monochrome Rainbow

LANDS FROM MIST, TIME FROM DREAMS

AN ANTI-CANON WORLD-BUILDING GAME BY LUKA REJEC

SEACAT
RPGCO
SYSTEM

Salutations to the magic heroes who make this game possible.

This is a …

… game …

… a toy. A toy for creating, inventing a land. Together or alone.

It is a patchwork time. A medley place. A land with structures, but without canon. No one true way it can be. A disturbed land.

Not post-apocalypse. Not pre-. Unless every day somewhere is someone's apocalypse.

This land is both far in the future and long ago. Time has been kind to it, the fog of forgetting obscures the beginning and the end. The wheel turns, but all the world sees is a line. Perhaps, the cycle is simply too grand for a history to encompass. Certainly, it is softer that way.

This land has wizards and technology and stars that move like self-willed machines and great cities that call themselves gods and old mysteries that stumble and groan and humans, so many humans, rich and poor, who fall and rise, fall apart and come together.

The centre cannot hold and a centre must be forged. Ever and again.

Collaborative

This is a mostly collaborative game, where the player(s) take on the roles of eidolons acting behind the veils of time and space and well-forgotten history to create the physical and human geography of a fantasy region of the Rainbowlands.

It is a cross-over between a boardgame and a roleplaying game.

Pieces

This game requires the following:
- One or more humans.
- A few hours.
- A few six-sided dice.
- A token for each player.
- A way to make symbols on a page or a screen. The miro app has been recommended as a digital visual collaboration tool.
- A regional map from Monochrome Rainbows.

Solo Play

To get the full effect of some of the rules in solo-play, the player should create at least two eidolons (i.e. simulated players) to play off one another and take turns each round.

Instead of an RPG Setting

This anti-canon world-building game can be used in lieu of a setting or gazetteer to generate a unique Rainbowlands to be used with the Ultraviolet Grasslands and/or Uranium Butterflies. It will also, of course, work with many other role-playing games, like Mothership, Troika!, OSE, Rifts, The Famous Fifth Edition Ampersand Game, Black Hack, PbtA, CoC, etc., etc.

Digital Use

The document is 3840 x 2160 pixels for easy digital use.

Rules

- Each game (each region) is played in two chapters.
- Each chapter is played in rounds.
- Each round, each player gets a turn.
- Players score currency called *numen* (from Latin for the special divine force of an object, place, or phenomenon) using the hidden purpose (*telos*) of their idols. They spend this on capital events.
- Players may choose to use numen as victory points.

Ch. 1: To Lay the Land

Players create the physical geography of the region.

Each player gets two dice, a token, and a random idol.

Each round:
1. Roll dice. Players take turns from highest roll to lowest.
2. On their turn a player puts their token in the ring or passes. If a player passes a second time in a row, they must discard one of their dice. If a player cannot discard any dice, they must take their turn (they cannot pass four times in a row).
3. When a player puts their token in the ring, they get extra rolls equal to the number of tokens already there (the first player to put their token in the ring gets no extra rolls).
4. The player then places two features on the map. Matching results give an extra option.
5. After each player takes a turn and all tokens are in the ring, the round ends and players reclaim their tokens.

Chapter ends:
- At the end of the round when the last hex is filled.

When the chapter ends, each player scores *numen* based on how well they have pleased their idol. They may then spend numen on capital events, starting with the player with the most numen.

Ch. 2: To Place the Cities

Players create the human geography of the region.

Each player gets two dice, a token, and a second random idol.

Each round play proceeds as in chapter one.

Chapter ends:
- At the end of the round when all 10 cities are placed and named.
- At the end of the round when a player cannot legally place all the results they rolled.
- Other map-specific conditions.

When the chapter ends, if any cities are still unplaced or unnamed, players place them in order of their *numen* scores, each player placing an available city.

Each player then scores additional *numen* based on how well they have pleased their second idol. They may then spend *numen* on capital events, starting with the player with the most *numen*.

