

## 2024 Season 3 Final Lore

As the chills of Frost recede, the realm once again fills with new sprouts of life. As the weather warms and the plants burst into colourful life, the re-awakened magical energies pulse through the earth once again, like a heartbeat beneath the soil. The world feels alive and the air shivers with magical potential, bringing warmth, freedom, and a feeling of growth. All can feel it, even as the heralds cry, "the Season of Growth is upon us!"

As Frost thaws, people all over the realm begin adventuring beyond their camps, outposts, and fortresses once again, finding the same structures have risen from the earth, emanating ancient power. These structures still possess strange markings and slots, but they appear to be wilder and more chaotic than previously seen.

Minor skirmishes between Factions have been fought during the transition between the Seasons of Frost and Growth; Monarchs have been killed, Checkpoints have been captured, and strongholds have been destroyed. Yet, these structures seem once again to be leading to another all-out conflict between the four Factions, something that hasn't been seen since the conflict in the Ironfrost Mountains during the Frost Season.

The Sprites have also re-awoken from their Frost hiding and hibernation. Their coats range in colour and pattern and already several types have been seen. It is still not yet understood what they are or where they hail from, but those who have claimed to have found one, report feeling different after the encounter, some for better and some for worse.

Since the magic re-awakened, there have also been sightings of people who emanate the same power as the obelisks. They tend to be secluded, seen briefly in forests and around the obelisks, seeming to always be looking for something and murmuring about dark days ahead. Most sightings have been around natural rings of magic, which came into life as the magic re-awakened, and overheard mutterings seem to place them as ritual circles. These powerful humans seem peaceful, although some argue they have seen conflict between them and warn people to stay away. Others claim to have helped these powerful beings and been rewarded for their service. It seems most folk will wish good luck to any person daring to interact with these beings, as such a gamble may reap rewards or leave a person cursed and full of regret.

However, this turn in Season has brought with it plentiful rumours of an even stranger being, one who lingers in the outskirts of the Fae forests, avoiding all people except those bearing a Sprite companion. This strange figure has been noted to be especially interested in the Sprites; those who have borne its presence say it's friendly but slightly unnerving, and bears a resemblance to some of the Fae residing in the southern forests. However, those who regularly interact with the Fae of the forest have heard only dire warnings about the being, though it is debated whether they should be believed.

Finally, as the Season of Growth comes into full bloom, the traditional game of cards is ready to commence, a reminder that in this time of magic, other strengths must not be forgotten. For

those unfamiliar with this tale, this game was invented by a wizard named Deckard in ages past. He became famous after building the bond and hypothesis that a strong body and mind is paramount to great growth, not only as a human, but especially for wizards, who tend to have an over-reliance on magic. In his memory, a deck of cards was imbued with magic to provide arcane points to those who hold the cards of highest value. It is commonly accepted that there are two ways to undertake this challenge: the honourable way, a gentleperson agreement to dual, and the more uncouth way, killing another player and taking their card by force. Both methods have proved successful in previous years, and it is simply up to the character of the participants as to how the game is played.