

Dime ADVENTURES



CIRCLES IN THE SKY

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Writing and Layout by
Thorin Tabor

Edited by
Tracy Lachowicz

Saga Machine system by
Thorin Tabor

Tab Creations is
Ben Goreham, Jesse Pingnot, Matthew Pennell, Thorin Tabor

Exceptional playtesting by
Kat Davis, Carroll Emerson, Ben Goreham, Micah Hollis-Symynkywicz, Matthew Kamm,
Jesse Pingnot, Brian Richburg, Atom Smith, Darin Strouts, Eric Wirtanen

Art by
Artem Stokolya, Enmanuel Martinez Lema, Jacob Blackmon,
Joselito Mahilum, Phoebe Herring, Storn Cook



Tab Creations



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INTRODUCTION

Contained in this book is a complete scenario for *Dime Adventures* that can either be used as a series of short globe-spanning adventures or as the framework for a longer campaign. The material presented here should be enough to cover somewhere between two and five evenings of play, depending on the pacing provided by the GM and the actions of the players. *Circles in the Sky*, however, has been specifically designed to be expanded as the GM sees fit, giving the player characters the opportunity to see many sites and have many adventures around the world.

Over the course of the scenario, the heroes will plan an expedition, fight sky-pirates, investigate a murder, explore a hidden temple, run up against a mysterious cult, get caught in a border dispute, and, finally, save the world from a binding ritual orchestrated by a sinister madman.

SYNOPSIS

The heroes have been chosen to be among the first people to ever circumnavigate the globe by airship! This ship, the *Shining Hope*, is scheduled to depart from Saint Louis at the opening of the 1904 World's Fair, traveling westward around the globe, and making it back to Saint Louis before the close of the World's Fair in October. The expedition's organizers have been planning a grand welcoming ceremony for the ship's return, commemorating the journey's completion.

This expedition has been publicized widely in the media, and the heroes' pictures have been plastered around the city. This publicity is necessary to raise money for the expedition, as it is proving to be quite expensive.

Towards this end, the expedition has also taken on several sponsors, who are each paying large sums of money. In return, the expedition has agreed to carry promotional materials for each sponsor. Along the way, the heroes are to have their pictures taken holding signs with the logo for each sponsor in front of famous landmarks, putting in a good word about the provisions the sponsor has provided, generally providing good word of mouth, etc.

Unknown to the heroes at the beginning of the adventure, one of these sponsors is not what they seem. They are being manipulated by the sinister Lord Wilburbottom. This sponsor has provided supplies to the expedition, and hidden among these supplies is an occult rod with potent mystic properties—the Iki Rod.

The sponsor plans to use the rod—and the heroes' expedition—in a binding ritual of unprecedented scale and ambition. As the Iki Rod moves, it is effectively drawing the invisible line of a binding circle. As the expedition travels around the world, they will carry the rod with them. Once the expedition has completed its circumnavigation of the globe, the binding circle will be complete.

The sponsor plans to then retrieve the Iki Rod, and use it to conduct a ritual utilizing the newly created binding circle. This ritual will

enslave anyone caught within the circle—you know, the whole world!

Along the way, the presence of this artifact will attract unwanted attention from paranormal denizens around the globe. The heroes will also have other, more normal, concerns to worry about, as the expedition encounters complications, such as pirates, hostile locals, engine troubles and inclement weather.

By the end of the expedition's journey, the heroes must hold everything together, uncover the sponsor's villainous plot, stop the ritual from enslaving the world and survive to claim their spotlight and glory!

SCENARIOS

This adventure is structured as a series of scenarios that the heroes encounter as they continue their journey around the globe. The first scenario launches the expedition and sets events in motion. The middle scenarios encompass interesting events that happen along the way, and provide foreshadowing and insight regarding the overarching plot. The final scenario follows the expedition on its return to Saint Louis, and brings the adventure to its exciting conclusion.

Ideally, each scenario will take about a single session to play through, allowing GMs and players some time to pursue the heroes' personal interests. This framework also makes it easy for GMs to come up with exciting ideas for entirely new scenarios, and insert them into the adventure, as the expedition makes its way around the world.

The different scenarios included in this adventure are briefly described below:

- **Dawn of an Expedition:** In the first scenario, the heroes are introduced to
- important NPCs, learn of their sponsors, make an appearance before the adoring public, investigate an untimely murder and encounter a strange cult.
- **Problems with Pirates:** In this scenario, the characters run afoul of a group of sky pirates, have an aerial battle, trudge through the jungle and explore a mysterious ruined temple.
- **Up the Mountain:** In this scenario, the heroes are accidentally caught in a border dispute, attract attention from a local witch-doctor, must undertake a difficult photo for their sponsors, climb Mount Kilimanjaro and rescue their ship.
- **Triumphant Return:** In the final scenario, the heroes make it back to St. Louis, completing their expedition, but they must solve the riddle of the Iki Rod and stop a villainous sponsor from enslaving the world.

THE EXPEDITION

The heroes in this adventure will be leading an expedition to circumnavigate the globe by airship. This lends itself to many interesting character types. A pilot or captain for the airship would be useful. Someone to oversee the expedition's security would also be helpful. The venture could use a doctor present. An engineer to oversee the ship's function would be an obvious help. An explorer with experience in distant lands or with logistics for large endeavors would be helpful. Perhaps a celebrity would help cement the expedition in the public's eye. And, of course, grunts are necessary to do much of the actual work.

Any of these roles not taken by the players will be filled by NPCs who, while competent, lack the panache and moxie of the heroes.

Ready-Made Heroes

The player characters presented in *Dime Adventures: Ready-Made Heroes* are ideal for use with *Circles in the Sky*. Simply print out the character sheets, let players choose which character each prefers and you are good to go!

Of particular note are: Maximilian who has experience leading expeditions, Oswald who has experience piloting vehicles, Gernot and Nofoto who both have experience in Africa, and Dr. Blake who has connections to Lord Wilburbottom.

THE SHINING HOPE

Players should feel free to name the airship, but by default this adventure refers to the ship as the Shining Hope. It's a large vessel by the airship standards of the time, and is equipped with the latest and greatest esoteric airship technology. Few expenses have been spared—one reason the expedition badly needs sponsors. The fact that the technology in the ship is so cutting edge also will explain why it is so difficult to find replacement parts when the ship inevitably breaks down.

The ship's balloon has a light wooden frame that is roughly 420 ft. (128 m long). It fills with hydrogen to provide lift and is driven by an experimental Tesla coil-based engine to provide thrust. The airship can lift up to about 10 tons (9000 kg), all of which fits in a cabin that's roughly 80 ft. (24 m) long. The ship has a crew of 10, of which about three are on duty at any given time. It's also built to carry up to about half a dozen passengers, depending on how cramped they wish to be.

THE CREW

The heroes will be taking a variety of crew members with them on the expedition. These crew members mostly serve to handle the “non-adventuring” work, give the GM a voice to make suggestions and provide color along the way. If, for example, one of the players wants to be the captain of the airship, the GM should simply swap that NPC crew member out in favor of the player. The crew members are listed below:

- Bianca Casaus is the captain of the airship, and can also act as a pilot when needed.
- Amos Ludlow and Vedran Tušek are pilots and the next in command.
- Hugo Schutz is the cook and Uzayr Lund is a guard.
- Asil Saqqat, Yosefu Okun and Furuse Mashai are porters on the expedition.