Rolls and Matches

A roll (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6) refers to the face on a player's die when they take their turn. A match is when two or more rolls show the same face (e.g. 1+1, 2+2, etc.).

Each roll corresponds to a terrain, city, or other feature players can place that chapter (each region and chapter has its own table). If the player has a match, they can place one additional special feature. If the player gets extra rolls, they choose two of those rolls for determining matches and placing features.

Chapter tables sometimes use shorthand to save space, e.g.:

- "add to 1" = add to a feature placed because of a roll of 1.
- "can repl. 2" = can replace a feature placed by a roll of 2.
- "next to 3" = must be next to a feature placed by a roll of 3.
- "if all placed: 2" = if all features of this type have been placed, treat this roll as a '2'.

Hexes, Edges, and Vertices

Each region is described with an array of hexes. Different features are placed on different parts:
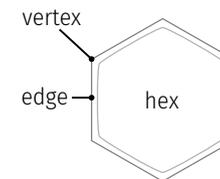
- Inside the hex itself is where large features like terrain are placed. Some features can be added to existing terrain without replacing it.
- The vertices of the hex are where smaller locations like cities, mines, farms, outposts, or forts are placed.
- The edges of hexes are used to measure distances and place roads, railroads, and indicate lines of control.

When space is short, a hex may be labelled 'h', an edge as 'e', and a vertex as 'v'. So, a roll might specify "cities must be 1v (2e) apart", meaning "cities must be placed with at least one vertex (that is, two edges) between them."

Final Numen Tally

Suppose players are treating Monochrome Rainbows as a competitive game. In that case, they tally numen for both their idols after the last capital event and add it to their remaining numen. The eidolon with the most numen (victory points) preens and declares themselves the most successful in the eyes of the Unmade Maker. At any rate, they boast to the other eidolons of their influence and status.

Examples

To aid in the apprehension of their roles and duties in creating the circle of this world, these examples are rendered unto the players of this creative play.

Rolling Dice and Taking Turns

Example: On the Decapolis map, Pengling rolls 5, 4; Hamster rolls 3, 3; Mycomorph rolls 2, 1.

Pengling goes first (5). Pengling passes, hoping for an extra roll of 5 or 4 to get a match.

Hamster goes next (3). Hamster puts their token in the ring and places two terrains (3: rich soil) and, because of their match (they rolled at least two 3s), they also place a forest. This may replace a plain or a plateau (can repl. 2).

Then it is Mycomorph (2). Mycomorph passes. They want two rolls.

Now it is Pengling's turn again. Pengling puts their token in the ring and rolls an additional die because Hamster's token is already there. They roll a 4. Pengling now has 5, 4, 4, and they choose 4+4 as their two rolls. Pengling places two rivers (4)

and a hot spring next to the river for their match. They could have added the hot springs to a river hex, but chose to fill a third hex instead (add to or next to 4).

Finally, it is Mycomorph. They put their token in the ring and roll two extra dice because Hamster and Pengling's tokens are already there. They roll 3 and 4. Mycomorph now has 1, 2, 3, and 4. With a sigh, Mycomorph places a mountain (1) and extends the Pengling's river (4).

Placing More Terrain

Another round, and again Mycomorph goes last.

They roll 1, 3, 2, 3—they can place one each of mountain (1), plain (2) and rich soil (3), or two rich soils (3, 3). If they choose to place two rich soils, they can also place an additional special feature because they have a match (3+3).

If they choose 3+3, they can place two rich soils, then add a farmyconid colony, a forest (which may replace a hex with terrain 2: plain or plateau), or a jungle (which must occupy a hex next to terrain 1: a mountain).

