

# The Fertile Valley

## 1 Overview

The Fertile Valley rises like an emerald ribbon in the center of the icy continent of Ezrute—measuring about a hundred miles from east to west and just over two hundred from north to south. In its southern part, it borders the Skorra glacier, which exhales powerful, cutting southerly winds that could split granite; but as they descend from the mountains and touch the valley, they encounter hot vapors that rise from geothermal fissures and dissipate into humid mist. Combined with powerful ancient magics, this collision creates an almost tropical microclimate: steaming lakes and geysers sublimate, spewing columns of boiling gas in varying mineral hues.

On milder nights, the sky can be seen cut through by curtains of mana—translucent, iridescent veils, reminiscent of oil on water, that form a kind of dome over the entire region. When these colorful sheets brush against the tops of the tallest trees, entire forests light up in an ephemeral glow; seeds awaken in minutes, flowers with colors of all hues bloom and fruits ripen. In this place that oscillates between the material plane and a higher stratum, and on the edges of this anomaly, forests of indescribable beauty and unique exoticism coexist with various creatures that live in every corner of the region.

The original inhabitants are called Supernal Horticulturists. Tall, with pale, semi-transparent skin, interspersed with green filaments that pulse slowly and rhythmically. Every day, they wield hoes of meteoric bronze and sing songs that accelerate photosynthesis. Beneath their magical greenhouses, vineyards and orchards yield two, sometimes three harvests a year. But abundance comes at a cost: addictions to narcotic powder extracted from lilies cause atrophying wear and tear on the mind and body when this source of supreme power and communion is overused. For every abundant harvest, there is always a demigod staggering in the wings, his skin cracked like dry bark.

Between the hungry continent and the verdant abundance move the Bearers of the Valley, also called the Mutes of Mist. Outside the valley, they never arrive in ordinary wagons: they appear with the mists of dawn, driving sleds of woven roots that glide over the snow without leaving a furrow. Cloaks of fur dyed in mineral waters hide their faces; hanging from their chests, talismans of golden moss are the symbol of the accepted commitment. Rumor has it that each bearer carries on his chest a fragment of heated geode - whoever approaches hears the stony tick-tock of a mineral heart.

In their exchanges with the various peoples outside the valley, they ignore the gold. They ask for rotten manuscripts, meteorite fragments, personal diaries, or silver chalices capable of holding back the first autumn mist. On nights of the full moon, they accept lives like “seeds of promise”: broken blacksmiths, exhausted courtesans, scholars without

peace. These pilgrims follow the forest of Ukra'Dor—the only access to the valley—and never again touch the city walls.

They say that with each passing generation, their sleighs arrive less frequently. The northern Mordac, the plains of Skolt and Brukon, Dunor, and Skorra itself begin to speculate on the chill of scarcity. While the geysers still roar and curtains of mana paint the sky, the valley remains an oasis of benevolence suspended between worlds. But in the frozen halls of the nobility of Ezrute the same question echoes: when the last sleigh ride ends at dawn, what frozen ghost will feed the continent with such delicacies?

## **2 History & Origin**

The story of the colonization of the Fertile Valley by refugees from the south is a fragment of memory buried under layers of silence, ruins and legends. Before the Jade Comet tore through Ezrut's skin, there was a kingdom to the south—an empire that no current language can name with precision. They call it, in the prayers of the ancient Horticulturists, Is-Nara, the Kingdom of the Last Summer. A place where the sun lasted longer than it should, where vineyards climbed hills and rivers sang songs of fertility. Here, magic and agriculture had fused to such an extent that crops grew to the rhythm of music and harvests appeared with an enchanted rain.

No one knows exactly how, but Is-Nara fell.

Legends speak of an ancient sin—a ritual that attempted to imprison a deity of abundance; another legend, of a broken pact with the natural cycles themselves. Whatever happened, it was catastrophic. The soil dried up overnight and the flowers turned to ash at the touch of the merciless wind. The Mana of the earth became poison, and time, a dull knife. The ice tried to claim for itself what had once been its own and there were no walls or landmarks left, only harsh memories in the bones of the survivors.

