

ZEPHYRA: CHILDREN OF THE YARATHI

Narrative Design Sample / Opening Cinematic Script

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LOGLINE: When her younger brother is abducted during a sacred festival, young adventurer Zephyra gives chase—only to uncover a sinister plot to kidnap Yarathi children across the land.

CONTEXT: Zephyra is a narrative-driven fantasy adventure that explores cultural identity, familial bonds, and the fear of not living up to tradition. The story follows Zephyra, an impulsive but big-hearted Yarathi girl, whose younger brother Typhos is taken during their community's most sacred celebration. In this excerpt, we witness the calm before the storm — a moment of warmth, light, and uncertainty that is quickly shattered by the first signs of invasion.

This scene was written as a narrative design sample to demonstrate cinematic pacing, worldbuilding through implication, character-driven dialogue, and story-rich environmental cues. It was written with narrative-first studios like **Finji** in mind, where emotional authenticity and expressive visuals take center stage.

EXT. SURANAI, ROOFTOPS – DUSK

The sky burns orange and purple with the setting sun. The city bustles with the sounds of the Yarathi cultural festival, an annual celebration of their diaspora. ZEPHYRA, an anthropomorphic female sugar-glider climbs onto the roof to join TYPHOS, her younger brother.

ZEPHYRA

Hey, champ.

TYPHOS

Hey, sis.

Zephyra let the wind thread through her fur as she crouched beside her brother. The whole city buzzed below them, glowing in gold and plum.

ZEPHYRA

(grinning)

Not bad. Almost makes up for all those stairs.

TYPHOS

Yeah! You can see everything from up here. Everyone looks like tiny seeds.

ZEPHYRA

Speaking of seeds—dinner's ready.

(Zephyra slings off a leaf-woven backpack and sets it beside him. He rummages eagerly.)

TYPHOS

Ooh! Are these watermelon?

(Zephyra snatches the wrong item from his hands—plastic beads.)

The sun kisses the horizon. Cheers echo from below. The crowds parading through the city far below begin to cheer, then—silence.

TYPHOS

(Energized)

Whoa! What's happening Zeze?

Zephyra takes a seat beside her brother and pats his head. After a beat, MAYOR RAHMU comes on the microphone in the town square down below.

MAYOR RAHMU

Thank you all for coming out tonight! This is a night of celebration! One where we embrace our pride and heritage as Yarathi people, as Children of the Wind! May we soar to new heights in the year to come!

Typhos pokes at the tiles of the roof.

ZEPHYRA

What's wrong, Typhos?

TYPHOS

(Grumbling)

I still can't glide.

Zephyra winced. She knew what it felt like — to get pushed off the edge and feel her body just... refuse. She grabbed his face and turned it towards hers.

ZEPHYRA

(Whispering)

Hey. You think I was born gliding? I nearly broke my tail the first time I tried.

Typhos' eyes start to water.

TYPHOS

Really? You? But you're amazing! I'll never be like you, Zeze.

ZEPHYRA

That doesn't mean anything. You're still just as Yarathi as everyone else!

Zephyra gives him a big hug.

ZEPHYRA

Don't worry. I'll teach you everything I know.

Fireworks start shooting up and bursting in the sky.

ZEPHYRA

Wow! I've never seen so many colors!

Typhos starts laughing.

TYPHOS

Did you see that, Zeze? That one looked like a fish!

ZEPHYRA

Are you sure? I think it looks more like a bird.

TYPHOS

No way! That was a total glug-glug.

Another firework bursts right in front of them and a smoke cloud forms. Their vision is obscured. A low tremor buzzed through the roof tiles.

Zephyra's ears flicked.

ZEPHYRA

Wait, something's not right. Those aren't fireworks.

The smoke cloud shifts, its inner light dimming. A shape inside it doesn't fall. A moment too late, Zephyra reaches for her brother.

ZEPHYRA

Typhos! Get down!

A rush of air. A flicker in the smoke. Talons, sharp enough to cut wood. The smoke cloud disperses as a crow-like figure dressed in robes swoops in and grabs Typhos. Before she realizes what's happening, the crow circles back and begins flying away from the city, Typhos wrapped tightly in its feet.

TYPHOS

Help! Zephyra!

Zephyra takes a moment to look around. Dozens of crow-men swoop down across the city, picking people up and carrying them off towards the jungle.

ZEPHYRA

Typhos! Hold on, buddy, I'm coming!

Without hesitation, Zephyra dives into action, riding the wind to chase after her brother.

Ext. SURANAI – NIGHT

Zephyra, still not an expert in gliding herself, falters and descends to the city below. Determined, she races across the rooftops and leaps between them, gaining just enough speed to glide from one to the other. She bounces off of an awning and resumes her pursuit.

ZEPHYRA

I won't let you take him!

A loud voice booms through the chaos as crow-men fly every which way.

MYSTERIOUS VOICE

Bring me the Children of Yarathi. The time is almost upon us.

As the sun fades fully behind the mountains and darkness covers the land, the voice begins chanting. With every word, magic sigils appear in the sky, hurling bolts of energy every which way.

ZEPHYRA

This isn't good. I can't let them take you, Ty.

Zephyra does her best to dodge the wild projectiles, but it slows her down. Just when she loses sight of the crow carrying Typhos, a magic bolt strikes her at an off angle. A snap of heat against her ribs.

ZEPHYRA

Ung. Ty...phos.

A flash of blinding light—then nothing. She blacks out, falling through the forest-canopy far below. The last firework fizzles out in the sky behind her as she's swallowed by the trees.