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The Elder Scrolls®

— ONLINE —





HELLO TEAM ESO

Here we go!

It may not come as a shock, but we are super excited to jump back in. We have so many ideas and recognize the fun we can have with these characters and the world of ESO. In hopes of keeping this phase as streamlined as possible, we've narrowed our approach to two core scripts based on early conversations and your initial direction.

The focus overall is mood, exploration, and the big reveal; the question is, of course, how we get there. Each script is based on the austere plot of our heroes getting to the Ayleid ruin and discovering the hermit/Ithelia within. How they arrive at the ruins impacts how they explore and for how long, as well as what they might find at its center. We also have two versions of how we build up the suspense of the hermit and Ithelia. What's her motivation for the escape and her role in it? We've featured variations of this within each script, but as we know, this will be finessed in both the boarding phase and editorially.

Of course, these first drafts are a jumping-off point for further collaboration and, hopefully, at the very least, some early narrative structure that can guide our way.

With time of the essence, let's get cracking!

Sincerely,

Rob



SCRIPT CONSIDERATIONS

Before we dive into the full scripts, let's consider their narrative approach to have a quick reference point of what makes each story unique while addressing the overall brief.

Script 1: Ithelia Awakens

Our first take on the narrative gives us time to be with our characters as we introduce them, one by one until we have the full iconic squad. This approach lets our heroes connect with the fans while drawing them into our story naturally. By tracking Torvesard through the Valenwood, we also ground the film with a familiar villain but also give ourselves time to showcase the beauty of the elven forest.

As The High Elf tracks Torvesard to the Ayleid Ruins (or does he lead her there by purpose?), we carefully and abstractly tease Ithelia as a hermit in her ethereal prison as she realizes who she is, grows in power, and slowly shatters her confines. This builds suspense around her and thus makes the full reveal that much bigger. In addition, it also adds drama to the chase, are they trying to rescue her? Stop her?

Tracking Torvesard into the ruins and becoming trapped, The Nord enters and heroically frees The High Elf. As the two explore the enchanted and treacherous structure, they meet The Breton, who pulls them to safety as Torvesard traps them in the great chamber.

Finally, our heroes encounter the mysterious hermit woman. Now free from her ethereal confinement, The Daedric Prince of Chaos is unleashed on the realm.

This version plays up the mystery surrounding Ithelia but also leaves enough space for a big reveal and transformation.



SCRIPT CONSIDERATIONS cont.

Script 2: The Heart of the Ruin

In this version, we again feature our three classic heroes but give them a big opening moment that ties to the expansive nature of The Valenwood. Here we key in on a ritual Torvesard performs to help break Ithelia free-- a ritual that is both torturously scaring for Torvesard and visually stunning. We also use that visual, a flowing line of energy, to connect to the 'strands of fate' concept. Ithelia weaves the worlds together as she escapes her enclosure, and Torvesard manipulates the strands. Consequently, the actual structure of the ruin shifts as the two worlds become more aligned and Ithelia's power grows, which ultimately leads to her escape.

This script also highlights the beauty of The Valenwood but uses the presence of the strange and powerful jungle vines to spur our heroes' motivation instead of tracking a villain. The act of Torvesard freeing her might not align entirely with the ESO lore, but we love the visual and antagonistic narrative device this provides. And maybe he is not the trigger, but she is the one bringing him to the event or channeling energy through him from the energy well? Here, her reveal is not as drawn out as we don't witness her transform, but we do showcase an epic reveal nonetheless.





SCRIPT 1: ITHELIA AWAKENS



EXT. VALENWOOD - DAWN

We open slowly, drifting across a beautifully colored forest floor. The autumn leaves create a warm array of deep red hues, brilliant oranges, and stunning yellows. The orchestral bed of music takes an ominous turn as we come over a decaying log and upon veiny, invasive jungle-like vines inching forward ever so slightly.

The putrid vines stand out starkly against the serenity of the elven forest as an even more sinister force enters into frame—a hulking, bloodied, and battle-worn figure scales over the downed tree.

