



Weed World

An adventure for 4-6 Mutants Level 1-3
Gary Con 2011

**SCENE 1:
VINES GONE WILD**

***** Centuries ago, the Ancient World ended in a swirling storm of nuclear fire, toxic bioweaponry, and global upheaval. But life survived, albeit changed and warped. Mutants and humans live side-by-side in the ruins of Ancient civilizations. Twisted creatures roam the radioactive wastes, and poisonous storms scorch the lands. This is the Mutant Future in which you live.**

You live in a small village (more like a permanent encampment) on the edge of the vast Sinatti Woodlands. Most of the survivors here scratch out a living through farming and raising spidergoat herds for meat, but you supplement your meager earnings through scavenging any ruins and structures you come across. You've sold a few good finds to traveling merchants and fortune hunters, keeping the best weapons and gadgets for yourself.

The villagers have become nervous as of late as the foliage and underbrush marking the edge of the village's border seems to have become thicker and taller in recent days. The plantlife grows fairly wild in the forests and thickets, but there's an almost perceptible encroachment of the flora regardless of the amount of threshing and cutting back the villagers do.

Equally mysterious is a weakening illness that seems to have overtaken the young and elderly. Several smaller herd animals seem to have perished from the illness as well.

You wake the next morning to startled cries and gasps of surprise. When you

leave your tents, you see that – overnight – the grass bordering the village has grown from ankle to chest height. The trees are now nearly taller than you can see. You feel as insects must in the overgrowth.

There is a thunderous CRACK nearby and the ground shudders. Screams pierce the air.**

Explanations aside, two monstrosly large Mummy Vine plants have sprung up on the northern edge of the village. Their vines are as thick as a man's thigh as they slap and swat at the villagers. The vines are covered with thorns, but the vines are still young and have not yet developed the mind-control toxin normally associated with Mummy Vines. But they will attempt to grab and subdue any victims. There are four vines swinging around; each takes 20 points of damage before severing. There is a brain-like root bulb that controls each plant. If the PCs attack that, it will “die” after 10 points of damage done.

Giant Mummy Vines (2) (AL C, MV 45' (15'), AC 5, HD 6, #AT 2 (clubbing swat), DG 2d4, SV L4, ML 12, mutations: none)
They all have 35 hit points.

VINES:

- 1 – 20
- 2 – 20
- 3 – 20
- 4 – 20

BRAIN BULB:

- 1 – 10
- 2 – 10

The vines will continue their attack until killed. The villagers will huddle and hide (generally worthless to the fight).

**SCENE 2:
FOLLOW THE BLACKTOP ROAD**

Once the rampant plants are dealt with, Zorrak, the village leader approaches those who fought.

**** As I watched you all grow and thrive, I knew it would one day be you who would come to our aid. Thank you for dealing with this tendrilled menace. But I fear this is but the start of something ominous. Obviously we've all been aware of the accelerated plant growth. This new explosion overnight confirms that this isn't a natural occurrence. I fear that, unless we act, our village and all within will be overrun and decimated within hours. Somehow, we must find out what is causing this and how to stop it. I must task you with a journey for the good of our people. You need to consult with the wisest man in our area – Zhonie Kharsin. If anyone may know what is happening, it could be him. He is said to live in an Ancient complex known as “Cow Spittal” about an hour south of here on foot. Follow the Ancient road of “Us-Four-Two” to find him and report back to me if he has any useful information.****

Zorrak goes to his tent and returns with a can of Medi-spray I (2d8 per spray, 5 sprays in the can). He offers it to them in case they could use it. He also suggests any without a blade should equip themselves with a threshing blade (machete - 1d8 damage) to help them clear the path they'll take.

**** Please hurry! Even now, I can see the plantlife moving ever closer. And Bob help us if any more of those giant vine plants spring up!****

Zorrak points them in the right direction and off they go.

==_==_==_

As the PCs walk along Us-Four-Two, they realize how bad the overgrowth has gotten. This black strip of flat rock used as a road used to be wide enough to take four carts riding next to each other. Now it's all they can do to hack a path through the growth to allow them to walk single file. All of the trees, vines, flowers, and flora have intertwined and grown to gargantuan sizes.

