

# Dime ADVENTURES



***RAINS OF AFRICA***

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## *RAINS OF AFRICA*

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# INTRODUCTION

Contained in this book is a complete scenario for *Dime Adventures*. The material presented here should be enough to cover somewhere between three and five evenings of play, depending on the pacing provided by the GM and the actions of the players.

Over the course of the adventure the heroes will face sinister sorcerers, the walking dead, empowered lions, mystic diseases and colonial spies. All the while they must protect their priestly allies and help enact a ritual that will free Africa from the grip of a zombie scourge.

## SYNOPSIS

For two decades now, in the heart of the African continent, the dead have been rising from the grave and assaulting the living. This is no chance phenomenon. It is the work of the Mfiti Dziedzi, a dark sorcerer of truly formidable power and sinister intentions. With a cabal of subordinate sorcerers and the might of the walking dead behind him, he plans to project his power into the Horn of Africa and beyond, until no force on Arth can challenge him!

But the secret is out. In Papal Somaliland the church has learned of the Mfiti Dziedzi's dark ambitions, and learned that the risen dead, the maduxwane, are destroyed by holy water. They have hired the heroes to escort a chosen group of priests in an ascent up Mount Kilimanjaro. There they will conduct a ritual to bless the waters, such that final rest literally

## Journaling the Journey

This is an age not just of exploration, but also of diaries. People journaled their adventures! To emphasize this, the GM can optionally have each player purchase a physical journal. Between sessions, players should record their heroes' experiences. Then, before each session, have each player read her journal entry from the previous session. This lets the players provide their own recap and helps them get back into character! Reward each player a Moxie for participation.

rains down upon the undead, bringing an end to the maduxwane scourge once and for all.

The going will not be easy, however. Kilimanjaro lies not in Papal Somaliland, but in the neighboring colony of Fei Zhou, and the two colonies have not always had the best of relations. The heroes will need to slip across the border, avoiding military patrols, then continue to avoid the spies of Fei Zhou's fanatical military governor.

To avoid suspicion the heroes will be given a cover story. They are to pose as troubleshooters hired by the railroad which is currently experiencing difficulties in laying track near the foot of the mountain. That much is true: there is a railroad laying track near the base of Kilimanjaro, and it is experiencing problems with

## Author's Forward

This adventure started with a joke.

For about a year, I had Toto's song "Africa" stuck in my head at least twice each week. It's a great song, so it wasn't that unpleasant. Into the mix came the Kickstarter for our new game, *Dime Adventures: Pulp Alternate History Roleplaying*. The summer before the Kickstarter, Thorin and I were hanging out at a coffee shop in our home town, brainstorming ideas for *Dime Adventures*, coming up with adventure hooks and talking about the setting in general. At one point, the subject of Africa being overrun with zombies came up, and the joke formed:

"What if the Pope sent a group of people to Africa to [singing] BLESS THE RAINS DOWN IN AAAAAAAAAFRICAAAAA? Then it would rain holy water and boom: no more zombies."

We had a good laugh, but the idea stuck with me, and I decided to write it up after a sort. As a result, this adventure can be ran as fairly tongue-in-cheek. Though that can be said about much of *Dime Adventures*. I mean, we have giant killer prairie dogs! Come on!

So I would like to thank David Paich, Jeff Porcaro, and all the rest of Toto for creating such a great song, and instigating this whole thing.

With all that said, this adventure has been a lot of fun to write. If it is even a tenth as much fun to play as it was to write, you and your friends should have a blast!



attacks by the walking dead and other difficulties. To maintain their cover, the heroes will be expected to aid the railroad camp.

Meanwhile, the presence of so many priests in the region will not go unnoticed by the Mfti Dziedzi. He will send his minions to attack the heroes three times. The first attack will be with mystically empowered lions. The second attack will be with a legion of the walking dead. And the third attack will be with a supernaturally virulent disease, which will rapidly spread throughout the camp.

Once the heroes have thwarted all three attacks, aided the railroad camp and foiled the governor's spies, they can make their final ascent up Kilimanjaro. At the very summit they will face off against the Mfti Dziedzi himself, defeat his numerous minions and conduct the ritual which will bless the waters and save the region!

## Ready-Made Heroes

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

Of particular note are David Sundown, who may be of interest to the Church; Gernot Kistler, who has many contacts on the African continent; "Madeline" Lemaire, who hunts a great beast in the region; and Nofoto Hangala, who is a native to the continent.

## Other Adventures

*Rains of Africa* 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.

- **Circles in the Sky:** As a section of this adventure takes place in the same region surrounding Mount Kilimanjaro, this is the easiest scenario to integrate. Simply have *Rains of Africa* be an extended diversion from the trip around the globe. The Papacy could even be added as one of the expedition's sponsors.
- **Skull-Spider Island:** This adventure could be set en route to Africa. In fact, the Eye of Wadjet might be replaced with an artifact that will be an important part of the ritual on Mount Kilimanjaro.
- **World's Fair:** The heroes could be hired for *Rains of Africa* while visiting the World's Fair. Maybe the heroes even encounter a captured maduxwane at the fair as a way to provide foreshadowing.



# BRIEFING

For decades the interior of the African continent has been plagued by attacks and outbreaks of the walking dead. Expedition after expedition has failed to return from the continent's dark heart. Now the Papal States have resolved to deal with this threat to Africa once and for all.

Rumors abound, but the Papacy has recently received new intelligence about the nature of the threat that holds Africa in its grasp, and God has shown the solution.

In response, the Papal authorities have commissioned the heroes to lead an expedition to northern Fei Zhou. There they are to protect a group of cardinals and bishops, and prepare the way for them to summit the highest peak of Mount Kilimanjaro. On this peak the clergy will complete a sacred ritual, blessing the waters of the surrounding land and literally raining eternal rest on the region's undead.

Everything has been arranged. The heroes have just assembled in Mogadishu, where officials quickly herded them onto a train, which departed as soon after.

## TRAIN RIDE

Canonically, this adventure begins on September 1, 1904, on a train heading from Mogadishu to Kismayo. The heroes are in a train car that has been set up as a briefing hall. They are seated in chairs around the perimeter of the car and are about to receive a briefing about the true nature of this mission. The

briefing is headed by His Eminence, Benicio Cardinal Agliardi, Bishop of Albano and Dean of the College of Cardinals.

Cardinal Agliardi is standing in the middle of the car, where everyone can see him, in front of a large box-shaped object, taller than he, that is covered in curtains. The box is surrounded by four guards, and the car smells like rotten death.

## MEET THE MADUXWANE

Cardinal Agliardi begins by having everyone introduce themselves. He will then let the heroes know that they are about to be let in on a major secret. God has revealed the true nature of the darkness that threatens all of Africa. For the first time in over two decades, an expedition has returned from the interior. With that, he nods to the guards, who drop the curtains from the box.

Inside, the box is a giant cage with thick iron bars. Within it are rotting corpses—but they still move. Their dead eyes gaze into nothingness as a palpable feeling of evil fills the car. The smell of death is nearly overwhelming.

Cardinal Agliardi explains that these are the previous expedition. These creatures are known in the south as maduxwane. They have been killed and their corpses reanimated by black magic. These shambling dead are not just a threat to Africa, but to the whole world, should such black magic triumph.



## **WEAKNESSES**

The maduxwane have two weaknesses, Agilardi observes. They are nothing before the power of God, of course. With this, he takes out a vial and splashes its contents on the front-most maduxwane. Where the water touches it, the flesh of the creature crumbles to dust. Agliardi explains that holy water is anathema to these creatures.

The second weakness is much more direct. Agliardi nods to a guard, then the guard raises a pistol and shoots one of the maduxwane in the head. It collapses. The maduxwane cannot survive without a brain.

## **ROOT OF EVIL**

But the maduxwane are not an isolated phenomenon, Agilardi continues. They are simply the instruments of an even greater evil. Somewhere inland of Kilimanjaro, a cabal of mfiti—practitioners of black magic—are raising and controlling the maduxwane.

