

HEROES OF TERRA

JUMPSTART EDITION



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***WATCH FOR **HEROES OF TERRA: THE MUSHROOM WAR**
COMING TO KICKSTARTER IN FEBRUARY 2019!***

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Heroes of Terra Jumpstart*, a campaign setting introduction for *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*.

Herein, readers will discover the plight of the mandragora people and their kingdom, under assault from the Dragon Emperor of the kappa, and his many dark allies. In a land where hope dwindles daily, the only chance for salvation lies in heroes from another world, a legendary parallel universe known to the inhabitants of Terra as “Earth.”

Terra is a magical world full of dinosaurs, terror birds, floral sorcery and saurian savagery. Players may well recognize many of the ideas and concepts in this game—albeit in a strange and twisted fashion, as though through a funhouse mirror.

THE PREMISE

Heroes of Terra is intended to be a love letter to classic pulp-adventure fantasy of the early twentieth century and a winking homage to the popular video games of the early 1980s. Think of the setting as “John Carter of Mario World” or “Conan, but as an Italian plumber instead of Arnold Schwarzenegger.”

Because of these disparate influences, *Heroes of Terra* is designed to work on two different levels: first, as a grinning tribute to everything video game nerds loved about early-generation Nintendo and Atari game; and second, as a nonstop action-adventure setting as fast, fun, and furious as any other *Savage Worlds* setting.

Because this setting is an homage and a satire, not a parody, it’s not presented as a “funny” or “joke” setting. Things can get downright dark in the world of Terra—but the general tone is one of free-spirited heroism, high action, and pulp adventure. The heroes are intended to be good guys and the villains are intended to be bad guys, though there are nuances on both sides.

If your group loves classic pulp fantasy, old-school video games, or just dinosaurs (and who doesn’t?), then *Heroes of Terra* is probably for you!

THE HEROES

On Earth, humans number in the faceless billions, and most have long given up hope of being special amidst the seething crowds. The enormous number of humans living in their world—each innately connected to magic itself—has shriveled the amount of magic controlled by each.

When brought to a magic-rich world such as Terra, humans find themselves filled with legendary strength, speed, and endurance, and many develop unique mystical talents as well. Known as “warpers” or “plumbers” because of their connection to the Warp and its currents, these powerful heroes have the potential to change the world in their passage.

These mighty heroes are not alone, however, and many of Terra’s inhabitants still fight for their own freedom. From the faithful and loyal Mandrake Guardsmen of Agaric, to renegade kappa who have turned on their evil Dragon Emperor, to surviving members of the High Blossom Courts, powerful in the magic of the land, many stand ready to fight the darkness.

Earther or Terran, it matters not—what truly matters is your power, your wisdom, and your courage. Do you have the strength to stand for what is right? Now is the time for heroes!



SETTING RULES

BLESSINGS OF THE LAND

The world of Terra is a living place, full of spirits. Most of them cannot communicate with people directly, but they can offer inspiration, aid, or influence to their champions, as well as hindrance and harassment to their enemies.

Full details on the powers of blooms, lotuses, and mandrake roots can be found in *Heroes of Terra: The Mushroom War*.

BORN A HERO

Earther or Terran, those who seek to save the Mandragoran Kingdom are a cut above others—legendary heroes whose deeds will resonate through the future. Characters ignore Rank requirements for Edges during character creation.

CREATIVE COMBAT

Terra is a world where jumping, free-running, and acrobatic combat are commonplace. Earthers would recognize the traditional Terran martial arts as a form of parkour—an athletic display that combines sudden motion with endurance running. As such, *Heroes of Terra* uses the Creative Combat setting rule, as described in *Savage Worlds Adventure Edition*.

DUMB LUCK

Terra herself seems to be watching out for those who serve as her champions. Players can spend Bennies to reroll their result even after a critical failure.

JUMPING AND FALLING

Gravity on Terra is slightly less than that of Earth, even though the two worlds are theoretically quantum doubles of one another. Falling damage is halved and jumping distances are doubled.

SCAVENGING

In the wake of the Dragon Empire's attack on Agaric, much of the civilized area of the Mandragora Kingdom lies in ruins. Those parts of it that aren't ruined are far too poor to simply give away supplies most of the time, even when they might want to aid the resistance. Because of this, heroes spend an inordinate amount of time doing odd jobs to make ends meet or scavenging in the ruins of a once-mighty civilization.

Full details about scavenging can be found in *Heroes of Terra: The Mushroom War*.

UNARMORED HEROES

Processed metal is relatively uncommon on Terra, since most societies have adapted to using less invasive methods of technological advancement. The kappa currently seek to master large-scale smelting—with horrifying environmental consequences.

Because of this, many heroes eschew armor entirely. If a Wild Card choose to not wear *any* armor, they add +2 to their Soak rolls.



