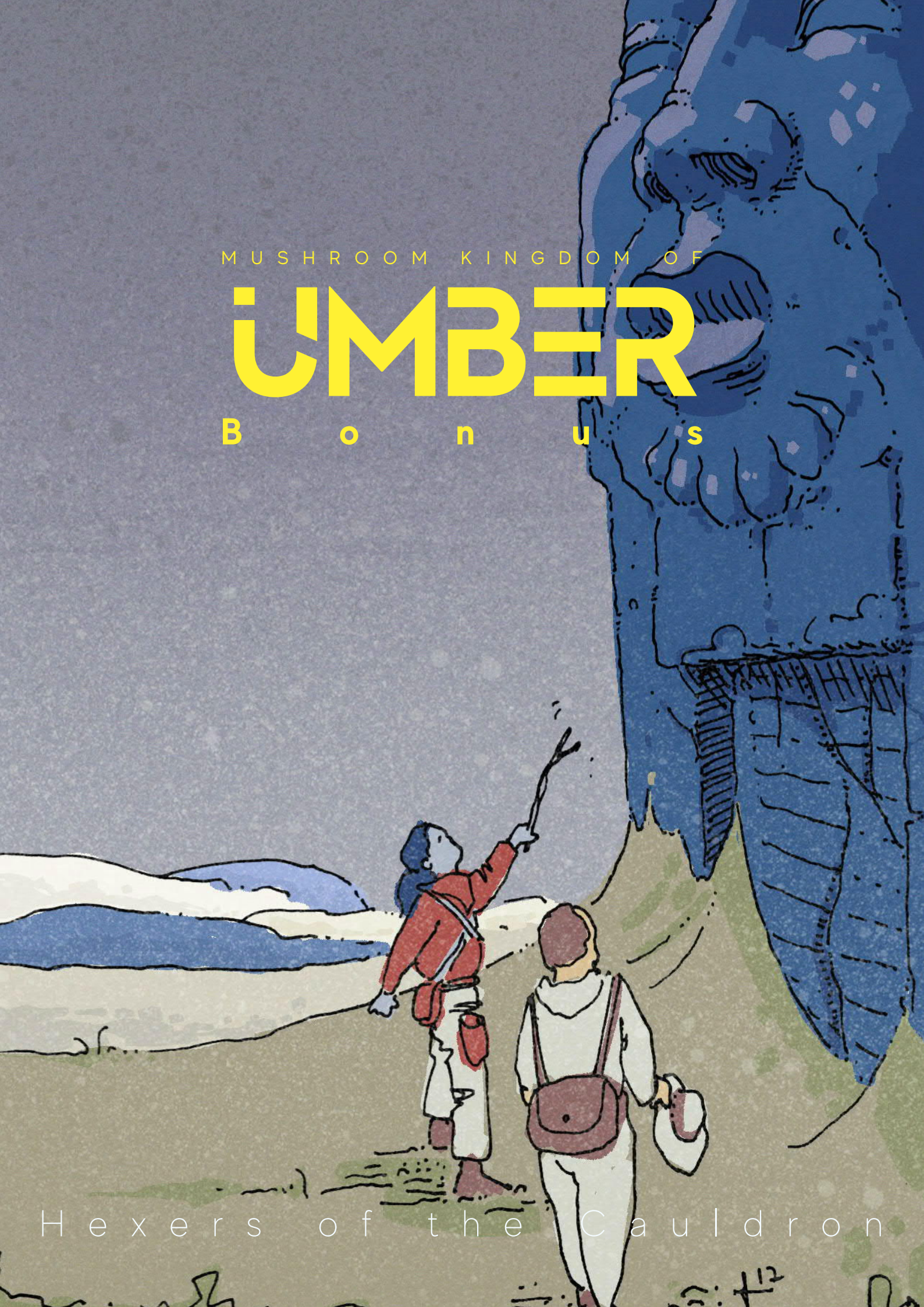


M U S H R O O M K I N G D O M O F

U M B E R

B o n u s

H e x e r s o f t h e C a u l d r o n



UMBER FORAGERS

A kingdom left to mushroom dreams.