In addition to the crew members described above, there are two other NPCs that are critical to the plot of the adventure, and as such the GM should not switch them out. These are Robert J. Harper, the expedition's publicist, and Joe Dukes, a porter working for the expedition.

It turns out, however, that neither of these two NPCs will be traveling with the expedition. Robert J. Harper will remain in St. Louis to promote the expedition, but will be in frequent contact by telegraph. Joe Dukes, on the other hand, will be murdered in the first scenario. His death will set much of that scenario into motion.

- Stats will not likely be relevant for Joe Dukes, but if by some chance they are, use the Crew Member stats presented on the next page.
- Robert J. Harper should use the Socialite stat block on page 227 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.

Crew Member

"We're making history here, and I'm just glad to be part of it!"

Str 4, **Dex** 4, **Spd** 4, **End** 5, **Int** 4, **Per** 5, **Chr** 4, **Det** 5

Defense 6/13, **Willpower** 6/13, **DR** 0, **HP** 9, **Wealth** 3, **Lifestyle** 3

Skills: Athletics 2, Mechanics 2, Melee 2, Socialize 2, Streetwise 2, Vehicles 2

Fists: +4♥ vs. Defense (♠5/♥3/♦2/♣1).

♣ **Grapple:** On a successful hit, the crewman establishes a grapple on the target.

Professional Skill: Each crew member has a job to perform on the expedition. This provides one relevant skill, specific to the crew member, at rank 3. For example, an engineer may have Mechanics 3 or a ship's porter may have Athletics 3.

▲ **Equipment:** Clothes, Rope

Use this stat block for any member of the airship's crew, including the captain. All of these crew members have been chosen for their tenacity and their willingness to brave the far reaches of the world.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM MR. HARPER

Throughout the expedition the Shining Hope will need to stop at cities and other locales for supplies and maintenance. During these stops the heroes will often find telegrams waiting for them, sent by their publicist, Mr. Harper.

Usually these messages will be fairly mundane in nature. For example, Mr. Harper may be letting the heroes know where he has arranged for them to pick up supplies next, or what photos their sponsors are requesting. Other times they may bear news from home, such as what people in the press are saying about the expedition or happenings at the World's Fair.

These communications may also be used as hooks for adventures along the way. For example, one of the sponsors may request a particular action (as happens in "Up the Mountain," see page 23). Other times, they may deliver news of what to expect as the heroes enter a new region, prompting the heroes to

act. For example, a communication may warn about wars, spies, mysterious circumstances, terrible storms or even personal events that would affect a particular player character.

How the GM should present these communications from Mr. Harper depends on the scope of the adventure the GM is intending to run. If the GM is planning to use *Circles in the Sky* as the framework for an expansive campaign, she should have the heroes arrive in these cities, receive the communication and maybe make up events in the city to add to the campaign.

On the other hand, if the GM is attempting to run this adventure in a couple sessions, sticking strictly to the presented events, these communications can be used as transitions between each of the scenarios. For reference, imagine the travel scenes in the *Indiana Jones* movies, where the journey is drawn as a line across the map. The telegram from Mr. Harper could be thought of as a voiceover during these scenes, marking the transition from one scenario to the next.



THE SPONSORS

At the beginning of the adventure, Harper has three sponsors lined up for the expedition. The three sponsors are listed below.

- **Kampbell's Soup:** A well-established soup company that has provided the expedition with money and several pallets of canned soup concentrate.
- **Sgt. Pepper:** An up-and-coming soda pop company looking to cement a reputation in the public eye. They have provided funds, syrup and a variety of flags with the company logo.
- **Pamble & Grocter:** Another well-established company, with a long history in the soap and candy markets. They have provided cash and grooming supplies.

One of these sponsors is not what it seems. It is a front controlled by the sinister

madman, Lord Nigel Wilburbottom, an expert in the occult (see the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook, page 245). In order to keep players on their toes, which sponsor is the front has been left up to the GM. Pick one of the three.

REPLACEMENT CHARACTERS

Given the premise of the adventure, it may seem difficult at first to fit in new player characters after the expedition has already launched. Below are a number of potential ways to introduce new PCs after the initial scenario:

- Early on in the expedition it is possible to discover a stowaway on the airship. A new hero could have many reasons for wanting to quickly leave St. Louis.
- The heroes will have a number of NPCs with them on the expedition, performing manual labor and crewing the ship.

Perhaps the new hero has always been with them as one of these laborers, and is just not stepping up to take the spotlight.

- The expedition's publicist is always looking for what would make the expedition more appealing to the public, and perhaps he has arranged the expedition to pick up the new hero, who has been chosen to appeal to a particular demographic.
- Of course, the heroes are likely to meet many interesting people along the way as they travel around the globe. Any of these people could sign on with the expedition mid-voyage, particularly if the new hero possesses skills the expedition is missing.



Other Adventures

Circles in the Sky can be used alone or in conjunction with other published *Dime Adventures* scenarios. Below are some notes on how to combine this adventure with others.

- **World's Fair:** This is a location-based scenario that can easily be inserted at either the beginning or end of *Circles in the Sky*, since it also begins and ends at the World's Fair. Perhaps the heroes arrive at the fair ahead of the Shining Hope's launch and need to perform tasks to prepare for the expedition. While perusing these tasks, they come across the adventure hooks as presented in *World's Fair*.
- **Skull-Spider Island:** Found in the *Dime Adventures: Quick-Start*, this scenario can be easily inserted after the heroes leave Europe and before they arrive back in North America. In this case, the Monster from the Deeps is instead a Monster from the Sky that forces the airship to land on the beach and need repairs. The Eye of Wadjet can be replaced with an artifact the heroes are carrying with them. Otherwise, the scenario can proceed as written.
- **Expedition Beyond Mount Terror:** This adventure is difficult to directly integrate into *Circles in the Sky*, as it is another expedition headed in a different direction. That said, it could easily be ran either before or after the events in this scenario, as the continuing exploits of the heroes heading out for a second record-setting feat of exploration.

OTHER SCENARIO IDEAS

Game Masters who want to use *Circles in the Sky* as an expanded campaign framework can easily add new scenarios between those included in this book. It makes sense that these added scenarios cover other regions of the world, as the Shining Hope completes its journey. Ideas for these additional scenarios are included below.

- As the Shining Hope passes the Rocky Mountains, the heroes spot a crashed Hitch'nyv ship. The strange energy radiating from this crash site causes the airship's engines to momentarily falter, bringing the expedition down near the wreckage. The heroes will have to explore the ship to shut down whatever energy is interfering with the engines. This can also be used to foreshadow the critical engine component featured in "Problems with Pirates."
- As the expedition reaches Fusang, the heroes must stop to stock up with supplies before they begin their long journey across the Pacific. A telegram waiting from Mr. Harper, however, has the first request from one of the expedition's sponsors, and the political climate in Fusang is far from stable. This can be used to foreshadow the tensions in the Chinese colony in "Up the Mountain."
- As the heroes are flying across the Pacific, one of them spots a large land mass that doesn't appear on any of their maps. When the expedition stops to investigate, they find themselves on the lost continent of Mu! The heroes may make themselves at home, at the insistence of the locals, but the inhabitants won't want to let the expedition leave,

and the entire land will disappear with the coming of the morning dawn.