This cabal is led by the Mfiti Dziedzi, a dark sorcerer of truly formidable power and cruel intentions. They say that he has gone mad with his power over life and death; that he's convinced himself, and those who serve him, that he is a living god; and that he will stop at nothing short of domination over the entire continent.

## **ONWARD AND UPWARD**

With the threat revealed, the Papacy has assembled this expedition. The heroes and accompanying priests will travel to Kibo, the highest peak of Mount Kilimanjaro. There, at the highest point, the clergy will perform a ritual blessing of all of the water in the land and

the sky above. The rain itself will become holy water, and will wash away the undead scourge.

However, in order not to create an international incident, the nature of the expedition must be kept secret. Kilimanjaro lies across the border in Fei Zhou, and tensions between Papal Somaliland and Fei Zhou have been perilously high.

To that end, the heroes will be posing as experts in railroad technology and construction, being sent to Fei Zhou to assist with a railway that is currently being constructed. The workers there have encountered problems around the foot of the mountain and have requested help.

The ritual must be accomplished on All Saints Day (Nov 1). The next opportunity to perform the ritual will be Easter 1905, and that is a terrible time to summit Kilimanjaro, not least because of the waste of money for this venture.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

At this point, Agliardi will answer any questions, then leave. When he is gone, unless the heroes choose to perform their own observations, the guards will execute the rest of the maduxwane. Here is the information he will divulge, if asked:

- Along the way the heroes will be protecting Cardinal Agliardi, as well as eleven other cardinals and bishops. Having all twelve clerics involved is important for the ritual.
- The expedition is headed by train to Kismayo in the Lower Juba region of Papal Somaliland. There they will be forced to disembark because the railroad isn't complete. They will then travel overland across the Fei Zhou border and south to Kilimanjaro. Air travel for the whole expedition simply isn't possible.

## Cardinal Benicio Agliardi

*"I serve Christ and His Church!"*

**Str** 4, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 6, **End** 5, **Int** 7, **Per** 5, **Chr** 7, **Det** 7

**Defense** 8/17, **Willpower** 10/21, **DR** 0, **HP** 9, **Wealth** 7, **Lifestyle** 7

**Skills:** Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Deception 2, Empathy 4, Investigate 4, Lib-Arts 4, Melee 1, Occult 3, Persuade 4, Socialize 4, Streetwise 2

**Knife:** +4♥ vs. Defense (♠9/♥6/♦4/♣1).

**Peacemaker:** +7♦ vs. Willpower. Increases target's Desire (do no violence) consequence a severity, or two with a critical success. Only affects people.

**Equipment:** Clerical Vestments, Vessels for Mass, Papers and Pens, Knife (Yes, he carries a knife; anyone going out into the wilderness for months carries a knife with them.)

Agliardi is the Cardinal Bishop of Albano and Dean of the College of Cardinals. At 66, he is aging, but he has managed to keep his body in good shape. Having been in positions of high authority for decades, he naturally assumes control, but only because he is used to it rather than because he actively wants it. He has no problem delegating and stepping back when out of his expertise. Cardinal Agliardi has devoted his entire adult life in service of the Church, and loves to serve the Church and her people.

- Tensions between Papal Somaliland and Fei Zhou are high, and the Papacy wasn't able to get the official permission of the Fei Zhou military governor for the expedition, thus the secrecy surrounding the venture.
- If discovered by agents of Fei Zhou's military governor, the colonial military will likely try to apprehend and arrest the heroes, as well as the accompanying priests.
- In order to keep up appearances, heroes will be required to solve the problems that are delaying the construction of the railway, as well as scout the ascent up Kili-manjaro. They must also establish camps along the way so that the priests will be able to move up the mountain without having to worry about supplies.
- Since the ritual has to take place on a particular day (All Saint's Day), rushing to ascend the mountain isn't helpful, as that would simply leave the heroes and priests far above the tree line with little to eat and limited supplies. Instead, any extra time should be spent in the railroad camp, solving problems and maintaining the expedition's cover story.
- It is unlikely that the mfiti who are commanding the hordes of maduxwane in the interior will by then not have noticed such a large group of holy men on their soil. The heroes should expect to be attacked spiritually and physically, especially on their way up the mountain.



# JOURNEY

By this point the heroes should have all of the information they need. Within three days the train will arrive in Kismayo, dropping off both the heroes and their priestly charges. In the city they will be supplied with ample food for the journey, as well as water and horses. At this point Cardinal Agliardi will take a step back, allowing the heroes to make plans and direct affairs. He steps in only if he feels that more direction is needed.

- Cardinal Agliardi's stats are found on page 9. The other priests use the stat block below.
- If the heroes ask for specific supplies, the cardinal is happy to supply them with anything of Cost 5 or less (within reason).

## INFILTRATING FEI ZHOU

The first task the heroes have before them is crossing the border and smuggling all of the priests into Fei Zhou without being noticed. Unfortunately, the border is often patrolled by government forces. These patrols have even been increased in recent months, as the tensions between the two colonies have risen.

The heroes can accomplish this task in any number of ways. If one of the players has an ingenious plan, feel free to run with it. Otherwise, some other ways of crossing the border are detailed below.

### Priest

*"Listen carefully, my child. These teachings will mean true life for you."*

**Str** 4, **Dex** 4, **Spd** 4, **End** 5, **Int** 6, **Per** 5, **Chr** 7, **Det** 7

**Defense** 6/13, **Willpower** 10/20, **DR** 0, **HP** 9, **Wealth** 4, **Lifestyle** 4

**Skills:** Empathy 3, Lib-Arts 3, Medicine 2, Occult 4, Persuade 3, Socialize 2

**Peacemaker:** +7♦ vs. Willpower. Increases target's Desire (do no violence) consequence a severity, or two with a critical success. Only affects people.

**Staff:** +2♥ vs. Defense (♠9/♥6/♦4/♣1). Defense 1.

♣ **Trip:** Increase the target's Prone consequence a severity, or two with a critical hit.

**Equipment:** Clerical Vestments, Vessels for Mass, Papers and Pens, Staff

These priests are a collection of bishops and cardinals who have been chosen to perform the ritual on top of Mount Kilimanjaro.

## Ambassador Xiadhan Mkapa

- Use the Socialite stats on page 227 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.

Ambassador Xiaohan Mkapa is the Fei Zhou ambassador to the Papal States. He is a serious man, reserved, and determined to do what is best for the people of Fei Zhou. He is also a member of a secret faction of the Fei Zhou government that opposes what they see as foreign occupation by the Qing Emperor in the person of the new military governor.

- To sneak across the border using stealth and guile, the party scout must succeed at a Per/stealth-14 flip. This cannot be a group action—the more people who try to hide, the harder it is to hide. If the scout fails, a border patrol will ambush the heroes.
  - A hero might convince the border authorities that they are a sanctioned work crew for the railroad project with a Chr/deception-14 flip. If failed, their entry is denied. If failed by Mag 5+, authorities will immediately attempt to arrest them.
  - With a successful Chr/peruade-12 flip, a particularly well-connected hero may attempt to contact Xiaohan Mkapa, the Fei Zhou ambassador. This will allow the hero to convince the ambassador to sanction their entry into the colony. However, Ambassador Xiaohan is not in favor with the military governor, and his writ will only be good for the initial crossing. Afterward, patrols will not accept it.
- tensions being what they are, these troops are inclined to shoot first and ask questions later.
  - The first patrol the heroes encounter will have a number of soldiers equal to the number of heroes. They are all minions. Use the Soldier stats on page 228 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.
  - Each subsequent time the heroes encounter a patrol, it will have twice as many soldiers as heroes. Again, they are all minions and use the same stats.
  - The troops will fight to capture the heroes rather than kill them outright. If captured, the heroes will be disarmed, bound and brought to a patrol checkpoint, where they await transport to Dar es Salaam, the colonial capital.