PEOPLES OF TERRA

The world of Terra is a magical land filled with more intelligent species than just one. Where Earth experienced a cataclysmic asteroid strike that killed off the dinosaurs, Terra never went through such a trauma, leading to the eventual evolution of sentient saurians, a number of plant- and fungus-based species, and stranger creatures still. The people of Terra refer to the different civilized species as “clades.”

In addition, humans from Earth have occasionally found their way to Terra in times past, and the amazing powers they inevitably develop have made them nearly legendary among the people of the Mandragora Kingdom.

HUMAN

The inhabitants of the semi-mythical world of Earth are called “humans.” These warm-blooded mammals are apparently descendants of the primate survivors of a Great Extinction that never occurred on Terra. The same meteoric impact also deadened Earth to its innate mystical energies, leaving humans incapable of wielding magic on their home world.

When humans cross the Warp into Terra, however, eons of dormant ability suddenly flares into unique innate magical abilities. What these talents will be is unpredictable, but such powers are rarely subtle.

- **Adaptable:** Humans are descended from clever primates, making them more adaptable than most of the clades of Terra. They begin play with a bonus Edge or 2 extra skill points (player’s choice).
- **Clueless:** Since they’re from another universe entirely, humans that wind up on Terra usually aren’t very sure of what’s going on, leaving them wide-eyed and shell-shocked. They lack an understanding of local history, culture, flora, fauna, geography... Quite frankly, they’re lucky that the locals speak something approximately like English. Humans suffer a –2 penalty on Common Knowledge and Notice rolls on Terra.
- **Innate Power:** Humans are creatures of magic in Terra (and on Earth as well, though the magic level there is low), giving them innate access to powers that other creatures must study. Every human gains Arcane Background (Gifted) as a bonus Edge, ignoring that Edge’s normal prerequisites.

MANDRAGORAN

At one time, the mandragora were the dominant species on Terra, having long since spread their blossom

markers across the face of the supercontinent and driven most of the animal clades out of their territory. Now, they labor under the uncaring claws of the Dragon Emperor.

A mandragoran looks surprisingly like a human, with the exception being their very smooth skin, which lacks both pores and body hair, and their over-large garishly colored eyes. The mandragora tend to stand somewhat taller than the average human as well, with an average height over six feet, though they are proportionally thinner and thus weigh about the same. Female mandragora tend to be slightly taller than males.

Most mandragora have blonde or red hair, though a rare few with brown or black hair are known, and their eyes are luminous and brightly colored, virtually every shade of the rainbow. Mandragora “hair” is actually a fibrous extension of their body, though like human hair it has no pain receptors. Young mandragora have pale skin, shading toward brown as they grow older.

- **Anemic:** Mandragora are highly susceptible to pollutants, impurities, and other factors that an animal species would be able to shrug off with ease. They suffer from the Anemic Hindrance, giving them a –2 penalty to resist Fatigue.
- **Keen Senses:** Mandragora have large eyes and are very sensitive to environmental changes. They gain Alertness as a bonus Edge.
- **Photosynthesis:** Mandragora eat and drink like humans, though they also photosynthesize. As long as a mandragoran has access to sunlight and water, he needs only half as much food as a human to remain healthy.
- **Racial Enemy:** The mandragora are an oppressed people, ruled over by cruel reptilian overlords. It’s hard to be courteous when your people are in chains. They suffer a –2 penalty on Persuasion rolls with kappa.
- **Spirited:** Mandragora are strong-willed, charismatic, and have great faith, in the universe and in one another. They start with a d6 in Spirit instead of a d4. This increases maximum Spirit to d12+1.

MYCONITE

The fungal berserkers of the kappa king and the front line in any kappa war march, the myconites are distant cousins of the noble mandragora.

Myconites are smaller than even humans, but they fight with a tenacity and vigor that makes even the

hadiest warrior nervous. While they are best known for their fungal berserkers, not every myconite is a raving savage.

The average myconite is a squat humanoid around four feet tall. Their heads are slightly too large for their bodies, they lack noses, and their fang-filled mouths are extremely wide; most myconites have a significant underbite, with fangs jutting up from their lower jaws. What hair they have is greasy and knotted, growing in a wild mane from their heads down their backs, and their eyes are an unnerving black. A myconite lopes rather than runs, sometimes using their hands to aid in running.

A myconite's feet have poorly-differentiated toes, almost seeming to be webbed, and have short black claws instead of toenails. Myconites have no gender differentiation; they are neither male nor female, and they reproduce asexually by budding off large spores. Their overall appearance is one of half-formed savagery.