- As the Shining Hope makes its way across India and stops for supplies, a mad scientist with a subservient squad of automatons will attempt to hijack the ship in an effort to use it to reach a mythological land hidden in the Himalayas.
- While the expedition is in Arabia, one of the crew members finds a bottle with a genie and is granted a wish. She wishes for more importance in the expedition. Suddenly the heroes suddenly find that the rest of the crew and everyone else recognizes her as the hero, and they're the hired help! They must find the cause of this change in reality and correct things. Unfortunately, the crew member no longer has the bottle or the genie, and the heroes must track it down.
- As the heroes are flying across the Sahara, a fierce sandstorm forces the airship to land. While the storm is raging all around, isolating the expedition, the spirits of a battle long past possess the crew and force them to them fight, reenacting the ancient battle. The heroes must put a stop to this before the crew kill each other!
- While the expedition is stopped in Spain, gearing up for the trip across the Atlantic, a woman attempts to book passage to the World's Fair. She is a spy working for the Portuguese against the Spanish. Her meeting with the heroes, however, does not go unnoticed by spies working for the Holy Roman Empire, who act against the heroes. The hydrogen reserves for the ship are stolen, and the heroes must find a replacement supply. Meanwhile, the covert actions continue on both sides.



DAWN OF AN EXPEDITION

In this scenario the heroes are introduced to their publicist, learn of their sponsors, make an appearance before the adoring public, investigate an untimely murder and encounter a strange cult. All of this is designed to set the plot of the adventure into motion, launching the expedition amid mysterious circumstances and sending the heroes on their way around the globe.

MAKE A SPEECH

The scenario begins with the heroes getting ready to go out on stage before the adoring public. They are in St. Louis at the opening of the 1904 World's Fair. The expedition's publicist, Robert J. Harper, is currently out on stage giving a warm-up speech before the crowd. He soon concludes his introduction and waves for one of the heroes to go out on stage to make a speech.

Hopefully one of the players will have her hero seize the initiative, and head out on stage to make a speech. If multiple heroes want to ham it up, so much the better! If, however, no hero volunteers, Harper will continue gesturing for a minute or two as the crowd grows quiet and then begins to boo.

- Impressing the crowd is a Chr/socialize-12 or Chr/persuade-12 flip. Give this action a bonus if the player accompanied the flip by roleplaying out a decent speech.

The players won't know it yet, but if the crowd comes away impressed by the heroes,

later in the scenario during the investigation, they will find it easier to ask around about the murder, as people from the crowd remember them in a positive way.

AFTER THE SPEECHES

After the speeches, Harper will call all the heroes together to discuss some important logistics regarding the expedition. The first thing he will do is to introduce the heroes to the rest of the crew that they will be taking with them. More on the crew can be found on pages 5-6.

Make sure to introduce Joe Dukes, who will be a porter for the expedition. Play Joe up as jolly and likable, if a little bit slow in the head. Harper will ask the PCs if they need any bags brought up to the airship, the Shining Hope, and will have Joe do it. Even if they don't, he will send Joe off to do one final check of the airship before its official launch tomorrow morning.

Meanwhile, Harper will explain to the heroes the importance of sponsors and funding. He will describe the three sponsors for the expedition (see page 7). He will also explain that the heroes are to carry sponsor-provided provisions with them, occasionally stopping along the way to take photos with the sponsors' logo in front of famous landmarks of whatnot.

Finally, Harper will suggest that the heroes get a drink and enjoy themselves tonight. This is their last night "in civilization," as they are to leave first thing in the morning in a



big departing ceremony that he's taken pains to schedule. To sweeten the deal, one of the local bars—the Prairie Dog—is providing free drinks tonight to members of the expedition.

OUT FOR DRINKS

The Prairie Dog turns out to be a rowdy little establishment in the basement of a commercial building not far from the World's Fair grounds. Outside, a half dozen demonstrators from the Anti-Saloon League stand, holding signs denouncing the evils of “the devil's brew.” Inside, a handful of different groups of people are drinking and making conversation when the heroes arrive.

EVENTS OF THE NIGHT

This is a good opportunity for the heroes to get to know each other or the rest of the crew (aside from Joe Dukes, who is not present). Give the players a chance to talk and do a little role-playing. If they're hesitant, or if the pace of the action in the session has slowed down too much, the GM should feel free to liven up the events of the evening with one or more of the events below.

BAR FIGHT

There are some rowdy people present at the bar this night, and two of them—Glen Starnes and Reed White—are just itching for a fight. If the heroes do anything to attract attention, they'll take the opportunity to start something. It will begin with Glen walking over, getting up into a hero's face and saying “You're in my seat. Move. Now!” Unless the hero immediately complies, Reed will throw a punch.

- Both Glen and Reed use the Thug stat block on page 229 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. They are minions.

“I KNOW YOU!”

It wasn't long ago that the heroes were making a speech in front of a large crowd. One of the people in the bar, Wilma Colburn, was present in the crowd and recognizes the heroes. How this encounter goes depends largely on how well the heroes did in their speech. If they knocked it out of the ballpark, Wilma will be falling all over herself to make the heroes' acquaintance and impress them. On the other hand, if the speech fell flat, Wilma may drop by to poke fun at the heroes.

Carrie Nation

"I cannot tell a lie; I did it with my little hatchet."

Str 4, **Dex** 4, **Spd** 5, **End** 6, **Int** 5, **Per** 4, **Chr** 6, **Det** 8

Defense 6/13, **Willpower** 9/19, **DR** 0, **HP** 10, **Wealth** 4, **Lifestyle** 4

Skills: Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Melee 3, Persuade 4, Streetwise 2

Hatchet: +5♥ vs. Defense (♠11/♥8/♦5/♣2).

♣ **Intimidating Fervor:** Increase the target's Fear consequence a severity, or two with a critical hit.

Righteous Cause: Increase Carrie's Bolstered consequence a severity every time she takes an action to smash bottle of booze.

Carrie Nation is a well-known radical prohibitionist, known for being arrested dozens of times for attacking the stocks of bars and saloons, smashing them with rocks or her hatchet.

- If stats become necessary for Wilma Colburn, use the Citizen stats on page 223 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.

"WITH MY LITTLE HATCHET"

Radical prohibitionist Carrie Nation is in town for the fair, and it turns out that she has chosen this night to target the Prairie Dog for "one of her little hatchetations." This means charging into the bar waving a hatchet and using it to smash all of the bottles and other alcohol on hand. Run this encounter during a lull in the conversation.

- With a successful Per/awareness-10 flip, a hero will spot Carrie as she enters the bar, and will have time to react before things escalate. Otherwise, the heroes will automatically notice as soon as the first bottles are smashed.
- Carrie Nation's stat block is found above.

Let the heroes react as they see fit. They could do anything from restraining her, to talking her down, to simply sitting back and watching events unfold.

IMPORTANT EVENTS

Whatever happens, there are two events that need to occur during the events of the night: the heroes should notice the attentions of the Men in Green and they should encounter Lord Wilburbottom. The latter event serves to introduce the character who will become the villain of the overall adventure. The former event serves to introduce the antagonists of this first scenario.

MEN IN GREEN

Either while the heroes are drinking at the bar or while they are making their way through the streets back to their hotel for the night, one of the heroes should notice a group of men all dressed in dark green suits keeping an eye on them. The men will look away if it becomes obvious that they have been spotted. Otherwise, they will keep their distance and continue their observation. These are secretly cultists of the True Form Foundation sent to keep an eye on the PCs.