NOTE: Let them know that they may see the bodies of some braindeer or atomicows laying here and there. (These are herbavores poisoned by the new enzyme.)

About 20 minutes down the road, they hack through some foliage and come across two dogs made of stone wrapped in vines. The statues don't seem to be weathered, rather very new in construction. These are two (dead) Rot Dogs that got caught up in some Medusaweed that litters the path ahead. If the players are watching for it, it's easy enough to avoid (unless someone is unlucky enough to fail a DEX roll or if they start pulling and tugging at the vines on the statues.

If touched, the Medusaweed will poison the victim for paralysis, then begin calcifying its victim for 2d4 points per round until dead.

Medusaweed (1) (AL None, MV None, AC 7, HD 4, #AT Special, DG Stun, Special, SV L2, ML None, mutations: dermal poison sap, fossilization)
Medusaweed has 12 hit points.

MEDUSAWEED - 12

**SCENE 3:
COW SPITTAL**

After another 30 minutes of walking and hacking, the pathway surprisingly opens up. It seems that the plants here have not grown so wildly and are actually of normal size and “temperament.” The road leads past a large Ancient brick structure nearby. The rusty Ancient sign seems to have lost some letters. It reads:

COUxxx xxSPITAL (The letters N-T-Y-H- and O lay nearby.)

This used to be the county hospital for the area. Zhonie Kharsin the Mastermind “hears” them approach with his latent telepathy and steps out to greet them. He's dressed in white robes (horribly dirty) with a goatee and glasses. He also has a bulbous throbbing head. When he speaks, you hear his voice in your head:

*****“Welcome Sinatti travellers! As the Ancients once proclaimed...Here's Zhonie! I can hear you've been looking for me. Please, enter, for I have news of use to you...and these lands.”*****

Zhonie takes the PCs down a series of long, dark, dust- and cobweb-strewn hallways and into something from a mad scientist movie. Bubbling testtubes and beakers line tables. He explains as he fiddles with “science stuff.”

“I am aware that the regional plantlife is undergoing accelerated and radical growth. Foliage is growing to sizes usually seen in years in just hours. And those plants that are of a more...”offensive nature” are even more deadly due to their increased size and aggressiveness. Even more

troubling....every single plant I have tested is also now highly poisonous, even those that are usually raised for consumption! Although not harmful to insects necessary for pollination, all animals that feed upon plantlife are dying. First the smaller and weaker ones, then eventually the larger and stronger ones will grow sicker and die. And the poisons linger, so even carnivores that feed on other animals will be poisoned.

However, I've believe I've isolated the cause of our trouble. My experiments on the plantlife around this facility reveals my success. You see, a single naturally occurring enzyme is responsible for both the growth and the toxicity. By the way the growth is expanding, I surmise it's spreading through the water table. To counteract it, we just need to add this to the nearest point of contamination which, by my calculations, is the reservoir just south of here. However, it's in the middle of an area the natives call “The Devil's Greenhouse” due to its already rampant growth. I don't expect that the journey will be an easy one.

Zhonie shows the players two testtubes with a thick yellow liquid. He explains that the contents of only one tube is needed.

“The counteragent should spread just as quickly through the water table, reverting everything back to normal.”

He grabs a backpack and a walking stick, intending to come with the group. He explains it's for research and also that he's never really explored beyond the facility.

I also want to see where that enzyme comes from, I mean, what could generate that much of a naturally occurring substance?

He then stops at the door, races back and grabs two rusty tin cans, sealed, with a pin and fuse mechanism on the top. Both cans are marked "DEFOL".

I whipped these up for another purpose, but I'll bet they'll be useful. It's a strong defoliant that explodes in a 10-foot radius. Should help clear out the more...*aggressive* plantlife we encounter.

It's a defoliant which will do 20 points of damage to any plantlife in a 10 foot radius when it explodes.

**SCENE 4:
BLOODSUCKERS FROM ABOVE**

**(THIS IS ONLY IF YOU NEED TO
FILL TIME...)**

As the adventurers leave the hospital, Zhonie stops them with an upraised hand.

