

HS1

**Compatible with the
Swords & Wizardry™ game**

Mini-dungeon Module HS1

A Very Scary Xmos

by Matthew E Kline

A HOLIDAY SPECIAL ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 1-3



Three sages warn of the return of Xmos, a demonically possessed archdruid that was banished to Limbo eons ago. His minions have gathered to prepare for his return. They must be defeated and Xmos banished back to Limbo.

A Very Scary Xmos is a holiday themed mini-dungeons filled with horrible puns. The above image has nothing to do with it really. It was cheap and we needed to put something there. So, you know, enjoy. And have a happy one!



**Dungeons of
Dazegoneby**

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Dungeons of Dazegoneby

Mini-Dungeon Holiday Special

A Very Scary

Xmos

Three sages warn of the return of Xmos, a demonically possessed archdruid that was banished to Limbo eons ago. His minions have gathered to prepare for his return. They must be defeated and the banishing ritual enacted before Xmos Eve is over and Xmos time is here.

About This Product

Although it can be scaled by the Gamemaster for groups of other sizes, A Very Scary Xmos is designed for 4-6 adventurers of level 1-3. This product is part of a line of mini-dungeons designed as quick, drop-in adventures. They're ideal for use as short side quests, or for gaming sessions where you're pressed for time. You could even string them all together as a mini dungeon campaign.

Gamemasters should feel free to adjust this adventure to suit their group's style of game-play or level of difficulty.

It's recommended that the Gamemaster read through this product at least twice in order to familiarize themselves with the adventure prior to playing. They should also take note of any new monsters or magic listed at the end of the document.

This product requires the use of the *Swords & Wizardry* rules. More information can be found online at www.swordsandwizadry.com

On the pages that follow you'll find boxes like the one surrounding this text. These boxes hold suggested descriptions of the rooms that can be read out loud to the players.

After most of the room descriptions you'll find one or more of the following symbols:



This symbol indicates that there's a monster or monsters in the room.



This symbol indicates there's treasure in the room.



This symbol indicates that there's a dangerous obstacle in the room.

A description of the monsters, treasures, or obstacles encountered follows after each symbol.

About Dungeons of Dazegoneby

I can remember a time in my distant past when I could head to the local mall walk into one of the two bookstores they had at the time, plunk down around five dollars, and walk out with a brand new Dungeons & Dragons module. Our *Dungeons of Dazegoneby* line is a tribute to old school gaming, paying homage to a time filled with graph paper maps, wandering monster tables, hand-drawn character sheets, and lazy afternoons filled with adventure and wonder. We hope you enjoy playing these products as much as we enjoyed making them.

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Gamemaster's Eyes Only:

Xmos time is upon us, a time foretold as the return of Xmos, a demonically possessed archdruid who started a cult that worshipped aspects of nature such as rot, weeds, and rampant overgrowth.

He's gathered his minions to him, his eight being who rain fear. They've assembled at his old estate, turned temple; the House of Xmos, anxiously awaiting his return.

Set Up

The party is approached by three sages dressed in robes, who seemingly materialize out of nowhere. They explain that they sense the demon-druid Xmos attempting to enter our realm. They seek the party's assistance in stopping him and his minions.

They state that they will send a gnome named Litee Mots along to assist them. They offer the party a reward of gold (500gp), frankincense, and myrrh upon their success. One will then shrug and say "It's what we do."

If the party agrees there will be a flash of light behind the sages. They'll step aside to reveal a gnome, rapidly pulling on his robes. "Oh bother!" He'll blurt. He'll scoop up a large book from the ground. "Well. Let's get going then."

In another flash of light the party will suddenly find themselves, along with Mots, standing in the middle of a forest. "This way." Mots will state then start heading off between the trees.

Mots consults his Book of Naughty/Nice along the way. It holds information on good creatures and bad creatures. He