These survivors were the last priests of this agricultural cycle — but also the forgotten, heretics and bastards of a fallen nobility. Trying to recover the glory of a past that would never return, they remained in their ruined kingdom for many, many years in the deepest misery, fighting against their own curse. But by an inexplicable call, a kind of shared dream: everyone saw a green light cutting through the sky in the middle of winter and hitting the center of the continent — the tremors were devastating and finished destroying what little was left of this decadent kingdom. Messianism took hold of them and so they left the south—crossing glaciers and mountains like shadows of the past—with their miserable bodies and a feverish certainty in search of the sign of a promised land.

When they reached the impact region, they found the earth alive, pulsating, as if it were waiting for them. The crater still lay smoking, but branches with translucent leaves

sprouted around it, and golden insects flew aimlessly, like divine sparks. The air was dense and the soil extremely fertile.

It was there that they made their Second Pact. The first had been broken with arrogance; this one would be sealed with humility and benevolent, selfless work. The ancient inhabitants of Is-Nara then invoked the entities that inhabited the depths of the earth—forgotten gods who fed on cycles, not prayers—and offered them what they still had: work, memory, and the promise to share.

The gods accepted. But the price was the Harvest Vow: all the abundance generated in the Vale was to be shared with the people who still struggled to colonize Ezrute. The newcomers thus became Supernal Horticulturists, not by choice, but by spiritual imposition. Over time, they gradually accepted elves who had lost their way in the densest forests of the mind, homeless dwarves, meditative orcs who fled the endless tribal wars, and humans without a direction in their lives – these came to be the Holders of the Vale.

And over the centuries this melting pot of races and memories formed the new people who now inhabit the Fertile Vale. Not as a kingdom, but as an organism, a rhizomatic culture that spreads through living roots, connected not by government but by communion.

But the pact is aging. The Vale feels the weight of the centuries. The Holders do not return as often to the cities, and the gods, some say, have returned to whisper in the soil. What has been given may one day be called for—and no one knows exactly what is coming.

### **3 Climate & Ecosystem**

Farming in the Fertile Valley is an ancient art, an intuitive science rooted in the cycles of magic and botany. Here, the act of cultivating transcends the simple management of the land: it is a dialogue between the farmer and the spirit of the soil, between sap and mana communicating in a unique way. Plant transpiration, for example, is regulated by reverse moisture enchantments, where leaves move in rhythmic patterns to keep moisture suspended in the air—creating nourishing mists that float over the fields like veils.

The greenhouses, called Kaherien, are organic structures fashioned from enchanted vines and voice-responsive mosses. They open or retract according to the lunar seasons and the verbal commands of those who cultivate them. Each greenhouse has a heat core powered by silica-manna stones, which exude steady heat, allowing the cultivation of citrus fruits, deep roots and various tubers, even under the threat of the unforgiving climate that surrounds this place.

The Horticulturists have developed techniques of photosynthetic pulsation: when they sing in unison, their tones release powerful energies that promote immediate sprouting. Some ancient trees, called Matrices, are so integrated into the ecosystem that they regulate the

microclimate around them — cooling regions that receive excessive heat or condensing vapor into light rain on thirsty beds.

Pollinating insects, many of which are semi-translucent, have been partially domesticated. There are butterflies whose dance regulates fruit set, and beehives that store honey with traces of arcane energy — used both as a sweetener and as an alchemical catalyst. There are even oracular fungi, grown on shady stumps, that whisper climate changes.

Finally, the soil is turned not with a plow, but with rituals of natural magnetic flows that invert the layers of humus. Nothing is wasted: every fallen leaf is returned to the cycle, every drop of sap is collected, and every plant death is ritualized.

## **4 Social Structure and Customs**

### **4.1 The Supernal Horticulturists—Guardians of Abundance**

The Supernal Horticulturists are no longer fully mortal, nor entirely vegetal. Over generations of immersion in the flows of raw mana that spring from the Star Fragment, their forms have merged with the soil, and their souls have taken root in subtle planes. Today, they walk like sentient trees: their bodies are composed of flexible bark and living veins of amber; their joints sprout luminescent moss; their heads, in place of hair, shelter thin leaves that change color with the cycle of mana and nests of small birds and rodents.

Their veins carry sap mixed with blood, and their beating hearts resonate in time with the rhythms of the earth. When they communicate with each other, it is usually through floral pheromones, root vibrations, or chants that make the leaves around them tremble. Some remain partially rooted, their roots reaching deep underground, becoming literally one with the fields they tend. Each planting is a song, each pruning a pact. They use tendril-like fingers to shape the soil, breathe heat to activate subterranean gems, and trace living runes with branches that sprout from their own arms. Their eyes are as opaque as seeds—and in them burn the reflection of memories that belong not to just one life, but to entire cycles of harvests.