- **Fungal Growth:** As a fungus-based life form, myconites suffer very little from the environment and heal extremely fast. A myconite ignores all penalties when making natural healing rolls, including wound penalties and any penalties for a lack of medical attention. A myconite can also make a natural healing roll every day, rather than every week.
- **Infravision:** Myconites can see in the infrared spectrum, halving attack penalties (round down) for bad lighting when targeting opponents that radiate heat.
- **Small:** Myconites only stand around four feet tall, making them significantly smaller and lighter than either humans or mandragora. They suffer a -1 penalty to Toughness.
- **Tough:** Myconites take a beating very well despite their size. Their entire cultural drive is based around survival of the fittest, leading them to be quite hard to kill. They start with a d6 in Vigor instead of a d4.
- **Ugly (Major):** Myconites are unpleasant to look at by most standards. They suffer a -2 penalty on Persuasion rolls.

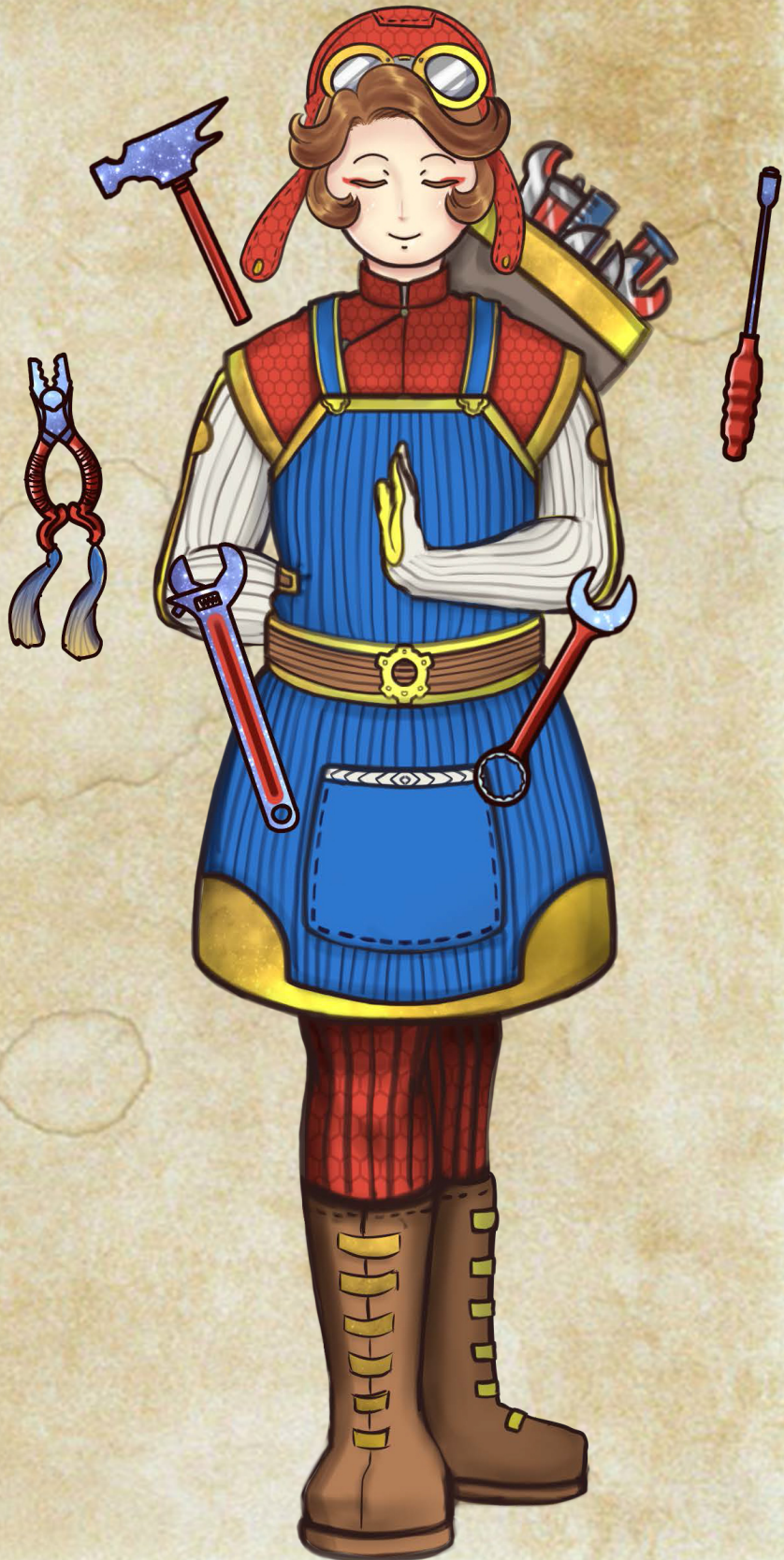
Kappa

Soldiers of the Dragon Emperor and descendants of the ancient tyrant lizards, the kappa are a reptilian clade bound for glory and conquest.

