Myths and current state of the Order

The legend of the past

The ancestors of the Magic Faction were not a single unified empire but rather a collection of tribes bound together by their shared mastery of magic and their reverence for the forest. Each tribe had its own philosophies about the role of magic, its potential, and its limits. Among them, three figures stand out in the legends, remembered for their brilliance, their conflicts, and their ultimate roles in the fall of their civilization.

The first is **Shivani the Rootbinder**, a lynx who is said to have unlocked the secrets of the forest's life force. Shivani believed that magic was a gift meant to protect the natural order and saw herself as the guardian of balance. She developed techniques for weaving chakra energy directly into the living fabric of the forest, creating immense groves that thrived even in the harshest conditions. Her mastery of life magic was unparalleled, and many considered her the heart of the civilization. Yet her commitment to preservation made her wary of progress; she resisted the experiments of her peers, fearing that their pursuit of power would one day unravel the harmony she worked so tirelessly to maintain.

The second is **Xezal the Shaper**, a deer whose vision was as bold as it was controversial. Xezal believed magic was not merely a tool but the key to transcending the forest's natural boundaries. Her tribe constructed towering spires and enchanted mechanisms, harnessing the power of chakra to reshape the environment itself. Xezal saw the forest not as a fixed entity to be preserved but as clay to be molded. Her creations were awe-inspiring - floating bridges, glowing waterways, and structures that seemed to breathe with the energy of the earth. Yet her ambition brought her into direct conflict with Alvarya, who saw her works as reckless and hubristic. Their feud became a central rift among the tribes, one that would deepen over time.

The final figure is **Danyal the Veilkeeper**, a peafowl shrouded in mystery. Danyal´s role in the civilization was not one of creation but preservation. They were the keeper of the ancients' deepest secrets, safeguarding knowledge that even their peers feared to wield. It is said that Danyal possessed the ability to peer into the flows of magic itself, glimpsing the futures it could shape. They warned of a coming darkness, a moment when the tribes' unchecked experiments would tip the balance of the forest and unleash forces beyond their control. Danyal´s cryptic warnings were dismissed by many, but their visions lingered in the minds of those who trusted them. Some say

they created the first sanctuaries deep within the forest, hiding away fragments of magic too dangerous to use.

The fall of their civilization, according to legend, was not the result of one great calamity but the culmination of these internal conflicts. Shivani, desperate to halt what she saw as the growing corruption of magic, led her followers to dismantle Xezal´s creations, sparking a schism that fractured the tribes. Xezal, angered by what she perceived as an assault on progress, turned her focus to unlocking the power of an artefact. The artefact was meant to unite the tribes under a single, infinite source of magic. Yet when Xezal activated the artefact, its power surged uncontrollably, disrupting the delicate balance of the forest and driving its magic into chaos.

Danyal, witnessing the devastation, made the ultimate sacrifice. They shattered the prism into fragments, scattering its pieces across the forest and binding its power to the land itself. After their sacrifice, the shattering of the prism did more than scatter its fragments - it altered the very essence of how magic could be perceived and understood. The ancient tribes, once united by their mastery of chakra and magic, found themselves inexplicably severed from the intuitive connection they had always known. Where once their minds and bodies had resonated with the forest’s energy, they now felt an emptiness, as though the language of magic itself had been rewritten into something indecipherable.

In the generations that followed, the loss of this connection to magic fundamentally changed the course of their civilization. Without the ability to harness chakra, the tribes turned to other means of survival, relying more on their physical skills, ingenuity, and cooperation with the forest’s natural rhythms. The few artefacts and tools of magic that remained slowly became enigmatic relics, their original purposes forgotten

Rise Through Rediscovery

For centuries, these legends were dismissed as mere folktales until a fateful discovery changed their course. A group of wandering scholars stumbled upon a ruin in the forest's heart. The animals of the Magic Faction were ordinary inhabitants of the forest, guided by legends of ancestors who communed with the spirit of the woods. Led by a visionary deer named **Levent**, they unearthed a crystalline piece of a shattered central prism that glowed faintly when touched. When **Levent** touched the crystal, he felt a surge of energy awaken within him - a connection to something far greater than himself. He felt in control of all his senses and a sudden yet unexplainable connection with his surroundings. His companions witnessed his newfound abilities: plants responded to his will, minor wounds healed in seconds, and an unexplainable warmth seemed to radiate from his presence.

Word of this discovery spread, and others joined **Levent** in his search for ruins and relics. Together, they began piecing together fragments of the past, uncovering instructions on harnessing "chakra" and crafting staffs. This rediscovery marked the beginning of the Magic Faction.

Formation of the Faction

The rediscovery of magic transformed the scattered communities into a unified group. Under **Levent**´s leadership with seven other comrades, the Magic Faction began to explore ruins, gather relics, and reconstruct the practices of their supposed ancestors. They built their sanctuary around the shard, naming it the *Hearttree Sanctuary*, and forged a community dedicated to rediscovering the magic of their ancestors. Thus, the Order of the Hearttree was born.

In the decades since its founding, the Hearttree Sanctuary became a flourishing city, a centre of learning and devotion. The Order of the Hearttree is governed by the **Circle of Mystics**, a council of seven representatives who embody the diverse perspectives of their society. Among these seven is the **Chronicler of the Veil**, a non-biased mediator tasked with maintaining balance within the council. While all roles within the Circle are democratically voted upon, leadership is rarely questioned due to the representatives' dedication to hard, peaceful work. Most representatives serve for life, reflecting the community's contentment with their leadership. However, the democratic structure ensures that any leader can be challenged if their decisions no longer align with the Order's values. The Circle is divided into three ideological sects:

- *Elderguardians*: two preservers who honour the shard as a sacred relic and believe it must remain untouched
- *Pathfinders*: two seekers who view the shard as a key to unlocking new magical potential and advocate for experimentation
- *Veilweavers*: two representatives of the general population, particularly non-magic users, ensuring the needs of all citizens are considered

They built rituals around the concept of "chakra" and developed disciplined methods to focus it through crafted staves, essential tools for wielding magic. **Levent**´s vision of their organisation was one of unity and humility. He preached that magic was a gift meant to serve the forest, not dominate it. Decades have passed since the shard’s discovery, and Levent is now a figure of legend, remembered as the first *Chronicler of the Veil*. His teachings and vision remain the foundation of the Order, which continues to thrive as a deeply spiritual society. Under numerous different leaderships, the Order of the Hearttree grew into a tightly-knit community, deeply spiritual and fiercely protective of the knowledge they uncovered. Moreover, the order´s dedication to their cause granted them some influence over the forest, as they guarded sacred sites and offered their healing magic to those in need.

Conflict and Isolation

As their influence grew, so did the challenges they faced. Other forest animals, especially from the kingdom, viewed with suspicion, accusing them of arrogance and secrecy. The artefacts they guard are seen as sources of immense power, and many want to claim them for their own purposes. The faction’s refusal to openly share their discoveries only deepened the divide, leading to skirmishes over control of sacred sites.

Internally, tensions also began to rise. Some members questioned the wisdom of uncovering lost knowledge, fearing that the civilization’s downfall was a direct result of its reliance on magic. Others see magic as a tool of power that could elevate the faction above all others. These ideological divides threatened to fracture the group, but the current leadership under Ghazal keeps them united - at least for now...

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