

Region Description – Fantasy Online RPG

Tightly nestled between mountainous ranges, the small, landlocked region of Emberlake has enjoyed a long tradition of peaceful detachment from the hustle and bustle of modern life. Surrounded by treacherous peaks shrouded in fog, its only viable connection to the outside world is the Capital Road, a trade route sneaking through a tight gap in the northeastern front of the cliffs. This trail, while essential, is by no means safe. Still, it stands as the only route in and out of Emberlake, one that is taught to the region's children to traverse only if absolutely necessary.

Perched along the edges of the volcanic lake at the heart of the region, the village of Dewille has evolved into the central market hub for the hamlets and farms dotting the tranquil landscape. Carefully managing the constant stream of escorted caravans flowing through the Capital Road, the communities of elves and humans who first settled here have long relished their slow approach to life. Rarely connecting with outsiders and only recently starting to mix between themselves, the elves and humans of the Emberlake have been growing ever so detached from the world outside their rocky shell.

Despite this voluntary withdrawal from society, the people of Emberlake still play an integral part in the ecosystem of the continent. The lush vegetation and blooming fertility of the region have historically been responsible for providing food for a great part of the needs of the mainland. The region's peculiar climate is fabled, alternating between sunny, bright days and much-needed rainy spells, without fail.

Inside the moss-covered brick houses along the cobbled streets and in the picturesque barns and sheds spotting the fields, secrets and knowledge about the lay of the land are passed on from generation to generation. The locals take pride in these skills, involving slow and deliberate hand-made care for the land. They long maintained that such an approach is simply not possible in a fast-paced, mechanised environment. It was this secret and well-guarded ancestral knowledge that

was widely believed to be the key to the sheer volume, size and quality of the food produced in the Emberlake. Until recently.

During an unheard-of period of two rainless months, the level of the water in the lake dipped to unprecedented lows. As the waters withdrew, remnants of something unknown emerged, gems shimmering through the bare earth. The same question is on everybody's mind, yet no lips dare to ask it: was the drought a natural occurrence or someone's design? For what was once a haven of peaceful beauty, now sits on the cusp of technological upheaval. Flocks of researchers and adventurers are flooding through the Capital Road from every corner of the continent, being drawn by the shimmer of possibility.

The quaint landscape, once quiet, is now rocked by melodies of progress. New camps and tunnels are being set up daily to research, investigate, and, more importantly, gather the crystals. Not much is known about these bright, purple gems, which seem to pulsate with vibrant, vital energy. Initial tests hint at the potential to harness this highly unstable energy to power machines as well as heal people. Some believe it to be a godsend, but a growing dissonance of voices is also raising awareness about the crystals' mysterious origin and side effects.

These concerns have not stopped the Prospectors. What started as a makeshift group of tents around the first tunnels dug on the southwestern shore of the lake, is rapidly burgeoning into a fully-fledged city. Soothill perfectly represents the growing rift between nature and technology that is fracturing not only the landscape but also the social fabric of the Emberlake. In fact, among their ranks, the Prospectors don't just count outsiders but also members of the region's newer generations of half-elves.

Harper Thorne, the half-elf leading the Prospectors, embodies the growing restlessness of the local youth, feeling constrained by the ways of their elders. After being exposed to diverse cultures and technologies from beyond the mountains, Thorne and those aligned with his cause advocate for openness and innovation. However, the glimmer of the crystals attracts more than just noble intentions. The more is learnt about

them, the more valuable the crystals become, with deeper and wider tunnels being dug. Unbeknown to most, unfathomable creatures slithering through the crystal-laden tunnels are now beginning to crawl to the surface, bound to the crystals' energy. Meanwhile, among the people, whispers are beginning to spread. Could the same pulsating energy seething in the soil also hold the secret to Emberlake's incredible fertility?