### **4.2 Valebearers—Conductors of the Share**

Valleybearers are chosen not by strength, but by inner resonance. Many of them were once marginalized—incurably wounded, orphaned by the ice, bodies scarred by disease or war. The Vale hears them. And so they join the caravan of Valebearers and are taken to the edge of Ukra'Dor for an initiatory crossing. There, amid illusions, beasts and time distortions, they face the living forest. Only those the forest accepts survive.

Those who endure are led to the Sap Core, where they are united with fragments of the primordial meteor. The ritual fuses crystal and flesh, impregnating them with luminescent circuits under their skin, prismatic eyes and a visceral connection with the magical pulse of

the soil. Their forms adapt: weapons grow from their arms, roots shield their hearts, and their presence repels corrupted entities.

As Diplomats, they represent the Conclave of the Vale before the various peoples and distribute agricultural gifts according to the cycles of the original pact. As Protectors, they patrol sacred routes, facing aberrations and beasts hungry for the power of the Vale. They are wanderers, spiritually linked to the Horticulturists, and return between missions to reenergize their crystalline cores in the hot springs. Seen as bridges and martyrs, they live between two worlds: one that flourishes and the other that withers.

### **4.3 Social Mutualism — The Balance between Static and Movement**

The coexistence between Horticulturists and Carriers is sustained by an ethic of radical mutualism, a concept that unites spiritual reciprocity and respect. Neither caste survives without the other: The Horticulturists provide sustenance, but cannot leave the Vale without falling ill; the Carriers depend on the magical sap and ritual rest to maintain their stable fusion. Daily life is marked by symbolic actions: when receiving food, the Bearers leave offerings of carved stone in the fields; upon their return, they share rare items, stories, and insights gathered from across the borders, teaching the Horticulturists about the ways of the outside world. Exchange parties, such as the Fruorrem, celebrate this symbiosis with baths in nourishing mist and chanting in chorus, connecting the two classes into a single social organism.

This structure is fluid and respectful, but not without tension. Some younger Bearers question the balance, wanting to abandon the rites or break the pact. Yet even the rebellious Jade Shadow recognize the delicate fabric of dependency and legacy that binds the two groups together.

## **5 Politics and Factions**

### **5.1 The Conclave of Roots — Core of Internal Politics**

The Fertile Vale is governed by an organic and symbiotic political system, centered on the Conclave of Roots, a living entity composed of three Elder Supernal Horticulturalists deeply rooted — literally and spiritually — in the magical soil of the Vale. They embody the living memory of the Vale and are treated as its thinking extension.

The Conclave does not issue direct orders. It transmits intentions through vibrations in the deep roots and symbolic signals at harvest times, which the other Horticulturalists interpret. Decisions are slow but lasting.

### **5.2 The Wandering Council — Voice of the Bearers**

Although the Bearers of the Vale are not part of the Conclave, their importance has led to the formation of a Wandering Council, a shifting circle of veteran Bearers who meet

between missions to relay their observations and warnings to the Conclave. This informal body serves as a bridge between the movement and the grassroots, giving voice to the realities of the outside world without directly interfering in the rituals of the Horticulturists.

However, tension is growing. Younger members—especially those from troubled backgrounds—are beginning to question their place in the structure. They feel like instruments of an order that they venerate but do not fully understand. Voices are emerging calling for reforms: more participation, more autonomy, less ritual.

### **5.3 Sparks of Dissent — The Jade Shadow**

The Jade Shadow is the embryo of a rupture. Formed by young Carriers, agricultural apprentices, and even stragglers of the Horticulturalists, this clandestine faction believes that the Seed Pact is broken—that the Vale is sacrificing its own flourishing in the name of a self-imposed mission to sustain the “embryonic peoples” outside its borders.

The Jade Shadow proposes a new cycle: breaking with the division and closing the roots. They advocate the unrestricted use of mana for internal reconstruction and total autonomy of the Carriers, even outside the ritual cycle of the hot springs. Some experiment with unstable fusions with corrupted crystals. Others study forbidden spells mined beyond the borders of Ukra Dor.

The conflict is still maturing, but it will be inevitable: in veiled chants and furtive encounters on the trails of mist, the Vale trembles between tradition and transformation.