Many kappa believe that total victory in the war is near, but a tiny number of kappa have turned against their own, calling the despotic rule of the emperor an affront to their traditional tribal way of life.

Kappa stand roughly eight feet tall and weigh over 500 pounds, massive and powerfully built saurians with

a tough but flexible hide. Many kappa have small crops of horns rising from their head or back, and their mouths are filled with razor-sharp fangs. Most kappa are either a dark or light green in color, though a rare few have exhibited other shades, and yellow or brown highlights are not uncommon.



Despite their size and bulk, kappa have surprisingly good manual dexterity. Their most unnerving habit to outsiders is their tendency to use the bodies of their honored dead as raw materials for weapons and armor—bone spears, rigid leather armor designed to look like turtle shells, clubs studded with teeth, and so on. Kappa commonly speak of “carrying my grandmother into battle” with pride.

- **Bloodthirsty:** Anyone with any sense is afraid of the kappa. They are cold in demeanor (if not in blood) and relish the thought of snapping bones and rending flesh in battle.
- **Can't Swim:** Kappa are heavy-boned, and they come from a region where the biggest bodies of water are puddles. They suffer a -2 penalty on Athletics rolls made to swim.
- **Claw/Bite:** Kappa claws mean they never count as an Unarmed Defender and inflict Str+d4 damage with their unarmed attacks. Their bite causes Str+d4 damage and can also be used on a Bound or Entangled foe.
- **Environmental Weakness:** Though not truly cold-blooded, kappa are poorly suited for frigid conditions. They suffer a -4 penalty to resist cold environmental effects and suffer +4 damage from cold-based attacks.
- **Large:** Standing around eight feet tall (or even taller for older kappa), a kappa is significantly taller and bulkier than a human. They are Size +1, and this greater size grants them +1 to their Toughness.
- **Low Light Vision:** The kappa lands are dim and unpleasant places where the skies are constantly choked with ash. Kappa ignore penalties from Dim and Dark Illumination.
- **Mighty:** Kappa are strong and powerful of limb. They start with a d6 in Strength instead of a d4. This increases maximum Strength to d12+1.

PUDICAN

Another distant cousin of the mandragora, the pudica are a humanoid plant clade more closely related to trees than to flowers or fungus. Few people are really sure of what the pudica look like, since their cultural tradition demands that they cover their bodies completely when in the company of other clades.

This extends to the wearing of complicated ceremonial masks, which are said to be individually crafted for each pudican and are as much an indicator of identity as a human's fingerprints. These habits have led the mandragora to call them “the shy folk.”

What little is known of shy folk culture indicates that it is deeply intellectual, with an economy based on ideas and deep thoughts. Without their covering garments,

pudica are thought to be humanoid in shape, and the few glimpses gained of them in this state have revealed them as having bark-like skin, brown or ebony in color, and liquid, sap-colored eyes. In public, they wear concealing robes, gloves and boots, as well as ornate wooden masks.

- **Always Watching:** Pudicans need far less sleep than other clades. They need only half as much sleep as normal to avoid fatigue.
- **Clever:** The pudica prize intelligence and have a great deal of it themselves. They start with a d6 in Smarts instead of a d4.
- **Reduced Pace:** Pudica have shorter bodies than most other clades, though they aren't as small as myconites. They have a Pace of 5 and reduce their running die by one die type.
- **Shy:** The pudica don't deal well with outsiders. Their cultural distance and inability to relate well with others causes them to suffer a -1 penalty to Persuasion with all other clades.
- **Wormwood:** Pudicans are descended from highly toxic plant life, making them resistant to most other forms of toxic shock. They are immune to poison.

QUETZAL

A distant cousin of the kappa, quetzals are tree-dwelling saurians that have adapted to their lofty homes by evolving to something partway between a dinosaur and a bird. Quetzals are smaller than kappa, about the size of humans, and have long avoided conflict with other clades due to their own natural skittishness. No love is lost between the predatory kappa and the omnivorous quetzals.

Quetzal society is mostly peaceful. Because of their unusual body shape and wing-structures, quetzals largely eschew clothing and armor, though they are willing to don them in time of need.

To the human eye, quetzals are quite strange-looking. These saurians have a somewhat hunched shape, seeming to lean forward, their long tails jutting out behind them and their arms held slightly in front. Their feet are large and clawed, and their heads large but narrow.

Their most striking feature is their combination of scales and feathers, both in bright colors and patterns. These feathers cover their arms and tails most thickly, creating a sort of wing-fringe, and some quetzals also have large “manes” of colored feathers.

Quetzals cannot speak any non-saurian language because of their vocal structure, but they can understand others easily enough, and those that interact with outsiders usually find ways to communicate.