## ENCOUNTERING A BORDER PATROL

There are a variety of ways in which the heroes may encounter a border patrol when making their way into Fei Zhou. Inter-colony

## STAYING ON TRACK

The trek across the border will take three days on horseback, twice that is traveling by foot. Along the way the heroes must both scout the way, and well as handle the horses, supplies and accompanying clergy.

- Each day one or more characters must scout the path ahead. This requires a successful Int/naturalist-10 flip. Failure delays the journey an additional day and

potentially causes the heroes to encounter a border patrol (see previous page).

- Additionally, assuming that the heroes are on horseback, every day the heroes will also have to handle their horses. This requires a Dex/animals-10 flip. On a failure, the hero should increase her Fatigue consequence a severity from being saddlesore. Delays from being saddlesore may also cause the group to encounter a border patrol (see previous page).

## ***RAILROAD CAMP***

Eventually, the group—heroes, priests and all—should make it across the border and to the railroad camp at the base of Mount Kilimanjaro. The workers at this camp honestly believe the heroes' cover story: that they've come to help the camp with its problems. They've had many troubles recently, from attacks by the maduxwane, to supply shortages. The workers will be ecstatic at the heroes' arrival, if a bit puzzled by the presence of so many priests. They'll welcome the heroes in with a round of cheers and celebration.

- Some good roleplaying and a successful Chr/deception-10 flip will convince the workers not to question why so many priests are present. On a failure, a few will gossip, and this will tip off the governor's spies (see page 16).
- Cardinal Agliardi will also take this opportunity to remind the heroes that they should take some time to solve the camp's problems, as this will both support their cover story and give the priests time to rest and prepare for the ascent up the mountain.

## ***RESIDENT HUNTERS***

Their first night in the camp, the heroes will be introduced to two resident big game hunters who are employed as part of the railroad effort, providing food and outdoor expertise to the camp. These two hunters are Val Patterson and Michael Remington. The hunters will be happy to swap stories with the heroes, recounting rumors and other information about the area.

- Val Patterson and Michael Remington use the stats found on the next page.



## Michael Remington

*"My blood belongs to Africa and her people!"*

- Use the Big Game Hunter stats on the page below.

Michael Remington is an aging big game hunter. While on a safari in eastern Africa in 1883, he fell in love with the continent and has not left it since. He has spent the past 20 years living among the African tribes, learning their ways and hunting big game. He is disillusioned with European culture, and vocal about it. However, he was hired for the Kilimanjaro railroad project and he is dedicated to fulfilling his role, not least for the sake of protecting the African workers. He has forged a deep friendship with Col. Patterson, and the two are rarely seen apart.

## Val Patterson

*"This is for my darling wife back home!"*

- Use the Big Game Hunter stats on the page below.

Colonel Val Patterson served as an army engineer in the Holy Roman Foreign Legion for many years before his retirement. He has served many places around the globe and has come to love the outdoors and all of nature's glory, as well as becoming a skilled hunter. He often talks about his wife and children back home in the HRE, writing letters home daily. Michael Remington is his close friend, having forged a brotherly bond while employed at the Kilimanjaro railroad project, and the two are rarely seen apart.

## Big Game Hunter

*"I embrace the age old struggle of man against the savage wilds."*

**Str** 5, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 7, **End** 6, **Int** 5, **Per** 7, **Chr** 3, **Det** 6

**Defense** 10/20, **Willpower** 7/14, **DR** 1, **HP** 11, **Wealth** 5, **Lifestyle** 4

**Skills:** Animals 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Guns 3, Mechanics 2, Medicine 2, Naturalist 3, Melee 1, Socialize 2, Stealth 2, Vehicles 1

**Elephant Gun:** +6♥ vs. Defense (♠14/♥10/♦7/♣3). Hands 2, Pierce 3, Range 3, Reload 3, Shots 2.

- ♣ **Knockdown Shot:** Increase the target's Prone consequence a severity, or two with a critical hit.

**Knife:** +4♥ vs. Defense (♠10/♥7/♦5/♣2) Conceal.

**Equipment:** Rugged Clothes (DR 1), Canteen, Elephant Gun, Hunting Hat, Knife

Big game hunters are skilled and hardy individuals who have tired of stalking smaller game, and who have moved on to the largest hunt available.

## CLOAK AND DAGGER

The military governor of Fei Zhou, Colonel Liu Olekina, has a well-developed spy network throughout the colony, rooting out insurrection, the deposed royal line and foreign influence. Two of these spies may become suspicious of the heroes.

No matter how well the heroes managed to sneak across the border, one of these spies has been tipped off as to the presence of foreigners traveling in the countryside. Going by the alias of Jiang Ai, she has since been following the path taken by the heroes, stopping at villages along the way to ask questions about their actions and their whereabouts.

The other spy of interest is Hou Abdu, who is embedded with the railroad camp. When the heroes first enter the camp he will not yet be suspicious of them, but if they don't cover their tracks enough, or if they do anything to arouse suspicion, he will begin asking questions and digging deeper into the heroes' actions.

- Both Jiang Ai and Hou Abdu use the Governor's Spy stat block on the next page.

## SUPPLY CAR

The day after the heroes arrive in the camp, a supply car will arrive by rail. This car contains additional railroad ties, stakes, foodstuffs, picks and other supplies necessary to keep the railroad camp running.

Michael Remington will come get the heroes once the car arrives. He will ask for their help with the unloading process, then bring them to the track where the supply car and attached engine awaits.

While the heroes are unloading the car, the fireman will make small talk with the heroes. Importantly, he will mention that on his way here, "some lady was asking around about people matching their descriptions." This will be the first clue the players have that the spy, Jiang Ai, is on their trail.

- Success on a Chr/persuade-10 flip will prompt the fireman to remember her name—Jiang Ai—and that she was a stunningly beautiful woman with a scar on one cheek.

## JIANG AI'S AGENDA

Jiang Ai will find her way to the camp three days after the party arrives. She shows up, asks a lot of questions about the heroes and the accompanying priests and then vanishes in the night. If the heroes are lingering around camp they may encounter each other. Otherwise that night, from the camp workers, they will hear all about the beautiful stranger with the scar on one cheek.

For Jiang Ai, this visit to the camp is enough to confirm that the heroes are agents of a foreign power, operating without permission on Fei Zhou soil. The night she slips away from the camp she will head back towards the border, where she will round up troops, then lead them back to the camp with the intent to arrest the heroes. She will arrive back three days later—six days after the heroes first entered the camp.

- She will bring with her twice as many soldiers as heroes. Use the Soldier stats on page 228 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. They are all minions.
- While the heroes are first fighting the soldiers, Jiang will remain hidden, then use stealth and cunning to attack the heroes. She uses the Governor's Spy stats on the next page.



## HOU ABDU'S AGENDA

Hou Abdu is less prone to head-on action. He won't become suspicious of the heroes unless they do something to merit suspicion or until Jiang Ai returns with her troops. After his suspicion is aroused, however, he will attempt to kidnap one of the priests in the night, then he will drag the priest into the wilderness and begin an interrogation. He wants to know not just who the heroes work for, but what they hope to accomplish in Fei Zhou and what their capabilities are.

- Heroes can notice the missing priest with a successful Chr/awareness-10 flip.
- A successful Per/naturalist-12 flip will track Hou and the priest to the interrogation spot. Otherwise the heroes will become lost in the wilds at night.

## DEALING WITH THE SPIES

Killing either spy is only a temporary solution. If either spy disappears they will

eventually be missed and their disappearance will be traced back to the railroad camp. This will eventually lead to Colonel Liu Olekina's direct intervention (see page 22).

Another, potentially more long-term, course of action is to turn the spies. This can be accomplished in a few ways:

- If the heroes honestly present what they're doing—defeating the maduxwane menace—the spies will be easier to turn. Make a Chr/persuade-12 flip. Success means that they sway the spy enough to not immediately turn them in, although the spy will remain suspicious and continue observing them. Success with Mag 5+ means that the spy is completely convinced.
- Both spies are well-versed at deception. If the players try to deceive a spy with some other story, it will be much more difficult. Turning the spy requires both good roleplaying and a successful Chr/deception-16 flip. Otherwise, the spy will play along, lie and attempt to slip away at the first opportunity.