Spending Numen at Chapter End

The chapter ends and each player scores numen based on how they have pleased their idol that chapter. Three players, Albrecht, Maximilian, and Giovanni, have 7, 3, and 1 numen. First is Albrecht with 7 numen. He spends 2 on a capital event. Now the players have 5, 3, and 1 numen. Albrecht still has the most numen (5), and this time he spends 3 numen, leaving him with 2. The players now have 3, 2, and 1 numen and it is the turn of Maximilian with 3 numen.

◄ Metropolis

G R E E N L A N D S

D6	ROLLS (PLACE ON VERTICES / EDGES)	+		MATCHES
1	Place city at vertex, if all placed: 2.	1+1		Additional city, larger city (add '*' to 1).
2	Name city, if no city: place 1.	2+2		+1 naming, culture city (add 'π' to 1).
3	Road along hex edges (start at city, right road, or port)	3+3		+2 roads, canal (start at river, lake, or sea), upgrade 1 road to railroad
4	Railroad (rules as roads).	4+4		+1 railroad, tunnel, major bridge.
5	Farm/mine (vertex adj. to city/outpost).	5+5		+1 farm/mine, freehold, trade factory.
6	City outpost, if no city: place 1.	6+6		+1 outpost, fortress, wall (on edge).
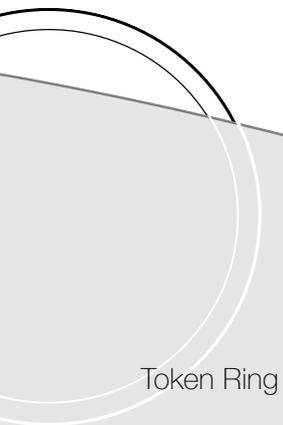
Cities and outposts must be at least 1 vertex (2 edges) apart. Farms/mines must be at vertices 1 edge from a city or outpost. Use colour, lines, or symbols to mark city claims.

Token Ring

C I R C L E   S E A
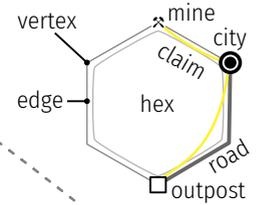
Right Road

Y E L L O W
L A N D S

Ch.1 The Land

D6	ROLLS (ON HEXES)	+	MATCHES
1	Mountain	1+1	Volcano, pass (add to terrain 1: mountain), caves (add to 1), crater (can repl. 1 or 2).
2	Plain or plateau	2+2	Waste, salt pan, glass (can repl. 2 or 3), dune (next to sea), razorfield.
3	Rich soil	3+3	Farmyconid colony, forest (can repl. 2), jungle (next to 1), mandrake grove (add to 3).
4	River (start new at sea or lake)	4+4	All add to or next to 4: hot spring, rapids, dam, geyser, gorge, delta, canal.
5	Bay (hex includes sea) or lake	5+5	Port (add to 4 or 5), floating garden (add to 5), swamp (add to 4 or 5), desalination facility, aquifer pump.
6	Oldtech Remnant [of the Long Ago]	6+6	All add to 6: nutrifac, fabricator, stalk, holdfast, vault, gate, or dome.

Decapolis

Rugged terrain and rival city states make the Chartreusard province between the Lands of the Yellow and the Green into a bastion of bio-mechanodiversity and oldtech.