- **Agile:** Quetzals are quick and nimble from a lifetime spent among the treetops. They start with a d6 in Agility instead of a d4.
- **Fast:** Quetzals are somewhat faster than other humanoids, starting with a Pace of 8 and a running die of d8. (A Quetzal with the Fleet-Footed Edge has a Pace of 12 and a running die of d12.)
- **Jumpy:** Quetzals are highly-strung and easily startled. They suffer a -2 penalty on Fear tests and when resisting Intimidation.
- **Keen Senses:** The quetzal have highly attuned senses of sight and smell. They gain +2 on Notice rolls.
- **Mount:** The strange body posture of a quetzal can make finding gear for them difficult at times, but they have learned that it makes possible a symbiotic

relationship with humanoids. Quetzals can act as mounts for any humanoid of Size +0 or smaller, ignoring the rider's weight for purposes of encumbrance. While mounted on a quetzal, the rider checks his Fighting against his Riding skill or the quetzal's Agility, whichever is better for determining his maximum mounted Fighting skill. While carrying a rider, the quetzal gains +1 Armor.

- **Non-Vocal:** A quetzal cannot speak any language other than their own. This gives them difficulty being understood by outsiders. They suffer a -2 penalty on Persuasion and Taunt rolls when dealing other clades, and may require Smarts tests in order to be understood at all.



THE MANDRAGORAN KINGDOM

Just over fifteen hundred years ago, at the same time a human king called Arthur was uniting his country in a shining nation, the mandragora were coming out of a time of tumult.

Dozens of small city-states had battled with one another for centuries in the so-called Flowering Wars, conflicts in which small-scale skirmishes and highly ritualized combat were used to determine the primacy of one city-state over the others. After one such Flowering War turned into a lethal debacle, consuming several city-states completely, the mandragora stood aghast at their own actions. They needed a better way.

From the carnage of war emerged a warrior-scholar named Magnolius, of the Clan of the Rose. Magnolius proposed a unified kingdom, bringing all mandragora together under one banner and giving all local rulers a say in the governance of that kingdom. He was initially met with opposition, until he showed the sincerity of his proposal by eschewing all of his own lands and holdings, and placing his daughter Rosaria on the high throne, with himself as a mere advisor.

The high ruler of the kingdom would thus own no lands, hold little property, have no resources but those granted to him by the will of his advisory council. In exchange, he would have the ability to arbitrate disputes fairly and impartially, and the right to muster an army to protect the kingdom from outside threats. This ruler would eschew his or her personal name, becoming known only by their clan name and the title “Mandrake,” after the mystic roots that blessed the land in times of need. They called their unified land Agaric, the Mandragoran Kingdom.

The lesser rulers accepted these terms and heralded in the reign of the Rose Queen, first Mandrake of Agaric. The aristocratic council that guided the monarch would become known as the Blossom Court, eventually also referring to the bureaucracy that maintained its power.

Hardly any real challenges to Agaric’s power would arise over the next thousand years, as the Mandrake line passed from mother to son, father to daughter, uncle to niece, and from one family to another. Many great wonders were achieved during this time, including the foundation of a great academy designed to teach the sorcerous ways of the Blossoming Path, schools to bring basic literacy to all mandragora of all social classes, and the construction of a vast network of roads across the kingdom.

This is not to say that all was peaceful during this time. The Mandragoran Kingdom faced numerous

minor threats, but nothing that threatened the existence of the kingdom as a whole. Minor rebellions would occasionally crop up as lesser nobles sought to improve their station at the expense of the kingdom as a whole. Border skirmishes with other clades occurred as the kingdom slowly expanded and consolidated. Trade routes and agreements with distant lands were established, even a few island-nations across the expanse of the vast Tethys Ocean. The kingdom thrived.

A generation ago, during a time of greater than usual prosperity, rumors began to reach the Blossom Court of rumblings in the lands held by the barbaric kappa. While kappa raids for slaves, food, water, and trinkets had been common in the past, the kappa were known to be a clade in decline. Their poor resources and frequent infighting had left their population depleted and the remaining tribes fractious. These new rumors, though, suggested that the kappa had restored their numbers and somehow united under a single banner—a battle standard showing a mighty dragon in full flight.

The Blossom Court advised the king against provoking the kappa, who were surely not as organized or unified as the distant reports suggested but who could still become a nuisance if they were antagonized. The king listened to their advice—to his later sorrow.

THE MUSHROOM WAR

Five years ago, the kappa came boiling out of the deserts and mountains of their homelands in a horde so massive that it shook the ground for miles in every direction. The marching legions could drink rivers dry and scale defensive walls on ramparts made from the broken bodies of their slain.

The ruthlessness, efficiency and sheer power of the attacking force shocked the Mandragora Kingdom into a panicked response, throwing ill-prepared soldiers at vastly greater forces and effectively devastating the kingdom’s army long before the kappa ever reached anything important.