### Governor's Spy

*"I will protect Fei Zhou and the Qing from foreign meddling!"*

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

**Defense** 11/22, **Willpower** 8/16, **DR** 1, **HP** 10, **Wealth** 5, **Lifestyle** 4

**Skills:** Awareness 3, Deception 4, Guns 2, Investigate 4, Melee 2, Socialize 3, Stealth 4, Streetwise 3, Thievery 4

**Knife:** +6♥ vs. Defense (♠10/♥7/♦5/♣2).

♣ **Vital Bits:** Increase the target's Bleeding consequence a severity, or two with a critical hit.

**Slippery:** When taking a move action to change zones, the governor's spies do not trigger Zone of Control reactions.

**Equipment:** Knife (Conceal), Lockpicks, Documents Incriminating the Heroes

These are the agents of the military governor investigating the heroes. They are masterful at deception, and they always seem to be asking far more questions than they answer.

- Jiang can be bribed with a Cost 8 payment. Hou cannot be bribed.

The players may very well choose to confront the spies in some other way not outlined here. Players are good at that. Feel free to wing it with these guidelines: the spies are largely loyal and think they're acting in the best interests of Fei Zhou. They will lie to avoid capture and they will try to flee as soon as they can.

## **LIKE SPIRITS IN THE DARK**

Early the next morning the heroes will be awakened by the shouts of panicked workers. As they emerge from their tents, they'll be accosted by Cardinal Agliardi, who tells them that something terrible has happened, and asks them to look into the matter.

Questioning the workers will reveal that over the past few weeks dozens have workers have gone missing in the night, often leaving trails of blood running from their tents. This has the whole camp spooked, and it is one of the reasons that the railroad camp requested outside help.

- Success on a Chr/socialize-10 flip will also reveal that Val Patterson and Michael Remington claim to have seen giant lions roaming the countryside at night, but everyone seems to write off these claims as "big game hunter fancies."
- A Chr/empathy-10 flip or Chr/persuade-10 flip is enough to calm the workers down.

## **BIG GAME HUNTERS**

If the heroes think to approach Val Patterson and Michael Remington about the situation, the two hunters will be ecstatic to

help out. They'll tell all about seeing "elephant-sized" lions roaming the night, and will offer suggestions with the hunt, but otherwise allow the heroes to retain the limelight.

## **HUNTING THE LIONS**

To stop the attacks the heroes will need to hunt down and destroy the lions which are killing the railroad workers. These are not just any lions. They've been driven into a human-killing frenzy because of a mfiti curse.

- The lions can be tracked to their den with a successful Per/naturalist-12 flip. On a failure, if Patterson and Remington are helping the heroes, the two hunters will step in and lead the heroes to the den anyway.
- Alternatively, the heroes also might choose to stay up and wait for the lions in the night. To spot a lion approaching camp, the sentry needs to succeed in a Per/awareness-14 flip. On a failure, if Patterson and Remington are helping the heroes, the two hunters will alert the heroes as one of them gets killed by a rampaging lion.
- There are a number of lions equal to the number of heroes, plus an additional lion if Val Patterson and Michael Remington are helping. Use the Tsavo Man-Eater stats on the next page. They are *not* minions.
- The lions are not alone. They are being watched over by a mfiti handler. Once the heroes engage the lions, at the beginning of the second round of combat, the handler will reveal himself and act to attack the heroes, bellowing something to the effect of "The Mfiti Dziedzi will soon rule all!" The mfiti will kill himself rather than be captured alive. Use the Mfiti stats on the next page.

## Tsave Man-Eater

*Hungers insatiably for human flesh.*

**Str** 13, **Dex** 8, **Spd** 6, **End** 9, **Int** 1, **Per** 7, **Chr** 6, **Det** 5

**Defense** 9/20, **Willpower** 6/12, **DR** 0, **HP** 33

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Melee 4, Naturalist 4, Stealth 4

**Claw:** +8♥ vs. Defense (♠16/♥14/♦12/♣10).

♦♣ **Pounce:** On a successful hit, the lion establishes a grapple on the target.

**Roar:** +6♦ vs. Willpower. Increase the Fear consequence a severity of all foes in the same or adjacent zones. With a critical success, increase Fear two severities.

**Catfall:** Halve the damage a lion takes from a fall.

**Size +1:** The Tsave Man-Eaters are large and powerful. This has been factored into the lion's Defense and HP.

These are the lions killing and eating the railroad workers. They are male lions of truly hulking proportions.

## Mfiti

*"I will drive off the foreigners and help the Mfiti Dziedzi conquer all Africa!"*

**Str** 4, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 7, **End** 4, **Int** 7, **Per** 5, **Chr** 7, **Det** 5

**Defense** 11/20, **Willpower** 9/19, **DR** 0, **HP** 8, **Wealth** 4, **Lifestyle** 4

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Deception 3, Medicine 2, Melee 3, Naturalist 2, Occult 4, Socialize 2, Thievery 2

**Rungu:** +6♥ vs. Defense (♠11/♥8/♦5/♣2). Thrown.

♣ **Cursed Blow:** Increase the target's Fatigue consequence a severity, or two with a critical hit.

**Mesmerize:** +7♦ vs. Willpower. Through her juju, the mfiti mesmerizes her target. Increase the target's Disabled consequence a severity, or two severities with a critical success.

**Perplex:** +7♦ vs. Willpower. Increases target's Dazed consequence a severity, or two with a critical success. Targets all other characters in the mfiti's zone.

**Survivalist:** A mfiti is adept at moving through difficult terrain and does not need to spend extra AP to move across difficult zone borders.

**Equipment:** Torch, Rungu (throwing club), Mfiti Mask, Tribal Shield

A mfiti is an evil shaman, a practitioner of black magic. They are the source of the maduxwane, as well as many other malicious spells and curses.

## MADUXWANE RAID

The following night, in the early hours of the morning, the heroes will be awoken by the sounds of battle. By now word has gotten out to the Mfiti Dziedzi of the presence of so many holy men in the railroad camp, and he wants to have them eliminated. To this end, he has amassed some of his maduxwane, sending to the camp with the goal of killing as many priests as possible.

As the heroes run out of their tents to deal with the undead threat, run the battle in three waves. Don't give them time to apply first aid and recover between waves; if they try, they'll be interrupted by more maduxwane.

- **Wave 1:** Initially the heroes are assaulted by a group of maduxwane as they leave their tents. There are a number equal to the number of heroes. Use the stats on the page below. They are all minions.
- **Wave 2:** Next, screams from the nearby clerics' tents indicate that the undead are pressing there especially hard. When the heroes arrive, they will face a number of maduxwane equal to their number, plus a mfiti overseer. The attackers will focus on the clergy first, before turning to the heroes. Use the same stats. Mfiti stats can be found on the previous page. The maduxwane are minions.
- **Wave 3:** Just as the heroes are mopping up the undead from Wave 2, they'll hear shouting from Cardinal Agliardi's tent. They'll arrive

### Maduxwane

*Possesses an unsettling and vacant stare.*

**Str** 7, **Dex** 3, **Spd** 3, **End** 7, **Int** 1, **Per** 3, **Chr** 3, **Det** 5

**Defense** 4/9, **Willpower** 4/9, **DR** 0, **HP** 14

**Skills:** Melee +2

**Bite:** +3♥ vs. Defense (♠8/♥6/♦5/♣3).

♣ **Grapple:** The maduxwane initiates a grapple with the target.

**Mindless:** A maduxwane is immune to all mental or emotional effects, such as intimidation or taunting. It, however, may still be directed or controlled by a mfiti.

**Shambling Body:** Contact with holy water deals 25 damage. Called Shots to the head deal twice the normal amount of damage. All other attacks deal only 1 damage, regardless of what the flip would normally indicate.