North

Safranj ►
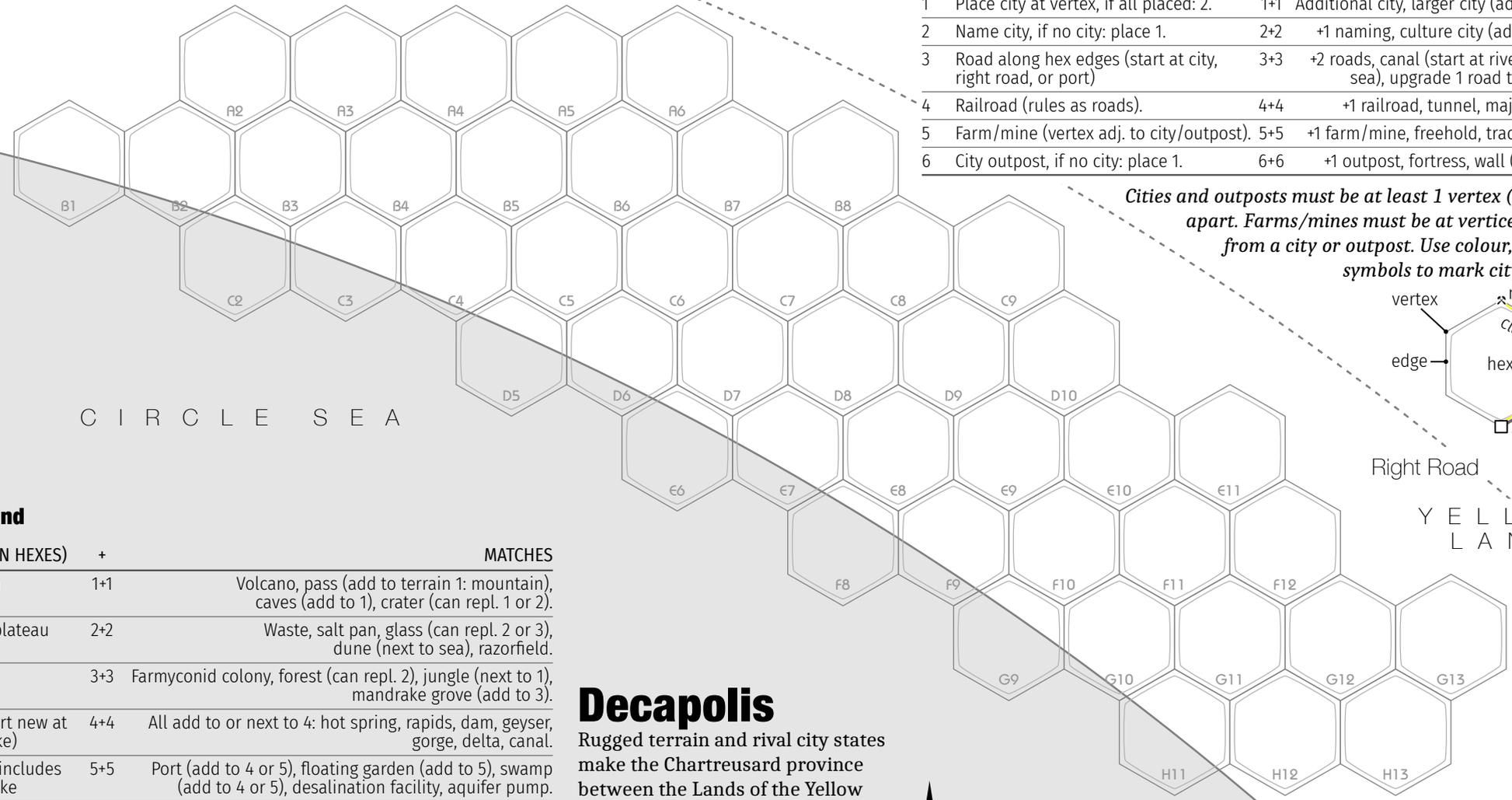
Idols

Each player gets a random idol each chapter. Two players can have the same idol in the same chapter. Each idol has a telos or purpose for each chapter. Satisfying an idol's telos grants numen.

Each idol also has an apocalypsis, a revealed effect that can be activated with a lucky roll or purchased with numen. Each subsequent purchase of an apocalypsis costs 1 numen more (so, the first purchase costs 1 numen, the second 2, the third 3, etc.) A player can use the apocalypsis before or after their usual turn actions.

1. Iron Virgin

A holy comfort golem preserved in amber and acrylic.

Telos, Ch 1 • Grants 1 numen for each vertex that touches 3 mountains (terrain 1). Each vertex counts once.