Do you hear that? Sounds like a high-pitched buzzing noise.

He's "hearing" the thoughts of two Mansquitos that landed on the roof of the hospital. Sensing prey within (and half-starved due to the dying animals), they've decided to attack the first fresh prey they've seen in days. They're gliding down from the roof just as Zhonie stops the party, so there's one round before they get surprise initiative.

Mansquitoes (3) (AL C, MV 120' (40'); Glide 150' (50'), AC 6, HD 9, #AT 1 (weapon, proboscis, or blood sucking), DG weapon, 1d4, or 1d6, SV L4, ML 8, *Mutations: complete wing development*)

Each Mansquito has 35 hit points

1 – 30

2 – 30

3 - 30

On belt pouches, the Mansquitos are carrying 51 silver pieces, an Antitox Shot and a Stimshot A.

((Just a quick combat encounter before hitting the road to the final encounter.))

SCENE 5: THE DEVIL'S GREENHOUSE

You fight your way through even more dense brush which seems to become laden with briars and thorns. You're starting to move even slower as you pick your way through the dangerous thicket, watching for any of the "aggressive" plants Zhonie warned about. You seem to have gotten lucky as you haven't been accosted since you left the Stittel. You feel the ground starting to slope as you start to descend into a small valley – The Devil's Greenhouse. It's hard to see as the overhanging growth cuts the sunlight considerably. It's like twilight under the dense canopy.

You hear the sounds of water rushing and falling. The thicket opens up into a small clearing surrounded by large trees. On the far end is an Ancient reservoir built into a freshly-running stream. The walls and channels keep the water from rushing out.

Zhonie points at it.

That's it. I'll bet my brain that reservoir is deep enough to touch the bedrock beneath. With the underground waterflow network emanating from this point, it should be sufficient to move the counteragent.

Of the trees there are three that they should be wary of. Two are giant Kernel Plants (15' high) that are under the complete sway of Splinterthorn. He'll trigger them when he feels the combat is going badly. The PCs should be warned by the pop-pop-pop as the cobs are triggered. Both have 25 hp.

Kernel Plants (2) (AL N, MV 15' (5'), AC 9, HD 3, #AT 1, DG 2d6 for a "shotgun" corn blast, 3d6 for a "cob missile", SV L2, ML 8, mutations: natural vegetable weapons)

KERNAL PLANT

1 -25
2 – 25

As the PCs approach, one of the "trees" next to the reservoir slowly turns. It's voice is hissing and raspy, slow. It's furious at the intrusion. Describe a 20' charred, scarred, gnarled, leaveless tree-man covered in briars and vines. It hisses:

WHAT ANIMALS DARE DISTURB THE SANCTUARY OF SPLINTERTHORN?

Zhonie may blanch at this.

"Oh my Bob. I've heard of Splinterthorn. He's a mutant plant who was trapped out in the open during the Apocalyageddon. They say he burned for centuries, unable to die. But I always thought he was a tale mutant plant parents tell their saplings to scare them. "Behave or Splinterthorn'll get you!"

Splinterthorn appears to have one leg in the reservoir. There's an oily sheen to the surface around where his roots are in the water. He's producing the enzyme sap after years of experimentation and mutation. He's been releasing it slowly. He plans to exterminate all animal life. Humans were responsible for his years of torment. He sees the destruction and devastation of plantkind as an

affront, so he has planned to drive the animal kingdom to extinction.

**ANIMALS EAT USSSS... BURN
USSSS... CUT USSSSSS... LIVE IN
OUR CORPSES.SSS... NOW,
ANIMALSSSS WILL DIE.
PLANTKIND NOW
DOMINATESSS. GO. SAY
GOODBYE TO YOUR LOVED
ONESSSSS.**

And the battle is joined. Splinterthorn is done talking. Unless the PCs leave immediately, he'll fire a volley of projectile thorns. If the PCs try to flank him, he'll fire the Kernal Plants, causing shrapnel to scatter the PCs. Only when he's at half-points will Splinterthorn uproot and give chase. If a Kernal Plant is still alive, he'll uproot it and fire it like a missile launcher.