**Undead:** As one of the undead, a maduxwane is immune to most metabolic hazards, is susceptible to effects targeting supernatural evil and doesn't naturally heal.

Maduxwane are people killed by a mfiti's dark juju and raised again as slaves. They are completely mindless, acting as puppets to the mfiti's will. If their mfiti dies, they will continue performing their last order until they are destroyed or fall apart. They reek of decay.

## Maduxwane and Zombies

The shambling undead are likely known to the reader as zombies. The term zombie, however, is of West African origin, by way of the Caribbean. It would be out of place in this region of East Africa. That said, some GMs who may find it easier to simply refer to the maduxwane as zombies, and we're in no position to judge.

Zombies as a monster also appear in the *Cryptid Codex* supplement. The undead in this adventure are distinct from their typical zombie counterparts.

to find twice as many maduxwane as heroes, as well as another mfiti. Use the same stats. The maduxwane are minions.

- The team must protect the holy men from the maduxwane. None of the clerics can be spared—any who are lost must be replaced and smuggled in from abroad with all due speed (see “New Blood” below). Any fallen holy men may show up in the Final Ascent as the more powerful maduxwane mukhethwa (see page 28).
- After the battle a successful Int/tactics-10 flip will allow a hero to reason that the raid was an assassination attempt on the priests.

### NEW BLOOD

If any of the holy men have been killed up till this point, replacements will need to be found and smuggled to the railroad camp. It is essential for the ritual to have a full complement of priests. Unfortunately, smuggling in new priests is a lengthy endeavor. The GM should choose between handling this process as an extended action or playing it out in full.

Regardless of the method, Cardinal Agliardi will want to send word to Papal Somaliland ahead of time so that suitable candidates can be selected before the heroes arrive. This will involve sending a trusted worker to Dar es

Salaam via the railroad, where she can then telegraph the information to Djibouti.

- As an extended action, obtaining replacement priests consists of a series of three flips. Each flip represents three days of activity. The Tally will be equal to the number of replacements that are needed.
- The first is a Chr/empathy-12 flip to select a trustworthy worker. If the heroes have already made friends with one, this flip enjoys a +4 bonus.
- The second flip is Per/stealth-12, representing the trip back to Papal Somaliland on horseback.
- The third flip is End/awareness-12, and represents the return trip into Fei Zhou with the new replacements in tow.

If the GM chooses to play the endeavor out in full, she should feel free to wing things, adapting the “Infiltrating Fei Zhou” section as necessary (see page 11).



## **THE BEAT OF THE DRUMS**

The next night the drums begin to echo, booming out of the forests to the west.

When the heroes begins to investigate, they will be confronted by an old man along the way. He will tell them that the Mbugwe tribe is issuing a challenge to find their lost city, that the heroes might learn some long forgotten words and ancient melodies.

## **FINDING THE LOST CITY**

“Lost City” is a bit of a misnomer. Its inhabitants know exactly where it is. Nevertheless, the city is well hidden from outsiders and discovering its location will be a challenge for the heroes. There are several methods the players might take to achieve this, including:

- Asking the right questions of local villagers will yield some clues, as the natives of the Lost City sometimes trade with those nearby. This is a Chr/socialize-10 flip.
- Combing the wilderness is viable as well, requiring a successful Per/naturalist-14 flip.

Once in the lost city of Magara, on the southwest shore of Lake Manyara, the team is welcomed with fanfare. A feast is held to welcome them and congratulate them on passing the first part of their trials.

## **THE EIGHT TRIALS**

The heroes wake in the morning to a deafening roar of drums. They are told they must pass a series of trails to prove their worth in order to be inducted into the tribe and learn its secrets. Each hero must pass these tests, or they will not be included in the induction.

There are eight tests—one for each stat. Have all players attempt each trial in order. However, once a trial has been failed, that player’s hero has been eliminated and no longer participates in any later trial.

- **The Test of Strength:** Each hero must lift a boulder above her head. To do this she must succeed in a Str-10 flip. The other heroes may aid her with words of encouragement, but they cannot intervene any other way.
- **The Test of Intelligence:** Each hero must engage the village matriarch in a battle of riddles. This requires success on an Int-10 flip. No one else may help, but feel free to award a bonus to any player who roleplays coming up with a suitable riddle.
- **The Test of Dexterity:** Each hero is placed, sitting down, in a basket with a small hole in the side, barely big enough to fit through. They each have fifteen minutes to maneuver their way out of the basket. This requires success on a Dex-10 flip. The others may encourage them, but may not intervene.
- **The Test of Perception:** Each hero must spot a silvery-cheeked hornbill among a flock of grey hornbills in a tree before the birds all fly away. This necessitates success on a Per-12 flip. They can receive no help.
- **The Test of Speed:** Each hero must race against one of the villagers in a circuit around the village, dodging sudden assaults from others who lie in wait. This challenge requires a Spd-10 flip.
- **The Test of Charisma:** Each hero must attire herself in the way of the Mbugwe and present herself to the villagers for approval. This requires success on a Chr-10 flip, otherwise the character will be rejected. The other heroes may assist,

providing fashion advice and insight into ways of the Mbugwe people.

- **The Test of Endurance:** Each hero must hold her arms straight out from her sides for fifteen minutes, holding a small bucket of water in each hand. This requires a successful End-12 flip.
- **The Test of Determination:** The left hand of each hero is placed into a glove holding live siafu—driver ants—whose bite is very painful. The hero must keep her hand in the glove for ten minutes without passing out from the pain. This requires success on a Det-12 flip, lest the hero pass out. The other players may encourage her, but she must keep her hand in the glove!

## PASSING THE TRIALS

Any heroes who pass all eight trials are inducted into the tribe. A feast is held in their honor, with much food, drink, dancing and music. Heroes who failed a test are allowed to attend the feast, but are not tribe members and are not taught the secrets of the Mbugwe.

The heroes who are inducted into the Mbugwe learn some long forgotten words and ancient melodies—which they are incapable of passing on to the other heroes, even if they try.

- From now on, so long as they sing the ancient melody, these heroes receive a +2 bonus to Willpower to resist the black magic of the mfiti, maduxwane and associated powers. (The author suggests representing this by playing “Africa” by Toto whenever a player invokes this ability.)
- Regardless of their success or failure on the trials, this feast allows all participating heroes to heal twice the usual number of HP when they rest this night.

## THE PRICE OF POLITICS

By this point, the military governor of Fei Zhou, Colonel Liu Olekina, has received confirmation that the heroes are in the colony illegally. He believes that the Papal contingent and heroes are spies, and he wants them in chains! The situation has progressed past the point where he trusts that job to underlings. Therefore, he has resolved to personally lead his troops to the railroad camp and arrest those pesky foreigners once and for all!

- Any hero keeping watch around the camp can attempt a Per/awareness-10 flip to notice the troops approaching early one morning, as the heroes are preparing for their final ascent up the mountain.
- Alternatively, if the heroes are busy, if they’ve befriended any of the camp NPCs, they’ll receive warning from that character as the troops approach.
- If the heroes are not on watch and haven’t made any friends, the governor’s troops will catch the heroes unprepared

## ENEMY FORCES

At this point the GM should take note of or guesstimate how many times so far the heroes have faced off against government forces. The more times they’ve fought, the bigger the threat Colonel Liu sees in the heroes.

- Colonel Liu has a number of troops at his command equal to 10 times the number of confrontations between the heroes and colonial government. If in doubt, just assume 30 soldiers. Use the Soldier stats on page 228 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. They are all minions.
- Colonel Liu’s stats can be found on the next page.

There is likely a large enough number of soldiers that the heroes don't stand much of a chance with a frontal assault. Try to stress this to the players. This means that they'll have to resort to either diplomacy or clever tactics.

## ***DIPLOMATIC RESOLUTION***

Remember, the governor is here to arrest the heroes, not kill them. This means that Colonel Liu will first attempt to parley. Unless attacked first, he brings a contingent of troops into the camp, leaving the rest of the army waiting outside.