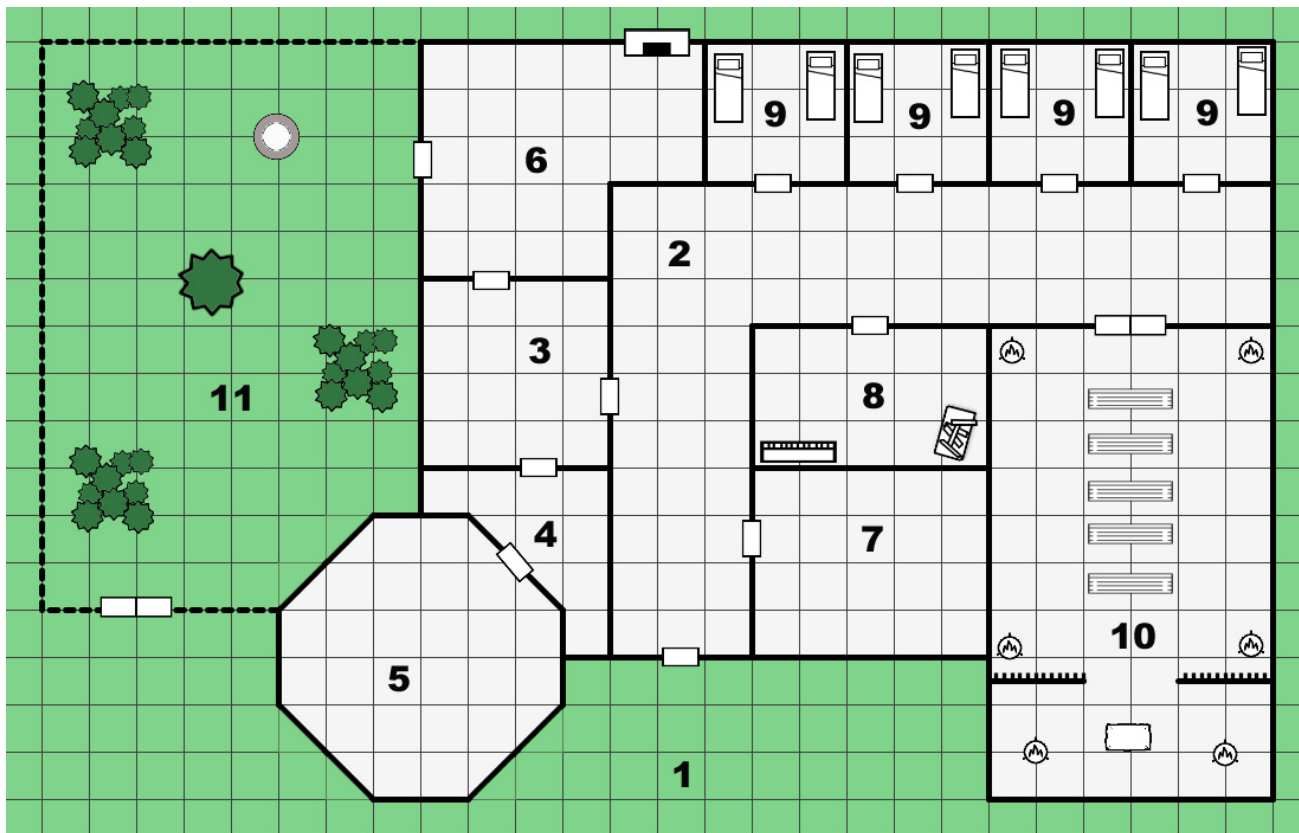
feels that it could be of help dealing with Xmos and his minions. It also holds information on the ritual used to banish Xmos. "Once at the House of Xmos, we'll need to find something called the *radiant star*. It's a crucial piece of the banishment ritual."

A Note to the Gamemaster

The set up described here is only a suggestion. Feel free to introduce this scenario to your group in any way you see fit.

It's possible a druid among the party senses something amiss and suggests the group seek out the three sages and/or Litee Mots (he can usually be found hanging around at Xmos time.)





HOUSE OF XMOS

1SQ = 5'

Key to the House of Xmos

Mots comes to an abrupt halt as the forest breaks into a large clearing. A small estate house sits at its center. There’s an octangular structure at its front left corner. A garden area with a low wall sits to the left of it as well. Mots is focused on the fact that a number of brightly colored glowing orbs are strung across the front of the house. “Uh oh, this is worse than I thought. The Xmos lights are up. That means the elves are here. We don’t have much time.”

1. Front Entrance

A dirt and stone road, overgrown with vegetation leads up to the front door of a small estate house.

As the group approaches they’ll notice a large wolf pacing back and forth before the door. Mots will consult his Book of Naughty/Nice then inform the group of the following: “That’s Fangsgiving, a dune worg that’s sworn loyalty to Xmos. His presence means Xmos time is near. You know what sets a dune worg apart from regular worgs? Its sandy claws...”

If the group approaches within 20’ of the front door the dune worg will attack.