If one of the heroes approaches these men, they will look uncomfortable and then one will claim that they were impressed by the heroes' speech earlier (regardless of how bad or good it was). If the heroes continue to give them attention, they will bolt, attempting to slip away into the night as soon as possible.

- This could lead to a chase (see the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook, page 128). If caught, the Men in Green will kill themselves before they can be questioned.

ENTER LORD WILBURBOTTOM

Either at the bar or immediately after the heroes leave, they will be accosted by a tall man with a fancy suit and British accent. Behind him is a dangerous-looking woman with a fencing saber hung at her side. These are Lord Nigel Wilburbottom and his companion, Ilyria Sinister.

The heroes will not know it yet, but Lord Wilburbottom owns a controlling share in one of the expedition's sponsors. He has already arranged for the Iki Rod to be placed in the heroes' airship. Before the expedition leaves St. Louis, however, he wants to meet the heroes in person and get a read on them and ponder if they might present a threat to his plans to enact the great binding ritual.

Wilburbottom will introduce himself and Ilyria. He will claim to be "a great fan." Play him up as agreeable, but creepy. Ideally he should stick out in the players' memories so that they will remember him during the final scenario. He will do little at this point, however, other than wish the heroes safe travels as they make their way in a circle.

- Lord Wilburbottom's stats can be found on page 245 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. Ilyria Sinister's stats can be found on page 244.

Behind the Scenes

Lord Wilburbottom, through one of the expedition's sponsors, has managed to sneak the Iki Rod onboard the Shining Hope, setting his plan to create an enormous binding circle into motion. He acquired this rod originally by stealing it from the Men in Green, and offshoot of the sinister True Form Foundation (see the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook, page 22). The theft, however, alerted the secretive Foundation as to Lord Wilburbottom's motives. They've sent the Men in Green to steal back the rod. They also believe the heroes to be cooperating with Lord Wilburbottom.

These agents snuck onto the Shining Hope and there encountered Joe Dukes, whom they murdered. After the murder, they frantically searched the ship for the Iki Rod, but were unable to locate it. Failing to find the rod, they returned to their rooms at the Gateway Hotel to regroup and plan their next action.

MURDER!

When it seems like the heroes have had enough boozing and make it back to their hotel for the night, they will be intercepted upon their arrival by Mr. Harper running up and distraughtly telling them in hushed tones that there's been a terrible murder aboard the airship—Joe is dead!

Harper will lead the heroes to the Shining Hope. Sure enough, Joe Dukes is lying dead on the floor of the cargo hold of the airship. Any hero who wishes can make a Per/investigation-8 flip to turn up the following clues:

- Examining the wound reveals that Joe was killed with a dagger to the back. He was taken by surprise (there are no signs of struggle).
- Examining the cargo reveals it was searched through, but nothing on the manifest is missing, suggesting they didn't find what they were looking for and nothing was added.
- A crumpled piece of paper can be found near the exit—a receipt for a room in the Gateway Hotel. It looks like receipt was used to clean blood from the dagger. There is no name or room number on the receipt.
- At the corner of a jagged crate edge, a shred of dark green cloth is caught. It is the exact same shade as the suits worn by the Men in Green.

If the heroes call the police or fail their investigation flips, the local constables will show up before the heroes can leave. The police will make a mess of the cargo hold as they search, but will turn up all of the clues above, conveying their contents to the heroes in the form of questions. For example, "There's a shred of green cloth here. Do you know anyone who was wearing this color?"

THE GATEWAY HOTEL

Hopefully the clues the heroes find at the scene will be enough to lead them to the Gateway Hotel and make them suspect the Men in Green. If not, Mr. Harper can nudge the heroes in the right direction

The Gateway Hotel is right next to the river. It's a large hotel, but:

- A Chr/socialize-10 flip will convince the clerk to direct them to the room with the men in green suits. The cultists actually have two rooms, and if the heroes knock on the door there will be no answer.
- Breaking in is an easy Dex/thievery-8 flip. Inside the heroes will find some mystic paraphernalia and full profiles and photos of all of the PCs! Make it seem as creepy as possible.
- Just when the heroes think that they've turned up everything in the room, have the cultists attack en masse! A Per/awareness-12 flip will allow a hero to hear them coming.
- The cultists will fight to the death, crying "You will not complete the circle!" They will explain nothing more, even if pressed. There are a number of cultists present equal to the number of heroes. Use the Cultist stats on page 224 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.

THE EXPEDITION MUST GO ON!

Harper is insistent that the heroes leave in the morning as planned. He's spent months booking the right place in the fairgrounds to launch the airship, promoting the event and selling tickets. If the expedition doesn't launch on time, they'll have angry would-be spectators and angry creditors. No matter what happens, the heroes will have to put on their best face and very publicly launch the airship at 9 am sharp.



PROBLEMS WITH PIRATES

In this scenario the heroes will run afoul of a group of sky pirates, have an aerial battle, trudge through the jungle and explore a mysterious ruined temple. Along the way they may acquire a useful tool that will serve in the finale of the adventure.

ONWARD TO ASIA

At the beginning of this scenario the heroes have been flying across the great Pacific Ocean for the last two weeks. It's been tough-going and they are short on supplies. Thankfully, however, they are nearing the end of their journey across the Pacific. Before them they can see a few islands and then a large swath of land—one of the distant jungle reaches of the Khmer Empire. They will need to stop very soon somewhere here to acquire food, water and new supplies for the ship.

SKY PIRATES!

This is when things get exciting. Nearby a Cambodian sky pirate airship has been lying in wait for the Shining Hope. It's been using the clouds for cover as the two airships have grown closer.

- Have the heroes each make Per/awareness-12 flips to notice the approach the pirate vessel. On a success, the heroes have a moment to prepare for the attack, otherwise the attack will come as a surprise.

BATTLE IN THE SKY

In the first round, the pirates will pull their airship close and then launch a multitude of grappling hooks at the Shining Hope. Other pirates will then begin to climb across the ropes onto the Shining Hope in droves. By the end of the first round, the heroes should clearly have many pirates to fight on the deck of the Shining Hope.

The pirates will drop onto the deck in many places at once—too many for the heroes to cover all the locations at once. Try to run this battle focused on the corner of the fighting where the heroes are, but at the end of each round take a moment to describe what's happening elsewhere on the ship, as the rest of the crew is kept busy fighting pirates. Also take a moment to describe how the pirate's ship is teeming with dozens of additional enemies.

Think of the pirates as attacking in waves. In the first wave the heroes will face a number of pirates equal to the number of heroes.

As the heroes are finishing off the first wave, the captain (or another crew member) will yell desperately for the heroes to use the ship's guns to drive off the pirate ship. If they don't take out or drive off the enemy ship, the pirates are likely to win due to sheer numbers.

Ideally this will send the heroes rushing to the ship's guns and initiate a second wave of fighting, where the heroes face off against a new wave of pirates trying to steal or disable the guns.

After the ship's guns are secured, the heroes can use them to shoot down the enemy airship.

- Use the Pirate stat block on page 227 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. They are all minions.
- Using the ship's guns and succeeding on a Dex/tactics-10 or Dex/guns-10 flip will successfully shoot down the enemy airship.

FLUX TRANSMOGRIFIER!

During the battle, while the heroes were occupied, another group of pirates managed to make their way below deck and raid the ship's machinery. Two of these pirates entered the engine room, stole a critical component and then fled back to their vessel. This was right before the pirate vessel was shot down.