Zhonie may shout that they have to get Splinterthorn out of the water. (**"It's HIM! The enzyme is coming from HIM!"**)

Zhonie will try to get near the reservoir only after Splinterthorn is giving chase to the PCs. He may toss one of the tubes to one of the other PCs nearby. Play up the risk of breaking the tubes while everything's going to hell!

==_==_==_==_==_==

Once Splinterthorn is down and the counteragent delivered....

As soon as the golden syrup touches the water, you see a clearness overtake the murky reservoir. It spreads out across the surface and to the depths of the basin. You can visibly see the plantlife starting to wither and shrink at the water's edge as the

antidote starts to leech its way through the water table. The walk out of The Devil's Greenhouse is no more difficult than a walk through tall grass as the thorns and brambles are now brittle, falling away at your touch. You escort Zhonie back to Cow Spittal.

****Thanks for letting me tag along on the adventure. I'll run more tests, but I'm pretty sure that the damage is being reversed and plantlife in the area is returning to normal. The illness should also run its course as the poisons are purged from everyone's bodies. And be sure to tell Zorrak Zhonie said "Hi-yooooo!" He'll know what it means.****

You shake hands with your new friend and head back north on Us-Four-Two, reaching your village and informing Zorrak that the menace has ended. You regale him with your tale of adventure and danger.

"And what of Splinterthorn then?" he asks nervously. "How does one kill that which cannot be killed?"

Back at The Devil's Greenhouse, Splinterthorn's (??? *burned, mangled, poisoned* ???) body lays motionless at the bottom of the valley. Slowly one eye opens...then narrows in fury.

END

Splinterthorn **9th Level Mutant Plant**

STR: 18 --- INT: 10

DEX: 9 --- WIL: 20

CON: 16 --- CHA: 7

HPs: 85 --- AC: 6

Mutations: projectile thorns, abnormal size (20 feet tall), regenerative capability

Splinterthorn is a 20-foot tall tree-like mutant plant composed of hardened saplings and thorn-laden vines. When he's not moving, he appears to be a leafless dead tree. Some unobservant folks could walk right past Splinterthorn without knowing he was "alive" in the truest sense. This would be very dangerous though as Splinterthorn hates all animal and humanoid life and he would not hesitate to attack.

Due to Splinterthorn's *abnormal size*, he receives a +3 to hit bonus in combat as well as a +2d6 crushing damage bonus with hand-to-hand weapons.

Splinterthorn can also fire out a salvo of fist-sized *projectile thorns* that do 1d8 hit points of damage to the victim.

Splinterthorn's *regenerative capability* allows him to heal 10 extra points of day as well as grow back missing limbs and extremities over time. He is large, powerful, and difficult to harm.

If examined closely, observant PCs will see that Splinterthorn's outer bark is covered with charred and blackened areas. Centuries ago, the mutant plant was caught in the atomic fires of the Apocalyageddon. Due to his regeneration mutation, he healed as fast

as he burned. His rage at having nearly died at the hands of humanoids fueled his hatred of all animal lifeforms.

Splinterthorn now views all creatures as nothing more than the slaughterers and oppressors of plantdom. Humans and mutants cultivate, cut, burn, consume, and harvest plants. Animals feed on them. Even caretakers and farmers who tend to plants and gardens are viewed as nothing more than horticultural slavemasters. Splinterthorn would like nothing more than eliminate all forms of animal life from the planet -- which is his longterm goal.

Splinterthorn resides in a hard-to-reach valley known as The Devil's Greenhouse. This valley is overgrown with briars, thorns, poisonous plants, and dangerous flora. It is said no animal life can survive in this inhospitable jungle. It is here that Splinterthorn hides, gathering information and supplies needed to carry out his plan of world domination by plantlife via the extinction of humans, mutants, fauna, waterlife, and avians.

Fairly tales and bedtime stories of Splinterthorn's tragic past and his plans for revenge have been passed down amongst generations of mutant plants over the years. Most consider these stories as folklore and fairy tales. But these "fairy tales" are more real than anyone realizes, and Splinterthorn is mere months away from enacting his extinction-level event.



D. CRAMER.