### **5.4 The Dryads — Guardians of the Lower Rifts**

The origins of the Dryads in the Vale are shrouded in mystery. Some say they appeared before the Horticulturists themselves, awakened by the first vapors of the Star Fragment. Others claim they migrated from distant places, guided by underground heat currents. The fact is that they did not ask for shelter — they simply appeared.

Since then, they have inhabited the hot and humid subsoil of the Lower Rifts, where their almost ethereal female forms and resin eyes appear and disappear in the mist. They do not speak, do not sleep, and do not eat. With their slow, spiraling movements, they regulate the flow of mana and calm thermal surges that threaten the underground irrigation tunnels and the open-air crevices.

They do not participate in the politics of the Vale, but are revered by Horticulturists and Carriers. The former leave amber offerings; the latter seek their blessing before dangerous crossings. Both castes recognize them as primordial beings, perhaps even prior to the Valley itself.

### **5.5 Foreign Policy — The Domain of Sharing**

The Vale’s foreign policy is shaped by the sacred mission of the Bearers: to bring the gifts of the soil to distant peoples. These contacts are regulated by living pacts, carved into the

very bodies of the Bearers, who become walking treaties—diplomats, senders, and protectors of a mission that transcends commerce or power.

The Vale maintains no armed borders, nor does it exact tribute. But its gift is conditional: it demands spiritual reciprocity. Some peoples send artifacts, chants, or seasonal offerings. Others merely silence. And, over time, profiteers emerge, feigning friendship in order to obtain the magical fruits.

Though the Horticulturists do not leave the Vale, their roots sense the imbalances beyond. When the cycles of return are broken, or when a Bearer fails to return, the Conclave adjusts the flows of sharing. This is perceived by outsiders as a natural sanction—but some outsiders are beginning to see the Vale as a center of power disguised as benevolence.

With the Jade Shadow working behind the scenes and a world starving for mana, the Vale's foreign policy is approaching a silent storm.

## **6 Religion & Magic**

### **6.1 Magic as the Pulse of the Earth**

In the Fertile Valley, magic is not learned, but lived. It springs from the soil, permeates the air, infiltrates the flesh and circulates with the sap. Its origin is the Star Fragment, a nucleus of raw mana that fell from the heavens in ancient times and is now hidden in the heart of the Valley. This fragment emanates a constant flow of vital energy that shapes biology, alters consciousness and anchors the rites that govern this society.

The Supernal Horticulturists channel it through ritual chants that awaken dormant seeds, symbols traced with living roots that reprogram the earth, thermal breathing that activates subterranean crystals, compounds of sap that heal, enchant or provoke visions.

The Bearers, on the other hand, manifest a crystalline magic, obtained by fusion with fragments of the meteor. This form is more aggressive and defensive: weapons sprout from the body, roots shield vital organs, and its naturally repellent presence to corrupted entities acts as a living barrier between the Vale and the outside world.

### **6.2 Religion as Cultivation of Harmony**

There are no named gods in the Valley. Religion here is pantheistic, ritualistic, and deeply integrated with the natural cycle. The Supernal Horticulturists themselves are seen as living priests who carry out the will of the land and are guarantors of the Seed Pact, the sacred code that demands balance between growth, sharing, and preservation.

Every planting is a liturgical act. Each agricultural cycle corresponds to a sacred act that aligns the will of the soil with that of the inhabitants. Rituals include:

- Sowing ceremonies in which chants unite with tools;

- Nourishing mist baths, which purify body and spirit;
- Seasonal festivals such as Fruorrem, in which Horticulturists and Carriers celebrate their symbiosis.

The Carriers, in turn, are seen as mystical pilgrims, agents of the spiritual expansion of the Valley. By distributing sacred food to the covenanted peoples, they spread the faith of collective growth, and are treated as silent missionaries.

### **6.3 Schism and Imbalance**

The religion, though harmonious on the surface, is already showing cracks. The Jade Shadow faction questions the centrality of the Seed Pact and rejects the idea that the flourishing of others must come before one's own. They consider excessive sharing an immobilizing dogma, an obstacle to the full power of the Vale.

Some of their members experiment with dissident rituals: fusions with corrupted crystals, lunar cults, and rites of uprooting, in which they sever their symbolic ties to natural cycles. They do not reject mana—but they want to free it from ancient rites, severing the link between magic and ritual submission.