Injured, we stay close to the runner, tracking them from behind, frantically moving through the colorful forest. Horse hooves pound the earth in the distance, echoing through the canopy. The brute's mace, stained with bits of bone and flesh, lashes the branches violently, clearing an obvious path. He stumbles, bracing his bloodied body against a massive Elven redwood, smearing a trail of crimson across the bark.











INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER - ABSTRACT

A woman's pained hands reach out in desperation over a cold, smooth metallic surface etched with ancient cryptic symbols-- small jolts of energy dance over the surface. Wider, we find the figure of a cloaked woman standing through an ethereal haze.

Tight on her face-- a plain-looking hermit woman, eyes closed as the hum of energy grows-- her face twitches. Her emotions pulse and shift from distant deep dreams to anger-- agony and fear to calculated vengeance. She snaps her eyes wide open, and we see she's no ordinary woman.

Her eyes fill with power, and the space behind her shatters for the slightest beat. The faint outline of a prismatic shape crackles the air, dimensional cracks of something similar to fractured glass suspended in the ether, starting to fracture the veil between realms.







EXT. VALENWOOD - DAWN

A hand traces along the smear of blood, and we follow it to reveal The High Elf standing heroically in the ancient majestic forest. She looks out across the lush foliage, her horse tied off nearby; the fierce warrior and hunter zeros in her gaze on the snaking jungle vines and a trail of broken twigs and branches through the woods.

Her eyes narrow with grit as she grabs the reins. We boom up through the forest to reveal an epic wide of the Valenwood as the sun crests distant mountains.

Fade to Black:

Fade up Logos Against Black:

BETHESDA SOFTWORKS

ZENIMAX ONLINE STUDIOS

Cut to:







EXT. VALENWOOD / AYLEID RUINS - DAY

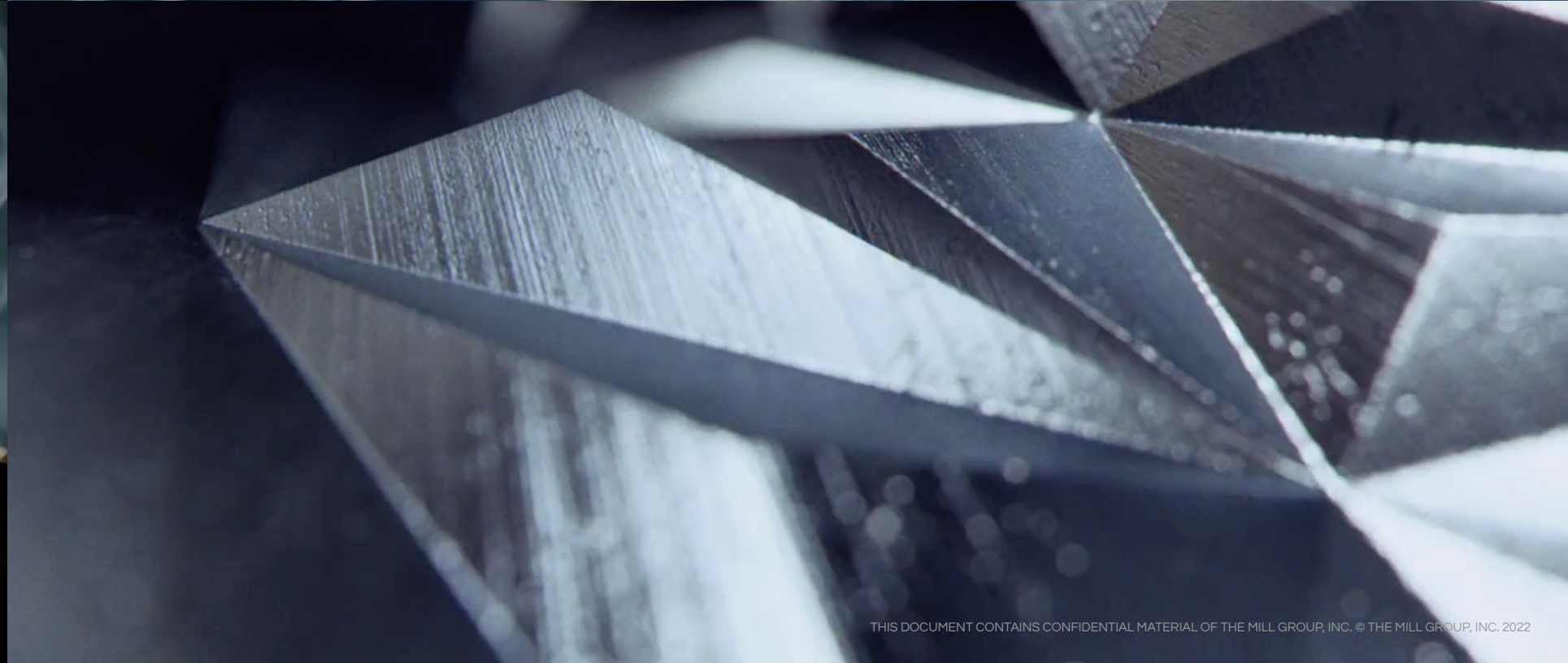
The bloodied runner moves with haste as we stay tight with him; the forest surrounding him is replaced with smooth rock and creeping vines. He stops, scowling over his shoulder; we reveal Torvesard. Pausing for just a beat, he reveals the slightest grin just as he disappears into a dark stone passageway.

INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER - ABSTRACT

The robed woman moves slowly, then fast, her eyes searching for something, a memory. Smoke and haze drift through the ghostly space, a realm that feels infinite yet confined, with jagged rocks seemingly dotting the horizon. From her slow gait, her look of searching fills with resolve. Lifting her arms, another burst of energy radiates through the environment, revealing more geodesic contours around her.

Her strength builds. More cracks appear.







EXT. VALENWOOD / AYLEID RUINS - DAY

The High Elf stands at the edge of a massive Wood Elf ruin. The scale is daunting—the ancient engineering marvel dwarfs our powerful, larger-than-life hero.

The air is heavy with a sense of mystery and dread. Sinewy vines slowly twist and crawl; their power appears to emanate from four devastating monoliths, a foreboding temple high above her position.

At a stone entrance, The High Elf senses Torvesard is close; finding another faint smear of blood on the wall, she's led into the darkness.







INT. AYLEID RUINS - PIT OF AGONY

Our hero moves quickly but warily through the ruins as a slight tremor hits. Drops of Torvesard's blood on the path show her the way, deeper into the maze. Parts of the ancient pantheon crumble as the tremors continue, revealing thick vines as if the very structure is alive. As The High Elf examines the vines, slowly pulverizing the stone, a sudden rockslide sends her sliding down into a deep pit.

She lands on a floor made entirely of vines, squirming slowly under her. Seemingly trapping and pulling her down, more as a matter of consequence and not necessarily intentionally, The High Elf tries to regain her footing, but it's of no use.

The smooth stone surface offers no hold, and she begins frantically stabbing at the walls with her sword, trying to stop her descent to a suffocating death. Another tremor pulses through the ruins, and then another; this one feels closer.

The wall next to her bursts open.

Light bleeds through the dust. And from the illuminated haze, The Nord steps in. Grabbing The High Elf by the hand and hacking away the vines with the other, he pulls his friend to safety, and the two share a profound moment.







INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER - ABSTRACT

Realizing more of her power, multiple cracks spiderweb across the air. Visually showcasing her confinement but also her salvation as the other world peaks through the mirrored cracks in her reality, only driving her more to break free.

Shockwaves of power emanate from her— through her, splintering the air and shattering the world around her, turning it into an endless sea of reflections within reflections.

INT. AYLEID RUINS - CHAMBER PATH

The Nord and The High Elf move cautiously through a dimly lit hallway. As they look upon ancient symbols and pictographs of Elven folklore etched into the walls, something moves in the corridor ahead of them, a shadow and a shifting shaft of torchlight— axe and sword drawn, they round the corner, raising their weapons for a fight. From the shadows, The Breton steps out, and the three embrace for a beat.

The moment is cut short as the glowing, beady eyes of Torvesard step out of the darkness, watching them from above. Snarling maliciously, he swings his mace. But instead of attacking, he pulverizes a chain locked against the stone.