Beyond the Way Stone the steppe continues, flat, tasteless, tone-deaf. The caravan trails have carved a route down to the bedrock and the long-dry gully buttresses of gently crumbling livingstone attest to the long-lost land of UMBER, once rich from local deposits of titanic biomatter which supported a thriving chitin-cap agro-industrial aristocracy.

“Brrr, this dull place, it eats at the soul,” said the Warlock.

“Agreed, nothing to loot,” replied the Hero.

Ultraviolet Grasslands, (Luka Rejec, 2019, p.49)

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Strange traders sometimes pass through UMBER, as though on a temporal loop.
2. Chitin cap is quite easily foraged in the region. The sheets and rods and fibres of chitin grow from the UMBER fungoid bio-mantics and are an important component of both buildings and autogolems.
3. Perfumists send harvesters to collect ancient spores from the flower fungi of UMBER. Some of the most mind-bending fragrances known to humanity can be found among the fallen laboratory autofarms.

DANGERS

1. Some spores are known to cause disease. Others cause strange mind-melting effects. Yet others are infectious, changing mind and body.
2. Chitinous automata or biomanced machines prowl some abandoned halls.
3. Husks of humans, gone to fungal seed, are weak and not very aggressive, but very infectious.
4. There are unconfirmed reports of predatory rat-kin packs.
5. Three war factories occupy a triangle of destruction. It is deadly.
6. Mercenary parfumiens have been known to come to blows over access to the finer flower fungus-choked great homes left by fall of the Slumbering Green.

WEATHER IN SHADES OF BROWN

The weather is unusually mild and calm for the steppes, and though the sun rises from the growing haze at only 10:30 it merely creates a pleasant feeling of decline and fall.

MISFORTUNE AND REST

Quiet desolation brings ennui and emptiness to the weak-willed.

WHAT IS FOUND

Fallen UMBER is generally a safe and quiet land. There is danger, but it is localized. Among the deep fossil fortresses the hulks of this fallen land prowl and scavenge, yes. Harvesting nutrients for long-dead masters. Feeding monstrous fungal vomes long gone. At the perimeters of the tumbled great houses animated chitin armors still stumble, parodies of guards. They are dull and not aggressive, unless disturbed.

Most of the abandoned artesian villages now belongs to megarodents. Hybrid prairie-dog hunting packs and hybrid sweet-flesh rodent fungus tenders and rabbit-pig farmers in crude shelters of straw and sticks. Primitive and new to sentience, they are not naïve and have a fierce pride in the ruins they now call home.

Humans are few. Mostly bands of itinerant chitin foragers with grubby caps and foul-minded mules. Exiles from the Rainbowlands, these poor, parched lands serve them as a place of respite.

More than animals, the mushrooms now call UMBER theirs. Glistening pale mushrooms feast on fallen creatures. Small ball mushrooms offer themselves for harvesting. Art flower fungi perfume the fallen palaces with mind-bending scents.



FORAGING OUTCOMES

Most harvesters brave desolate Umber to harvest chitin cap (usually selling at €100 per sack) and ancient spores (selling for as much as €2000 a sack).

Prospectors also sometimes find other treasures here.

FORAGING

Foraging takes a full week. A different player makes a relevant d20 test each week.

Misfortune checks are still made every week.

Results assume a labor crew of ten harvesters. Much smaller crews roll with [-], much larger crews with [+]. The chitin and flower fungus patches are usually not large enough to support a labor crew of much more than twenty or twenty-five mouths. Bigger parties should split up.

HIRED HELP

1. Armed foragers (L2). Capable and well-armed, they intimidate most scavengers and can lay down enough bolts and shot to scare off even a large predator. They try to charge €20 per mouth per week.
2. Itinerant foragers (L1). Weary and beaten down. They can scare off some scavengers, but will not fight anything dangerous. €10 per mouth per week.
3. Mouse-monkeys (L0). Nimble and small. Unwilling to do any fighting whatsoever. They will work for rations (a sack of supply per mouth per week) and are particularly fond of the ancient delicacy known as canned mystery meat.
4. Chitin robotnik (L3, ponderous). Many-legged chitin golems. Autonomous survivors of some forgotten dependancy of the Umber Kingdom. Immune to spores and most attackers. Hard to find. They charge €50 per mouth per week in fuels, lubricants, and processed biomass.

