

Children of the Bush

A Savage Worlds One Sheet™ By Darryl Nichols;
art by Jordan Peacock; for use with Weird Wars: Tour of Darkness™



A blood-sucking demon preys on the children of a small village—and perhaps an unfortunate squad of US Soldiers as well.

Date: Anytime during the US war.

In the process of digging a tunnel complex, the Viet Cong have released a Mosquito Demon named Bollaxus. She slew the soldiers who freed her then released her spawn to possess the children of a nearby village called Mau Do Doi. Her spawn subsequently led all of the adults in the village to her cave, slew them, and drained their blood into a pool.

The heroes, on a reconnaissance patrol of the Srepok River, come across the village of Mau Do Doi. Before long, they realize there are no adults. When the children are questioned, they lead the soldiers to Bollaxus's cave and attack them.

• **The Rifle Squad:** A full U.S. Army Rifle Squad contains a total of 10 soldiers, though during most of the war many rifle squads were understaffed. Use the U.S. Army Soldier extras to fill out the rifle squad with a total of eight soldiers, including the player characters.

Briefing

This is a recon patrol along the Srepok River. We will fly you out by chopper to an LZ eight clicks east of the river. Hike due west to the river, then follow it northwest, downstream, toward Cambodia.

About 17 clicks down river, on the western bank, lies the village of Mau Do Doi. We suspect the VC have been using this river to infiltrate II Corps, so do what you can to win over the villagers and get them to talk.

You will evac the following morning at 0900 at a second LZ, 10 clicks farther down the Srepok.

• **Enemy Forces:** We're not sure what you'll find, that's why you're going.

• **Support:** There is no dedicated support for this mission but you can call the firebase if you need it.

• **Weather:** Hot and muggy.

• **Equipment:** Take standard gear for 24 hours in the bush. One of the unit must carry a PRC25.

The Mission

The soldiers fly out to the LZ by chopper and touch down at 0700. The first thing they notice is the heat. It's already 90°+ Fahrenheit and promises to get hotter as the day goes on. The heroes should be fine as long as they packed the standard four quarts of water in

their gear. If not, Vigor rolls need to be made every four hours; and since this is Nam, add encumbrance penalties.

Snipers In the Bush

You've been hiking deep in the bush for four hours. The sun is high overhead turning the jungle into a sauna. Sweat drips down your chin as you look out over the Srepok River. It runs slow and wide here. It looks to be 50 yards wide and about chest deep. The jungle crouches on either bank like a thirsty animal. The shadows under the trees are pitch black despite the glaring sun.

While the river provides a convenient landmark, traveling along its bank or crossing it can leave a rifle squad dangerously exposed. The characters are attacked by a trio of snipers when they cross the river. Two of the snipers take three shots each at the soldiers before retreating. The third sniper takes only one shot before retreating to warn the main force he thinks is waiting at the bunker and tunnel complex. Don't worry if the first sniper gets away. The heroes will find his body later.

Main Force Viet Cong

Main Force Viet Cong are hard core guerrillas who have received more training than their militia comrades. They strike fast and travel light, operating well in small independent units.

• **Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Strength d6, Spirit d6, Vigor d6.

• **Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d8.

• **Charisma:** 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5.

• **Hindrances:** None

• **Edges:** Acclimated

• **Gear:** Bayonet, M1 Garand, 20 M1 Garand rounds. One of the three snipers has a M26 Grenade.

Mau Do Doi

The village of Mau Do Doi is a collection of around twenty thatched roofed wattle and daub huts with a couple of pig pens, chicken coops, and a few acres of rice paddy by the river. The place seems peaceful enough with children playing between and around the huts. Near the village center is a wood carved statue of Buddha in the middle of a semicircular stone shrine. The Buddha has been defaced

recently by a machete and is spattered with fresh blood.

Seven children immediately approach the soldiers when they arrive. (An eighth child slips away to warn Bollaxus.) Very shortly the soldiers realize there isn't an adult in sight and the children are strangely quiet. If the soldiers scope out the village before entering, a simple Notice roll reveals this ahead of time.