If Fangsgiving engages the party the Xmos elves in **Area 5** will be alerted to their presence. There are only two arrow slits on the bastion’s southeast wall so the party only risks coming under arrow fire from two elves while fighting the dune worg.



Fangsgiving (Dune Worg): HD 4; HP 25; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6+1); Move 18; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Blinding sand attack.



Once the dune worg been dealt with the *Xmos lights* can be retrieved (see New Magic.) There are twelve here total.

2. Main Hall

A 15' wide corridor lies to the north it turns a corner 35' ahead then heads east. Stray stands of webbing cling to the walls, stirred gently by your entrance.

A giant brown recluse patrols this hall. When it comes into view Mots will again consult his book: "That's Rudolfo the Brown-toed Recluse. Rudolfo became embittered from being constantly harassed by the other giant brown recluses. Mostly because his toes were browner than the rest of him. That and he had toes..."



Rudolfo the Brown-Toed Recluse (Giant Spider): HD 1+1; AC 8[11]; Atk 1 bite (1hp + poison); Move 9; Save 17; CL/XP 3/60; Special: lethal poison (+2 saving throw)



3. Pantry

You're greeted by the smell of moldy and rotting food as you open the door to this room. A depressed looking man dressed in the rags of a peasant stands at the center of this room. His rags drift and move as if stirred by a breeze that isn't there.

This was the estate's pantry. Old wooden shelves filled with moldy and rotten food line the walls.

Once the man's aware of the party's presence he'll raise his head and ask "Are you here to end this? I'm ready for this to be over..."

Mots will jab a finger at an entry in his Book of Naughty/Nice. "It's the Ghost of Xmos Peasant! A simple peasant named Hon was granted a boon of eternal life by Xmos. He wished to pass on years ago, but it's the Xmos gift that keeps Hon living!" Hon's features will then twist into a mask of rage and he'll attack the party.



Ghost of Xmos Peasant (Half-Wraith): HD 2; HP: 12; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 touch (1d4+ weakness); Move 9 (Fly 12); Save 13; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Temporary weakness with hit.

4. Store Room

A small pile of brownish dust lies just inside the door to this room. Mots stoops over, jabs a finger into the dust and tests it on his tongue. "Nutmeg." He mutters ominously, "We haven't much time."

This room was at one time used as a storage area for the estate. It now sits empty, save for the nutmeg.

5. Bastion

Eight red and white striped bed rolls are scattered across the floor of this octagonal room.

This room houses Xmos elves, a faction of elves with a fanatical devotion to Xmos.

Each wall of this room bears two arrow slits which allow the elves to fire out at unwelcomed visitors. Anyone attempting to fire in through the arrow slits suffers a -4 penalty to their attacks.

The elves will be alerted to the party's presence if they hear Fangsgiving doing battle with them or the sound of the gate to **Area 11** squeaking open. They'll fire out of the arrow slits at the party for as long as they can. Once the party's no longer visible, four elves will head from this room and attempt to ambush the party as they enter the main hall. The rest



will remain here to fire upon the party if they try to leave the estate again.



Elves (8): HD 1+1; HP: 8,7,7,7,6, 6,5,5; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 sword (1d8) or 2 arrows (1d6); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: None.



If the bedrolls are searched the party will find 3 bundles of *Xmos cookies* containing 3 cookies each (see New Magic.)

Sitting against one of the walls is a large sack. The sack contains 36 brightly painted wooden toy soldiers. These toys are worth 2d4 copper pieces each.

6. Kitchen

The first thing you notice is that this room is almost unbearably hot. The second thing you notice is a flaming skeleton carrying off bits of broken furniture to feed a roaring fire in a hearth in the northeast corner of the room. All right, maybe you noticed the flaming skeleton first. It's kind of hard to miss the thing. It's a skeleton. On fire.

This room was at one time the estate's kitchen. The tables and shelves that once stood here have been broken up and used as fuel for the fire.

Mots will identify the skeleton as Yuleloggos. "He delights in the warmth he brings to the hearts of others. Unfortunately, he's usually holding the hearts in his hands at the time."



As a one-use attack, Yuleloggos can cause flames to erupt from the hearth. These flames deal 2d6

damage to all creatures within 15' of the hearth. A successful save vs. dragon's breath will halve the damage. Extinguishing the fire in the hearth will deal 1d6 points damage to Yuleloggos and deactivate his flaming aura.

