

Neopets: the Darkest Faerie

A Jumpchain CYOA based on the 2005 Video Game
Version 1.0: Happy New Year Edition

It is sunrise on the Fifteenth of Storing, in Year Seven of the Neopian Calendar. At the moment, the magical world of Neopia is more or less at peace. New Maraquia and the Lost Desert have been rescued from the recent dangers which bedeviled them, and whatever other threats are currently at large always have been. Well, that's what everyone *thinks*. In truth, a very important necklace will fall off of a very important statue at the bottom of the sea some time today, and then *strange things* will begin to happen.

A young Lupe named Tormund Ellis is, at this time, getting up to help his parents on the family farm. They aren't too far from Meridell Castle Town, at the heart of the downright medieval Kingdom of Meridell. Meanwhile, Princess Roberta of Brightvale is preparing for another day of magical study. Though a niece of the wise King Hagan, she is more interested in sorcery than politics. It will not be long before these two youths cross paths with one another, and with an ancient shadow now unbound.

This is where your part of the story begins as well. Whether you stand with the heroes of this tale, swear fealty to the dark force on the rise, or simply carve your own path, you will have an opportunity to make history. You will, by default, be here for a period of ten years, ending on 15th of Storing, Y17. Before you go, however, take these **1000 Neopoints (NP)**. You'll need them.

Section 1: Location

Where does your journey on Neopia begin? While you might be from any Neopian Land that has already been discovered, the locations below are the most relevant to the tale that is set to unfold, and you are therefore recommended to choose one of them to begin your time here.

Meridell – A land of knights and peasants, this is the realm of King Skarl the First, and it exists in a strange relationship with the rest of Neopia. Due to the actions of some children some years ago (long story), it exists in a semi-permeable time bubble, along with its sister realm of Brightvale and the grim Darigan Citadel. Compared to Brightvale, Meridell trends generally poor and uneducated, but its knights are one of the mightiest military forces in the known world, despite being three hundred years behind most of it chronologically. Much of Meridell's land is also rather wild. The swamps and woods hold monsters like you wouldn't believe, though some places, like the glade of the Earth Faerie Illusen, are safe havens.

Brightvale – A land of scholars and sages, this is the realm of King Hagan, whose lands sit next to the lands of his brother Skarl on a peninsula. Hagan is a wise king, unlike his greedy, gluttonous, grumpy brother, and patronizes the arts and sciences. That said, he is not *entirely* above pettiness – his disdain for his brother is well-known, and he is known to wax wrath now and again himself. His realm also seems to be more centralized, with fewer wild portions, fewer isolated villages, and fewer monster hauntings. There are still some, mind you, but not as many.

Faerieland – Nestled atop clouds and enchanted rock, the home of the Faeries and those Neopets closest to them is grand, mighty, and beautiful. It is everything the Faeries are. When the Neopets below look up at eternal Faerieland, they know that Queen Fyora and the Faeries are watching over them. Some may think they don't do enough, or that they rule those who should rule themselves, but surely these are too few and far between to do much more than stuff young Faeries in bottles?

Altador – This city of marble and columns has been forgotten for a thousand years, trapped beyond time and erased from memory by a powerful spell. Yet, its people live on. Perhaps you are one of them, or perhaps you were simply here when the spell was cast. You may even have fallen into the Hall of Heroes through a portal somewhere. Several of the city's founders have made their way to other lands in disguise, and if you are feeling brave enough you should be able to do the same.

Elsewhere – Or, you could just be somewhere else on Neopia that's been discovered thus far. Neopia Central, the Lost Desert, the Haunted Woods, Terror Mountain, Tyrannia, Darigan Citadel, Kiko Lake, Krawk Island, Kreludor, the Virtupets Space Station, Maraqua, Roo Island, and Mystery Island are all options available to you. If you'd rather not get involved in the coming events concerning the Darkest Faerie, or if you mean to rally the rest of Neopia, this is a good option.

Section 2: Origins

Before your adventure begins, let us ask one question: who are you? Choose a Species and an Origin below, to establish the details. Your age is up to you, within reason. As a Neopet, your gender is also up to you – sexual dimorphism among Neopets appears to be merely cosmetic. As a Faerie, well. All *known* Faeries are female, but don't let that stop you.

Species

Neopet [Free] – You are one of the many fascinating creatures known collectively as Neopets! At this point, around fifty kinds of Neopet, each with their own temperaments and abilities, have been discovered, and they seem to live just fine anywhere, though they all have their preferred habitats. Some, like Pteris and Scorchios, can naturally fly. Others, like Grrarls and Skeiths, can eat things which should not be eaten. Still others, like Kois and Peophins, can inherently breathe underwater. Yet, whatever their origins, all species Neopets seem to have the same great potential. You can thus be any species of Neopet which was discovered before the Fifteenth of Storing, Year Seven – which only excludes the Xweetok, the Ogrin, the Gnorbu, the Lutari, and the Vandagyre, all of which were discovered later. Whichever species you are, you'll have no problem getting around on your hind legs or on all fours.

Unclear [Free] – Not everything on Neopia is a Neopet or a Faerie. If you want to be truly human (an alien creature in these parts, to be sure), ambiguously humanoid in the same manner as the Tiki Tack Man of Mystery Island (what *is* he behind the mask, anyway?), or a strange and truly alien creature like Dr. Frank Sloth is, this is what you want to choose. On its own, none of these options will make you any mightier than the average Neopet.

Species Modifiers (for Neopets and Unclear)

While there are many kinds of Neopets in the world, and some beings that aren't Neopets or Faeries at all, they're not all made equal. Some of them are the same

Colourful [Free] – With this option, you may choose to be any Paintbrush color that would not impart abilities unusual for your species that was available before the Fifteenth of Storing, Year Seven. Acaras would, for instance, be able to be painted Starry, but not Magma. This applies a new color and perhaps texture to your body, and some of these paintbrush colors even come with new clothes. For the sake of convenience, let us say that you can have those manifest or disappear at will.

Elemental [Free] – You have a greater connection to one of the six elements than most. Whether it be Water, Earth, Fire, Air, Light, or Darkness, you are resistant to your innate element, and your attacks deal extra damage to those aligned to your opposite. Taken with **Colourful**, this also allows you access to a paintbrush color appropriate to your element, if you like – Shadow for Dark, Cloud for Air, and so on. If you do not take this, assume that you do not possess a base elemental alignment.

Enhanced [50 NP] – With this option, your species' inherent abilities have grown to an extent that you are physically distinguishable from others. A Lupe might become a Werelupe, or an Ixi akin to the Ixi Raiders, or perhaps you are simply an unusually tall and strong member of your kind.

Airborne [50 NP] – If your species cannot normally fly, this option will help. Somehow or another, you've sprouted wings strong enough to bear you aloft at about the same speed you could run at. If taken with **Colourful**, these might be the bright, glittering wings a Faerie Paintbrush would give

you, or the devilish wings some Neopets get from the Darigan Paintbrush. If you're something like a Pteri, Scorchio, Shoyru, Skeith, Lenny, or Buzz that could already fly, you'll find yourself an exceptionally swift and agile flier even for your kind.

Aquatic [50 NP] – If your species cannot already breathe underwater, this option will help. Much like Neopets painted Maraquan (a color available to you if you choose this alongside **Colourful**), the rivers, lakes, and oceans of the world are your oyster, if you'll pardon the pun. If you could already breathe underwater and swim well (such as being a Flotsam, Jetsam, or Peophin), you'll find yourself an exceptionally swift and agile swimmer even for your kind.

Ghostly [100 NP] – Whether you're painted Ghost (as you will be if this is taken with **Colourful**) or simply cursed, you appear to be something of a phantasm. This doesn't let you fly or possess others, but you can pass through solid objects as you desire, and are somewhat translucent, making it somewhat harder to spot you. Oddly, this doesn't protect you from diseases and you still need to eat and drink. If taken with **"Jerdana is dead, a thousand years dead!"** however, you really *are* a proper ghost, with none of the needs of the living. Food, water, air, disease, poison – those all become irrelevant.

Monstrous [200 NP] – You are far larger than most of your kind, likely as a result of dark magic. Whether you're an abnormally long Hissi like Kastraliss, a hulking four-armed Werelupe like Gnarfes, or something else altogether, you can be sure that you're among the largest and strongest of your kind.

"Jerdana is dead, a thousand years dead!" [200] – Or so someone might think. However, like the other Heroes of Altador, her lifespan has been extended by the magic of Siyana, allowing her to live long past a Neopet's natural lifespan. It would seem your lifespan has been extended by similar means. It's not clear if this is merely a slowing of your aging or a repudiation of it entirely, but a thousand years hence you will still be as young and strong as you are now.

Faerie [200 NP/400 NP] – You are one of the elegant magical beings known as Faeries, who cohabit the world of Neopia with the Neopets and have long produced both its staunchest protectors and its most menacing threats. All known Faeries are female, though they *can* reproduce *somehow* – some will mention their mothers or daughters. Likewise, all Faeries are intrinsically ageless, though they can still fall prey to illness, accident, or violence. There are six main types of Faerie, with temperaments matching their inherent elements. In appearance, they are all best described as human women with wings and pointed ears (though the Water Faeries trade wings, and their legs, for a fish's tail). With that said, it's not clear if anyone here would know what a "human" even *is*. The main types of Faeries are:

- Light Faeries, who wield power over light and are known to be the most benevolent of all. They dedicate themselves, more or less, to helping the innocent and defeating the wicked.
- Earth Faeries, who wield power over green and growing things and are known as protectors of the natural world. Their benevolence is less about banishing evil and more about ensuring the common Neopet has enough to eat.
- Water Faeries, who wield power over water and are known for both haughtiness and intellectualism. They generally prize knowledge, and are thought to hold many ancient secrets.