A WEEK'S LABOR (D20)

1. A tryptoad (L4, ballistosporic) clambers into your claim-camp; lose d4+1 foragers and no foraging is accomplished this week (armed foragers lose only 1 forager).
2. Field of infernal puffballs (L0, fragmentary) blankets the claim-fields. Lose 1 forager per sack gained; gain d3 sacks of caps.
3. A worker's mother-in-law died; they're either at the funeral or a party, they weren't clear. Lose 1 forager; gain 2 sacks of caps.
4. A forager fell into a newly-uncovered ceremonial chamber. Next to their corpse was found a magnificent bearded moai of sweaty bluestone (5 sacks, 5000 cash); Lose 1 forager; gain 1 sack of caps.
5. Forager inhales spores of galaxy-crossing alien intelligence-designing mushroom. Over the course of the rest of the harvesting the forager undergoes symbiotic hyper-evolutionary changes. Lose 1 Forager; gain one...? something, -though-"not as we know it"-intelligence being... (Note: the Forager is not 'taken over' by the Alien Mushroom - rather, has become a hyper-symbiotic-meshed-dual-intelligence; retaining the (now heightened) personality of the Forager (maybe a bit like a Moadib).
6. Some workers unearthed a damnable portal of antediluvian evil. Their every step unsettled the ancient earth, but they were in a realm of death and madness. In the end, [d3] alone fled, laughing and wailing through those blackened arcades of antiquity, until consciousness failed them. Lose 6 minus [d3] foragers; discover a Gate in the darkest dungeons.
7. A bland but bleak week. Two more workers succumb to their aspergilloma; gain 2 sacks of caps.
8. If you are employing Mouse-monkeys, they form a "Guild of Mushroom (& associated things, items, and whatnot) Harvesters, Pickers, and Arbitration Adjudicators" and demand a greater cup size (or some) of Cat Coffee as their morning meal drink, with their 'canned mystery' rations upped. If unable to compromise or supply these demands they go on rampage in the claim camp (loose 1d4 sacks); if compromise is made which includes Canned Mystery Meat increase your future finds by +1 sack/roll; if compromise is made which includes increase in Cat Coffee all rolls are at advantage [+].
9. There's one less body sat around the butane stove tonight. Jokes hang in the air, conversation skirts around the shape of a companion once-known; Lose 1 forager; gain 1 sack of caps.
10. A rich, fruiting vein! You celebrate with fermented smut gin, it burns good; the hallucinations prove a bit too much for one of the older hands, they run off into the night. Lose 1 forager; gain 4 sacks of caps.
11. A ghostly caravan passes by. They sell ancient spores sparkling with long ago memories. One forager joins them, departing into the tangled ways. Gain 1 sack of cap and 1 sack of unearthly spores.
12. They try to explain in frenzied mouthfuls of half-witnessed gibberish. One of them touched something, or it touched them? They turned into spores. They heard their old comrade's laugh on the wind. One of them bottled the spores in case they can get their friend back. You think it's unlikely, but agree anything is possible. Lose 1 forager; gain 1 sack of ancient spores.
13. Someone was touched by a Mind-Emptied Husk and got around half the camp before they broke down and confessed; everyone they touch is quarantined in a bio-bivouac. Over the remainder of the week they slowly crumble away. You covertly direct the

ventilator tubing into plastic crates.

Lose 5 foragers; gain 3 sacks of ancient spores.

14. It's alive! It's Activated! Something huge lurches out of the undermess of chitin and mushrooms - a huge mech maybe? One of its ocular implants glows orange and bathes the foragers in a beam of flickering light - criss-crossing their faces, then flicks off. Then this semi-colossus sadly shakes its head, slumps it forwards with a despondent moan, and then crashes to the ground shattering into a thousand pieces. The party gains 1d4+2 sacks of high quality chitin, 1-2 old tech parts (1 stone and €300 each), plus the sinking feeling they are not The Prophesied One (Cha rolls at disadvantage [-] for 1d4 weeks).
15. Garden of hidden delights. A parfumer's paradise, overrun by rabid rabbit-pigs. After pitched battles, a cache of fine-spun chitin cap (2d4 sacks) but several injuries (1d6 foragers laid up with bites) and one case of fatal friendly fire (armored foragers lose no crew).