The governor is a stubborn man who is convinced that the heroes and their associates are spies. Convincing him to do anything other than arrest or attack the heroes is difficult, but

still possible. If the heroes have made nice with Ambassador Mkapa (see page 12) or turned any of the governor's spies (see page 16), these actions with help out. Otherwise, the heroes may have a very difficult time.

- Convincing the governor of their innocence is an absurd Chr/persuade-18 flip.
- If the heroes were able to call on the Ambassador and can make this known, they gain a +4 bonus.
- If they managed to turn any of the governor's spies, the spy will speak on their behalf, giving the heroes a +4 bonus.
- If the heroes have killed any government troops (not just rendered them unconscious or captured them), they suffer a -4 penalty.

### **Governor Liu Olekina**

*"I will gladly lay down my life for Fei Zhou!"*

**Str 5, Dex 6, Spd 6, End 6, Int 6, Per 6, Chr 7, Det 6**

**Defense 9/18, Willpower 9/19, DR 5♠, HP 22, Wealth 6, Lifestyle 4**

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Guns 4, Medicine 2, Melee 4, Persuade 4, Socialize 3, Streetwise 2, Tactics 5

**Sword:** +7♥ vs. Defense (♠12/♥9/♦6/♣3).

♣ **Duelist Training:** Liu's target is disarmed, if possible.

**Automatic Pistol:** +7♥ vs. Defense (♠10/♥7/♦5/♣2). Auto 3, Range 2, Reload 2, Shots 10.

♦♣ **Rallying Chatter:** The soldiers surrounding Col. Liu are heartened by the familiar chatter of his pistol. All Fei Zhou soldiers who can hear the sound of the pistol increase their Bolstered consequence by a severity.

**Seasoned:** If the colonel is not surprised, on the first round of combat he may be chosen to act next, even if the last two characters to act were also on his side.

**Villain:** Colonel Liu's HP is doubled, he gains 5 AP per round, and he may take up to two actions requiring a flip each round.

**Equipment:** Sword, Pack, Family Photo, Automatic Pistol, Officer's Helmet (DR 5♠).

Liu Olekina is both a military colonel and the governor of Fei Zhou. He is a proud man, admired by those under his command, adamantly loyal to Qing China and a strong family man. He will fight to the death for Fei Zhou, but he will not sacrifice his troops to a hopeless cause.



- The GM, as always, is free to add bonuses and penalties based off the situation (maybe somebody prepared a particularly stunning fruit bowl, or a particularly offensive one).
- Colonel Liu is very skeptical of the group, so any attempt to deceive or intimidate him will give a -4 penalty, on top of any penalties they have from bad blood with the government.

## MILITARY RESOLUTION

If diplomacy breaks down, or is never attempted, there will be a battle. As the soldiers likely seriously outnumber the heroes, the players would be advised to utilize clever tactics rather than attempt a frontal assault. The GM should endeavor to be flexible and roll with any clever plan the players come up with.

- The governor's retinue is a number of soldiers equal to the number of heroes. If the retinue is attacked, on the third round, they will be reinforced by additional soldiers bringing the total up to 10. Use the Soldier stats on page 228 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook. They are all minions.
- When the heroes do fight the soldiers, try to divide them into waves of 10 soldiers each. This allows the heroes to fight on without being overwhelmed by sheer numbers all at once. This means that, for example, if there are 30 soldiers, the heroes will face three waves.

Colonel Liu, once defeated, will surrender. Even if he has been rendered unconscious earlier in the battle, he will recover his composure enough to speak, albeit with some difficulty. He will request that he be allowed to lead his men away, so that his troops are not scattered and killed in the wilds. The party may choose what to do with him. Be sure to reward proper pulp hero behavior with a Moxie.

## WILD DOGS CRY OUT IN THE NIGHT

The howling of wild dogs wakes the heroes in the middle of the night. Searching the camp will reveal feverish workers collapsed everywhere, their necks swollen, with ashen patches on their skin. The cacophony of howling dogs and the workers' barking coughs is overwhelming.

- A Per/medicine-10 flip will determine that symptoms similar to diphtheria are sweeping the camp at an unbelievable rate.
- A Per/occult-10 flip will reveal the plague to be of supernatural origin—the work of dark magics, such as those wielded by the mfiti.
- At this point, each of the heroes has been out and about in the camp, and will have been exposed. Have all players make an End-10 flip to resist the mystic disease. Players who fail increase their Fatigue consequence a severity. If this would push it over critical severity, the hero dies! Meanwhile, her necks begin to swell, she cough periodically and her fever increases.

## DIPHTHERIA JUJU

The heroes only have a matter of hours to find the plague shaman responsible and defeat her, otherwise the entire camp will succumb to the disease!

- For every hour that passes, have all of the heroes make another End-10 flip versus the disease (see above). This will cause their Fatigue consequences to worsen. Meanwhile, make a random number flip. This many workers in the camp succumb to the disease.
- Tracking down the plague shaman is an extended Per/naturalist-10 (Tally 5, 1 hour)

action. Remember that this action causes time to pass, which results in more flips from the disease! Trying again is possible, but failure means that the heroes will have to start the extended action over, taking even more time.

## **FIGHTING THE PLAGUE SHAMAN**

Once the heroes track down the Mfiti Thamu—the plague shaman—there is little left to do but fight. The shaman won't even speak, instead only giving an impossibly wide, diseased grin and launching into a sickening attack

- Before battle begins, the Mfiti Thamu calls on her dark juju to infect the heroes. Have all of the heroes make another End-10 flip. On a failure, increase the hero's Fatigue consequence as before (see the previous page). The Mfiti Thamu then acts first in combat.
- The Mfiti Thamu's stats are below.

With the Mfiti Thamu defeated, the plague ends. The Fatigue consequence of all heroes and camp workers is immediately removed. Heroes and workers both begin to gasp, gulping down fresh air into starved lungs.

### **Mfiti Thamu**

*"Infect the invaders! Drive them to extinction!"*

**Str** 4, **Dex** 7, **Spd** 7, **End** 4, **Int** 7, **Per** 5, **Chr** 8, **Det** 5

**Defense** 9/19, **Willpower** 10/20, **DR** 3, **HP** 16, **Wealth** 4, **Lifestyle** 4

**Skills:** Athletics 2, Deception 3, Medicine 2, Melee 2, Occult 5, Socialize 2, Thievery 2

**Spear:** +5♥ vs. Defense (♠9/♥6/♦4/♣1). Reach.

♣ **Cursed Thrust:** Increase the target's Disabled consequence a severity, or two with a critical hit.

♥ **Infect:** +9♦ vs. Willpower. Through her juju, the mfiti infects her target with a magical disease. Increase the target's Fatigued consequence a severity, or two severities with a critical success.

♠ **Weeping Sores:** The mfiti infects her target with weeping sores. Increase target's Bleeding consequence a severity, or two with a critical success.

**Survivalist:** A mfiti is adept at moving through difficult terrain and does not need to spend extra AP to move across difficult zone borders.

**Villain:** As a villain, the Mfiti Thamu's HP is doubled. Additionally, she may use both her spear and her Infect attack in the same round.

**Equipment:** Torch, Spear, Mfiti Mask, Tribal Shield

The mfiti thamu are plague shamans, who strike down all in their way with mystical diseases. Fortunately for the party, these diseases only last while the mfiti lives.



# FINAL ASCENT

The time has come to summit Kilimanjaro and perform the ritual! This is where all that work in the railroad camp and scouting pays off! Ideally, the heroes should set out with a few days to spare, because they will probably find it preferable to spend a few extra days at the last camp than to be delayed and fail in their mission. If the players do not say this explicitly, it is up to GM's discretion whether they have spare days or not.

## SCOUTING THE ROUTE

With all of the problems of the railroad camp settled, it's finally time for the heroes to scout a route up Kibo. This is necessary for the priests to safely ascend, as they are used to a life of quiet piety rather than rugged outdoorsmanship.