As the heroes are binding their wounds or otherwise recovering from the battle, one of the crew members will run up from below deck yelling, "They stole it! They stole the flux transmogrifier!"

- A successful Int/mechanics-12 flip will let a hero know that this is a rare and critical component of the ship's engines. Otherwise, the crew member will go on to explain this for the hero's benefit.
- Without the stolen component, the Shining Hope won't be able to stay afloat long. A successful Dex/vehicles-10 flip will allow a hero to land the ship gently in a jungle clearing. On a failure, the landing will be less than gentle, dealing everyone onboard 5 damage.
- As the ship is landing, call for all other heroes to make a Per/awareness-8 flip. On a success, the hero will notice that the Shining Hope is landing in the jungle just a few miles from where the pirate vessel went down.

THROUGH THE JUNGLE

Once the Shining Hope has safely landed, the heroes can survey the damage from the battle. It's not insignificant, but any hero with mechanical expertise ought to be able to get it flying again—that is, if the heroes can retrieve the missing flux transmogrifier!

To do this, the heroes will need to either retrieve it from the pirates or take a similar component out of the crashed pirate vessel. Either way, this will involve a trek through the jungle to the pirates' crash site. If the heroes don't think of this on their own, have one of the crew suggest it.

- A successful Int/mechanics-10 flip will fix the ship, but this can't be accomplished until the characters have the missing component back in their possession.
- Finding their way to the pirates' crash site requires a successful Per/naturalist-10 flip and several hours of chopping their way through the dense jungle growth. On a success, the heroes will find their way directly there, perhaps encountering the below events en route. On a failure, the heroes will still eventually find their way, but not before an extremely exhausting trek. In this case each hero should each increase her Fatigue consequence a severity.

NECESSARY SUPPLIES

At some point one of the crew members will remind the heroes that the expedition is short on supplies, and before the pirates attacked, they had been planning to stop for resupply once they reached Asia. Now that the Shining Hope has been forced to land, no one knows how long they will be here and the crew is growing anxious. Gathering some

supplies—particularly food—would go a long way towards easing the crew's anxieties.

- A hero can gather food from the jungle with a successful Per/naturalist-10 flip.
- Alternatively, a hero can use social skills to ease the crew's anxieties with a successful Chr/socialize-12 flip.

TIGER!

As the heroes make their way through the jungle they will attract the attention of a hungry tiger. The tiger will silently begin to follow them, hoping to make one of them its dinner.

- Have the hero in the back of the party make a Per/awareness-10 flip. On a success, she spots the tiger approaching. On a failure, the tiger will gain surprise.
- Use the tiger stats on page 234 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. It will flee once it's reduced to 0 HP or less.

THE CRASH SITE

Eventually the heroes will come to the end of their trek. They will find that the pirate ship managed to land, keeping itself mostly intact in the process, if not exactly sky-worthy. It has landed in the jungle next to an ancient and vine-covered stone temple. The crashed ship is guarded by two pirates who will let out a shout and attempt to flee into the temple upon spotting the heroes.

- If necessary, use the Pirate stats on page 227 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. Both pirates are minions.
- A successful Per/investigate-8 flip at the landing site will reveal that most of the pirates perished in the crash, but at least a few of them have retreated into the ancient temple, probably to use it for shelter. They have taken the flux transmogrifier with them, along with any valuable parts from their own ship.



THE RUINED TEMPLE

The temple is a sprawling, partially-ruined structure made of stone and covered with vines. It is also littered with traps and other devious measures intended to keep away would-be raiders. As the heroes explore the temple, give them a few forking paths to choose from. Ultimately, however, the temple will lead them through three trap rooms and then to their final confrontation with the pirates and the temple's guardian.

POISON DART ROOM

As the heroes enter this room they should immediately notice the body of one of the sky pirates sprawled across the floor at the entryway of the room. A quick examination of the pirate will reveal that he is dead, killed by a poisoned dart sticking out of his side.

- A successful Per/investigate-10 flip will reveal small holes along the two side walls of the room. These seem to be linked to tiles in the



floor, such that the darts will shoot out of the walls when the wrong tiles are stepped on.

- If one of the heroes steps on the wrong tile, a dart will shoot out. A hero prepared for this can dodge the dart with a successful Spd-12 flip. Five tiles have to be crossed this way, at minimum, to make it across the room. Getting hit by the dart affects the hero with Cobra Venom (see page 135 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook).
- A successful Per/awareness-10 flip will allow a hero to notice that the wind through this room makes a certain pattern of whistling through the holes in the walls.
- If one of the heroes uses a stick or something to press on a tile, a successful Per/awareness-10 flip will allow the hero to notice that it causes a note to sound from somewhere in the temple. Different tiles produce different notes.

- Using the tiles to reproduce the pattern that the wind makes will get the heroes across the room without getting hit by poisoned darts. If the players don't think of this themselves, one of them might stumble upon this idea with a successful Int/lib-arts-10 flip.

OPEN COURTYARD

The heroes will come upon an open courtyard, its floor literally crawling with poisonous snakes. There is a door at the far side with a dead-looking pirate next to it. There is also a door on a ledge on the third floor of the temple above the courtyard. This is the correct door. The other door is nothing more than a trap with ejecting blades.

- A successful Per/awareness-10 flip will allow a hero to spot the third floor door.

- With an Int/naturalist-10 flip a hero can identify the snakes as poisonous. If a hero gets bit by a snake, use the mechanics for Cobra Venom (see page 135 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook).
- A hero might be able to get across the courtyard and up to the correct door without disturbing the snakes by jumping from clear spot to clear spot. This requires an extended Dex/athletics-12 flip.
- Opening the wrong door sets off an ejecting knife trap. The hero must succeed at a Spd-12 flip or take 10 damage.

COLLAPSING CEILING ROOM

When the heroes enter this room a pressure plate in the floor will trigger and cause the doors to rapidly seal. Then the ceiling will slowly collapse until all inside are dead.

- Making it out the doors before they seal requires a Spd-16 flip. A critical failure means the hero is pinned beneath the door, dealing 15 damage.
- Heroes trapped inside have one minute before the ceiling begins to crush them to death, although a desperate Str-16 flip might allow a hero to hold the ceiling up, delaying it an additional minute.
- A successful Per/investigate-10 flip will reveal a hidden control panel. A Dex/thievery-12 flip is then necessary to disarm the trap.

CENTER CHAMBER

Once the heroes have trekked through the temple past the three trap rooms, they will find six remaining pirates in the process of opening a sealed temple door. In fact, the pirates have just finished opening the door when the heroes arrive.

If the heroes start a fight, the pirates will flee into the darkened room beyond the door they have just opened. A round after that the screaming will begin. This is the sealed tomb of a once-important priest. Inside the tomb lurks a Temple Guardian, that will emerge and attack all characters—both heroes and pirates. The guardian starts by cutting off the exit, making it difficult to escape. The heroes will have to enter the tomb to retrieve the flux transmogrifier that one of the pirates has dropped there.

- There are six pirates. They are minions and more interested in running away than fighting. Use the Pirate stats on page 227 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.
- Use the Temple Guardian stats on page 240 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.
- Inside the tomb the heroes can retrieve the flux transmogrifier. It has been dropped on the floor next to a jeweled bracelet. This is the Bracelet of Xian. It's a potent protective artifact, providing the wearer with DR 2 (which doesn't stack with armor). It will also protect the wearer against the binding ritual in the finale of the adventure.
- The walls of the temple here are covered with ancient writing. This writing talks about the power of binding rituals, and the control they grant over people caught in the ritual circle. A hero can decipher some of this meaning with a successful Int/lib-arts-10 flip. Otherwise, a defeated pirate can babble about the literal writing on the wall as she dies.