If asked about their missing parents and guardians, and if one of the soldiers speaks Vietnamese, the eldest boy present, approximately 12 years of age, says their parents are working in the cave and will be back soon. If asked about the cave, he is vague but offers to lead the soldiers there. If they don't take the boy up on his offer, he waits for the girl's return and watches the squad with the rest of the children in eerie silence.

Search the village and a successful Notice roll reveals signs of neglect, such as rice well-past harvesting, empty animal pens, and no signs of typical daily chores like laundry or cooking.

If the squad doesn't head for the cave, a 10 year-old girl enters the village from the jungle after a half hour or so. She whispers in the ear of the 12 year-old boy, who then tells (or motions to) the unit to follow him to the caves. He says, or acts, concerned because their parents should have returned by now. The rest of the children follow in silence from a discreet distance.

The Cave of Bollaxus

The trip to the cave requires a 15 minute hike. After 10 minutes, each character makes a Notice check. With a success, the GI notices a rock splattered with fresh blood—just like the Buddha. A raise on the first test, or an extended search of the area, reveals several .30 caliber bullet shells nearby. (They're from an M1 Garand.)

A mist rises from the ground as you approach a tree and vine-covered hill that seems like most others you've hiked. About halfway to the top, the eldest boy points to a collection of small boulders shrouded by the huge leaves of some jungle plant. You use the barrel of your rifle to part the leaves, and indeed, there is the opening of a cave, if you can call a hole in the ground a cave. The opening isn't large, but you and your buddies should be able to enter by crouching if you're so-inclined.

This turns out to be a small VC tunnel complex with a planning room, a bunk room, and a couple of tunnels that lead to a pair of bunkers. In the planning room are maps of the area and nearby fire bases, as well as a list of radio codes and schedules. The tunnel complex is disturbingly void of VC. The children follow the soldiers into the tunnel but keep a discreet distance until later.

A tunnel leads off of the planning room, goes 30', and ends in a large ancient stone stairway. The stairway leads down about 50' and widens as it descends. It is 12' wide at the foot.

You step off the stairs into a large natural cavern, approximately 50' wide and 70' long with a 30' high natural ceiling and several large stalactites and stalagmites. Using your flashlights, you see the ground is littered with white stones. There is a small pool, approximately 10' in diameter, in the center of the cavern. A headless body wearing VC black hangs upside-down from the ceiling, directly above the pool, blood dripping from its stump of a neck.

A successful Notice check reveals that the white stones are actually bones, and the pool is not a pool of water but a pool of blood. Something like large, six inch long larva swim around the pool.

Bollaxus is hiding beneath the surface. The children wait until Bollaxus attacks before revealing their true nature. Bollaxus waits until one of the soldiers steps up next to the pool before attacking. Unless the soldier beats Bollaxus in an opposed Notice vs Stealth test, the demon gets the Drop on him.

A nude female demon rises from the pool, dripping blood. She is beautifully proportioned but her hard and chitinous skin makes the beauty horrific. She has four arms, and her legs are misshapen, with the knees pointing and bending backwards. She has large insect-like wings and her eyes are multifaceted. When she opens her mouth, a long sharp proboscis jabs forth.

Bollaxus uses her Stinging Bite on the nearest soldier until he drops from Paralysis, Wounds, or Fatigue. She then flies towards the back of the cave and clings to the ceiling, uses a stalactite as cover, and shoots at various soldiers with her Mosquito Swarm attack. The children transform into Lesser Mosquito Demons, swarm the soldiers, and attack them with their Stinging Bites. If a particular soldier seems to be causing her spawn problems, Bollaxus jumps down and tries to bite him instead of shooting.

Aftermath

The unit runs across no other threats and makes it to the LZ with no trouble. The maps and other information found in the planning room are eagerly collected by Military Intelligence. If the unit talks about their weird encounter during the debriefing, the report finds its way to MACV-SIG. The commanding officer debriefing them states what they saw has been "noted." If the soldiers press the issue, the officer questions whether or not they've been smoking the local weed as it is rumored to be laced with hallucinogens. He punctuates the remark by asking them if they want that to go on the report as well.

Lesser Mosquito Demon

These eight small creatures look like children crossed with insects. They have mosquito-like wings, multi-faceted eyes, four arms, and their legs are out of joint and twisted backwards so they can walk on walls. When they open their mouth, a long sharp proboscis jabs outward.