Telos, Ch 2 • Grants 1 numen for every three connected railroad segments. Each segment counts once.

Apocalypsis • Roll 1,1,1. Place a sculpted mountain or replace a mountain (terrain 1) with a sculpted mountain. All cities next to the sculpted mountain gain culture (π). One adjacent oldtech remnant activates and becomes a special feature.

2. Sky Mother-Father

The brood roc in silver and ebony, with four wings outstretched.

Telos, Ch 1 • Grants 1 numen for every 3 plains (or 2+2 features) touching a mountain (terrain 1). Each plain only counts once.

Telos, Ch 2 • Grants 2 numen for each city next to two rich soils (terrain 3).

Apocalypsis • Roll 2,2,2. Replace an existing hex with a fertile crater (counts as rich soil). Adjacent cities or farms are destroyed and replaced with ruins. This cannot extend a chapter.

3. Golden Gremlin

Its eyes swivel with hunger, its fur glistens with quicksilver.

Telos, Ch 1 • Grants 1 numen for every 3 rich soils (or 3+3 features) in a row. Each hex only counts once.

Telos, Ch 2 • Grants 1 numen for each city with two adjacent mines or farms.

Apocalypsis • Roll 3,3,3. Place a plateau (terrain 2) of compacted machine fossils or replace a mountain or lake with a machine deposit (terrain 2). All cities next to the machine feature gain wealth (*).

4. Waterman

Tangled hair like kelp and a face both greedy and giving.

Telos, Ch 1 • Grants 1 numen for every river hex adjacent to two hexes with rich soil (terrain 3) and/or a lake (terrain 5).

Telos, Ch 2 • Grants 2 numen for each city next to two water terrains (terrain 4 or 5).

Apocalypsis • Roll 4,4,4. Shift a river one hex, without breaking the flow of the river. The previous hex is replaced with rich soil. The edge the river crosses is wiped clean. The vertices at either end are also destroyed. This cannot extend a chapter. The player may spend 1 numen per additional hex shifted in the same flood.

5. Crab Bringer

A dolphin-human hybrid with ruby eyes and adamant teeth.

Telos, Ch 1 • Grants 1 numen for each bay or lake (or 5+5 feature) adjacent to two hexes with mountains (terrain 1) and/or rich soil (terrain 3).

Telos, Ch 2 • Grants 2 numen for each oldtech remnant (terrain 6) next to 2 cities.

Apocalypsis • Roll 5,5,5. Expand an existing rich soil (3) special feature by 1 hex. The edge the new forest crosses is wiped clean. The vertices at either end are also destroyed. This cannot extend a chapter.

6. Clockwork Michael

A god born of a machine.

Telos, Ch 1 • Grants 1 numen for each oldtech special terrain.

Telos, Ch 2 • Grants 1 numen for each city connected to the largest transport network (combined road and railroad).

Apocalypsis • Roll 6,6,6. Activate an oldtech remnant. Replace it with an oldtech special feature or a terrain of choice. In chapter 2, immediately add a city or outpost to a legal vertex of the transformed hex.

7. Green Firebringer

The teacher of destruction.

Telos, Ch 1 • Grants 1 numen for each destroyed or altered hex.

Telos, Ch 2 • Grants 2 numen for each city with 2 or more culture (ππ) or size (**).

Apocalypsis • Combined value of rolls is greater than 18. Increase the size or culture of a city by 1, reduce the size or value of another city by 1. If a reduced city has no culture or size, it is destroyed.

Capital Events

These are myths in the history of the land. Not all truly happened, some were perhaps forgotten, but these have left their legacy. Each capital event can only occur once.