THE RETURN

Once the heroes have survived this battle and have the flux transmogrifier, they can return to their ship, install it and fly onward, bringing this scenario to an end.



UP THE MOUNTAIN

In this scenario, the heroes are accidentally caught in a border war, attract attention from a local witch-doctor, must take a photo for their sponsors, climb Mount Kilimanjaro and, finally, must rescue the Shining Hope.

Zhou has been forbidden. This means that the heroes are going to have to land the Shining Hope in Papal Somaliland, and then trek across the border to Mount Kilimanjaro by land.

MOUNTAIN PLAN

At this point in the expedition, the heroes have arrived at the border between Papal Somaliland and the Chinese colony of Fei Zhou. In their last telegram from Mr. Harper, they received two critical pieces of information:

- One of their sponsors is insisting that they get a picture taken on top of Mount Kilimanjaro, otherwise they will cut funding for the expedition. (This will be the sponsor which is the front for Lord Wilburbottom.)
- Unfortunately, however, political tensions between Fei Zhou and Papal Somaliland are high, and air traffic in and around Fei

BORDER TOWN

As the heroes arrive at the colonial border they will quickly learn that in the time since Mr. Harper's last telegraph, war has broken out between Fei Zhou and Papal Somaliland. The first news of this will come in the form of a Somaliland military squad demanding, over some sort of megaphone, that they allow the unit to board and search their airship for enemies, otherwise they will be fired upon.

If the heroes resist, the military unit will fire a single warning shot, then begin to attempt to seize the ship in earnest.

If the Heroes Try to Fly

It's possible that the heroes will attempt to fly to the top of the mountain, in defiance of any air travel ban. If they do this, they will be flying into an active war zone and will be mistaken by both sides as enemy forces. If the heroes come up with this plan, try to give them fair warning. If they persist, however, don't be afraid to shoot down the Shining Hope. The PCs can heroically save the ship from a disastrous crash landing, confront the forces that shot them down and spend a few days fixing the airship. These few days should be sufficient to introduce the critical events of this scenario.

- Use the Soldier stats on page 228 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. There are a number of soldiers equal to twice the number of PCs. They are all minions.

If allowed, the soldiers will do a quick search of the ship and inform the heroes that, due to the war, they are forbidden from taking the Shining Hope any further into Fei Zhou. They can, however, leave it here and trek by foot further inland to do whatever they wish. There is the border town of Biānchéng just a quarter mile away. They can buy supplies there and do whatever it is they need to do.

Once in Biānchéng, it is obvious that it is a Fei Zhou town under occupation by Papal Somaliland forces. If the heroes are to hike to the mountain, they will likely need supplies and maybe a guide.

WATCHED...

As the heroes go about their business in town, they will be watched by Tong Tuhān, a local witch-doctor. He is sensitive to the flows of paranormal energy, and the time the heroes have spent in proximity to the Iki Rod has left its mark on them. He knows that they reek of sinister magic and suspects that they are in league with dark forces.

- Have a hero make a Per/awareness-10 flip to notice that they're being watched.
- If necessary, Tong, the witch-doctor, uses the Mystic stats found on page 226 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.

Tong doesn't plan to make a move right away, but he wants the heroes gone. If they attempt to speak to him, he will simply say that he wants no part of their foul magic. He tells them to leave and never come back. He refuses to explain any more.

A NATIVE GUIDE

As the heroes gather supplies, they will be approached by Dalmar Asad. He introduces himself fluently in whatever languages the heroes speak, then offers his services as a guide. In return he wants a Cost 5 payment. The heroes may choose to take him up on his offer, or turn him down.

- If necessary, use the Tribesman stats on page 229 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.

APPROACHED BY THE RESISTANCE

As the heroes begin to leave the settlement, they will be approached by one more character. She introduces herself simply as Danie. She is a member of the Fei Zhou resistance. She wants the heroes to spy on the Somaliland forces once they're back in their airship—nothing much, just note any troop movements and send this by telegram when they next stop. The heroes can get involved here however they wish, either turning her down, ignoring her or taking her up on her offer.

CAMPING FOR THE NIGHT

The trek to the mountain takes long enough that the heroes will have to camp for the night on the way there. During the night they will be attacked by a group of masked men who have been tipped off by Tong, the witch-doctor, that the heroes are dark sorcerers. They will use hit-and-run tactics with the goal of driving the heroes off. They are extremely afraid of the heroes and what dark magic they might possess.

- Use the Tribesman stats on page 229 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. There are a number of tribesmen equal to the number of heroes. They are all minions.

MOUNT KILIMANJARO

Once the heroes make it to the mountain, they will still need to climb all the way up, and get their picture taken on the summit. The GM should run several events along the way, but the real climax of this adventure won't happen until the heroes reach the top. Some challenges along the way might include:

- They may come upon a wounded traveler. First aid and a Dex/medicine-12 flip is enough to get him moving, although the heroes may want to escort him to safety.
- An End/athletics-12 flip may be necessary to get up a difficult path without increasing each hero's Fatigue consequence a severity.
- One of the heroes may need to make a Per/naturalist-10 flip to avoid a sudden rock slide due to a fierce storm as the heroes approach the summit. Failure results in 5 damage to each hero and the possibility of sliding further down the mountain.

THE SUMMIT

By the time the heroes reach the summit, a storm will be upon the mountain. The rain will pour down in thick sheets and lightning will flash around them. The heroes can set up to take their picture without too much difficulty, but just as they are wrapping up, they will be attacked by local warriors—either those from the other night or those avenging them. Have the fight take place in the storm, right at the edge of a tall cliff. Make it dramatic! During the fight any guide will try to grab the heroes' stuff and run.

- Use the Tribesman stats on page 229 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. There are a number of tribesmen equal to the number of heroes. They are all minions.

- Tong, the witch-doctor, is also present. Use the Mystic stats on page 226 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. Right before he is defeated, he will shout about the heroes carrying evil artifacts with them.

BACK TO THE SHIP

There is one more problem left for the heroes to face: Once they have trekked down the mountain and back to their ship, they will find military forces attempting to break in and steal it. In fact, any NPCs left on their ship are in the process of attempting to fight them off.

- Use the Soldier stats on page 228 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. There are a number of soldiers equal to twice the number of PCs. They are all minions.
- The soldiers were expecting to capture the airship without the heroes being present, and weren't expecting a serious fight. Now that the heroes have returned, things have changed. A hero can talk them down with a successful Chr/persuade-10 flip for convincing words or a Str/persuade-10 flip for intimidation.

The forces attacking the ship can be from either Somaliland or Fei Zhou, depending on who the heroes have angered more. Once the heroes have fought these troops off, they can get in their ship and fly it around the war zone, stopping somewhere along the way to send the news of climbing Mount Kilimanjaro by telegraph. The response forwarded by Mr. Harper will be from Lord Wilburbottom directly:

"Dear Expedition, I understand that you have completed your ascent up Mount Kilimanjaro. Excellent! It is an anchor from which the immaterial forces of the world flow. I am making my preparations for the return ceremony, and await the arrival of the Shining Hope back at Saint Louis. Sincerely, Lord Wilburbottom."