- Air Faeries, who wield power over wind and are known to be somewhat flighty. Of all the Faeries, they're generally the most concerned with their looks.
- Fire Faeries, who wield power over flame and are known for being impulsive and hot-headed. Their impatience, even towards those doing them favors, is something of a stereotype.
- Dark Faeries, who wield power over shadows and curses and are known as generally unpleasant. There are notable exceptions, but most Dark Faeries exist on a scale of "mischievous" to "malevolent."

You may choose to be any one of these, or something more unique; as the Tooth Faerie and the Soup Faerie attest, not all Faeries are bound to their elemental origins, and they trade their magically aligned might for a particular obsession. If you pay the higher price for this species, however, you will be one of the most powerful Faeries on the planet, akin to Queen Fyora herself – or perhaps more like the Darkest Faerie? Where most Faeries can control minor manifestations of their inherent element, you could start a massive blaze, create a tornado, or conjure a mighty whirlpool, depending on your own alignment, and your capacity for magic in general will prove itself immense. Other Faeries possibly on this level include Aethia the Battle Faerie and Mira the Space Faerie, in their respective domains at least.

Origin

This is who you are, as opposed to what you are. It's what you've been doing all this time. Your age is up to you, within reason. Neopets seem to age at the same rate humans might, were they known to exist. Any of the below Origins may also forego any history in Neopia, appearing as if from nowhere. You would not be the first.

Apprentice – You are likely on the younger side. Perhaps you are studying magic in Brightvale, or perhaps you are a squire to one of the Knights of Meridell. Perhaps you are even a simple farmhand. Whatever the case, you've got a lot to learn, and the pluck and gumption necessary to do it.

Sage – You're likely on the older side, seeing as you've put yourself to the task of teaching the next generation and accruing greater knowledge. Whether it's magic, swordplay, or even the lessons that let one save the world, you have much to tell, to anyone who will listen.

Ruler – You're also likely older than any Apprentice, but where others your age might teach, you prefer to lead and administrate. While you perhaps do not wear a crown just yet, you are at the very least some form of nobility or elected official.

Villain – Young or old, you have something you want, and it's likely something Neopia at large doesn't want you to have. Whether you're a petty thief, a notorious marauder, or an ancient evil unleashed from your prison, you are *bad news*, and you have the skills to prove it.

Section 3: Perks

The Perks under your Origin are discounted by 50%, save for those which cost **100 Neopoints** ordinarily. The **100 Neopoint** Perks under a given Origin are instead free for members of that Origin.

Apprentice Perks

“The road to Meridell is a long one, and it’s not safe.” [100 NP] – Luckily, you’ve got what it takes to walk that road. For being most likely a child or young teenager, you’ve got a remarkable amount of strength, stamina, and agility. So long as you aren’t accosted by bandits, you could walk the long road from the Ellis farmstead to Meridell’s castle town without breaking a sweat.

“Knights follow a code. A code of chivalry.” [100 NP] – You’ve taken this to heart, and find it easier to hold to whatever morals you choose to adopt. While this won’t prevent you from being caught in a catch-22, it will ensure you’re more resilient against temptation. Whatever price you might have sold your ideals for before, it might take ten times that much now.

“I’m sure you’ll make a fine knight someday.” [200 NP] – Your instincts, or perhaps years of play-fighting with other children, seem to be working in your favor. Not only are you already a skilled enough swordsman, sorcerer, or other fighter to close the gap in strength between yourself and the adults, you also seem like a good pupil to those who are already famous for their martial prowess. Prove both a student worthy of their time and a person worthy of their regard, and they’ll make a hero out of you yet.

“Wait! Fulfill your end of the bargain first!” [200 NP] – Sometimes you can’t just ride in and save the day. Sometimes you need to get your hands a little dirty, mostly by striking a deal with people whose hands are plenty dirty. You get them something they want or save them from some trouble, they give you the thing you want. Notably, you’d normally have no reason to trust them, but something about you inspires honor even in thieves. In both letter and spirit, even those who pride themselves on being scoundrels are at least somewhat inclined to honor any bargain you make with them in good faith.

Stuck The Landing [400 NP] – Sometimes, heroes fall. This is often meant figuratively, to imply they’ve fallen from grace and turned wicked, or to imply they’ve been killed. But sometimes, you really do just get pushed off a cliff or something, and that’s where this perk comes in. This isn’t purely a protection from fall damage, and you will likely be hurt if you fall on your own. However, if your enemy decides to cast you down from as high up as Faerieland and hope the fall takes care of you for them, you’ll come away with little more than bruises even if you hit solid ground. Sending a fireball down the same rubbish chute you’re using to get away will fail to do more than singe you. Pitfall traps will do little more than waste your time. In other words, should the forces of evil want to kill you, they’ll find gravity won’t do the work for them.

X Marks the Spot [400 NP] – Your nose for treasure is, much like the Usul barmaid Hannah’s, incredibly good. You could pay a king’s ransom with the treasure hunting you could do in a year’s time, provided you’ve got the strength, speed, and agility to see it through. Not necessarily like her, you also tend to ‘home in’ on pieces of a ‘collection’ of objects you don’t have yet, when you’re looking, and get vague feelings about how to get any such piece someone else has. Whether that means your gut nudges you towards whatever they’d trade it for or gives you a sinking feeling you’ll need to fight them is up to them, really. Whether you’re chasing treasure maps or working at a stamp collection, this will help you quite a bit.

“We can free the land!” [600 NP] – It is said that there are problems which cannot be solved by skill at arms or battle spellwork alone. Yet, they help you more often than not. When you defeat the most powerful evil creature in a given area, you may find that certain curses or dangers in the land clear up in the wake of it. You could disperse some of the Darkest Faerie’s clouds by slaying one of the monsters under her command, for instance. Why, were you to strike down the Darkest Faerie herself, you might undo all of the wicked spells she’s wrought since she escaped her prison in an instant, even if Faerieland were already falling from the sky! It won’t bring anyone back to life, but it will tie up all of those loose ends, and all you have to do is win a straight-up fight. This mostly works on dark magic or other magical effects of a monster or something being there, but this could hypothetically extend to defeating a tyrant king and watching as his former subjects begin to prosper. It would be to a lesser extent, surely, but it just might work.

“Be the heroes you are destined to be.” [600 NP] – You really are destined to be a hero. Even if the sky is falling out from under your feet, and you have three minutes to stop the one who sent it tumbling down, you have a chance. Good odds, even. When it comes to saving the world, or at least stopping someone from conquering or destroying it in the short term, fate seems to favor you. You’re not likely to get lost, you’ll most likely find opportunities to grow stronger along the way, and whoever it is you’re trying to stop will find their minions not quite as attentive as they perhaps should be, ensuring you have a chance to escape any death traps or ambushes. This isn’t a guarantee, but so long as you’re working towards your heroic destiny, chance and coincidence will be on your side more often than not.

Sage Perks

“The mission is most important.” [100 NP] – Your experience and wisdom have made you more amenable than the younger sort to tedious formalities and the like. In short, even had you not possessed it before, you’ve developed the self-control necessary to perform tasks you find tedious or menial which are nonetheless still your responsibility. You could spend day in and day out crossing your t’s and dotting your I’s and barely even notice the boredom. Likewise, you seem that much more difficult to distract or bribe.

“Your uncle and I have never seen such clouds as those that gather over Meridell.” [100 NP] – If there is one thing your wisdom allows, it’s noticing when things are not quite right. While you won’t necessarily know exactly what is happening or why, you have something of a sense for ill omens and unusual magical phenomena. Even without any other information, you’ll get a feeling that something is off when you see, say, purple clouds appearing where they never have before.

“She’s not known for doing any dark conjurations...” [200 NP] – It’s easy to be mistrusted, despite your wisdom, when you possess magic and tend to keep to yourself. Yet, the Earth Faerie Illusen does not suffer this. King Skarl himself, grumpy old Skeith that he is, trusts her intrinsically. So it is with you. However little others know about you, even those with reason to fear you tend to give you the benefit of the doubt so long as you haven’t hurt them before.

“Remember to never take it off!” [200 NP] – Not everyone listens to the wise, and so their wisdom goes wasted. This is less of a problem for you than it would otherwise be. Even your most cryptic, obtuse advice leaves those who hear you with an impression of the *weight* of what you’re saying, such that they at least know how serious *you* are about them never ever removing that necklace you just gave them while disguised as a beggar. Let’s see that farm boy with no idea what’s going on ignore your advice now!

The Protector [400 NP] – That is a title for the ancient sorceress Jerdana, and yours is the potential to live up to her title. Whatever magic you do, it is greater still when wielded in the name of protecting the innocent, and you already know some minor protective spells even if you know no other magic at all. With more power, it would be trivial for you to create an enchanted necklace that protects its wearer from even the Darkest Faerie’s corruption, and not that much harder to forge a magical orb that can keep her trapped in a stone shell to protect the world from her wrath. Well, assuming you can get it around her neck. With enough time to prepare and enough power, you could save an entire city and its people from destruction, sealing it within a bubble of slowed time that phases it out of the world, and turning your greatest allies within to stone that they might be awakened when the necessary help arrives.

