

Dungeon Master Accessory DMA1

GUILD OF WINTERCREST

For use with the Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition

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In the frozen reaches of the High Ice, beyond the scorching sands of the Anauroch, lies a land of icy beauty. Long ago, the enigmatic Frostlash the Ice Mage established a small fortress in the High Ice dedicated to teaching future generations exquisite magical arts harnessing the power of the snow and cold. The Guild of Wintercrest was established, but since Frostlash's disappearance the guild has become isolated, jealously guarding its secrets. Come now and get a look into the Guild of Wintercrest - its history, its leaders, membership benefits, and adventure hooks!

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Guild of Wintercrest

Written by “Weird Dave” Olson

In the far north, beyond the great desert of Anauroch, in the land of bitter wind, biting cold, and harsh folk known as the High Ice, a group of wizards have settled in secret. Away from prying eyes they've gathered in a remote castle to study their magic and advance their craft. They formed the Guild of Wintercrest, but to most people they are simply known as the frost mages.

The residents and teachers of the Guild of Wintercrest specialize in arcane magic relating to the icy domain surrounding the castle. They are familiar with the more common spells and certainly do not look down on them – after all, not all problems can be solved with magical ice. But the spells that are researched and taught at Wintercrest, the ones that give them their reputation as frost mages, are both difficult and formidable. Their secrets are not given to strangers lightly, but to the gifted and dedicated wizard a whole world of knowledge can be accessed within its halls and from its teachers.

Guild History

There is something inherently magical about the High Ice, where the sky turns many colors and burns in the night air, or so some believe. The most fervent of these dreamers was an enterprising adventuring mage named Frostlash the Ice Mage who called these savage lands home long ago, before the Shade Enclave rose to power in the Anauroch. He was a mysterious figure, clad in snow white robes and bearing a strange wooden staff of an unusual icy blue hue, and his appearance in the small villages was regarded as a sign of ill omen. His magic was not trusted, and more than once Frostlash faced dangerous prejudice in the tight-knit communities.

And so Frostlash decided to create a home

for people such as himself to study the magic of the north in peace and relative quiet from the prying, judgmental eyes of the outside world. Whether he stumbled across his chosen wilderness castle already abandoned or cleared it of its inhabitants is not known for certain; certainly it is widely recognized Frostlash was not a kind hearted man, prone to cold calculating actions. Regardless, he claimed a castle as his own and named it the Guild of Wintercrest.

In his travels, Frostlash had met many people who shared his passion for the icy magic and he called upon them to join in his new endeavor. Many did, having experienced the same prejudice that drove Frostlash away, and a small faculty grew. For many years Frostlash sat as headmaster, approving new admissions and developing new spells for the curriculum. Most of the signature spells of Wintercrest come from his original notes.

Then, after twenty years of serving, Frostlash simply disappeared. He left behind a small council of regent mages who hold control of the guild, and over the years the sternest of them took over as headmistress, the cold-hearted Ellerin Tyathe. She has turned the guild from a place of open learning for all who are interested in the arctic arcane into an elite group of like-minded, lawful wizards, dedicated to maintaining some sort of perfect order that only she can see.

As such the guild has taken on a more reclusive bent of late, which suits the few surrounding villages and towns just fine. This policy has also helped keep a low profile from the Shade Enclave, and some wondered at the expansion of the High Ice over the past 100 years and recalled stories of the frost mages. Few made the trip to find them, however.

Wintercrest is currently completely

autonomous as well, though regular deliveries of supplies arrive every few months from a small dwarven merchant company out of Citadel Adbar. Traveling the dangerous land is a job few merchants care to undertake and they are always on the lookout for experienced adventurers to protect the travelers.

Guild Staff

There are only a handful of permanent staff members at the Guild of Wintercrest. The founder, the wandering mage Frostlash, has been gone from the guild for many years. Most assume he is out exploring the wilds of the northlands, investigating rumors of frozen castles lost to time in the wastelands beyond the reach of the unskilled. Others whisper that he died fighting a glacier kraken, a legendary creature of the icy north feared for its insatiable hunger. Still others say that Frostlash is still in the guild in the sealed lower chambers, frozen away as a result of some magical experiment gone awry.

Whatever the reason Frostlash is not around, and so a skilled protégé has taken over accepting admissions and running the guild in the role of headmaster(mistress). The current headmistress is Ellerin Tyathe, and she is assisted by the Council of Regents who serve at the guild in permanent positions. The four of them form the core NPCs at the Guild of Wintercrest.