TRIUMPHANT RETURN

In the final scenario, the heroes make their triumphant return to St. Louis, completing the expedition. However, they must still solve the riddle of the Iki Rod and stop Lord Wilburbottom from enslaving the world.

RETURN CEREMONY

When the heroes finally make it back to Saint Louis they will be met with much fanfare and publicity. Mr. Harper has been planning this event for months, putting the arrangements in place and publicizing the heroes' return.

As the Shining Hope lands, Mr. Harper will have a stage set up nearby. He will be waiting for the heroes on it, ready to lead them down a ramp from the airship and out to greet the cheering crowds. He's already

given half a speech, revving up the adoring public. This setup will once again give the heroes the opportunity to make an impression before the gathered crowd.

- Encourage the players to roleplay a victory speech, but a hero can make a Chr/socialize-12 or Chr/persuade-12 flip to impress the crowd as well.

SOMETHING AMISS

As the heroes are addressing the crowds at the World's Fair, however, they will have the chance to notice that something is amiss.

- Have them all make Per/awareness flips. The hero who gets the highest total notices that the local porters are beginning to move equipment and crates out of the Shining Hope. One crate, however, is not being brought along with everything else;

Foreshadowing

This scenario works best if the GM has already done some foreshadowing in the previous scenarios.

- The Men in Green and Lord Wilburbottom should have been introduced in "Dawn of an Expedition."
- The heroes should have acquired the Bracelet of Xian in "Problems with Pirates." Ideally, they will have noticed the literal writing on the wall, hinting about binding rituals.
- The fact that Lord Wilburbottom is associated with one of the expedition's sponsors should have been revealed in "Up the Mountain." Similarly, the Iki Rod should have been hinted at in that scenario.

in fact, this crate is being ported by several men in dark green suits.

How the heroes react is up to them. Will they stay and finish the speech or will they charge off of the stage towards the Men in Green? Ideally the heroes will give chase, causing their publicist to have a near heart attack. Even if the heroes do not give chase, however, the Men in Green can be tracked down later at their hideout.

THE CHASE

If the heroes immediately rush off to pursue the Men in Green, they will find that their pursuit quickly becomes complicated. The men divide up as they run through a crowded marketplace. The large number of people slow the pursuit down. Additionally, the men have been preparing for this moment. In the marketplace is at least half a dozen other sets of men with green suits carrying a similar-looking crate. If the heroes lose sight of the men for even just a moment, they might not be sure whether they are in fact chasing down the correct crate.

- It's time to bust out the chase rules (see the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook, page 128). Make this a long chase, unless you want to wrap it up quickly.
- Each interval calls for a different flip as the scene changes: Per/awareness to move towards the correct set of men, Str/athletics to push through the crowds, Spd/athletics to dash down an alley, etc. For simplicity's sake, assume the men have a +5 on their flip, regardless of the stat or skill used.
- Anytime the Men in Green get a leg up, pull a shell game, where a different set of men carrying a crate confuse matters.

- If necessary, use the Cultist stats on page 224 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. They are all minions.

REVOLVING THE CHASE

If the heroes do not succeed on the chase, the Men in Green will get away with the crate and will have to be tracked down through other means (see the next section).

If the heroes do succeed on the chase, however, the cultists will have an unfortunate surprise waiting. The cultists will be trapped in an alleyway when the heroes finally corner them. As the heroes approach, one of the cultists will throw the crate at the character in front. Three others will rush to immediately attack.

- It's a Dex/athletics-10 flip to catch the thrown crate.
- There are four Men in Green present. Use the Cultist stats on page 224 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. They are all minions.
- If the heroes examine the crate and its contents they will find it empty. Was this the right crate? Was it empty even when the Men in Green first took it?
- If interrogated after the fight, with a successful Str/persuade-10 flip, the cultists will reveal the location of their headquarters in the city—an abandoned warehouse on the riverfront. The cultists will also be legitimately surprised that the crate is empty. Only with a critical success will they reveal anything else. The heroes only get one chance at this, too, as after the first attempt, the cultists swallow some sort of suicide capsule each has hidden in a tooth.

Behind the Scenes

The Men in Green see this as their final opportunity to retrieve the Iki Rod. With the binding circle created, they may even be able to perform the ritual themselves, reaping its rewards instead of allowing Lord Wilburbottom to do so.

Towards this end, they arranged to steal the crate containing the rod upon the Shining Hope's return to Saint Louis. Unfortunately for them, Lord Wilburbottom's agent, Ilyria Sinister, got there first. By the time the chase even started, the rod was already in her possession, and she was on her way back to Wilburbottom.

- If the heroes think to question the crew members and porters, one of them remembers seeing a woman matching Ilyria's description in the cargo hold, but the porter was too busy unloading the airship to do anything about it.

MEN IN GREEN

Ideally the players will come up with the idea of tracking down the Men in Green on their own. This is important because the final confrontation with the Men in Green is the big reveal about the binding circle and the Iki Rod. If the players don't think of this, however, Mr. Harper might suggest it. Failing that, the Men in Green could even track the heroes down again, assuming that they took the Iki Rod from the crate before it was stolen.

The Men in Green are currently operating out of an abandoned warehouse on the riverfront. The heroes may already know this as a result of the chase earlier; however, if they don't, they can track this information down in a number of ways:

- Success on a Chr/investigate-10 flip and several hours questioning witnesses will result in several people saying they saw men wearing dark green suits near the warehouse in question.
- Questioning the local crate manufacturers will reveal that a local merchant delivered a

set of identical crates to the warehouse. These were paid for by several men in green suits.

- The Men in Green could kidnap Mr. Harper and deliver a ransom note, telling the heroes that they'll return Mr. Harper in exchange for the Iki Rod, and to meet them at the warehouse for the exchange. (The cultists think the heroes have the rod.)

THE WAREHOUSE

At this point, the Men in Green are desperate and don't have much of a plan beyond attacking the heroes and taking back the Iki Rod. When the heroes make it to the warehouse they are using as a base of operations, Stevana Asen, the local cult leader, will make a speech and then direct her minions to attack. During her monologue, Stevana should convey the following points:

- "Ah, the minions of Lord Wilburbottom arrive. I will admit, I did not expect you to secure the Iki Rod before we could steal it back."
- "The Iki Rod is not yours! It is ours! While you may have carried it around the globe,

forming a binding circle with which your master can enslave the world, we will not let you finish the ritual. Instead, we will take the rod from you and finish the ritual ourselves, reaping the reward of your actions. The world will be enslaved to us, not Lord Wilburbottom!”

- “You underestimate our resources. We, the Men in Green, have many connections around the world. We have powerful allies. We are legion.”
- “What?!? You don’t have the rod?!? That means... Lord Wilburbottom already has it... Shit!”
- Both Stevana Asen and her followers use the Cultist stats on page 224 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. Stevana, however, is a Villain with twice the usual number of HP (see the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook, page 222). Her followers are all minions. There are a number of them equal to the number of heroes.

THE WORLD GOES STILL

Right as the heroes are about to win the fight in the warehouse, a wave of paranormal energy will sweep across the scene. Electric lights will flicker, the sky will grow a deeper color and every character in sight will stop moving. Lord Wilburbottom has started the binding ritual.