## **7 Points of Interest**

**1 Ukra Dor** – The vast forest north of the valley serves as a living barrier against the rest of Ezrute. Its paths move. Impassable without guidance, it bends space and time, distorts memories, and devours intentions.

**2 Sap Core** - The place where the new Valebearers are united with fragments of the primordial meteor.

**3 Cliff of the Last Chant** - A ceremonial place where the important dead are buried. The dark rocks emit deep sounds in the wind. The farewell chants echo for days.

**4 Hearth of Sap** - The epicentre of the Star Fragment impact. A large crater of liquid jade surrounded by luminescent trees and living vapors. Its edges emit whispers to those who dream nearby.

**5 Vaern Terraces** - Agricultural terraces on the eastern slopes, built around veins of natural heat. Regions where the lunar cycles determine which seeds will germinate. At night, the fields glow with biophotonic light.

**6 Ice Library of Kaen** - A tower of enchanted ice, carved from a glacier that pulses with ancient memories. Its towers house living crystals and organic manuscripts that whisper visions upon touch. The structure responds to readers' presence with chants and illusions. Fragments of a Star Grimoire given to the Horticulturists by the Gods rest in a secret



chamber, and each consultation demands offerings of memory—as if the castle were demanding wisdom in exchange for one’s soul.

**7 Murlai Mirror** - A lake of still waters that reflects not only the moon, but the arcane flows of the Vale. During certain cycles, its surface reveals crop patterns, weather omens, or hidden paths. Horticulturists use it as an agricultural oracle.

**8 Kzun Tubes** - A vast complex of endless geothermal tunnels and caverns located to the west of the Vale. They not only contain steam and magical condensate from deep within, but also serve as thermal lungs for the Vale's subterranean ecosystem. Filled with crystals, the walls of the Tubes reverberate with subtle heat and a greenish glow, exuding a warm mist that carries traces of dense mana.

From these main chambers, a complex network of natural tunnels and channels, hand-dug by generations of Holders, extends in multiple directions. These tunnels are called Kzun Veins, and they function as thermal conduits and hidden irrigation channels. The moist heat that courses through them keeps the Vale's soil fertile even in the most arid or shaded regions, slowly melting the surface permafrost and feeding the reservoirs of enchanted water beneath the Horticulturists' fields.

Revered as a gift from the living underworld, the Kzun Vats are also a place of deep worship, where offerings are cast into the sacred vapor to maintain the thermal balance of the Vale. It is said that if the vapors cease, the fields will fall asleep and the pact will be broken.

Lower Rifts - Cracks in the ground where mana collects chaotically. The earth here burns like a fever, corrupting flora and mind. Dryads keep constant vigil to prevent outbreaks of imbalance.

## 8 Story Ideas

**The Withering** - A silent magical decay spreading through the roots of a remote valley region. Crops are sickening, the soil “forgets” how to nourish itself, and even ritualistic chants fail. The origin is uncertain—it could be a natural imbalance, sabotage, or the end of the divine pact.

**The Jade Shadow** - Young dissidents who wish to break the Seed Agreement. Although seen as heretics, some act as liberators, others as eco-terrorists, infiltrating the nurseries and sabotaging them to “speed up renewal.”

**Invaders** - Frozen tribes and beasts from the Great Kristol Glacier have begun arriving from the south, drawn by the valley’s warm energy. Their incursions are increasingly bold, and seem guided by something—or someone—who thirsts for the Star Fragment.

**Echo of the Broken Runes** - The geode runes that maintain the magical boundaries of the valley have begun to emit erratic signals. Some have faded, others have shattered. The microclimate is in danger of collapsing.

**Hunt for the Lost Shard** - A fragment of the original comet has been stolen from the Kzun Vaults. The trail leads beyond the forest of Ukra'Dor.

**The Seed of the End** - A spontaneously sprouted plant is absorbing mana at an alarming rate. Some believe it is the embodiment of the next era. Others believe it must be destroyed.

**The Last Holder** - A Holder of the Vale has been captured by a foreign nation. His recovery is urgent, as he holds vivid memories of the Conclave of Roots.

**The Climate Reversal** - Predictions indicate that the thermal flow may reverse. If this occurs, the valley will freeze over within a few cycles. Someone is accelerating the process.