“Since you began your journey, we’ve done our best to help you.” [400 NP] – There may be those who need your guidance, but are kept away from you by some mighty spell. Perhaps even one you cast yourself. No matter, it seems, as you’ve learned a neat trick in your long years. Even if your body is trapped in a bubble of slowed time or a willing stone slumber, you may ‘project’ yourself out into the world. In this form, your power will be much reduced, but your knowledge will not. You can even take certain items out with you, should you think to do so ahead of time – anything that could be carried on your person, and no more. This new form will also come with a nondescript ‘role’ in the world beyond, such that your presence is not too closely questioned. By default, it’s the sort of role that would allow you to covertly and conveniently assist a true hero.

“Maybe I’ll teach you some more complicated spells while we’re here.” [600 NP] – Well, perhaps it isn’t magic, if for some reason you don’t know any. Perhaps it’s engineering, accounting, mathematics, astronomy, astrology, physics, philosophy, tactics and strategy, or even poetry. Whatever it is you know, anyone would be blessed to have you as a teacher. You’ve got an eye for the potential your students have in your field, as well as how they learn best, ensuring you can bring each pupil to full blossom. What’s more, you’ve got experience and intuition towards managing the expectations and emotions of your students, letting you ensure they take things at the proper pace instead of trying to rush ahead of your lessons and hurting themselves or others in the process. Ironically, your ability to pace your students properly helps them learn faster overall, turning months of study into weeks. You can also put to bed your worries about those who would use your teachings against you, as your intuition lets you catch the signs sooner. Whether you try to steer them off that course of action or interrupt their plot and reveal you knew they were up to something once they spring it is up to you. Finally, thanks to all of this, you have a sense for those students who might be your best pupils of all – those whose learning style best matches the teaching style that works best for you, and whose personalities and interests match best with your own. Altogether, you’re one of the best teachers in Neopia. Perhaps in time, your students will redefine their fields entirely, all thanks to you.

Legend of Altador [600 NP] – Had you lived in King Altador’s time, had you come to his notice, there might have been thirteen heroes. There is something about you, some skill or courage or both you possess, that makes you worthy or renown in your own right, and will serve you even better in concert with other heroes. Perhaps you are a dancer so skilled and vibrant that your performance brings hope in even the darkest times. Perhaps you are a farmer so adept that you can turn back a horrific crop blight on your own. Perhaps you are a shepherd skilled enough with animals that you can pacify a rampaging monster with a simple offer of food. Perhaps you are a general unmatched in strategy and tactics, brave enough to lead from the front, and so inspiring that troops ordered to kill you for refusing to sack a small village would turn to your side instead. Perhaps you are an accountant, so skilled and so incorruptible that not a single coin under your watch will ever go missing. Perhaps you are an admiral, as indomitable on the waves as your general counterpart would be on the field. Perhaps you are a

sorceress without peer able to create a barrier to hold off a Werelupe pack on reflex, or an uncatchable thief with a heart as golden as the riches you swipe from those glutted on greed and give to those in dire need. Perhaps you are simply a Faerie willing to save another's life at the risk of your own, even if already gravely injured yourself. Perhaps you are something else a kingdom would need altogether. Whatever you are, yours would be a tale worthy of the Book of Ages.

Ruler Perks

Regal Bearing [100] – You've been training for this since your youth, you know. You've had all the formalities of Neopia's royal courts drilled into you well enough that any violations of courtly etiquette are intentional on your part. That doesn't just mean showing the appropriate respect to Skarl, Fyora, and the like, either. You play Dice-A-Roo well enough to keep King Roo entertained, are versed in the tea ceremonies of Shenkuu, and

It's Good To Be The King [100] – Or queen, or monarch/dictator/warlord/elected official/CEO of indeterminate gender and/or species. The point is that you, like many of Neopia's rulers, seem particularly resistant to the stresses that come with the job. You may still find assassination attempts to be unnerving, and feel the appropriate concern in the face of a potential revolt, but the day to day responsibilities of an executive will never weigh so heavily on you that you cannot bear them.

“Get those ovens cooking!” [200] – When it comes down to it, one of the perks of royalty is feasting as you please. Even in a land that faces famine now and again, you now find you can somehow throw lavish feasts for any cause worthy of celebration, or even simply to sate your appetite. Whether your castle has its own gardens that feed you in lean times or your taxes simply include enough to stock the royal larders even in lean years, no blight or early frost will threaten your table again. What is more, your subjects will not resent you for eating like the king or queen you are, even as they scrape by. At worst, they may comment on your poor table manners. If you're feeling nice, perhaps you might even invite some of them?

“A messenger from Illusen!” [200] – How can you rule if you don't know what's going on? Especially in a world like this, where supernatural happenings are common enough to be merely natural? Luckily, you'll never be out of the loop for long. Whenever strange things are going on in your lands, you'll find someone or other comes to you about them before it's too late to act. You'll have enough time to muster and send your loyal forces, choose a champion to take on the task, or even see to the disturbance yourself, should you feel it necessary. This does not guarantee you will be able to solve the problem, but you'll certainly go in forewarned, and forewarned is forearmed.

Marrow Tax [400] – The Marrow Tax is, along with all the others, the reason most Meridellians have just enough to get by and not a Neopoint more. Reports are vague on what precisely this tax is *for*, but it's blatantly exploitative. It's not exactly clear why King Skarl I is able to get away with taxing his people this much, but it would seem that you can too. However many resources you extract from your subjects, they will remain disinclined to revolt so long as your taxes do not make it impossible for them to survive at all. They will simply make do with what they can grow, hunt, or forage.

Wise Old King [400] – For those more interested in giving back to the people, you may perhaps look to the example of Skarl's brother, King Hagan of Brightvale. His patronage of the arts, sciences, and literature has resulted in Brightvale hosting one of Neopia's two known universities, as well as an annual conference on, of all things, robotics! Not bad for a land from three hundred years ago. That's not to mention how much more common magical knowledge is than in neighboring Meridell, or the Brightvalians' love of stained glass. You'll find similar results when you invest your royal resources in

the arts, the sciences, magic, philosophy, and other forms of education. Founding a university with royal coin will see it become the premier university in the region, if not the world, and paying tuition for accepted students from the national coffers will see them make leaps and bounds in their studies, achieving far more than they would have had you left them to sort themselves out. You would make an ideal royal patron for intellectuals of all stripes on the results of your patronage alone.

The Founders Twelve [600] – Countless ages ago, a Lupe named Altador grew up in a city mired in corruption and misrule. Lamenting this state of affairs, he set out to found his own city, free of the vice that riddled other realms at the time. When he found the right place, he found it all but uninhabited, and so vowed to build a city himself. As he strove to do so, he found eleven like-minded individuals, who were drawn to his ideals and his quest. Together, they founded the idyllic realm of Altador, named for its new King (at the insistence of his eleven greatest allies, rather than of the King himself). Like Altador, you are all but destined to find allies worthy of your aims when you set out to establish or reorganize any organization, from a simple guild to a full-fledged kingdom. If you seek a chief tax collector, you will find the most honest and competent one the world has to offer. If you seek a general, you will find one of the best. If you seek a court wizard, you will find an archmage truly worthy of the title. Moreover, this blend of skill and moral fiber will ensure your councilors will ensure no outside force will tempt them to betray you. That won't help you if one of them grows impatient with your unwillingness to make use of her power and decides she would be better suited for your throne, but it will definitely help if foreign spies should try to set you against one another. You and your allies will not merely collaborate – you will be true and honest friends.

Long Live the Queen [600] – Were it not for Queen Fyora, you might be the most beloved ruler in Neopia. At the very least, you possess the qualities necessary to be so loved by your people. Yours is the patience of a saint, the composure of an ascetic, the administrative skill of a truly worthy king or queen, and a heart big enough that, should you so choose, you may truly care for all of your subjects as if they were your own children. It is these traits that allowed Fyora to unite the Faeries in time out of memory, and brought even the mischievous Dark Faeries to respect her. What is more, any reputation you earn as a good ruler will blossom far beyond what your deeds would naturally warrant, to the point that other sovereigns may instinctively seek your counsel on matters of global import. To the common people of other kingdoms, who may well swear by your name, you might as well be a god or goddess, even if you have no such power.

Villain Perks

Make This Look Good [100] – If there's one thing you know about being bad, it's that you need to make it look good to get by. Who's going to take you seriously if you can't? Luckily for you, some force or another is helping your presentation along. When you mean to intimidate, rooms will darken ever so slightly as you enter, your long shadow falling impressively upon the far wall. When you gloat, your wicked laughter will show the world just who you are, whether it's the jingling giggle of a spoiled brat, the practiced guffaw of a refined malefactor, or the deranged cackle of a sadistic brute. Your sly smirks and manic grins could never be mistaken for mere grimaces, and your incensed snarls alone might give children nightmares. Last but not least, rejoice, for you shall never stutter or stammer while monologuing again.

Swift As A Meerca [100] – What else is there to say? You're rather fast. While this could serve you well in a straight-up fight, you're at your best when doing just the opposite – running *away*. Who needs a getaway vehicle when you can practically match those speeds on foot, hm? This should serve any heists or pickpocketing sprees you get up to rather well.

“Ah, a new customer!” [200] – Perhaps you do not do your evil deeds for your own ambitions, but for coin. Yet, how will you ply your *unique* services if no one can find you? That is where this comes in. Your new powers of teleportation are curious, and perhaps even confusing. When someone wants to hire you, as a thief or an assassin or what have you, you can allow them to “summon” you, thus allowing you to appear before them in a puff of smoke. Likewise, you can then teleport to within a certain range of your target, appearing in a puff of smoke within their line of sight. Interestingly, they might be able to hear you before they can see you, allowing you to get in one or two ominous lines before you appear. Notably, you can also teleport to a lesser extent in combat, sinking into your own shadow to reappear somewhere within five meters of your opponent.