Yuleloggos (Flaming Skeleton): HD 3; HP: 18; AC 8[11] or 7[12] with shield; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d6) or (1d6+1 two-handed); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Flaming aura. Gear: +1 *Yule Log*.



As stated above Yuleloggos is armed with a +1 *Yule Log* (see New Magic)

7. Dining Hall

This room is far colder than it should be. A frozen corpse sits on a makeshift throne comprised of pieces from broken up tables and chairs.

The corpse will rise and move to attack the party as Mots pages frantically through his Book of Naughty/Nice.

After the corpse has been defeated Mots will identify it as Frosty the Deadman. "Granted icy undead status by Xmos, Frosty was fated to serve its master for all eternity, or until the spring thaw. Whichever came first." He'll then look over the body and add "I guess they should have included a sword to the head in their parameters."



There's a thin layer of ice coating everything in this room making the floor of this room tricky to navigate. 'To hit' rolls, damage,

and AC all suffer a -1 penalty. Movement for creatures other than Frosty is reduced by half. Making an unsuccessful melee attack against Frosty has a 20% chance of causing a character to slip and fall prone. There's also a 20% chance a player will slip each time a successful melee attack is made against them. A critical hit triples this chance. A prone character will have to spend a good deal of their next turn climbing back to their feet (and possible retrieving a fumbled weapon.)



Frosty the Deadman (Ice Zombie): HD 3; HP 16; AC 7[12] or with shield 6[13]; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Cold aura, Immune to sleep and charm.

8. Study

This looks to be some sort of study or workshop. A wooden soldier rises up from the center of the floor like a marionette.

Mots looks up from his book. "Uh oh. It's Nutcracker." He'll then look at the nearest party member. "You don't want to know why they call him Nutcracker..."



Nutcracker (Wood Golem): HD 3 (18hp); AC 9[10]; Atk 1 kick (1d4); Move 8; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: 30% spell resistance.



If the room is searched the players will recover a small sack full of around 3 dozen walnuts and 7 mouse-sized gold crowns worth 5gp each.

9. Dormitories

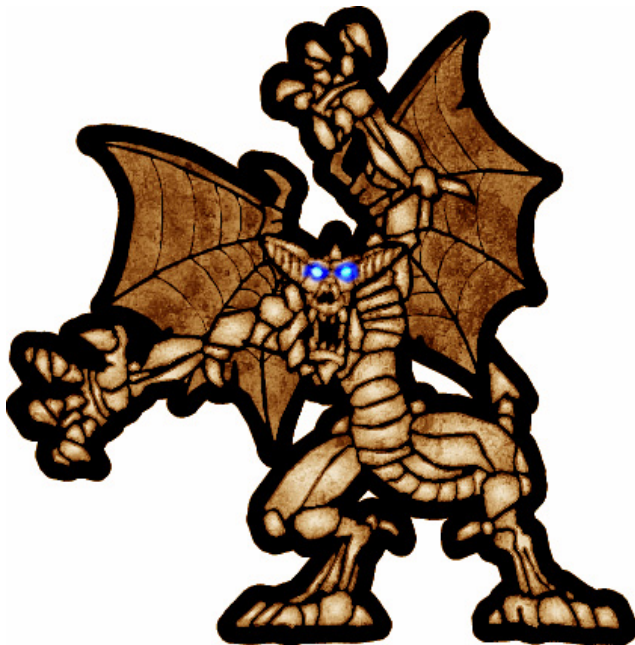
At one time this served as living quarters for members of the cult of Xmos. Now its fallen into disrepair.

Each of these rooms contain two sets of bunkbeds for four beds total. The wood they're comprised of is old and rotten. In some cases the bunks have collapsed. There is nothing of value in these rooms.

10. Temple

This large room was at one time a center of worship. A row of old rotted pews runs up the center of the room. They face an altar to the south upon which stands the *radiant star*.

The ceiling of this room is 30' high. A strange gargoyle hovers high in the air near the center of the room. When Mots spots it he'll say the following: "It's Merv! The Myrrhgoyle. He's made of Myrrh!" He'll then shrug and add "What do you want? They can't all be winners..."



Merv will swoop down and attack anyone heading for the star.



Merv (Myrrhgoyle): HD 3; HP 17; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9 (Fly 12); Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Healing, fly.



Once Merv's been dealt with the *radiant star* can be retrieved from the altar (see New Magic.)

11. Walled Garden

A 4' high stone wall surrounds a garden which looks remarkably well maintained. Several large evergreen trees are visible.