## 9 Dangers and Monsters

**1. Mudwraith** - A living pool of corrupted mana that forms in regions where the ground has been defiled by the Jade Shadow. It creeps silently like a slime, and its slime tentacles wrap around the legs of its victims before they realize it. Those who are swallowed do not die immediately: the creature slowly digests their life essence, feeding on dreams and memories.

**2. Barkwhisper** - These creatures perfectly mimic ancient trees, with fibrous bark that hides mouths full of thorns and eyes buried under moss. At night, they whisper forgotten names and promises, luring the unwary closer. When they attack, their branches strike the bones, and their moans are echoes of ancient corrupted prayers.

**3. Fog of Echoes** - This spectral fog prowls the shores of Ukra'Dor and manifests itself after tragic events. It takes the form of loved ones or venerated figures, guiding victims to temporal rifts or plant traps. Those who follow it rarely return, and if they do, they carry with them inner voices that never stop. Some claim that the mist is the living memory of souls that the Vale has rejected.

**4. Manaworm** - A colossus of opaque scales, moving slowly beneath the ground. When it emerges, it devastates entire fields, sucking the vital mana like a magical leech. It is sensitive to the vibration of the Horticulturists' chants, which it obsessively pursues.

**5. Broken Forge-Seraph** - An ancient automaton built to protect the energy chambers of Kzun Tubes. Now broken and maddened, it wanders the region releasing blasts of heat and chanting words in a dead language. Its presence attracts lightning. Many say that its heart is a fragment of the Star Fragment, pulsing like a war drum. **6. Madfruit Tree** - A beautiful and colorful tree with branches that sway even when there is no wind. Its fruits change color every hour, giving off a sweet and hypnotic scent. Those who eat them are consumed

by bouts of euphoria. Some villages report mass outbreaks after finding one of these solitary trees growing on the edge of their fields.

**7. Cindersnout** - A canine beast enveloped in icy blue flames that do not burn flesh, but consume magical energy. They attack in packs, silent as mist, and leave behind only dried corpses of mana. They are hunted with extreme care. It is said that they were born from the remains of a sacrificed Horticulturist.

**8. Hatchsplitter** - A grotesque insect with powerful jaws and a carapace covered in plant spines. It buries eggs in fresh corpses, which hatch and release larvae. These larvae create new "nest bodies", becoming mobile and unpredictable threats. When Hatchsplitters descend upon a caravan, silence is almost always the only thing left.

**9. Amberback Guardian** - A natural guardian formed from the fusion of amber crystal and living trunks, usually immobile until it senses mana distortions. Its arms are spears made of hardened resin, and its skin glows with arcane inscriptions. It protects sacred trails and resting places of the Horticulturists, recognizing true Bearers by resonance. It is ruthless with intruders.

**10. Vineclaws** - Living vines with rudimentary consciousness, moving nimbly and slithering through low branches. They have claws that inject a paralyzing toxin, which they use to slowly envelop their prey and drain them until only their skin remains. Created from ancient, forgotten spells, they are considered a mistake that the forest refuses to right.

**11. Runebeast** - A Valebearer corrupted by unstable mana or desecrated pacts. Their bodies still bear the mark of rituals, but now emit destructive waves of raw magic, and their crystallized limbs have become chaotic weapons. They wander aimlessly, attacking any living being, as if subconsciously seeking to erase their own existence from the natural cycle.

**12. Sporemorph** - An intelligent fungus that infects living beings and transforms them into normal-looking hosts. Those infected retain memories, but serve the will of the collective mycelium. Only Horticulturalists sense their presence by the changes in the scent of their souls. At night, Sporemorphs gather in fungal circles to sing in dead languages, nourishing their mother colony.

**13. Obsidian Stag** - A majestic stag with black crystal antlers, capable of reflecting magic and cutting through armor. Rarely seen, it is believed to be an omen—its appearance can herald great change or tragedy. Those who have attempted to hunt it have often disappeared.

**14. Rootborn Nomad** - Humanoid plant creatures born of broken rituals or unbalanced pacts. Wandering without home or purpose, they attack anything that exudes magical stability. They are often mistaken for Stargazers, which has led to tragedy. Many live tormented by their lack of identity, emitting groans that resonate like pleas for release.

**15. Profane Carving** - Statues or carvings left by the Jade Shadow at the borders of the Vale. Those who pass by them feel compelled to kneel and make pacts. Even the strongest Stargazers must resist the urge to touch the runes. When activated, they release ancient specters that feed on hope and faith, leaving their victims emotionally sterile.