In an instant, The Breton pulls our heroes back, narrowly dodging a massive rock door, sealing them into a great chamber.











INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER

Turning to face the vast atrium and bracing for a fight or a way out, our three heroes emerge from the doorway. We snap zoom out wide to show the enormity of the space-- a meager cloaked female figure stands at the center.

Letting their guard down slightly, The Nord steps forward; his heavy boot crushes a single crystal shard on the ground.

The cloaked woman snaps her head around, and the space ignites with energy and color. A shockwave of reflections, light, energy, and crystal shards erupts. Our heroes look on with dread, and Torvesard watches in awe from a distance as Ithelia, The Daedric Prince of Chaos, rises with a wave of crystals from the floor, unfurling her wings.

There, levitating menacingly above her inferiors, she breathes in her newfound form and freedom as she rises, the crystals swirling, magnetizing around her, lifting her higher and solidifying onto her wings.

With a sudden burst of energy, she breaks free from the crystals setting off a chaotic maelstrom of crumbling stones and rushing vines. The walls crack, and rocks crumble, threatening to bury them within the collapsing ruin. The Breton spots an exit, and with a mix of fear, urgency, and confusion, our heroes escape the collapsing ruins just in time.









EXT. AYLEID RUINS - DUSK

The Nord, The Breton, and The High Elf race away from the ruins in an expansive wide as it completely collapses, swallowed by the earth—devoured by the vines. Rising from the dust and rubble, we tilt up with Ithelia as she soars into the sky.

They share a solemn glance in silence, knowing the journey will be fraught with new unthinkable challenges ahead to restore balance to their shattered realm.

As we continue to move high above the collapsed ruin, we see the city of Skingrad in the distance; and Ithelia is heading straight for it.







BUMPER - EXT. SKINGRAD

Cutting low to the cobblestone street of Skingrad, the sound of a busy market fills the space.

As we get closer to the sound, a bright iridescent caustic reflection dances over the space as the silhouette of the cloaked hermit figure materializes into the frame.

A crack in the cobblestone opens, and a small jungle vine inches its way out as the hermit wanders into the scene.

Smash Cut to:

End Card





SCRIPT 2: STRANDS OF FATE





EXT. VALENWOOD - DAWN

We open on a low-angle of a beautifully colored forest floor. The autumn leaves create an array of deep red hues, brilliant oranges, and stunning yellows. A small but prominent jungle vine disrupts the lush bed of colorful leaves.

Slowly, spiraling forward, the vine climbs over the hull of a dead tree just as horse hooves spring over it.

Wider now, three riders race toward the spreading jungle flora– the colorful beauty of the elven forest draped with an invasive presence.

Behind them, our camera swoops around, revealing three classic heroes, The Nord, The Breton, and The High Elf. They ride with sheer determination until we...

...Cut above the forest's canopy to an epic wide of the landscape. Our gliding camera, high above the treetops, tilts down to find our three riders expertly navigating the trail. The surrounding forest fades as the trail's winding visage ignites with an amber glow.

Transition to Black:

Fade up Logos against Black as a visual strand of fate spirals through.

BETHESDA SOFTWAREWORKS

ZENIMAX ONLINE STUDIOS

Cut to:







INT. ITHELIA'S PRISON - ABSTRACT

In an ultra-tight shot, our camera glides over a rippling strand of energy - faint whispering echoes. A small, glowing hairline wisp appears as it gets pulled through the air; our camera dances with it through the ethereal space: light and magic.

INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER / ENERGY WELL

We match cut the lightness behind the wisp as the background turns dark and the small line sears into unknown flesh. The sizzle of skin resonates as the glowing line solidifies. Wider, we reveal that we are behind Torvesard.