The hero with the Bracelet of Xian (see page 21) will be unaffected, as will any characters who touched the bracelet. If the heroes gave away the bracelet or didn’t retrieve it in “Problems with Pirates,” then the GM should contrive another reason why the heroes wouldn’t be affected by the ritual. Maybe all the time they spent in proximity with the Iki Rod had provided them immunity to rituals conducted with the artifact, or maybe the Men in Green have been preparing for this eventuality,



and have mystically shielded everyone in the warehouse from the effects of the ritual.

Regardless, every human being on Arth—save the heroes, Lord Wilburbottom, minions and maybe a select few others—have just stopped moving. There they will remain, standing as still as statues, until either the heroes can stop the ritual or until Lord Wilburbottom can complete it and enslave them all to do his bidding. The heroes will have 24 hours to find and defeat him.

- A hero can make an Int/occult-10 flip to figure out that everyone is still because of a binding ritual. Additionally, this will let the heroes know that they likely have 24 hours to stop it.

ILYRIA & LORD WILBURBOTTOM

The heroes can track down the lair of Lord Wilburbottom and Ilyria through several means:

- Mr. Harper has an address listed for all the sponsors, as well as a contact name. Mr. Harper will be still, like everyone else, but his papers are accessible. The

address listed for Lord Wilburbottom's sponsor is an old Civil War-era fortress along the Mississippi River, about 12 miles (20 km) north of Saint Louis.

- If the heroes figure out that the Bracelet of Xian is shielding them from the effects of the ritual, they can touch the bracelet to others to cure them of the ritual's effects. This will allow them to question people as to Lord Wilburbottom's current location. Success on an Int/investigate-10 flip will lead them to the river fortress.
- If the heroes are taking too long, about 12 hours after the world goes still, Lord Wilburbottom will send some minions into Saint Louis to loot supplies from the city. The heroes can follow these minions back or fight them and question them. Use the Guard stats on page 225 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. There are two minions.

THE RIVER FORTRESS

Lord Wilburbottom's lair is an old Civil War-era fortress along the Mississippi River. The heroes should approach during a storm, with lightning flashing in the background. The mystic energy of the ritual causes the lightning to flare strange colors.

- The fortress is manned by a dozen Guards (see page 225 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook). They are all minions.
- There are also four Guard Dogs (see page 232 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook). They are also minions.

IT'S THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

Once the heroes manage to fight or sneak their way inside, the villains will be waiting. Lord Wilburbottom will give a speech about his plan to enslave the world, cackling all the

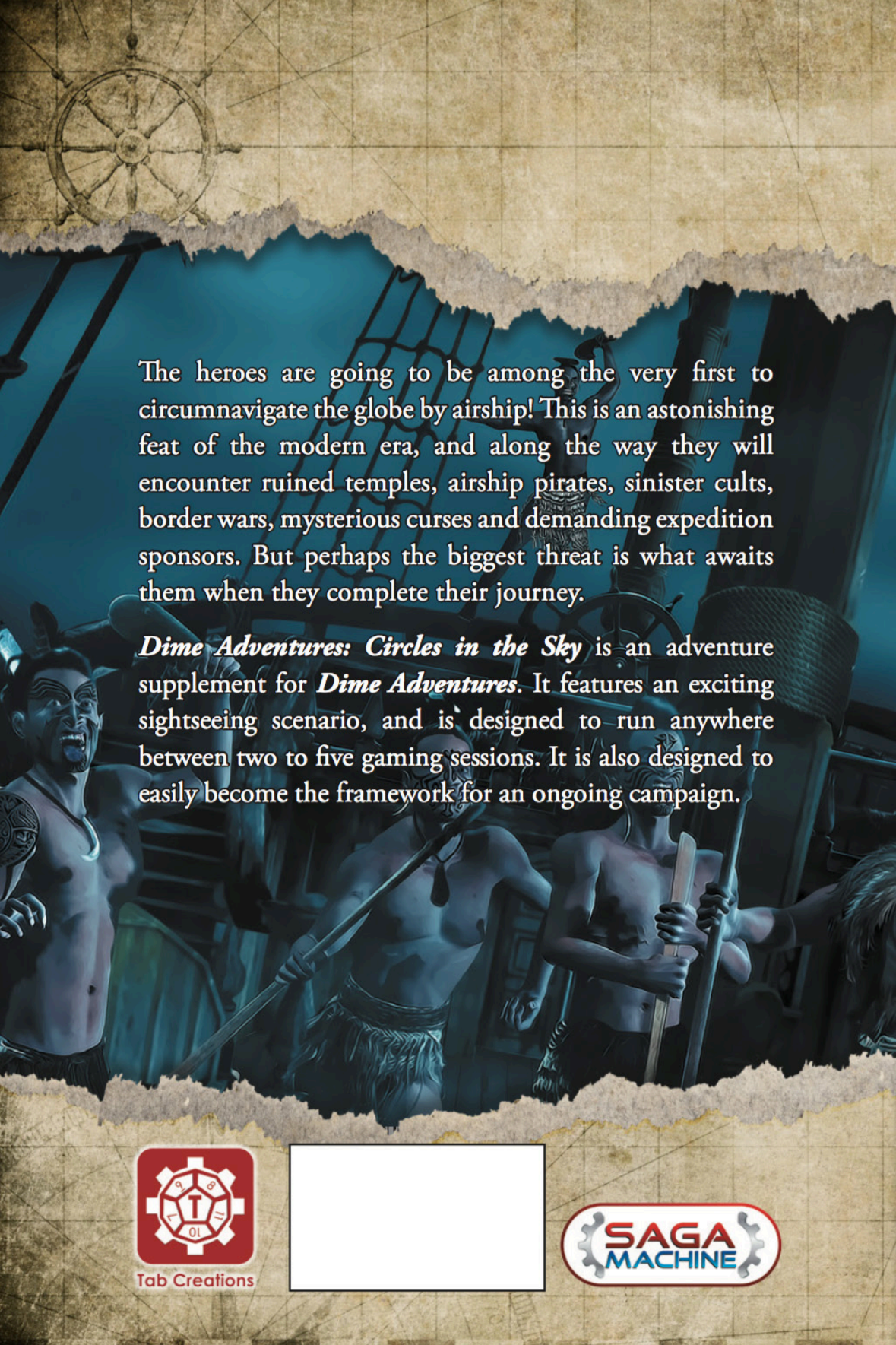
while. Meanwhile, Ilyria Sinister will use this opportunity to circle the heroes, flanking them from behind.

- Lord Wilburbottom and Ilyria Sinister are both villains. Their stats can be found on pages 244-245 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.
- Lord Wilburbottom will hold the Iki Rod in his left hand during the fight. A hero can make a Per/occult-10 flip to recognize the rod for what it is.

PUBLICITY EVER AFTER

Once the villains have been defeated, the ritual will be disrupted and everyone in the world will regain the ability to move, having only vague memories of the time they were frozen still. In the aftermath, Mr. Harper will publicize the hell out of the heroes' daring actions, and many interviews and book deals will follow. This newfound celebrity will lead the heroes on many adventures yet to come. But that is a different story...





The heroes are going to be among the very first to circumnavigate the globe by airship! This is an astonishing feat of the modern era, and along the way they will encounter ruined temples, airship pirates, sinister cults, border wars, mysterious curses and demanding expedition sponsors. But perhaps the biggest threat is what awaits them when they complete their journey.

Dime Adventures: Circles in the Sky is an adventure supplement for *Dime Adventures*. It features an exciting sightseeing scenario, and is designed to run anywhere between two to five gaming sessions. It is also designed to easily become the framework for an ongoing campaign.



Tab Creations