One (1) Numen Events

1. The amber flood. A low-lying hex next to a water terrain is covered in synthetic amber.
2. The deep silting. A bay is replaced with rich soil.
3. The eating sea. A bay extends one hex inland.
4. The great burner raid. A settled hex is burned, rich soil is replaced with plain. Adjacent cities are fortified.
5. The centaur khan's army. An army of self-propelled golem chariots is excavated. It bursts out, leaving a trail of devastation and opportunity.
6. Starfall. A meteorite strike leaves a deposit of fast star metal that increases the wealth of adjacent cities.

Two (2) Numen Events

1. Fire in the sky. A star comes to visit. Its fires scorch the lands. Three adjacent hexes lose forest cover (terrain 3), lakes dry out, and plains turn to dust.
2. The rising wall. Six consecutive edges at the border of the region become a cliff.
3. Smoke on the water. Eldritch mist blocks access to the Circle Sea across six consecutive edges at the region's border.
4. Arcane aqueduct. An elevated canal in the sky crosses 1 hex, connecting two water terrains. It counts as a transport connection.
5. Half-real city. A ghostly, half-real city appears at a vertex … or replaces an existing city. New cities can be built adjacent to the abandoned city.
6. Manifestation of the Howl. A demiurge group consciousness present in the wailing of a pack of dogheads takes up residence on the region's borders. An impassable dome of ill-existence blocks of 3 edges of the region, but adjacent cities and outposts regularly discover far-future magical artefacts on its margins.

terrain hex can be treated as rich soil for farming. All adjacent cities gain size and culture.
2. Division bell. Three hexes in a row are replaced with a straight, glass-walled canyon. Features in the way of the tolling of the heaven bell are, obviously, destroyed.
3. Ladder from heaven. A fast star drops a stalk to ground at a vertex. This becomes a trading depot for sending raw materials to the fast star in exchange for divine fineries and fripperies. Adjacent cities gain two culture and size.
4. Anger of the wave. All coastal hexes are struck. Every city loses an outpost. If it has no outposts, it is destroyed.
5. Short-lived confederation. Under a charismatic precognitive leader called "The Monkey", who swears they'll make it right this time, the Decapolis is briefly united. It sweeps out to conquer the Yellow and Greenlands. For three generations, the north-east of the Circle Sea prospers. Then the governors rebel and war comes to Decapolis. The capital city is destroyed. Three other cities each grow larger (*).
6. A cartel of necromancer poets