Like a knife pointed at the heart of the kingdom, the kappa army tore its way straight to the great capital, Rubeus. The Blossom Court scattered to the four winds while the king and his remaining legions stayed behind to face the oncoming horde.

On the highest parapets of Castle Corundum, the Dragon Emperor himself descended to face the Mandrake in single combat. Though armed with magic, weapons of orichalcum and adamant, and the faith of a kingdom, the Sunflower King was no match for his

opposite number in a fight, and he died on the Dragon Emperor's claws before a horrified populace. The banner of the dragon flew above the mighty castle, and the kappa celebrated with days of looting and destruction.

All seven of the great fortress-cities of the kingdom have now fallen to the kappa, leaving the mandragoran people in the hands of a cruel enemy captor. The remnants of the Blossom Court have formed a resistance movement, using guerilla tactics against the vastly superior force to harass the kappa and waste their resources. The Court's hope is to make the war so costly to the kappa that they simply decide to leave the kingdom. A few nobles have considered appeasement, offering to make the kingdom a willing satrapy of the Dragon Empire in exchange for limited autonomy—and, of course, an improvement in their own position.

The common people live in terror of the kappa. Though they are cruel and vicious, holding mandragora life in low regard, they have proven adequate administrators of their new holding. Most regions of the kingdom live as they once did, only that they now pay tribute to the Dragon Emperor instead of to their own leaders, and that their taxes are somewhat higher. A few places, however, have become nightmares of kappa industriousness, turning the populations of entire villages into slaves for mining, smelting, or other heavy labor that the kappa themselves eschew. What few rights the average mandragora peasant had before are nothing now—the tyranny of the kappa has replaced the rule of law.

Hope still exists in the land, however. It is common knowledge that the Dragon Emperor has kept the king's only daughter and heir alive in captivity for some unknown reason. Her survival has served as a rallying point for kingdom loyalists who believe that her rescue would result in a mass uprising against the kappa. Others of a more mystical bent speak of the land and the monarch being one in spirit, and they point to the reappearance of the magical pyreblooms and mandrakes as a sign that all is not lost.

A few whisper that the Warp has opened again, disgorging the inhabitants of a legendary parallel world—known as "Earth"—into the kingdom for the first time in generations. If the legendary heroes called "humans" have indeed once more returned to Terra, then the kappa are in for a rude awakening.

THE RETURN OF HUMANKIND

Before the Ice Age on Earth, humanity had built several great magical civilizations. The greatest of these became known to later peoples as Atlantis, though it is likely that the natives of that storied island knew themselves by a different name.

As the human population increased, however, the available amount of magical energy on Earth dropped precipitously. The magical civilizations drew so much power that they began to suck their world dry. A cataclysm of some sort was inevitable, one that knocked humanity back to barbarism and sundered their connection to their magical history.

A few generations after that cataclysm, during a time of barbarism and dwindling magic, an ancient civilization known as "the Forebears" were building a great civilization on Terra. Their Warp Tunnels gave passage between Earth and Terra, allowing small numbers of humans to travel between the two worlds.

Humans walked on Terra as mighty heroes and demigods, praised as saviors by the ancestors of both the mandragora and the kappa. On Earth, the energy leaking from the Warp Tunnels allowed a brief resurgence of magical ability not seen in generations. A few creatures from Terra crossed to Earth as well, giving rise to legends of monsters and demons.

At some point, the Warp closed off. Whether because of Earth's dying magic or some other reason, the walls between the worlds sealed up. Humans became legendary on Terra, and magic itself faded into myth on Earth. Billions of humans walked the skin of their world, blind to their great potential. They built societies, made war, and did all the things humans do—but they did it without magic.

Five years ago, the Dragon Empire came surging out of the Blight, washing over the green lands of Agaric like a scaled plague. Around the same time, the Warp Tunnels began opening again, almost as if the land itself wanted the escaping courtiers to succeed in their efforts to hide from the Dragon Empire.

More than that, the wall between the two worlds tore open, admitting humans to Terra in numbers for the first time in millennia. No one knows how many humans have crossed the Warp to Terra, but even one would be too many for those invested in the status quo...

THE PLUMBER'S DILEMMA

AN INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE FOR *HEROES OF TERRA*

BACKGROUND

For the past five years, the peaceful Mandragoran Kingdom has been occupied by the invading soldiers of the dreaded Dragon Empire. While many villages escape with only a token garrison, the mandragorans live in constant fear of their reptilian overlords due to the kappas' foul tempers and violent impulses.

The village of Fourleaf is no different than most, save in one respect—unknown to the mandragorans or the kappa, a Warp Tunnel lies beneath the village. This jade-and-steel construct, a legacy of the prehistoric civilization of the Forebears, can act as instantaneous transportation from one place to another. The Tunnel is currently malfunctioning, disgorging monsters into Fourleaf, but whoever discovers it first could possibly repair it and use it to benefit their side in the ongoing Mushroom War.

