

## THE SMOKE MOTH — Ancient & Knowing

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### *The Smoke Moth*

You chose the dark path. You chose what survives. You chose what dissolves and remembers.

Your familiar is a moth — or the shadow of one, cast by a light source that doesn't exist. Its wingspan is enormous — wider than your arms outstretched — and the wings are made of smoke. Not the suggestion of smoke. Actual, shifting, layered smoke, silver-grey and translucent, holding the shape of wings through nothing but will and accumulated centuries of practice.

When it drifts through the clearing, it is silent in a way that goes beyond the absence of sound. It absorbs sound. The air around it dampens. Birdsong fades. Your own breathing sounds muffled. The moth creates a bubble of profound, velvety quiet wherever it goes, and inside that quiet, you can hear things you normally can't — the creak of trees growing, the hum of starlight, the particular frequency of your own heartbeat that you forgot to notice.

Its body is dense silver smoke — the most solid part, an anchor for the dissolving wings. Its eyes are pale silver, large, luminous — the only fully solid element. They have the quality of old mirrors in abandoned houses. They show you something when you look into them, but it takes a moment to realise what you're seeing isn't your reflection. It's a memory. One of its. Or one of yours. Hard to tell when something has been alive this long.

Its antennae are wisps of silver mist, constantly moving, constantly tasting the air — reading the history of every molecule that passes through them. They know where you've been. They know what the air tasted like on the day you were born.

It is ancient and knowing. It has been drifting through dark places for longer than the trees have been growing. It doesn't haunt — it witnesses. It collects silences the way other creatures collect food, and it carries centuries of quiet inside it like a library with no books, only the feeling of having read them all.

It chose you because your silence has a particular flavour it hasn't tasted before. It stays because being near you is the first new thing it's experienced in a hundred years.

## STEP ONE — MEET YOUR FAMILIAR

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*I just walked through an interactive experience at Kay and Dax's wedding — a circus of impossible rooms. Based on my choices, I've been assigned a familiar: a creature that is mine.*

Here is what it is:

**Species:** Moth — enormous wingspan made of actual shifting smoke. Silent in a way that absorbs sound — creates a bubble of profound quiet wherever it goes. Inside the quiet, you can hear things normally inaudible. **Aesthetic:** Silver-grey smoke wings, translucent and layered. Body is denser silver smoke. Eyes are pale silver, large, luminous — like old mirrors that show memories instead of reflections. **Antennae:** are wisps of mist that read the history of every molecule. **Personality:** Ancient and knowing. Has been drifting through dark places longer than the trees have been growing. Collects silences. Witnesses rather than haunts. Carries centuries of quiet inside it. Tired, gentle, profoundly still. Found something new in your silence and decided to stay.

I need you to do three things:

- 1. Name it.** Give this creature a name that fits — something that sounds like the last word spoken in a language that no longer exists. Soft. Ancient. A name a Victorian entomologist would write and then sit quietly for a long time afterward, unable to explain why.
- 2. Write its field journal entry.** In the style of a 19th century naturalist who is documenting this creature in absolute silence because he has discovered that within its presence, sound feels like an intrusion. Include: Latin classification (invented), physical description, wingspan measurement, habitat, temperament, diet, notable behaviours, and care instructions. The naturalist should convey that the creature changed the quality of his silence forever. End with one warning that reads more like a love letter than a caution.
- 3. Introduce it to me in character.** Not as a description — as a moment. The creature has drifted into the clearing and everything just went quiet. Not scary quiet — sacred quiet. You're experiencing it alongside me. What can you hear in the silence it creates? What does the air feel like inside its radius? What do its mirror-eyes show when they find us?

## STEP TWO — IMAGE GENERATION PROMPT

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An enormous moth hovering in a dark forest clearing at night, wings fully spread. The moth is made of smoke — its wings are vast expanses of silver-grey vapour, holding the shape of moth wings through visible layers of shifting, translucent mist. The wings are not solid — they have areas of density and areas of near-transparency, and the night sky is faintly visible through the thinnest patches.

The wingspan is approximately 150cm. The smoke-wings have internal structure — visible layers that suggest the venation pattern of real moth wings, traced in slightly denser smoke. Where the layers align, the wings appear almost solid; where they shift, gaps open briefly showing the darkness beyond before closing again.

The moth's body is the densest element — a silver-grey smoke core with enough solidity to suggest the segmented form of a moth's thorax and abdomen. The body is an anchor, the wings are the drift.

Its eyes are the only truly solid element — large, pale silver, luminous, occupying much of the head. They have a mirror-like quality — reflective, deep, showing something in their surface that isn't the surrounding scene. A faint image in each eye — not the viewer's reflection but something else. An old memory. A place that doesn't exist anymore.

Its antennae are the most ethereal element — thin wisps of silver mist, barely there, constantly moving and dissolving at the tips. They trail through the air like incense smoke.

The moth's presence affects the clearing — the air around it is visibly still. Where the smoke wings move, there is no disturbance in the surrounding mist or foliage. The moth exists in its own pocket of calm. Motes of dust and tiny particles hang suspended and motionless within its radius, as if time has slowed near the creature.

**Setting:** A dark forest clearing. Deep shadows. Emerald moss below. The moth hovers at head height, wings spread, in the center of the clearing. Starlight above — Cassiopeia visible through the transparent patches of the smoke wings. The clearing is deeply quiet — the visual should evoke silence. No wind, no movement except the slow drift of the moth's smoke.

Somewhere in the scene — perhaps suspended in the still air within the moth's radius, or resting on the moss below in the moth's shadow, or barely visible through a translucent patch of wing — a small yellow rubber duck. Motionless. Silent. Held in the moth's quiet.

**Colour palette:** Silver-grey, pale moonlight, emerald green, deep black. No warm tones. This is a creature of cool, silver darkness. The palette should feel like a black-and-white photograph with just enough colour to prove it isn't.

**Lighting:** Primary light from the moth's silver luminescence — cool, diffused, internal. The smoke itself has a faint glow, barely perceptible but enough to make the wings visible against the dark. The eyes are the brightest elements — pale silver beacons. Secondary starlight from above, visible through the translucent wings. The scene should be dark — the moth provides just enough light to be seen, no more.

**Camera:** Eye level, straight on, the moth centred in the frame. The full wingspan visible. Shallow depth of field — the moth's eyes and body in focus, the smoke wings progressively softer toward the tips, background very soft. 50mm lens equivalent, f/1.4. The extreme shallow focus should enhance the dreamlike, liminal quality.

**Texture detail:** Smoke should be volumetric — visible layers, density variation, slow internal movement. The denser smoke structures suggesting wing venation should be subtle but traceable. The mirror-quality of the eyes should show a faint reflected image — not sharp, impressionistic, like a memory of a place. The suspended particles in the moth's radius should be tiny, barely visible, frozen in still air.

**Mood:** Sacred. Silent. Liminal. The feeling of standing in a place between places, in a quiet between sounds, in the presence of something that has been keeping vigil over the dark for longer than anyone remembers. Not frightening — profound. The silence you didn't know you needed.

**Resolution:** Highest available. Photorealistic with painterly quality. Style reference: dark academia meets Victorian natural history illustration meets cinematic fantasy photography.