“You of all people should know never to turn your back on an enemy!” [200] – And yet, they do. Your heroic adversaries find themselves slightly more easily distracted in the heat of battle. This isn’t something you make happen so much as small windows of opportunity that open to you on their own, so long as you let your enemies focus on one of your minions or allies instead of you.

“Shouldn’t skeletons be dead?” [400] – A question I am sure your enemies will be asking when they witness your handiwork. Somehow or another, you’ve become a talented necromancer, raising even the well-buried dead to your service. A small graveyard might only yield you a few skeletons, but a true ossuary would lend you an army, if you put in the time. Where corrupting the living fails, twisting the dead to your service may supplement them. You can likewise also invest evil spirits into suits of mighty armor this way, creating foes like the Black Knight for your adversaries to fall before.

“For more than a thousand years, I have waited for this moment!” [400] – Did they truly think you could be locked away for good? No, you are not so easily gotten rid of. Though it may take a while, depending on how thorough your enemies are, nothing short of true death may remove you forever as a threat. Their seals will wear away and break. Their cells will fail to hold you. When last the Darkest Faerie was defeated, she was turned to stone with a magical artifact of immense power wielded by a mighty sorceress, further restrained by an enchanted amulet, and then sunken into the deepest sea. Afterward, that sea became home to a ship-swallowing cursed vortex and the ruins of an undersea kingdom. Even *all of this* only held her for a thousand years, and she was able to conquer a kingdom within mere weeks of her escape. It would take no less than that to hold you for any significant time, and that is assuming you are not mightier still than the Darkest Faerie herself. As a bonus to this, know that your body and powers will never decay or atrophy from disuse. You will be as mighty and as healthy after a thousand-year slumber as you were before it. Those who think you will be weakened while you are freshly freed are in for a rude awakening.

“I will be remembered forever as the one who destroyed two kingdoms at once!” [600] – Let it never be said that you aren’t a threat, as it seems fate has conspired to *make* you one. Whether you’re of a magical bent akin to the Darkest Faerie, a scientist in the vein of Dr. Sloth, or more of a brute like the Monoceraptor of more recent times, it takes the truly great to stop your diabolical plots. Magicians on par with Fyora, Jerdana, or Roberta, and warriors like King Altador or Sir Tormund would have just as much of a chance against you as before, but an army of nameless rabble will find its morale melting faster than even peasant conscripts really should give up, and its ranks especially susceptible to dropping in droves against you. Whether you twist them to your service with magic, unleash your own hordes against them, or simply barrel through them like an avalanche down a mountainside, the unremarkable masses will part before you like the sea before whatever miracle-worker you might name.

“This land is mine!” [600] – Not by right, but since when has that stopped the likes of you? There is one thing you clearly share with the Darkest Faerie – the ability to seize lands and their peoples for yourself through your evil influence. Given you would obviously need some influence to spread, you’ll also find yourself with an incredible talent for (and deep well of) dark magic. You can convert your own power into clouds that hang over certain areas. The dark clouds you can unleash will seize the minds of all those who live beneath them, save those specifically protected against magics that influence the mind. Strong wills will hold out for days, weeks, or even months if *truly* exceptional, but only those warded can resist forever. Notably, you can also exert some control of the weather through these ominous purple clouds, such as making them extend brief vortexes to strike flying enemies down from the sky, or causing them to loose equally ominous purple lightning. The clouds spread rather quickly, too. The Darkest Faerie conquered Meridell and Faerieland within what seems merely days, and Brightvale was set to be next. However, this power is not infallible. Should someone destroy one of your more powerful minions beneath a certain section of the clouds, that might be enough to clear them away. Additionally, powerful wielders of light magic can dispel the clouds nearest them, and those wielding artifacts like Fyora’s Rod can directly free your puppets.

General Perks (No discounts apply here.)

Fair as a Faerie [100 NP] – By the standards of your species, at least, you’re rather beautiful. Whether you’re a devilishly handsome Lupe, a fluffy, fashionable Usul, or the cutest Kiko one ever did see, your looks are worth turning heads and talking about. Interestingly, the Faeries are known for their beauty already. Taking this as a **Faerie** would make you noticeably beautiful even by that lofty standard. Do with that knowledge what you will.

Minor Mysticism [100 NP] – Whether you’re a dedicated sorcerer or something of a dabbler, you at least know a little utility magic. You might be able to conjure a number of Neopoints from thin air, with greater magical skill granting you a larger sum. You might have a spell to animate your combs and brushes so they maintain your hair for you. Magics like these come fairly easily to you, in truth. They might not be much worth in combat, but they’ll certainly make your day-to-day life easier.

Table Tennis Terror [200 NP] – Like some of the swordsmen (swordspets?) in this world, you’ve figured out a peculiar way to even the score against magicians and other ranged fighters. With a flick of your blade, you can reflect magical projectiles back at their senders! It’s rather like hitting a baseball with a bat, really. That said, you’ve got to time it just right. If you don’t, well, you’re still eating that fireball to the face.

“She turned him into a Doglefox! For an entire month!” [200 NP] – If there’s one skill that seems to be common among mages of all moralities around here, it’s transformative magic. Illusen once turned the Werelupe King into a Doglefox, the Darkest Faerie can disguise herself as Fyora and Fyora as herself, Sophie the Swamp Witch can turn those who displease her into Mortogs, and the list goes on. Whether you deliver it through a wand or a potion, you likewise have some experience with transformative magic. With what you know now, turning a Neopet into a Petpet temporarily is easy, and with some more study, more power, or an artifact to amplify your magic, you’ll be able to disguise one Neopet as another, disguise yourself as any creature one might find on Neopia, or even turn someone to stone indefinitely.

Section 4: Items

Just like Perks, Items are discounted by 50% to their respective Origins, with the **100 Neopoint** items instead being free for their respective Origins. In addition, should you already possess a similar item, you may import it as

Apprentice Items

Trainee Weapon [100 NP] – Perhaps this is a wooden sword, or perhaps a wooden wand. Whatever the case, it isn't exactly impressive. What it is, however, is reliable. It's surprisingly durable, can even handle being imbued with Fire Motes without burning up, and deals enough damage to let you fight off the likes of Crokabeks and Drackonacks, provided you're smart about it.

Traveling Clothes [100 NP] – This set of patched, roughspun clothes won't win you any style points, and some might even call them rags. They are, however, reliable. A cloak, a pair of boots, a tunic, and some undergarments keep you warm in the cold, cool in the heat, and dry in the rain, as well as enduring even weeks of constant travel without maintenance. All but the cloak will also somehow fit under even the tightest armor you could be wearing, ensuring you need not trade one form of protection for another.

Jerdana's Charms [200 NP] – One to protect you, one to protect a friend. Not only do these amulets protect the wearers from the Darkest Faerie's mind control (and other such mental control imposed by dark magic), they also seem to have a slight effect on fate, ensuring the wearers will be able to find each other in a timely fashion. Their protection, however, only lasts so long as they're on your person. It is thus imperative that you do not allow these to be stolen. If you wish, you may designate one of your Companions to automatically receive one of the two amulets, and can change that decision once in each new world you go to. Alternatively, you can just give a friend the other one manually.

Meri Acres Home [200 NP] – Much like the young Tormund Ellis, you have access to a Meridellian farmhouse and a few acres of farmland surrounding it. Enough to raise Bagusses and Whinnies simultaneously, but not so much that performing your daily chores is too long a walk. Optionally, and like Tor's situation, you do not *own* this verdant land so much as live there with your family. Either way, the farmhouse also possesses all the tools you'd need to tend the land and the plants and creatures living on it, the way they do in the Meri Acres collective.

Mote Supply [400 NP] – Motes are small condensed packets of elemental magic with eyes, rather common here in Neopia. They can be used to add elemental properties to your weapons and armor, though use slowly consumes them. When facing a creature aligned to a given element, imbuing your armor with a Mote of the same element will blunt their attacks, and imbuing your weapon with a Mote of the opposite element will enhance your attacks against them. Each also has a special attack you can burn one to enable, rather than merely applying it to your weapon or armor. You happen to have a bag full of them. Of the Bubble, Leaf, Fog, Fire, Smoke, and Light Motes, you possess twenty each. Of the stronger Stone, Water, Lava, Wind, Shadow, and Sun Motes, you have ten each. Of the omni-elemental Nova Motes, you have five, and you possess one of their superior form – the Supernova Mote. The bag replenishes its Mote supply after use, at differing rates. The Bubble, Leaf, Fog, Fire, Smoke, and Light Motes replenish weekly. The Stone, Water, Lava, Wind, Shadow, and Sun Motes replenish monthly. The Nova Motes replenish every six months, and the Supernova Mote replenishes yearly.

Your Very Own Shop [400 NP] – Did you know that Princess Roberta is also the owner and proprietor of the Scrollerly in Brightvale? Much like her, you have come into ownership of a shop that

sells some manner of good the enterprising Neopian needs. Perhaps produce from Meridell, perhaps Faerie-forged weapons and armor, perhaps even rare Neggs or elemental Motes. Whatever you sell, you can be sure that your suppliers will never cheat you, you'll always be able to find at least a few customers wherever you go, that no one truly interested in buying will threaten you while you're at your counter, and that someone will come along to deal with anyone who tries to rob you outright. Whether that's the local authorities or some hot-shot young hero depends on the timing. Finally, should pressing matters like the end of the world force you to close up for a few months or so, you'll find you haven't gone entirely out of business for it, though you might need a small loan or a holiday rush to get all your numbers back in order.