- Scouting a route up the mountain is an extended Int/naturalist-12 (Tally 10, 3 days) action. This endeavor takes as long as it does in part due to altitude sickness—parties who ascend too quickly may die!
- The GM can use the Fatigue consequence to represent altitude sickness. In this case the consequence cannot be removed until the heroes have spent a few days at their current altitude, acclimating to the elevation.
- On a failure, the heroes will run into difficulties during their scouting trip. Possible difficulties include avalanches, altitude sickness, temperature extremes or falls (see

Hazards in the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook, page 137). Also see “Events on the Mountain” below.

## ASCENDING THE MOUNTAIN

It's finally time for the heroes to ascend the mountain with the priests in tow. Hopefully they've scouted a good route.

- Ascending the mountain is an extended End/athletics-10 (Tally 10, 3 days) action. Have all heroes perform this action individually. Increase the TN by +2 if the heroes failed to scout an appropriate route. As with scouting the route, this endeavor takes as long as it does in part due to altitude sickness.
- Failing any individual flip results in the hero increasing her Fatigue consequence a severity. This consequence won't go away until either she descends to a lower altitude or waits three days at her current altitude to adjust.

## EVENTS ON THE MOUNTAIN

Every three days (every interval of the extended action) as the heroes ascend the mountain, they will encounter an event. The GM should pick from the list below.

- **Late Freeze:** Though it's late spring in the southern hemisphere, an unseasonable

## Maduxwane Mukhethwa

*Silently glares at the heroes with malevolent intent.*

**Str** 7, **Dex** 5, **Spd** 5, **End** 7, **Int** 1, **Per** 5, **Chr** 3, **Det** 5

**Defense** 7/15, **Willpower** 4/9, **DR** 0, **HP** 14

**Skills:** Melee +4

**Bite:** +6♥ vs. Defense (♠8/♥6/♦5/♣3).

♣ **Grapple:** The maduxwane initiates a grapple with the target.

**Gaze of Evil:** +5♥ vs. Willpower. Activates at the beginning of the Maduxwane Mukhethwa's turn. Costs no AP and does not count as an action requiring a flip that turn. Target increases her Stun consequence a severity, or two severities with a critical effect.

**Shambling Body:** Contact with holy water deals 25 damage. Called Shots to the head deal twice the normal amount of damage. All other attacks deal only 1 damage, regardless of what the flip would normally indicate.

**Undead:** As one of the undead, a maduxwane is immune to most metabolic hazards, is susceptible to effects targeting supernatural evil and doesn't naturally heal.

When a priest is killed in this scenario, they will return at some point as a maduxwane mukhethwa, the animated corpse of a holy man. The mfiti delight in bringing back the clerics as powerful weapons against their friends. These maduxwane are reminders of failure and defeat, and through them the mfiti strikes at the heroes with powerful juju.

cold snap strikes. All heroes must succeed at an End-12 flip or increase their Fatigue consequence a severity from frostbite.

- **Rockslide:** A recent rockslide has blocked the path the heroes scouted. The party must make a Per/naturalist-14 flip to find a way past it. If they fail, they must turn back and find a new route. Increase the TN of all future flips to ascend the mountain by +2.
- **Storm:** A sudden storm strikes! To see the storm coming, the heroes must succeed at a Per/awareness-14 flip. On a failure, a bolder loosened by the storm strikes and kills a random priest. This priest will show up again later as a Maduxwane Mukhethwa (see above and the next page).
- **Avalanche:** A rumble of thunder, but in a cloudless sky? Part of Kilimanjaro's snowy peak has dislodged and is heading straight for the party! Use the Avalanche rules on page 137 of the *Dime Adventures* core rulebook.
- **Harrying Raid:** At night the heroes will be attacked by henchmen of the Mfiti Dzedzi. There are a number of maduxwane equal to the number of heroes (see page 19) and one mfiti (see page 18).
- **Maduxwane Mukethwa:** The heroes may encounter a maduxwane mukethwa, the animated corpse of a holy man. See the stat block above.

## **THE RITUAL COMMENCES**

At last, Kibo is in sight and history is about to be made. The air is thin, but hopes are not. It is time to destroy the undead menace to Africa!

- Have each hero make an End/athletics-12 flip to make it to the summit. On a failure, increase the hero's Fatigue consequence a severity from the extreme elevation.
- Allow time for the heroes to celebrate: they are among the first people on record to climb to the highest peak of Kilimanjaro!

## **IT WAS YOUR HOLINESS ALL ALONG!**

Once the celebrations die down, the clerics get to work setting up for their ritual, including assessing all the implements they need to perform a mass. One of the priests, however, puts on a very distinctive vestment. He isn't some unnamed bishop: he's His Holiness, Pope Pius X! When asked, he will thank the party for bringing him to this place, and explain that he kept his identity hidden so as to not make himself a target for assassination.

## **PREPARING DEFENSES**

While they wait for nightfall, the players may occupy themselves in setting up defenses. The clerics have carried enough wood to provide a decent warmth at the summit, but not enough for barricades. There is no spare timber, as they are far above the tree line. Let the players be creative: what can they do to create defenses up here?

Once night falls, the ritual begins. And so does the climactic battle to the death!

## **THE FINAL ASSAULT**

In short order the heroes and priests will be assaulted by the forces of the Mfiti Dzedzi, come to stop the ritual which threatens the dark sorcerer's sinister grasp on the region. Forces that have amassed include:

- Waves of maduxwane. Use the stats on page 19. All are minions.
- Trusted mfiti lieutenants. See page 18 for the stats.
- Maduxwane Mukhethwa, the animated corpses of fallen priests. Unlike other maduxwane, these are not minions. See the previous page.
- The Mfiti Dzedzi himself. See page 31.

## **CONDUCTING THE RITUAL**

As soon as the priests begin conducting their ritual, the mfiti will show up and launch their attack. Run this as one extended battle where the heroes not only have to survive, but must protect the priests as well!

Conducting the ritual will take 10 rounds. Each round a number of new enemies will appear to menace the heroes, as described below.

- **Round 1:** A number of maduxwane show up equal to the number of heroes.
- **Rounds 2-4:** One mfiti shows up, as well as half as many additional maduxwane as there are heroes.
- **Round 5:** The Mfiti Dzedzi appears, cackling with a malevolent glee. Remember earlier in the adventure when we said to keep track of the number of priests killed? That many Maduxwane Mukhethwa also show up this round. If you failed to keep track, just assume there are half as many as there are heroes.

## Pope Pius X

*"The purity of the Catholic Church must be protected!"*

**Str** 3, **Dex** 6, **Spd** 6, **End** 5, **Int** 9, **Per** 7, **Chr** 7, **Det** 8

**Defense** 9/19, **Willpower** 12/24, **DR** 1, **HP** 8, **Wealth** 9, **Lifestyle** 8

**Skills:** Athletics 1, Awareness 3, Deception 3, Empathy 3, Investigate 5, Lib-Arts 5, Melee 1, Occult 4, Persuade 5, Socialize 5, Streetwise 1

**Knife:** +4♥ vs. Defense (♠8/♥5/♦3/♣1).

**Equipment:** Rugged clothes (DR 1), Vessels for Mass, Papers and pens, Knife (conceal)

Pope Pius X was born Luigi Sarto. Having assumed the Papacy in 1898 at the age of 63, he has advocated a very isolationist policy for the Church. Thus it came as much of a surprise to those in the know when he masterminded the Kilimanjaro expedition. He believes fervently in the power of God and the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church, and perhaps this explains why he can advocate such isolationism while simultaneously creating this expedition: because the dark powers that hold the region in thrall are creating a place where the Church cannot go. Despite his hardline stance, he is not a belligerent personality, instead coming across as a kindly old man. He greatly favors his close friendship with Cardinal Agliardi.