Five (5) Numen Events

1. Sun of god. A permanent, tiny sun manifests inside a mountain hall. A mountain

unleash a cultural renaissance when they accidentally revive an entire gene-artist colony. One city gains 4 culture, another gains 3 culture, a third gains 2 culture and the right to call itself the birthplace of the onion-and-skull style.
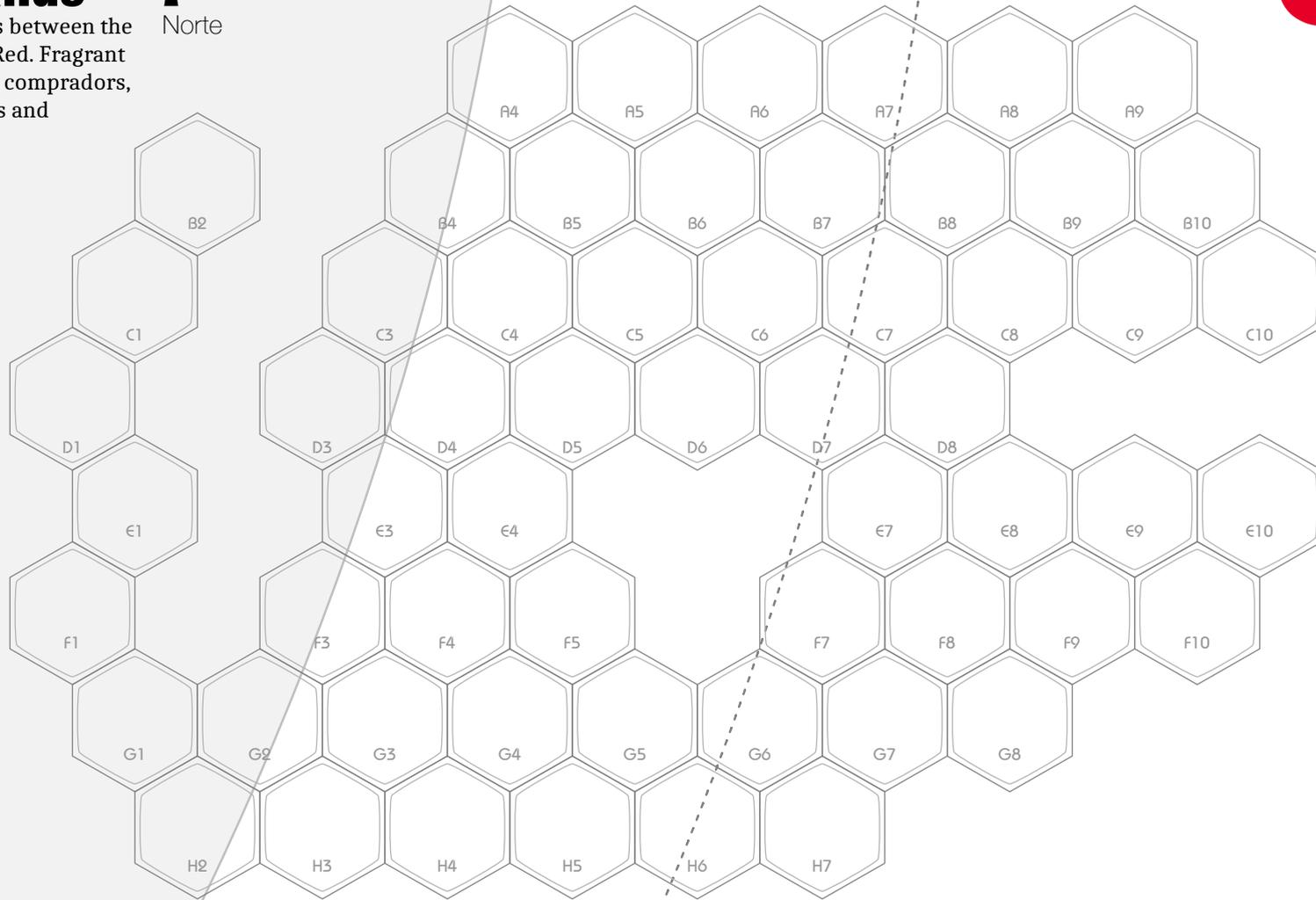
Orange Lands

The underrated realms between the Yellow Lands and the Red. Fragrant orchards and frivolous compradors, overlooked hinterlands and hedonarchic resorts.

Norte

Coming sooner or later

A4 A5 A6 A7 A8 A9

B2 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10

C1 C3 C4 C5 C6 C7 C8 C9 C10

D1 D3 D4 D5 D6 D7 D8

E1 E3 E4 E7 E8 E9 E10

F1 F3 F4 F5 F7 F8 F9 F10

G1 G2 G3 G4 G5 G6 G7 G8

H2 H3 H4 H5 H6 H7

◄ Fleet Isles

THINLANDS

CIRCLE SEA   REDLANDS

Thank You

For reading this far.

If you enjoyed Monochrome Rainbow (Libre), you can follow and/or support its author at the following meta-real locations:

Patreon (for games): www.patreon.com/wizardthieffighter

Substack (for stories): lukarejec.substack.com/
(aka. Xenon Elasmotherium)

Itch.io (for pdfs): wizardthieffighter.itch.io

Exalted Funeral (for physical things): https://www.exaltedfuneral.com/

Website (for a hub): www.wizardthieffighter.com

Twitter (for tweets): https://twitter.com/stratometaship

Instagram (for pictures): https://www.instagram.com/wizardthieffighter/

You can, of course, also share this pdf.