Prominent Potions [600 NP] – You'll need more than a sword and shield or robe and wand to make it through the trials ahead. Luckily, you've found some of the rarest potions in the land. The satchel you now carry holds three of each of the following, with used ones replenishing on a weekly basis: Kauvara's Potion, a draught that restores you to full health even from the brink of death and renders your flesh impervious to physical damage for about half a minute afterward; Fyora's potion, which restores your magical reserves to full even if emptied and enhances your regeneration thereof for about half a minute afterward; Unguent of Curing, which can break most curses, cure all poisons, and even restore you to normal if you've been magically slowed somehow; Potion of Revival, which lets you restore full life and magical reserves to someone who's been dead for less than a day; Potion of Heroism, which makes all of the drinker's attacks noticeably stronger for roughly an hour; and Potion of Meerca Speed, which lets the drinker zip around like a speeding Meerca for about an hour.

Hero's Panoply [600 NP] – Perhaps this is the golden armor and sunburst-blazoned shield of a Knight of Altador, matched with a sword equal to the king's in might. Perhaps it is the robe of an almighty sorceress, paired with a wand worthy of the ancients themselves. Perhaps it has a different aesthetic, but otherwise matches one of those two in capability. Any which way, what you have here is truly legendary. To wear the armor and shield or robe is to be protected from even truly mighty weapons and magic at least somewhat. The armor is more physically defensive while the robe provides better magic protection. To wield the sword or wand is to strike physically or magically with the might of heroes. With all this, even a child has a fighting chance of surviving a one-on-one brawl with the Darkest Faerie herself. Two children are, after all, soon set to do just that under just these conditions.

Sage Items

Reliable Raiment [100 NP] – This is an outfit fit for a scholar. A dress or robe (your choice), a pair of slippers, some undergarments, and a hat or hood (again, your choice) make up this ensemble, and they somehow stay clean and comfortable even if you pull several all-night study sessions in a row. With that said, best not to get caught out in the rain, snow, or heat. They aren't especially protective from those.

Neopian Notebook [100 NP] – A true student of life finds a lesson in everything, and that's cause to take notes. This notebook should help. Not only do you never seem to lose track of it even at your most forgetful, but it's light, surprisingly resilient against damage (even catching fire doesn't make it less legible!), and never quite runs out of new pages. Because you'll also need something to write with, this comes with a pen that never quite runs out of ink.

Faerie Globe [200 NP] – When you absolutely, positively, need to get past a dark magic barrier preventing you from entering a castle or some such, this orb does the trick. It can banish, at least for a

time, even mighty walls of dark magic surrounding a keep or castle town. It doesn't do much else, though.

Scepter of Seradar [200 NP] – This white and gold staff, topped with a glittering green gem, is useful in a number of small ways. First of all, it makes your magic slightly more powerful. Additionally, carrying it lends you a slight air of sagely wisdom. You just seem more like the kind of person who knows many things. Finally, it serves as an excellent walking stick, should you need or want that.

Illusen's Charm [400 NP] – Much like the charms made by Jerdana the Protector, this charm in the style of the one Illusen wears is good at protecting you from dark magic. With this, the Darkest Faerie wouldn't be able to control your mind even should you be trapped beneath her clouds, and various other dark magics would have a far harder time affecting you at all. Even bolts of dark energy meant to kill you might slide off you like raindrops, rather than the desired effect. With that said, the protection only lasts so long as you're wearing or holding it, so don't get it stolen.

Illusen's Glade [400 NP] – Like the Earth Faerie Illusen, you have found and fortified an enchanted glade, where dark creatures fear to tread. This is partially for fear of you, and partially for fear of the retaliation they will suffer should your home come under threat. Not only are you slightly more powerful within this bit of magical forest, but your allies always seem to know if an intruder is proving too much for you. Maybe a messenger reaches them, maybe they just get a bad feeling. Either way, it proves an excellent deterrent.

The Archives [600 NP] – To know all there is to be known is the calling of a true sage, and this archive is the perfect place to store such knowledge. Modeled on the archive of Altador itself, as well as the libraries of Brightvale, this library-museum hybrid contains much, if not all, of the written knowledge within all Neopia. You will also find it seemingly expands itself to contain new artifacts and tomes when you bring them, while producing the perfect conditions for preservation. Even digital records and stored seed stocks or genomes will find themselves beneficiaries of the subtle preservative enchantments woven into the very stones of this archive.

Jerdana's Orb [600 NP] – A ruby orb on a gold chain, simple as that. Far more impressive than this necklace's make, however, is what it can do. If you can get it onto even someone as powerful as the Darkest Faerie and recite the correct spell (a spell you now know), the power of the Orb will turn them to stone, trapping them for at least a thousand years. Longer, perhaps, if you include other measures. For that reason, it will also refuse to interfere with any other methods of sealing you employ in tandem with it, instead complementing them as best it can. This is a simple effect, but immensely powerful.

Ruler Items

Heavy Is The Head [100 NP] – That wears the crown. Which, of course, is yours. Still, a crown is an accessory as much as it is a burden, and yours fits you perfectly. It could be heavy, golden, and bedecked in jewels, or more of a simple tiara or diadem, but a crown fit for a king or queen it is indeed. Anyone who sees you wearing this will have a slightly better idea of the authority you command.

In All Her Finery [100 NP] – If there is one thing royalty can be said to be, it is stylish. The trends tend to follow their tastes, after all. Whether it's an elegant violet gown that glitters like starlight on gemstones, or an ostentatious red robe with a high fur collar, this royal finery well and truly suits you. It's also sturdy enough to be worn into battle without too much damage – you likely have enemies, after all.

Royal Writ [200 NP] – Ah yes, paperwork. The *boring*, but *essential* part of ruling. If your papers are out of order, who knows what chaos might ensue? This should help. You now have a royal seal, official stationery, and a truly sturdy writing-desk. To use them is to ensure that your official correspondence is delivered smoothly and on time, and that your official correspondence is all but impossible to *forg*e, thwarting any number of frauds before they can so much as try.

A Perfect Place For It [200 NP] – Over one thousand years ago, King Altador built his kingdom from the ground up, by hand, on land such as this. No, really, he did. The Sleeper even offered to use her magic to aid in the building, but the Hunter refused, for he knew his people would value their capitol city more if they'd built it themselves. If you think you can do something like this, too, this is for you. An untamed wilderness roughly the size of Meridell lies before you. Rolling hills, deep forests, and at least one major river, perfect for feeding aqueducts and irrigation canals or acting as a channel of trade. It can be an island or an inland area at your discretion, and somehow, legally, it's all yours. The one real downside is that no one actually lives here yet. You may want to do something about that.

“Knights of Meridell, let's ride!” [400 NP] – No one keeps a crown without an army. This is yours. These Neopets may not be armed with the futuristic weaponry one might find on the Virtupets Space Station, but for mail-clad knights operating mostly in melee, they hold their own. Given the elite training they possess, they only number about one thousand or so, but each one is worth their weight on the battlefield. As a royal bodyguard or a solid core to a larger army, they will prove their worth time and again, acting as Followers wherever you might go. Their loyalty is also, first and foremost, to you. Some may have misgivings if you begin to act out of character, but you'd have to do something truly imbecilic or apocalyptic to drive them to mutiny.

Orb of Prosperity [400 NP] – An orb like this once saved Meridell from a horrible famine, allowing the land to prosper. Unlike the knights King Skarl sent to find an answer to the famine, though, you did not have to *steal this from Lord Darigan*. This magical orb, roughly the size of your head, enhances the fertility of the land it is kept in, guarding against all but the worst crop blights and other sources of famine. However, it only has a certain radius – enough to cover Meridell, but not necessarily Brightvale, much like the other one.

Upon This Rock [600 NP] – What is a ruler without a place from which to rule? This fully-furnished castle in a style you find tasteful is both heavily protected and surrounded by a small castle town wherein services essential to your needs may be found. The people of this castle town, roughly ten thousand Neopets of various species, will join you as Followers. Alternatively, if you are a **Faerie**, your closest subjects may be Faeries themselves. As for the castle, its methods of protection may vary. If you favor physical fortification, then like Meridell Keep, its walls will be high and thick, and much of the castle town will be staffed by knights. Perhaps you want a balance between physical and magical protection, instead? Or, favoring magical protection, the castle and the town around it may soar through the sky on a levitating rock, as both Faerieland and the Darigan Citadel do. While rather less physically durable than Meridell Keep, this keep is by no means flimsy, and its position high in the air makes it much more difficult to invade to begin with. Should you also possess **A Perfect Place For It**, you may find yourself saving a lot of time and work, as that land can become a kingdom surrounding this castle town. Most of its people live in small farming villages, but there might be one or two towns with particular industries. A mining town, maybe, or a market town? That's not to mention your capital city, centered on your keep. In terms of technology and population, your new kingdom is roughly equivalent to Meridell by default.

Fyora's Rod [600 NP] – The scepter is often a symbol of rulership, but the magic wand Fyora wielded one thousand years ago bears a much more literal power. Namely, it seems to be an immensely potent tool for combating dark magic, undoing curses, banishing evil spirits, and generally protecting the world from evil. Even King Skarl, not exactly known for his magical prowess, can use it to banish the Darkest Faerie's clouds from Meridell entirely. He soon will, should events proceed as they would without your presence. In Fyora's own hands, it can arrest the momentum of a Faerieland falling at terminal velocity and restore it to its proper place. She soon will, should events proceed as they would without your presence. It would appear either that this wand is now in your possession, or that you possess one of equal might.