SUMMARY

The heroes arrive in Fourleaf, a small apiary village in the Mandragoran Kingdom. As they try to resupply and gather their strength while avoiding the few kappa soldiers in town, they are witness to an attack by fire beetles and must act quickly to save the townsfolk.

After the battle, the heroes are informed that fire beetles aren't native to this part of the kingdom. One of the village elders suspects an open Warp Tunnel is the cause, which is why they've tried to keep the attacks a secret from the kappa until now. Unless the heroes were extremely efficient, the remnants of the fire beetle attack can't be hidden, putting them in a race against time with the kappa garrison.

When they find the Warp Tunnel, they are confronted with a choice—go through it and try to repair it from the far side in the hope of using it for their allies, or destroy it to keep it out of enemy hands. Either way, they will have to deal with the kappa soldiers all too soon...

SCENE 1 FOURLEAF

The heroes arrive in Fourleaf, a small mandragoran village of perhaps fifty or sixty people. In typical mandragoran fashion, the homes are interwoven with the native flora, grown from living wood and vines whenever possible. The village is centered on a large communal pool fed by a natural underground spring. The streets are cobblestoned and broad. On the edge of

the village are the communal apiaries, home to the village's prize giant bees.

If the heroes are part of an ongoing campaign, Fourleaf is just the next village on their travels, a place to purchase food and gear up. Unfortunately, as is all too common in mandragoran villages these days, the heroes can see that a rough stone lodge has been built on the edge of town—a kappa garrison.

The kappa rarely patrol the village, preferring to keep to themselves and stay away from the "weaklings" they have been assigned to manage. Fourleaf has no tactical value or resources beyond its bees, so only eight kappa soldiers have been assigned to keep the populace pacified. The villagers are happy to tweak their noses by offering temporary lodging and trade to travelers, even to humans, who are supposed to be reported to local authorities immediately on sight.

Give the player characters a little bit of time to meet with the locals and see their friendliness firsthand before proceeding to...

SCENE 2 FIRE BEETLES!

The heroes have only been in Fourleaf for a short time when the screaming starts. They can see mandragoran villagers running away from something as well as catching sight of brief flashes of light. If the heroes have to be prodded into checking it out, have the villager they've been speaking to the most so far beg them to help. But really, heroes shouldn't need prodding to help out innocents in need!

On the far end of the town square, a group of mandragorans are helplessly watching a stand of trees burn. Some of them have buckets and there is plenty of water, but they can't get close to the fire because of the beetles. The fire beetles are agitated and hungry, looking to turn as much of Fourleaf into charcoal as possible so they can gorge on it.

Encounter: There is one fire beetle per player character. There is also a matter of putting out the fire. This is a Dramatic Task; see the details below.

Resolution: The encounter ends when the fire beetles are defeated and the blaze is extinguished or runs its course.

Fire Beetles

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8
Skills: Athletics d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6
Pace: 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** Thick shell.
- **Bite:** Str+d6.
- **Fire Breath:** A fire beetle can breathe fire in a Cone Template. Any creature in this template must make an Agility roll opposed by the fire beetle's Shooting; a failure causes the targets to take 2d10 damage and risk catching fire (SWDE 88).
- **Size -1:** Fire beetles are about the size of large dogs
- **Slow:** Giant beetles have a running die of only d4.

Dramatic Task: Put Out the Blaze

Difficulty: Simple

Skills: Athletics (to carry buckets and splash water), Persuasion (to organize a bucket brigade), Repair (to improvise an aqueduct)

Consequences: On a successful resolution, the heroes are hailed as friends and given free lodgings and food for their stay in Fourleaf. On a failure, the villagers will still grudgingly deal with them, but they suffer -2 to Persuasion rolls with the villagers during their stay.

SCENE 3

MEETING WITH ELDER CORK

The night of the blaze, the heroes are approached by an elderly mandragoran woman. She is Cork, one of the village's elders; her vine-hair has turned brownish with age and her skin is deeply cracked and wrinkled. Cork informs the heroes that fire beetles are not native to this part of Lemuria, and that they must have arrived here through unnatural means. These are not the first strange monster attacks they've suffered lately, so something must be causing them.

Let the heroes make Common Knowledge rolls to figure out that a Warp Tunnel might be involved. Succeed or fail, Cork can tell them that her grandmother once told her about "old magic" lingering in the caves above Clover Lake, only a few minutes' walk from the village. Clever heroes might decide to backtrack the trail of the fire beetles; let them make Survival rolls at +2 (the beetles leave scorch marks as they walk).