- ♦ **Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d4, Vigor d4.
- ♦ **Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d10.
- ♦ **Pace:** 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 4 (1).
- ♦ **Special Abilities:**
- ♦ **Armor +1:** Chitinous hide.
- ♦ **Blood Sucker:** Each round after the demon bites, the victim must make a Vigor check or gain one level of Fatigue from blood

loss. This can lead to Incapacitation, but not to Death. Fatigue is removed after a week or until treated in a hospital.

- ♦ **Fear:** The horror of facing this amalgamation of human and insect causes a Fear check.
- ♦ **Infraction:** Lesser Mosquito Demons halve penalties for dark lighting against living targets (round down).
- ♦ **Paralysis:** A target who is Shaken or Wounded by the sting of a Mosquito Demon must make a Vigor roll or fall prone and be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds.
- ♦ **Size -1:** They are child sized.
- ♦ **Stinging Bite:** Str+d4.



Bollaxus, Greater Mosquito Demon

Bollaxus resembles a human female but her skin is hard and chitinous. She has four arms, and her legs are misshapen with the knees pointing and bending backwards. She has large insect-like wings and her eyes are multifaceted. When she opens her mouth, a long sharp proboscis jabs outward.

- ♦ **Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d10.
- ♦ **Skills:** Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d10, Shooting d8, Stealth d8.
- ♦ **Pace:** 6; Parry: 7; Toughness: 9 (2).
- ♦ **Special Abilities:**
- ♦ **Armor +2:** Chitinous hide.
- ♦ **Blood Sucker:** Bollaxus can drain blood after grappling. Each round she has a victim grappled, she automatically causes a level of Fatigue that can lead to Incapacitation, but not Death. Fatigue is removed after a week or when treated in a hospital.
- ♦ **Fear:** The horror of facing this amalgamation of human and insect causes a Fear check.
- ♦ **Infraction:** Bollaxus halves penalties for dark lighting against living targets (round down).
- ♦ **Level Headed:** Bollaxus acts on the best of two cards.
- ♦ **Mosquito Swarm:** Bollaxus can summon a tightly packed swarm of mosquitos. This attack uses the Shooting skill, has a range of 12/24/48, and does 2d6 damage.
- ♦ **Paralysis:** A target who is Shaken or Wounded by her sting must make a Vigor (-2) roll or fall prone and be paralyzed for 2d6 rounds.
- ♦ **Stinging Bite:** Str+d6.
- ♦ **Wall Walker:** She can walk on vertical surfaces or even upside down at normal pace.

