

The Winter Court

Deity

Domain: Nature, Tempest, Knowledge

Pantheon: Other Powers

Alignment: LE

Symbol: A black branch bearing a single perfect snowflake

Worshippers

Those who seek power without sentiment; mortals who have made peace with being used as instruments; scholars who were warned and went anyway.

The Winter Court is ruled by **Thessavaine the Pale**, the oldest of the four Fey monarchs and the only one who does not change. Where Summer burns and Spring shifts, Thessavaine endures -- cold, precise, and absolutely without mercy in ways that are not cruel because cruelty implies preference. Thessavaine simply does not weigh mortal suffering as a relevant variable.

The Winter Court's interactions with mortals are the most consistent of the four courts and therefore the most dangerous. A mortal who bargains with Summer may receive something unexpected. A mortal who bargains with Winter receives exactly what they asked for -- to the letter, stripped of all intent, with every ambiguity resolved in the Court's favor. Thessavaine does not trick. She simply holds every mortal to a standard of precision that no mortal ever achieves.

Winter fey are not sadistic. They find suffering neither pleasing nor offensive -- they simply recognize it as a natural consequence of imprecision, which they consider a character flaw. This is more frightening than sadism.

The Winter Court's relationship with the High Elves of Elysor is a matter of deep historical unease. The Halvaen and the Winter Court once had an arrangement -- the oldest Elysorian scholars remember its outlines, though not its terms. Whatever the arrangement was, it ended badly. The Court has not forgiven the elves for whatever it was they did. The elves have not forgiven the Court for its response.