- **Rounds 6-10:** If the heroes are doing well, have a number of maduxwane show up each round equal to the number of heroes, otherwise use half this number.
- Don't have the enemies only focus on the heroes, but rather have some of them try to rush past and attack the priests conducting the ritual.
- Once the ritual is complete, rain will begin to fall on the next turn, dealing damage to all maduxwane as holy water. This will instantly kill all of the maduxwane, but any surviving mfiti will fight on until the Mfiti Dzedzi is defeated.
- If the Pope dies, the campaign is lost! The Roman Catholic Church will have to elect a new Pope, then mount a new expedition to the top of Kilimanjaro on another Easter or All Saints Day. Africa remains

bound to the dark will of the mfiti, and the heroes will never work with the Roman Catholic Church again!

## CONCLUSION

Once the ritual has been successfully completed, all water in the region has been made into holy water. It will rain down on the maduxwane and destroy them!

The power of the mfiti is broken, and they can now be pursued without fear! The heroes can make their way back down the mountain, unmolested by the powers of darkness, and return to Papal Somaliland.

- On the train back, Pope Pius X will reward each of the heroes with a Wealth 8 payment and the promise of future contracts. They must, however, keep the ritual secret—this

## Mfiti Dziedzi

*"I am the true power here. You will worship me before this night is through!"*

**Str** 5, **Dex** 8, **Spd** 8, **End** 6, **Int** 9, **Per** 6, **Chr** 8, **Det** 7

**Defense** 11/22, **Willpower** 12/24, **DR** 5, **HP** 22, **Wealth** 4, **Lifestyle** 8

**Skills:** Athletics 4, Deception 5, Medicine 4, Melee 4, Occult 6, Socialize 2, Thievery 4

**Rungu Manditi:** +8♥ vs. Defense (♠12/♥9/♦6/♣3). Thrown.

♥ **Spirit Strike:** The power of the mfiti channels through the club and into the target. Increase the target's Stun consequence by a severity, or two severities with a critical hit.

♣ **Cursed Club:** Increase the target's Disabled consequence a severity, or two with a critical hit.

**Infect:** +9♦ vs. Willpower. Through his juju, the mfiti infects his target with a magical disease. Increase the target's Fatigued consequence a severity, or two severities with a critical success.

♠ **Weeping Sores:** The mfiti infects his target with weeping sores. Increase target's Bleeding consequence a severity, or two with a critical success.

**Protective Wards:** The Mfiti Dziedzi has tattooed himself with magical wards of protection, granting him DR 5 (already figured above).

**Survivalist:** A mfiti is adept at moving through difficult terrain and does not need to spend extra AP to move across difficult zone borders.

**Villain:** As a villain, the Mfiti Dziedzi's HP is doubled, he gains 5 AP per round, and he may take up to two actions requiring a flip each round.

**Equipment:** Torch, Rungu Manditi (magic club), Mfiti Mask, Tribal Shield

This is the leader of the mfiti, who battles the party at the summit of Kilimanjaro to disrupt the ritual. He is a powerful and ancient sorcerer, determined to destroy the heroes at all costs!

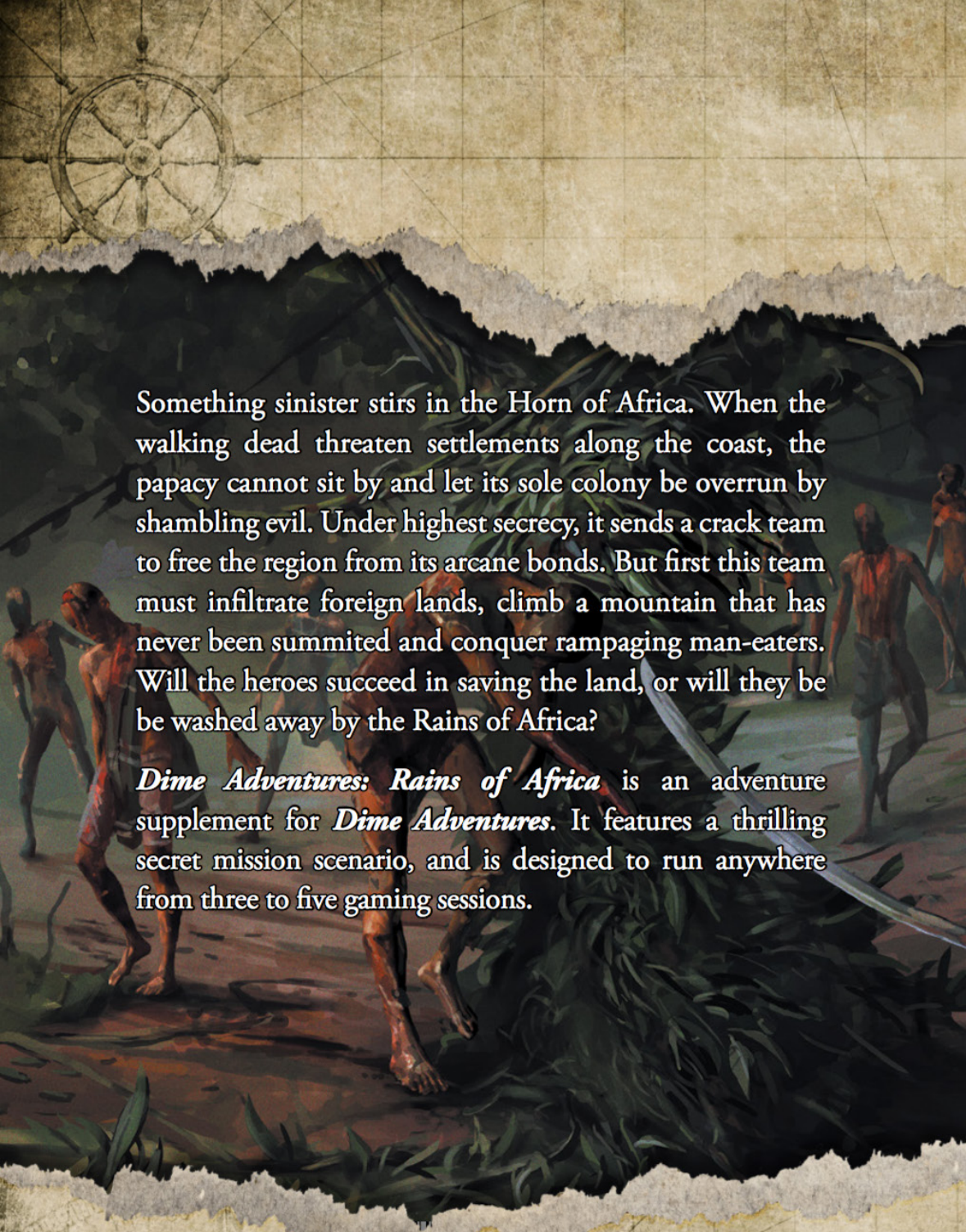
was merely an exploratory expedition in the eyes of the public.

- Heroes who performed especially well will be rewarded with a blessed charm. This appears to be a small crucifix, hung on a chain and meant to be worn around the neck. Heroes who grasp the charm and pray when they are in mortal danger will

immediately gain a Moxie. This happens only once, then the charm is spent.

- Regardless of the outcome, the heroes have made mortal enemies of the mfiti. Any surviving shamans will retreat into the wilds and bide their time, plotting revenge on those meddling heroes!





Something sinister stirs in the Horn of Africa. When the walking dead threaten settlements along the coast, the papacy cannot sit by and let its sole colony be overrun by shambling evil. Under highest secrecy, it sends a crack team to free the region from its arcane bonds. But first this team must infiltrate foreign lands, climb a mountain that has never been summited and conquer rampaging man-eaters. Will the heroes succeed in saving the land, or will they be washed away by the Rains of Africa?

*Dime Adventures: Rains of Africa* is an adventure supplement for *Dime Adventures*. It features a thrilling secret mission scenario, and is designed to run anywhere from three to five gaming sessions.



Tab Creations