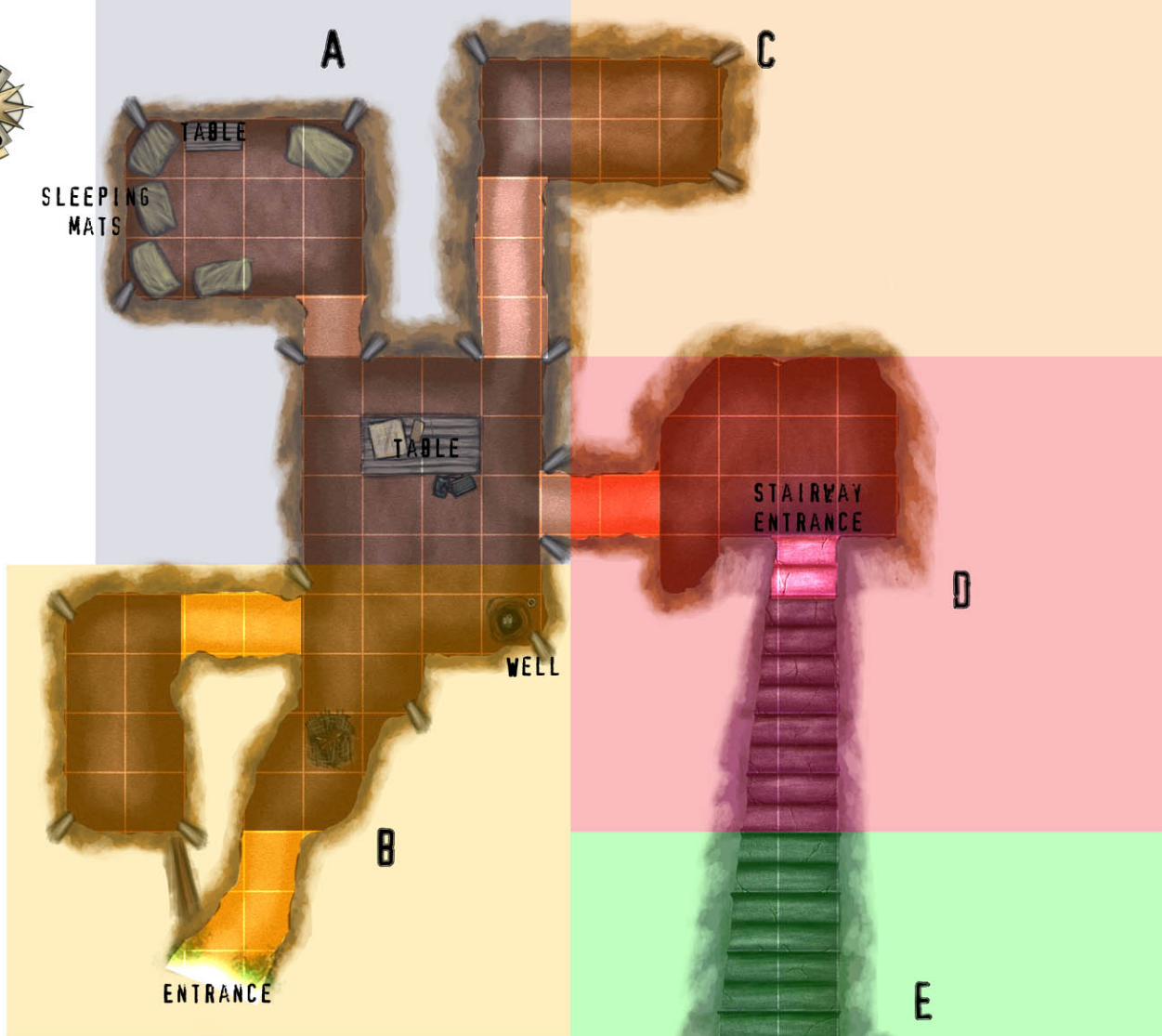
U.S. Army Soldier

They are called "Grunts" because whatever you dish out, they just grunt and take it. They are well-trained and well-equipped, though many of them were drafted so they may be a little more concerned with surviving the war than winning it.

In full kit, they suffer a 1 Encumbrance penalty.

- ♦ **Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Strength d6, Spirit d6, Vigor d6.
- ♦ **Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d4, Shooting d8, Survival d4, Throwing d6.
- ♦ **Charisma:** 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 5.
- ♦ **Hindrances:** None
- ♦ **Edges:** None
- ♦ **Gear:** Angle Head Flashlight (.5lbs), 3 C Rations (6lbs), Folding Shovel (3lbs), LBE (5lbs), M16 (Range 24/48/96, Damage 2d8, RoF 3, Weight 8lbs), 2 M26 Grenades, 3 Magazines: 20 M16 rounds each (3lbs), 2 One Quart Canteens (6lbs), Pancho, Small Towel, Steel Helmet, Machete, Two Quart Canteen (5lbs). Total weight: 46.5 lbs.





CHILDREN OF THE BUSH MAP TILES

The following pages can be printed off and put together to represent the small VC tunnel system and the uncovered cavern from the "Children of the Bush" *One-Sheet™* adventure for use with the *Weird Wars: Tour of Darkness™* Savage Setting.

Note: In real life, VC tunnels would be narrower, often requiring crawling on your stomach to get through ... but they're presented as wider here on the maps so you can use minis.

Optional Terrain Rules:

TIGHT CRAWLS: Highlighted areas of the map (tunnels one square wide or narrower) are tight crawls; to get through, a normal-sized character must be Prone and can only move at half Pace. Running is out of the question. Small creatures (or smaller) are not subject to these limitations.

SPIKE PIT: Anyone with a light source can easily avoid this shallow pit, as the thatched covering has already fallen, making the danger clear. In the unlikely event someone steps in, the spikes do 2d4 damage to the legs/feet.