A 10' tall evergreen tree grows at the center of this garden. There are three standings of smaller evergreen trees and a fountain here as well.

Mots will identify the fountain as the Fountain of Nog. Drinking this creamy concoction will restore 1d4+2 hit points to a character. A character who drinks more than once from the fountain in a 24-hour period will become possessed by the spirit of Xmos. Instead of being healed they'll be able to take no action other than drunkenly stagger about for the next hour. Possibly while singing.

Coming within 15' of the large evergreen tree will cause it to animate and attack. At this point Mots will read from his book: "It's Tanin-Baum! An extremely rare pine treant, driven mad by his isolation, loneliness, and severe allergy to pine needles!"

When the treant's been defeated it will root to the spot. Seeing **Banishing Xmos** at the end of this section.



Once Tanin-Baum animates it will command the evergreen trees in the area to fire their needles. The players will take 1 point of damage each round from this pine needle barrage for as long as Tanin-Baum lives. They'll also smell like pine for the next few days.



Tanin-Baum (Pine Treant): HD 3+1; HP 23; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 strike (1d6); Move 3; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Pine needles.

Banishing Xmos

Upon defeating Tanin-Baum the treant will root to the spot. This will also cause a portal to start to form close by in the walled garden. Mots will view this as the beginning of the return of Xmos, or what he refers to as Xmos Eve. Mots will suggest the party hurry up and find the *radiant star* if it's not already in their possession.

Placing the star atop the corpse of Tanin-Baum will transform it into an Xmos Tree. Once the radiant star is in position Mots can begin the banishing ritual, unfortunately it will also cause a group of skeletons to emerge from the portal.

Six skeletons will emerge from the portal, with an additional six to follow 1 round after. Unlike normal skeletons these each are topped with a silver coated skull.

When the skeletons emerge Mots will yell at the party to protect the tree, then add "Silver skulls! Silver skull! It's Xmos time." He'll then mutter "What a pity..."



Silver Skull Skeletons (12): HD 2; HP 7,7,7,6,6,5,5,5, 4,4,4,4; AC 8[11] or 7[12] with shield; Atk 1

weapon or strike (1d6) or (1d6+1 two-handed); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 2/30; Special: *Silver skulls*.

As each skeleton is defeated Mots will collect its silver skull and place it on the tree. The radiant star will grow brighter and the portal will seem to diminish with each skull placed. Once the tree has been adorned with all twelve silver skulls Mots will begin the chant to banish Xmos, he may need some help from the party:

Oh Brightly Glowing Xmos Tree

(To the tune of 'Oh Little Town of Bethlehem')

*Oh brightly glowing Xmos Tree
How radiant shines thy light
Though things look grim
You'll banish him
Into the endless night!*

Once the banishing ritual has been intoned the portal will snap shut and the threat of Xmos ended.

Xmos Wrapping Up

After the banishing ritual's performed and the portal has been closed the three sages will appear in a puff of smoke. They'll congratulate Mots and the group on a job well done. They'll each hand over a small wooden chest to the party, one filled with gold (500gp), one containing *frankincense incense*, and one holding a rope necklace with a large chunk of myrrh (*myrrh necklace*.)

The sages then suggest that either Mots or the party take possession of the *radiant star* and the 12 *silver skulls*.

Once everything's sorted out the sages will offer to teleport the party anywhere they want to go (within reason.) They

offer to teleport Mots somewhere as well but he declines, deciding to hang around a bit longer.

Continuing the Adventure

Really? You want to continue this? Okay. Here are some suggestions:

✂ The party takes the sack of toys they retrieved from the Xmos elves into town. Unfortunately, once there the toys animate and grow to full size. The party now has to deal with the march of the wooden soldiers.

✂ The nutmeg Mots identified in **Area 4** was left behind by a batch of gingerbread assassins. These animated cookies manage to track down the party and exact revenge on behalf of Xmos.

✂ If the party is in possession of the seven mouse-sized crowns from **Area 8** the seven-headed mouse king may come looking for them, along with his mouse army. It may not seem like much of a threat, but it's an awful lot of mice.

✂ Someone's stolen Mots' Book of Naughty/Nice. The gnome contacts the party and requests their help in getting it back.



✂ After eating one of the Xmos cookies a party member gets the irresistible urge to start making wooden toys.

✂ Friends of Rudolfo, an axe wielding ranger, a yeti, and an elf who likes to pull teeth, come looking for the spider's killers.