Villain Items

Dark Staff [100 NP] – This imposing staff, topped with a crystal ball, is not the source of your evil powers, but it does allow you to scry on individuals of interest from afar. It won't tell you what they're saying, but it will show you where they are. That alone is useful, no?

Evil Ensemble [100 NP] – You may be bad, but you've got to make it look good. Whether you wear the hooded cloak of an assassin or the dark blue dress of a gruesome queen, this outfit is stylish, intimidating, self-cleaning, and most of all, *you*. No one else can wear it quite like you do.

“Your lessons in dark magic can finally begin!” [200 NP] – While Roberta may not have accepted the mind-controlled Seradar's offer to teach her dark magic, these books on basic dark magic you now possess will help you quite a bit if you find more *willing* students. Curses that bring minor bouts of bad luck, basic bolts of painful purple power, that sort of thing.

Evil Implements [200 NP] – There's no dancing around it. What you have here, in this suitcase-sized box you can summon to your side at will and even have cling to the nearest wall, are instruments of torture. You'd think this sort of world wouldn't call attention to that, but here we are. Branding irons, whips, thumbscrews, gags, so long as it could hypothetically fit in the case, can be held in an average person's hands, and is primarily used to inflict torture on others, you'll probably find it in there.

Darkest Armor [400 NP] – This is interesting. This pitch-black suit of armor, complete with sword and shield, is much like that worn by the Darkest Knight. It's immensely sturdy, for one, and while you could wear it yourself without much issue, it also acts as a perfect vessel for any evil spirits you may want to summon into it. Even those that might otherwise be rather weak will find themselves bolstered by the armor, but the real power comes when the spirit of a truly great warrior of darkness finds its way into this suit. So dark a knight could easily capture decent territories on their own, and prove difficult indeed to remove from whatever ruined keep might lie nearby.

Werelupe Woods [400 NP] – A truly terrible place, this, more like the Haunted Woods than anywhere else. This deep, dark forest is home to a pack of Werelupes roughly a hundred strong who, for one reason or another, acknowledge you as their overlord. Whether you're the biggest member of the pack or a power none of them can touch, they will muster from this wood at your command. They aren't necessarily the brightest, and prefer simple orders like “go here and kill this person” or “make trouble right around there,” but they do those things rather well. Maybe don't send them after Illusen without having someone distract her first, though. Remember what happened to the Werelupe King the last time he tried that.

The Betrayer [600 NP] – This is less something you own and more something you'll be able to find. Each time you enter a new world, you'll be able to find something much like the Darkest Faerie.

Namely, a powerful ancient evil turned to stone, trapped where few if any could reach it. Maybe at the bottom of the sea, maybe in a deep cavern, maybe on an unmarked, uninhabited island, you'll find yourself poised to unseal this antediluvian malefactor. While they won't be hostile to you immediately, and you may be able to forge an alliance, the real advantage of unleashing them is the opening they'll create for you. Even if the locals defeat them, that's resources they've expended that could have been spent finding out your plans or stopping the opening steps thereof.

Conquered Kingdom [600 NP] – You've already done it, haven't you? Perhaps you took a slice of the Haunted Woods for yourself, or some of the forests near Meridell, or a small island, but the result is the same. You've enough land to comfortably hold roughly the population of Roo Island under your control, as well as about that many inhabitants, who have become dubiously willing Followers. Unfortunately, you seem to have made quite a mess of any infrastructure, heroes, or armies you might have found when you got there, so not only are these Neopians rather *uncomfortable*, but you also won't find any fighting spirit in them by default. Still, they're terrified of you, more susceptible to your dark magic than they otherwise should be, and don't really have any way to escape from you. How better to amuse yourself?

General Items

Promotional Food [50 NP] – This is curious. This isn't really related to the story being told here. Yet, here you are holding them. Once per day, you can reach into any container on your person and draw forth a box of Neopets Islandberry Crunch, a crunchy breakfast cereal flavored using the eponymous Mystery Island fruits. Likewise, you may do the same once per day to acquire a sealed cup (curiously labeled "Jamba Juice") of the Neopets Tigerfruit Smoothie, produced using the eponymous fruit as well as apples, bananas, and strawberries. They're both deliciously tropical, and decently filling, though neither is all that nutritious.

Neopian Notes [50 NP] – That's curious, too. It would seem that many of Neopia's musical offerings (including every track in the Darkest Faerie game as well as many tracks from the website's multimedia morsels) are following you wherever you go, playing themselves as a soundtrack for your life. Whether in peaceful moments or tense ones, you'll have just the song you need to really get into it. You may switch this soundtrack on or off at will.

Petpet [100 NP] – Meet your new little friend! From the chilly Abominable Snowball to the skittish Babaa to the adorable Doglefox and beyond, you now have a loving, playful Petpet of your very own! Your little buddy is no mere pet, either, able to fight alongside you and fend off minor enemies on their own! Don't send them after any mean-looking Werelupes alone, but they can duel Drackonacks just fine. They might even *be* a Drackonack. Thanks to your investment here, you'll even find them none the worse for wear the next day should something *happen* to them. Your new friend is, after all, still mortal. Speaking of, this can be any Petpet that was available on or before the 15th of Storing, Y7.

Mechanical Fruit Picker [100 NP] – This appears to have fallen from the sky. Did someone on the Virtupets Space Station discard this carelessly? Whatever the case, it's a handy little grappling hook. You can use it to pick smaller fruits and vegetables from a distance (which the person who found this and gave it to you assumes is the intended use), or pull yourself toward larger structures it latches on to, such as boulders and walls, provided there's a clear handhold.

Cloak of Heroes [100 NP] – The interesting thing about a cloak like this is how it conceals you from the Darkest Faerie's minions, and other such creatures created via dark magic. While natural

creatures corrupted by dark magic can still see you, those *created* by those means would need to be right in your face to notice you're there at all, and even then they'd have to spend a bit sniffing you out. This can be highly useful, in the right circumstances.

Section 5: Companions & Followers

It is dangerous to go about alone, especially in a time like this. Here, you will find a few options to find allies in your doings here in Neopia.

You're Here Too? [50 NP/200 NP] – Oh, look at that! Your old friends have followed you. For **50 NP**, you can import one of your existing Companions, giving them **800 NP** to spend on their Species, any Species Modifiers they might take, Origin, Perks, and Items. For **200 NP** you may instead import up to eight, working under the same rules.

On A White Horse [100 NP, discount Apprentice] – Somehow or another, this Neopet came see your protection as his top priority. Perhaps you're royalty of a sort, and he's a bodyguard? Perhaps you two are old friends? Perhaps you saved his life one day, and he's been repaying that debt since. Whatever the case, unlike most Neopians, he's not much for standing on two legs and he doesn't talk all that much. He *can*, he just often *doesn't*. Likewise, whether a Uni, a Peophin, an Eyrie, an Ixi, a Kau, or a Tonu, he's strong enough to carry you on his back and not disinclined to do so. He knows that **"knights follow a code, a code of chivalry,"** and you might tell him **"I'm sure you'll make a fine knight someday."** What's more, you've never seen a fall faze him, as if he always **Stuck The Landing** somehow.

Bright Pupil [100 NP, discount Sage] – This young Aisha seems a bit lost. While her red fur and blonde hair wouldn't be too out of place in the Lands featured in this tale, her blue-and-white hoodie and skirt mark her as a native of the more modern Neopia Central. Still, she's an excellent pupil, and already knows a little bit of magic. Mostly minor blasts of elemental force from her wand. She knows that **"the road to Meridell is a long one, and it's not safe."** She also learns from you as if you were a **Wise Old King**, who might say **"Maybe I'll teach you some more complicated spells,"** even if you *feel* what you do more than *know* it. With time and practice, she might even become so powerful as to be worthy of a title like **The Protector**, or even be hailed as alike to a **Legend of Altador**. Of course, you could lead her down a darker path instead, and watch her prove just as adept there before you can ask **"Shouldn't skeletons be dead?"** or say **"This land is mine!"** Whatever you teach, she'll learn with flying colors.

Words of Wisdom [100 NP, discount Ruler] – Every ruler needs an advisor, a chancellor, a vizier – a second opinion on matters of state, even for the wisest. This old Neopet, whose species really is up to you, is an excellent fit for the job. He's got his ear to the ground, as if he'd found **"A messenger from Illusen!"**, and will update you on any matters of state or magic he hears that you haven't. He's also well-versed in magic himself, knowing some **Minor Mysticism** and recalling when **"She turned him into a Doglefox! For an entire month!"** He knows that **"Your uncle and I have never seen such clouds as those that gather over Meridell,"** and with all of that knowledge at his disposal, he's able to consistently raise points you might not have considered.

Dirty Hands [100 NP, discount Villain] – This shadowy figure has got it all. As far as what kind of Neopet they are, that's really up to your observation. Their skills are unquestionable, given they're as **Swift as a Meerca**, have a way of saying **"Ah, a new customer!"** that gets the gist across right away, and even leave their foes asking **"Shouldn't skeletons be dead?"** One or two impromptu games have also revealed them as a **Table Tennis Terror**. As for their personality? They've got a tendency to solve problems at the lowest level possible, a no-nonsense attitude to carrying out missions, and a loyalty to you that would see them die in your arms no matter how poorly they know you'd treat them if they failed you. Ah, but they *might* fail you – and yet, you can use that, too. You see, certain kinds of

people bring out a playful streak in them. **“You’re feisty. I like that in a target,”** they might say to these people. Should you catch your new minion playing with their food, you’ll know that person is someone you might call a real Protagonist. What you do from there is up to you, but forewarned is forearmed.