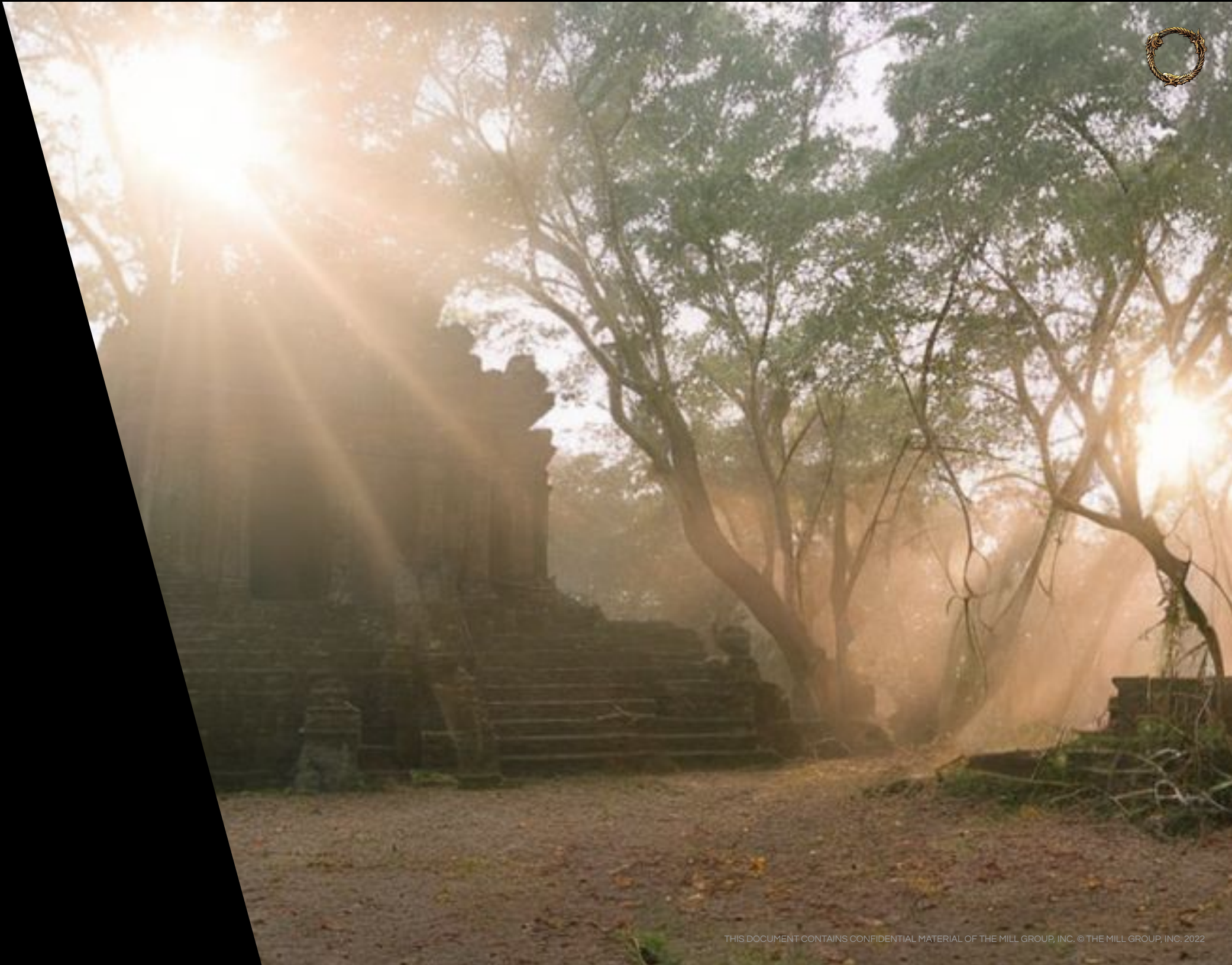
He moves his arms in a grand gesture— a ritualistic ceremony, channeling energy from the ground; his scowl sharpens as a surge of power ignites the circular spiral tattoo pattern in his flesh.





EXT. VALENWOOD / AYLEID RUINS - DAWN

At the edge of the forest, with their horses tied off in the clearing, our heroes gaze upon a massive, overgrown ruin—they stand in eerie silence, surrounded by the lush red forest while thick, sinewy vines slowly twist and crawl, their relentless growth seemingly defying gravity. The air is heavy with a sense of mystery and dread. High above their position, the thickest vines appear to emanate from four devastating monoliths, a foreboding temple; The Nord, The Breton, and The High Elf proceed with caution.