Cork also warns the heroes that word is likely to get back to the kappa soldiers about the fire beetles before too long—and anything the heroes can suss out, they can too. It would be best if they left immediately instead of waiting for morning.

If they follow Cork's advice, go to **Scene 4: Lake Cave**; if they track the beetles, go to **Scene 5: The Crevice**.

SCENE 4

LAKE CAVE

There are many caves lining the shores of Clover Lake. Searching all of them would take days, if not weeks. A Survival or Notice roll at -2 can reveal one of the caves is filled with recent scorch marks and ash. Unfortunately, the cave that the fire beetles emerged in isn't empty;

they fled from the cavern to get away from the ghost inhabiting it.

The ghost lingers in the cave invisibly when the heroes arrive, waiting for living things to draw near so it can steal their life force. It makes a Stealth roll against their group Notice when they enter, then makes another one on a single PC as it tries to take the Last Step (SWDE 27). If it succeeds at both of these rolls, it gets the Drop on that PC.

The ghost only fights until it has inflicted two wounds, then it immaterially retreats into the stone walls of the cave and does not come back. After dealing with the ghost—either by defeating it or letting it drain them—the heroes can proceed down the tunnels and eventually arrive at **Scene 5: The Crevice**.

Ghost

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidate d8, Notice d8, Stealth d12

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities:

- **Disruptive Touch:** A ghost can touch a living creature (Fighting roll as normal) to inflict its Spirit die as damage, ignoring Armor.
- **Ethereal:** Ghosts are immaterial and can only take wounds from magical attacks.
- **Fear:** Ghosts cause Fear checks when they let themselves be seen.
- **Size -1:** Ghosts are somewhat smaller than humans, basically large balls of ectoplasm a few feet across.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; immune to poison and disease; no additional damage from Called Shots.

SCENE 5

THE CREVICE

The heroes arrive at a rocky crack in the earth, leading deep underground. If the heroes come from above, they must make Athletics (climbing) rolls; if they come from the lake, there is an underwater stretch that requires a Swimming roll. Failure on either roll results in Bumps and Bruises.

At the bottom of the crevice is a cavern whose walls are obviously remnants of some ancient structure. They are covered in inscriptions that a Common Knowledge roll can reveal as Forebear hieroglyphs. At the far end of the cavern is a two-meter-tall green cylinder—a Warp Tunnel! Its mouth glows with a flickering light, showing that it is partially active. An artificer or floral sorcerer can make an arcane skill check at -2 to activate it, opening the portal fully.

Before they can open the portal, however, a group of four kappa soldiers manages to catch up to them! They came through the lake caves and lost one of their number to the ghost already. (The kappa actually left out before the heroes did, but they spent several hours searching the caves before they found the right one.) The kappa aren't interested in talking it out either!

If you think your heroes are tough enough to take it, make one of the surviving troopers an officer instead. An officer has the same statistics, except that he is a Wild Card and wields a massive two-handed hammer (Str+d10, Parry 6, Toughness 9).

Kappa Trooper

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Athletics d4-2, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Stealth d4-2

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Gear: Spear (Str+d6, +1 Parry, Reach 1), shell armor (+2 Armor)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Vow (Major: Serve the Dragon Emperor)

Special Abilities:

- **Low Light Vision:** The kappa lands are dim and unpleasant places where the skies are constantly choked with ash. Kappa ignore penalties from Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Size +1:** Kappa stand head and shoulders taller than humans.

AFTERMATH

If the heroes defeat the kappa, they have control of the Warp Tunnel! What lies beyond it is a story for another day, if they decide to keep it intact at all. If they cannot activate it, it might be more tactically to their advantage to destroy it rather than leave it in a place where the enemy might get to take it. After all, it's only a matter of time before more kappa come to the village now. While the villagers will probably escape punishment (they

aren't responsible for the actions of a bunch of vagabonds), the area will soon be swarming with soldiers loyal to the Dragon Emperor.

Destroying the Warp Tunnel is just a matter of persistence and time at this point. A fully working Warp Tunnel would resist harm, but this one is half-broken from age and decay anyway.

Either way, the heroes deserve *something* from all of this mess. Carefully searching the cavern will reveal a storage block. The mystic runes on the surface can be broken to spill out its contents: 2d20 gold coins, 1d10 days' worth of preserved food, and a precious green mandrake!

Green Mandrake (Floral Treasure)

These mandrakes are highly sought after for their mystical healing properties. When the root's juice is squeezed onto a creature that has suffered a wound within the last hour (which takes an action), that creature is healed of one wound.

Additionally, if used on a creature suffering from a disease, the creature receives an immediate Vigor check at +2 to overcome that illness.

For further adventures in the Mandragoran Kingdom, keep an eye out for
HEROES OF TERRA: THE MUSHROOM WAR
Coming to Kickstarter February 2019!