Faerie Friend [100 NP] – Like many Neopians have done, and will do, you rescued a Faerie trapped in a bottle some time ago. In most cases, the grateful Faerie bestows a blessing and leaves, but this case has proven somewhat different. Your new compatriot is a **Faerie**, with all the beauty, agelessness, and elemental power that implies, but in terms of power she’s rather average. With that said, she’s clearly **Fair as a Faerie**. Depending on her element, her exact relationship with you may differ – a Dark Faerie might be trying to pretend she doesn’t really care about you despite being grateful enough for your aid to follow you around, while a Light Faerie might try to make herself the angel on your shoulder, ensuring you continue to walk the right path.

Section 6: Drawbacks, Toggles, and Ending Choice

If your base budget wasn't enough, you can tack on a few extra challenges here for some extra Neopoints. Up to **800 additional NP**, to be specific. Do be careful not to bite off more than you can chew.

Just Here For The Game [+0 NP] – So be it. Should you choose this option, you may leave this world the moment the Darkest Faerie plot is resolved, one way or the other. Whether that means the Darkest Faerie is defeated or achieves her goals with your aid is, well, up to you.

Who Am I Again? [+0 NP] – Well, this is interesting. With the right Species and a build approximately matching their capabilities, it seems you can slot yourself into the role of one of the personages pivotal to this story. An Apprentice Lupe could take the place of Tor, for instance, with the right Perks and Items. This will lock you into the plot, and rather than a history matching your Origin but otherwise up to you (or indeed no history at all, if you so chose), you'll also have the memories and entanglements of whoever you've replaced. You'll *be* them, for better or worse. Any Drawbacks you take will be additional complications on top of whatever you'd face just by being who you are.

“My Whinnies! Mom's gonna kill you!” [+100 NP] – Unfortunately, you're a little bit clumsy. You can still comport yourself well in battle, but you do have a habit of knocking things over when you don't mean to, stepping on things that go *crunch* while trying to sneak around, and leaning on gates that just *happen* to be unlocked, letting out whatever creatures are penned within.

“I wasn't cut out to be a diplomat!” [+100 NP] – Nonetheless, you must do your best for your family and your kingdom. Though, perhaps it is not a diplomat you find yourself unsuited to being, but some other task involving your status. Perhaps you are no knight, but hail from a family of them. Perhaps you have no talent with Petpets but belong to a family of herders. Whatever the case, the disconnect between what your family wants for you and what you truly want to do will prove a source of frustration while you are here.

“What does that fern-covered forest Faerie want now?” [+100 NP] – Well, it's not necessarily her, but someone does want something from you. A lot of someones want a lot of somethings, really. You now find yourself subject to what you might describe as an endless series of “side quests” that no one else seems inclined to perform, even if they could. Townsfolk looking for missing Petpets, farmers needing something fetched from wherever in the woods they lost it, so on and so forth. While they won't be ungrateful, they won't reward you too much for such modest tasks. You could turn them down, but that just means none of these things will get done, and you wouldn't abandon these people in their hour of need, would you? Even if you're evil, you're not that petty, are you?

Get Back Here! [+100 NP] – Who keeps trying to steal your stuff? It seems you've a plague of pickpockets, because every month or so, someone's going to try to steal something important from right under your nose. Maybe it's the Meerca Brothers, maybe it's one of the many, *many* bandit groups in the Lost Desert (at least six operate in the vicinity of Sekhmet alone), maybe it's someone from the Thieves Guild (yes, there is one of those), but they'll be making a go at your home, your person, and anywhere else you might keep your belongings. You could fend them off, but at least once a year, one of them will manage to succeed. Getting whatever item they took back won't be too difficult, but depending on *what* they get from you, they may cause a few problems before you do. At least it'll never be anything the average Neopet could neither access nor carry.

Get Thee To The Neggery [+200 NP] – Perhaps you are interested in rare Neggs. Perhaps you are fond of Petpets. Perhaps there are certain coins or stamps that consume your mind. Whatever the case may be, you are possessed by a dire urge to *collect them all*. Whether it be trading cards or Motes, you'll find yourself distracted from more pressing objectives when presented the opportunity to *get that last thing you're looking for*. There's also the issue that, should anything you collect also be consumable, you'll find yourself loath to *use* it, whether it be a Mote that would let you defeat your foe much more easily or a Chokato that would save your life if eaten.

Bottling Things Up Isn't Healthy [+200 NP] – Especially when it's done this literally. If you are a Faerie, Balthazar was most likely behind this, but otherwise it could be anyone within reason. The simple fact is that you start your time here magically trapped in a bottle. You won't die from this, but not only will whoever frees you (which should happen in a couple of days) expect a favor for the trouble, but you'll actually feel inclined to grant one. Furthermore, expect this to happen all over again every couple of months or so. Not so much of a problem if you don't stay too long, but *bound* to get annoying over the course of a decade.

Grumpy Old King [+200 NP] – Or, whatever you are. Whatever else you are, you're also a selfish, irritable glutton. You prefer to occupy yourself with feasting above all else, lose your temper at small annoyances, and think of your own gain before anyone else's. This doesn't make you *evil*, necessarily, as King Skarl proves, but it *does* make you more prone to bad decisions and/or alienating your allies.

"I *really* hate him." [+200 NP] – And you will, too. Just as the Gelert Assassin will constantly taunt and frustrate Tor and Roberta during his contract on them, so too are you confronted with someone whose reason for being seems to be to *annoy* you. This is no mere prankster, either, as they've devoted their life to impeding your goals any way they can without actually standing still and fighting you. If you can somehow corner them, they'll prove to be a surprisingly challenging combatant. Not invincible, no, but certainly a challenge for you. Yet, you'll have to cut off their every avenue of escape or just get them angry enough at you to not teleport away after inconveniencing you and taunting you *yet again*. Otherwise, they'll slip your grasp *somehow*, living to make any major goals you set out to accomplish far longer and more complex than they need to be.

"Make *me* serve you food, huh?" [+300 NP] – Yes, she very well might. With all of the curses, mind control, magical plagues, and other problems going around these days, it would be a very good idea to have some kind of inherent protection from these sorts of things. Unfortunately, you do not. If you did before, they don't seem to be working anymore. The Darkest Faerie's dark clouds, Illusen turning you into a Doglefox for an entire month, either will find itself as effective on you as they would be on anyone else. You'll also find that, should you acquire items within Neopia itself that would protect you, they don't seem to want to stay with you. Thieves will pick them over more technically valuable items, monsters might rip them off of you, and of course whoever is trying to curse or control you will figure out that they should take that necklace off you first. Keeping command of yourself isn't an insurmountable task here, but it will take doing. Be vigilant.

"You're feisty. I like that in a target." [+300 NP] – You have a distinct problem with *playing with your food*. Something about you drives you to drag out any effort you undertake against your enemies. Maybe you're a sadist and you want to watch them squirm before you destroy them. Maybe you're too merciful and you keep giving them chances for redemption. Maybe you just want to fight them at their strongest, so you let them train themselves. Whatever the case, you *will* take far longer

than you should to strike down those who are against you, and it will most likely cost you or your allies a great deal.

“Kill him, but bring me whatever’s left of his body when you’re done.” [+300 NP] – This place can already be surprisingly dark for a world full of funny talking animals and what have you. Werelupes gladly hunting and eating other Neopets, Ixi Raiders burning towns to the ground, the Darkest Faerie personally torturing her prisoners, and so on. Now, though? Now *your enemies aren’t playing around*. Should you stand on the side of justice, you shouldn’t expect any assassins sent after you to try pit traps or to stand around taunting you. They’ll just go for the throat. Likewise, if you side with darkness, expect the likes of Skarl, Hagan, and Fyora to send their forces against you *immediately*, or to deal with you *themselves* if you prove too dangerous otherwise. Don’t expect to get much sleep.

“This place is so light and pleasant. We’ll soon fix that, won’t we?” [+300 NP] – In fact, she already has. You’ve arrived in a different world, one where the Darkest Faerie has already won this bout. The other Faeries are either dead, or converted into perverse parodies of themselves under her control. You’d best hope she decided to do the former with Fyora. Meridell has had Faerieland dropped right on top of it, Brightvale is entirely under her mind control, and she rules Altador with an iron fist. Now she will march on the rest of Neopia. Countless plans will be devised to stop her, somehow or other, but without you, none will succeed. It’s do or die now.

Whether you stayed a whole decade or just long enough to deal with this Darkest Faerie business, your time here will come to an end at some point. With that, all of your Drawbacks will cease to affect you. From here, the choice is yours:

Quit – Going home, then? We all grow homesick from time to time. If you choose this, your adventures in the multiverse are over, but you’ll keep everything you’ve gained so far. Best of luck, both to you and the world of your birth.

Save Game – Staying here in Neopia, then? Sometimes you find home on the other end of leaving it. Your adventures in the multiverse are over, but your adventures in Neopia have just begun. You’ll keep everything you’ve gained so far. If you took **Who Am I Again?** and you choose this, that will stay active for good. No sense in complicating things with a second you showing up, right?

New Game – Places to go, people to see, then? Wanderlust is a compelling motive. You’ll take everything you have so far with you to the next world. Just where that is, I can’t say. Hopefully you’ll have as much fun there as we hope you had here.