NEW MAGIC

Frankincense Incense

These cones come in packs of 12. Burning one while memorizing a chosen spell will allow the spell caster to retain the ability to use that spell again after casting it. Basically, the spell caster gains the ability to cast the same spell twice during one 24 hour period.

Myrrh Necklace

The wearer of this necklace regains 1 hit point each time a target within 15' of them is healed by magical means. The wearer also regains 1 additional hit point when healing by resting.

Radiant Star

Clerics within 5' of this item gain a +1 bonus when attempting to turn undead. The star can also be used once per week to return a level that's been drained from a character by an undead creature.

Silver Skulls

Used in conjunction with an *animate dead* spell. The caster replaces the skull of a skeleton they've animated with a silver skull. The skeleton gains 1 additional hit die and becomes harder to turn by five challenge levels.

Xmos Cookies

One of these cookies provides enough food to feed a man-size creature for 1 day. And they have sprinkles!

Xmos Lights

A glass like orb roughly 6" in diameter. When released they drift along behind the one who released it, producing light equivalent to that of a torch for up to 8 hours before burning out.

Yule Log

A large two-handed club resembling a 3' long log. It weighs 15lbs and deals 1d8 damage to a target. Once per day it can be willed to ignite after striking a creature, dealing an additional 1d6 fire damage.

NEW MONSTERS

Dune Worg

Similar to standard worgs save for the fact that these creatures prefer to lair near deserts and beaches. They have the odd ability to generate sand between their toes, which they can use to perform a blinding attack once per day. Creatures within 10' of them must save vs. dragon's breath or else be blinded for 1d3 rounds.

Dune Worg: HD 4; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 bite (1d6+1); Move 18; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Blinding sand attack.

Flaming Skeleton

Like a standard animated skeleton however this one's on fire. The same magic that creates its flaming aura makes it more difficult to damage or turn. At the start of a flaming skeleton's turn all

creatures within 5' of it are dealt 1 point fire damage. Flaming skeletons have some control over flame and are usually encountered near a flame source of some type.

Flaming Skeleton: HD 3; AC 8[11] or 7[12] with shield; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d6) or (1d6+1 two-handed); Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Flaming aura.

Half-Wraith

Whatever transformative power normally used to create a wraith only half affected these creatures. They're weaker than a standard wraith but they can pass that weakness on to others as well. Creatures damaged by a half-wraith have their strength temporarily reduced by 1 point for 1 hour. A currently weakened creature cannot be weakened again.

Half-Wraith: HD 2; AC 6[13]; Atk 1 touch (1d4+ weakness); Move 9 (Fly 12); Save 13; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Temporary weakness with hit.

Ice Zombie

An ice zombie is surrounded by an aura of cold. If they spend too long in one spot this aura tends to coat the area around them with a thin layer of ice. When an ice zombie is destroyed it's aura detonates dealing 1d4 cold damage to all creatures within 20' of it.

Ice Zombie: HD 3; AC 7[12] or with shield 6[13]; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Cold aura, Immune to sleep and charm.

Myrrhgoyle

A myrrhgoyle is made of myrrh. Myrrh has certain healing properties. Each time damage is dealt to a myrrhgoyle it caused a puff of dust to be released from the creature. This dust heals all creatures within 10' of the myrrhgoyle for 1d2 hit points. Upon slaying a myrrhgoyle it will burst into a cloud of dust healing all present for 2d6 hit points.

Myrrhgoyle: HD 3; AC 5[14]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9 (Fly 12); Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Healing, fly.

Pine Treant

Like a normal treant only slightly less mobile. Pine treants can fire off their needles dealing 1 point damage to all creatures within 20' of it. It can also will other non-treant needle bearing trees that are close by to do the same.

Pine Treant: HD 3+1; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 strike (1d6); Move 3; Save 13; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Pine needles.

Wood Golem

These man-size golems have only one attack, a kick. They tend to aim that kick at a very sensitive area, their original creator's idea of a joke. Males on the receiving end of this attack tend to talk in a high-pitched voice for 1d3 rounds afterwards.

Wood Golem: HD 3 (18hp); AC 9[10]; Atk 1 kick (1d4); Move 8; Save 16; CL/XP 3/60; Special: 30% spell resistance.

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The map for our "old school" House of Xmos was created using dungeonographer mapping software from Inkwell Ideas.

Happy Holidays from



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