Ellerin Tyathe, Headmistress of Wintercrest Guild

LN Female Human Archmage

Possessions: As headmistress, Ellerin has access to a great many magic items. She is never seen without a quarterstaff of some sort along with pouches full of ingredients.

Headmistress Ellerin Tyathe is a woman who takes her role very seriously and is quite an accomplished sorceress herself. She believes in weeding out the unworthy from attending the school, though she has done so with great care over the years to the point where the council of regents that sit as a governing body have not noticed. Headmistress Tyathe has a distinct dislike for non-human students.

Physically, Ellerin Tyathe appears as a matronly spinster – steel gray hair bound in a tight bun, conservative clothes, a pair of wire glasses perched on her hawkish nose. She has lived at the guild for many years and studied under Frostlash himself after having been dropped off unceremoniously by parents eager to see her take on the mantle of a great spellcaster. The Tyathe family name commands much respect in southern lands, though no one at Wintercrest currently knows about it. Ellerin spent her childhood knowing she was going to inherit this great magical legacy and lives under its shadow to this day, which is part of the reason for her innate racism. She believes she has turned the Tyathe name into a respectful one tied inextricably to the Guild of Wintercrest. Therefore, the applicants reflect directly on her name and personal legacy.

Headmistress Tyathe spends most of her time studying new arcana in her tower at the guild, mostly keeping to herself. She does take on individual students when someone of exceptional talent gets accepted, but such an event is rare and only happens with humans (or half-elves, if the talent is great enough). Her skill in astrology and ancient history is well regarded in scholarly circles around the land.

Garlyth Wesstone, Council of Regents Member and Library Keeper

LG Male Human Archmage

Possessions: Due to his bad knee Garlyth is always seen with a staff that is also normally enchanted. He keeps a suit of leather armor from his adventuring days in his room along with an assorted collection of rods and wands.

The youngest member of the Council of Regents is Garlyth Wesstone, a man of about thirty years, who settled on teaching after a decade of adventuring. He has white hair kept long and loose and his friendliness towards all students and visitors marks a sharp difference between him and the headmistress. Wesstone always has a story to tell about his adventuring days, such as the tale of when and his band of companions kept a bridge safe from a band of ice trolls to the west while a caravan containing much needed supplies went over. Whether or not Wesstone's seemingly exaggerated stories are true is up to the GM. He maintains the library at the Guild of Wintercrest and knows its contents thoroughly.

Arann Tal, Council of Regents Member and Advanced Spellcrafter

LN Male Human Archmage

Possessions: Arann always keeps an assortment of magical ingredients with him, stuffed away in bulging pockets in his robes. A dagger is sheathed at his side, which is usually used to cut inanimate things rather than in combat.

Specializing in the crafting and testing of new spells is Arann Tal, a southern man in his mid-fifties. He is stocky and keeps his salt-and-pepper beard and hair well-trimmed at all times. Tal's gruff and inconsiderate nature melt away when he's actively engaged in spell design or testing, at which point his normally grey eyes take on a wild luster and his face splits into an unusual grin. His skin is tan and many student wonder about what drove the man to the Guild of Wintercrest; whatever the reason he doesn't like to talk

about it.

Cadest Snowshimmer, Council of Regents Member

CG Male Elf Archmage

Possessions: Cadest is rarely seen without his prized sword, an elven blade of ancient family design. It is rumored he keeps a prized suit of elven chain mail in his room somewhere.

The final member of the council of regents is an elf named Cadest Snowshimmer, a spellcaster almost as skilled as Headmistress Tyathe. He has platinum blonde hair kept tied in tight braids and a sharp, angular face common to his race. His skin is as pale as driven snow, though whether this is a result of the climate around the guild or his arcane studies is unknown. To the students he is strict but fair and can usually see the intentions behind rash actions. Most students at the guild favor the elven tutor, who specializes in instructing weather phenomenon and the raw magic of the northlands. There are many who want to see instructor Cadest become headmaster Cadest, but to date he has shown little interest in holding that position. The only reason he sits on the council of regents is his history with the guild's founder, Nimus; Cadest was the first mage called to the school when it was founded and he has been there the longest.