INT. ITHELIA'S PRISON - ABSTRACT

A female hand glides a lucet fork through an ethereal space creating a visual strand of fate. Trails of the glowing magic linger in the air, twisting into a helical design.

INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER / ENERGY WELL

An identical design on Torvesard's chest ignites with power as he spins his mace, peering desperately into the cluster of swirling magic—the energy from the ground channels into his body. Gritting through the pain, he channels the power, and the glowing pattern lifts off his skin, widening out and becoming a three-dimensional magical holographic outline in front of him, flowing and pulsating with energy.







INT. AYLEID RUINS

Our heroes cautiously move through the ruins as the distant sound of Torvesard's tortured wailing grows, echoing across the stone. The vines creep and crackle under their feet as if the very structure of the ruin is alive.

Parts of the ancient pantheon crumble away, revealing thick tentacles of vines pulverizing the stone, creating perilous rockslides and steep, vertigo-inducing chasms.

INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER / ENERGY WELL

Wider, we see the thick roots of vines all around Torvesard. He pulsates with magical energy pulled from the well, his intensity and pain growing as he draws power from it. The lucid strands' holographic outline becomes more explicit, both a pattern and a blueprint of the ruins' maze.

Through the haze of the magic, a cloaked figure flickers in and out, manipulating the glowing, ethereal lines bleeding through into the chamber. The map of the ruins shifts.







INT. AYLEID RUINS

The ground gives way beneath them. The High Elf and the Breton fall with a wave of rubble to almost certain death, but The Nord quickly anchors himself to the wall, snatching their outstretched hands.

The team shares a brief moment; this could have been the end; The Nord pulls them up, onto the pathway.

INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER / ENERGY WELL

Torvesard drops to his knees amongst the swirling vines and magic energy. Searing, glowing lines smolder all over his trembling mass, channeling the immense power to the magical lines before him as he manipulates the energy one last time. He feels he is close to his goal.

As it locks into place, Torvesard stretches his arms out wide, screaming to the gods as we cut to an epic top shot of the entire ruin. We see his tattoo's design matches the ruin's holographic design exactly. Energy flows between them and the structures-- powerful strands flowing uncontrollably from the vines and rocks into the center of the ritual.

The Nord, The High Elf, and The Breton emerge from a path on the opposite side of the chamber. They see Torvesard amongst the vines and helical mirrored pattern suspended in the air, a portal- to the other side, a shadowy cloaked figure lingering just beyond their realm.







INT. FORGOTTEN CHAMBER / ENERGY WELL - Cont.

With the fate of the world at stake, The Nord bounds over the vines, racing to stop the dremora's ritual. Raising his battle axe and about to decapitate the weakened Torvesard, a shockwave of reflections, light, energy, and crystal shards erupts. The entire space fills with reflections within reflections as the shadowy cloaked figure materializes into the realm shattering the cracked reflection into shards.

As the dust settles and the ringing in their ears gives way to reality, our heroes look on with dread, and Torvesard watches in awe as Ithelia, The Daedric Prince of Chaos, rises with a wave of crystals from the floor, unfurling her wings.

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Smash Cut to:

End Card





THANK YOU

As we all know, while carefully developed, these scripts are in the very early stages and truly are a catalyst for more granular thought and revisions. At this stage, we should keep considering options; creative questions. Questions like: how do our heroes get to the ruins? Is it the vines? Do they track Torvesard through the woods? Do we open with them already there? What is Torvesard doing in the ruins, a ritual of setting her free or searching for the energy well? Or is it a trap and certain death for our heroes as Torvesard lures them into an encounter with a transforming daedric prince? Did he lead our heroes there intentionally? Some of those questions and answers will dictate how Ithelia arrives. Does she achieve freedom and transformation by herself, through a villain's magic? And, consequently, when she does arrive, what type of conflict ensues?

These are all fascinating elements to play with, and we're thrilled to collaborate on finding those answers with you again.

Sincerely,

Rob