Section 7: Notes

- If you were confused about the times and dates given, know that the Neopian Calendar is, out-of-universe, tied to the existence of the Neopets website itself. Year One is equivalent to 1999 CE (when it first became available to the public), and the years follow one-to-one from there. At the time of this writing, Neopia would thus be in Year Twenty-Seven (or Y27 for short). It is unclear if, in-universe, the reason for this epoch is known. The month equivalencies are as follows:
 - Sleeping → January
 - Awakening → February
 - Running → March
 - Eating → April
 - Hunting → May
 - Relaxing → June
 - Swimming → July
 - Hiding → August
 - Gathering → September
 - Collecting → October
 - Storing → November
 - Celebrating → December

These months are jam-packed with holidays in modern Neopia, though they don't come up much in the Darkest Faerie game (which, if it lines up with its release date, starts on the 15th of Storing, Y7 and ends some time before the 17th of Running, Y8, taking at absolute most five months to resolve and from context clues quite a bit less than that). In addition to festivals such as the Day of Giving (Christmas) and April Fools' Day (they didn't even change the name – shouldn't it be Eating Fools' Day, or just Fool's Day?), there are festival days for each species of Neopet (such as Lupe Day on the 2nd of Hunting), festivals for certain personages (such as Fyora Day on the 2nd of Relaxing – why yes, the Faerie Queen's birthday is a worldwide holiday), and festivals commemorating certain events (such as Discovery of Meridell Day on the 30th of Swimming). Other interesting holidays include Grey Day (14th of Eating), Gadgadsbogen (all of Running, over on Mystery Island), the Annual Usuki Doll Convention (20th of Hiding), the Faerie Festival (20th of Gathering), and Borovan Day (20th of Celebrating).
- No Scientologists were ~~harmed~~ involved in the making of this document, or the game it is based on. The whole issue is an overblown rumor involving an old financial backer whose attempts to influence the game were rejected from the outset.
- The semi-permeable time bubble that Meridell, Brightvale, and the Darigan Citadel sit in is the result of an incident involving two time-travelling Neopets, a magical orb that brings prosperity, three mysterious corrupting spirits, two wars, and lots and lots of magic. The point is that modern Neopians can visit these kingdoms as they were roughly 300 years ago, rather than the ruins that would otherwise stand where they both were. We don't see this happen during the game, but its events are canon to the wider universe.
- While no Neopian lands outside of Meridell, Brightvale, Faerieland, and Altador are seen in the Darkest Faerie game, the game is canon to the overall Neopets plotline, and leads directly into the Altador Plot. It naturally follows that the other Lands, such as Tyrannia, Terror Mountain, Roo Island, Neopia Central, the Lost Desert, Kreludor, and even yet-undiscovered lands like Shenkuu and Moltara are varying degrees of accessible, should you leave the regions affected by the plot.

- There are a number of other events that will take place during your default stay here, should your actions not derail things too badly. These include, but are not limited to:
 - In Storing of Y7, Prince Jazan of the Lost Desert city-state of Qasala will defeat his undead father and break the ancient curse afflicting his homeland.
 - In Running of Y8, or immediately after the defeat of the Darkest Faerie (whichever comes first), the ancient city of Altador will be freed from its thousand-year slumber.
 - In Running of Y8, at roughly this same time, an adorable Petpet of indeterminate species named Fluffy will chase a thief into a portal to reclaim the Wand of Wishing. While there, he will explore the alternate world of Petaria, where Petpets speak, and have many adventures.
 - In Hiding of Y8, a mysterious ship called the Cyodrake's Gaze will dock at Krawk Island, missing one of the members of its crew. This will eventually lead to modern Neopia's rediscovery of the land of Shenkuu, by the 8th of Gathering.
 - Collecting of Y8 will see a woeful tale unfold, wherein the Haunted Woods town of Neovia will play center stage. The origins of the Swamp Witch, Sophie, will become clear, and though the curse on the town will be lifted, the true culprit will escape.
 - In Hunting of Y9, Professor Hugo Fairweather, his assistant Werther, his daughter Lilian, and an adventurer by the name of Roxton A. Colchester III will set off on an expedition to the Lost Island. There, they will find horribly aggressive giant Petpetpets, only barely managing to escape with proof of the island's existence at all.
 - In Sleeping of Y10, Dr. Frank Sloth will make his triumphant return, turning the Grundo factions of Kreludor against one another to once again facilitate his diabolical designs. Though the spaceborne resistance against him will fight back, they will not have the direct aid of the Space Faerie this time.
 - In Gathering of Y10, the Petpet Protection League will open up a Petpet Park, after dealing with some obstructions created by a disgruntled former agent involving several active portals to Petaria.
 - In Storing of Y10, a fairly nondescript adventurer will arrive in Shenkuu and become embroiled in a plot involving Rock Beasts that fall from the sky and force Shenkuu's populace to evacuate, as well as attacking several other Lands. The climactic showdown will take place on Mystery Island, at the peak of Techo Mountain.
 - In Sleeping of Y11, a sorceress named Quizara will curse the Faeries of Faerieland with her Question Curse, only for a young, nondescript hero to free the elemental Faeries and duel her within Fyora's throne room.
 - In Collecting of Y11, Roxton and a small group of fellow adventurers will follow leads given to them in Shenkuu and uncover several ancient secrets. Through Altador, Faerieland, Terror Mountain, and a deserted chain of islands near Altador, they will venture. By the 25th of Storing, they will have re-established contact with the volcanic, steam-powered city of Moltara.
 - In Gathering of Y12, the Faeries of Faerieland will gather for the annual Faerie Festival. However, the celebrations will be cut short by a terrible event – every Faerie on Neopia will turn to stone. By the end of it all (on or before the 26th of Sleeping, Y13), Faerieland itself will fall from the sky, and the warlock Hybrid Nox will be well and truly dead. Neopia will likewise see the Shadow Wraiths for the first time in centuries during this tragedy. Also, assuming the Darkest Faerie has been turned to stone again before this, her statue will vanish during the crash.
 - In Swimming of Y13, a massive tentacled beast will pull Krawk Island apart, leading heroes from across Neopia to help pull the pirate haven back together. If all goes well, they will, and the island itself will be under new management.

- In Awakening of Y15, a mysterious obelisk will rise in the wilds of Tyrannia, and six factions will go to war over it. The mysterious Order of the Red Ersim, the charismatic Sway, the militant Brute Squad, the underhanded Thieves' Guild, the scholarly Seekers, and the undead Awakened will all clash in the Tyrannian badlands, in a conflict none of them will ever truly win.
 - In Gathering of Y15, the Spooky Shindig Society will set up and host a contest in the village of Neovia. Specifically, a Spooky Food Eating Contest. The attempts of two monster hunters to sabotage the contest will result in several shenanigans, and the rediscovery of ancient Vaults created by a family of dark magicians long before the founding of Neovia.
 - In Running of Y16, a mysterious message will go out across Neopia, leading to a secret laboratory in Moltara, a portal to a starship called the *Coincidence*, and the repair of the Confusionator, a device invented by the eccentric Lutari Dr. Landelbrot to induce Random Events across Neopia.
 - In Hiding of Y16, Princess Amira of Sakhmet will invite King Hagan of Brightvale, King Skarl of Meridell, King Altador of Altador, the Emperor of Shenkuu (who will send his daughter Princess Lunara in his stead), and King Jazan of Qasala (who will send his wife Queen Nabile in his stead) to a diplomatic summit. During the first night of the summit, something will be stolen from every single royal present, and further investigation will reveal that nearly every gang of cutpurses and pickpockets the Lost Desert has to offer was behind at least one of the thefts.
- The **Bright Pupil** is based on Sally, a scrapped character from the development cycle of Neopets: the Darkest Faerie back when it was intended for the Playstation 1. At baseline, she has an equivalent to the perk **“The road to Meridell is a long one, and it’s not safe.”** Her learning speed is also enhanced as if she were living under the effects of **Wise Old King** and **“Maybe I’ll teach you some more complicated spells,”** even if you do not have those perks. As for her mentioned eventual achievements, consider them branching development paths. You could keep her learning normal magic and see her become almost a second coming of Jerdana, gaining equivalents to **The Protector** and **Legend of Altador**. On the other hand, if you’re a **Villain** yourself or just think dark magic is cool, and lead her down that path, you’ll find her taking to it just as well and gaining equivalents to **“Shouldn’t skeletons be dead?”** and **“This land is mine!”** instead.
 - **On A White Horse** is based on Solarin, **Dirty Hands** obviously takes after the (otherwise unnamed) Gelert Assassin, and **Words of Wisdom** is honestly a more generic royal chancellor, with some inspiration from what little we see of Seradar.
 - You could conscript the Neopets in the **Conquered Kingdom** into your armies, and you’ve broken them enough by default that they won’t rebel, but the intent is also that their previous ruler, heroes, and armies fell in battle against you, a battle that also cost them any major fortresses or wizard’s towers they had. Granted, reanimating those remains might be an option if you’re some kind of necromancer, but if you’re looking for anyone particularly *useful* in there, you’ll have to train some yourself. The ones they already had tried to stop you, and based on you not being *dead*, you know how *that* went.

- **“We can free the land!”** really *will* let you alleviate a state’s problems by bumping off the worst of its leaders, but it’ll be slower and less dramatic than Tor and Roberta banishing the dark clouds by killing monsters. You’re still doing something *close* to what this perk is meant for, but it’s not *quite* the same.