Joining Wintercrest

The Guild of Wintercrest is available for mages to attend for formal training, or to simply study new spells. In order to join, the prospective student must submit a letter of recommendation from a current or former student of Wintercrest – finding such a person can be a quest in and of itself. The prospective student can send the letter to the guild separately or deliver it personally, though final decision takes 2d4 days of waiting.

Deciding whether to accept new students is entirely up to Headmistress Tyathe.

Acceptance requires a special roll of 1d100 plus any of the applicable following modifiers:

Situation	Roll Modifier
Prospective student is proficient in Arcana	+15
Prospective student is proficient in Survival	+10
Recommendation letter	+5 to +20 at DM's discretion
Prospective student has a lawful alignment	+10
Additional gp spent	+5 per 25 gp spent
Performing deeds for the guild	+5 to +30 at DM's discretion
Non-human race	-10

If the acceptance roll is 100 or greater the prospective student has been accepted and can begin training immediately. No additional roll is necessary for additional training at later levels, but a prospective student can only try once per level to gain admission.

The cost for level training at the Guild of Wintercrest is standard rate after acceptance.

Benefits of Membership

Each member of the Guild of Wintercrest is given a signet ring with the guild's symbol on it in an ice blue crystal. This ring contains a minor enchantment that binds it to the owner (though it does not count against the number of attuned items). Rumors of rogue wizards learning the secrets of removing a guild signet ring are quickly squashed by the Council of Regents.

Wizards who are accepted as members to the Guild of Wintercrest are allowed full access to the guild's library, which is quite extensive. Volumes of lore on arctic creatures, forbidden history of the Great Glacier, and other esoteric topics can be found in the well-catalogued shelves.

The Council of Regents does its best to control the number of cryomancers in the world and thus members of the guild are the only sanctioned practitioners of the School of Cryomancy wizard tradition that the guild recognizes. Even members who do not follow the cryomancy tradition can gain access to the guild's library. New spells can be found in the **PLC1 School of Cryomancy** article.

Guild members are also expected to take up arms to defend Wintercrest and its holdings when called. The signet ring contains another minor magical effect allowing the headmistress to send out a summoning beacon to all rings, as long as they are on the Prime Material Plane. Failure to show up in a timely manner can be considered grounds for dismissal by the Council of Regents.

Adventure Hooks

Mage characters with an interest in the icy aspects of their arcane art may simply seek out the Guild of Wintercrest to study at; certainly the spells taught within its walls are near impossible to find elsewhere. However, there's plenty to do for a whole party of characters not interested in cryomantic magic.

A Pinch of This, a Dash of That

Arann Tal is developing a new spell and has need of some rare ingredients. This type of hook can be used to send the characters nearly anywhere, either in the surrounding wilderness just outside the guild walls or to further points. A rare specimen of plant, a particular stone, even some harvested part of a wild creature all are possible targets for a spell still in development.

Dangerous Roads

The guild's last shipment of supplies is unusually late, and with a harsher than normal winter predicted by Cadest Snowshimmer the need is greater than usual to be well stocked. Perhaps the caravan was ambushed by a band of desperate orcs driven into the north by southern forces; perhaps some great beast simply attacked the travelers out of hunger. Tracking the shipment requires following the course from its last known checkpoint at the edge of the northlands.

Cold Murder

Someone is murdering students at the school and leaving cryptic message written in blood. The exact culprit is left up to the GM, but possibilities include a psychotic current student, the vengeful spirit of a deceased student, a former student exacting bloody

revenge, or even a protégé of Headmistress Tyathe performing a "cleansing" on students found unworthy of the guild's halls.

Under Guild Orders

As part of their magical study, new magical items are often created at the Guild of Wintercrest. Headmistress Tyathe needs a group of adventurers to escort a case containing experimental new items to a southern guild for verification and trade. The journey would be dangerous as word spreads of the potential treasure being transported; bandits and highwaymen would be the least of the characters' worries as all sorts of interested individuals made their plays to acquire the magical items.

The Ice Mage Cometh

What really happened to the guild's founder, Frostlash the Ice Mage? Perhaps he suddenly appears one day and demands to take over as headmaster. Certainly such an event would throw the guild into a chaotic uproar, but the truth could be more sinister than that. Why is the returned magical master acting strangely? Why is his long-time friend Cadest Snowshimmer denied an audience? Is it really Frostlash the Ice Mage returned – or is it something else? Possibilities include a magical construct, a doppelganger, or even a mind-controlling effect such as a parasite or powerful spell. Where the real Frostlash is located would be key to solving the situation.

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