

# DEEP MAGIC

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## ILLUMINATION MAGIC

GREG MARKS

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## Illumination Magic

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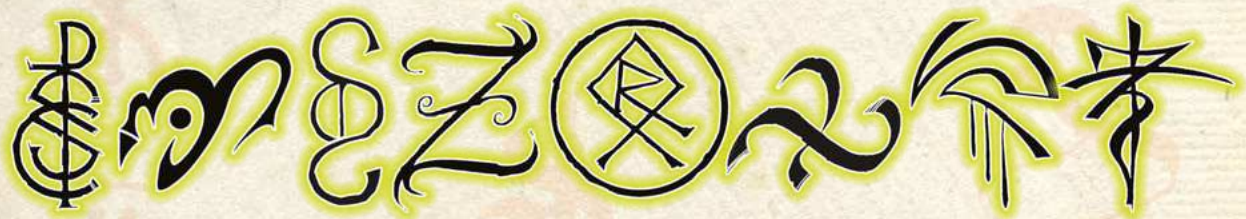
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# Illumination Magic

**F**irst created by the shadow fey, the school of illumination blends observations of the heavens with the manipulation of light and shadow into an arcane tradition that's closely tied with the shadow plane. Many of its spells have much in common with divination, illusion, and necromancy. Unlike those schools, illumination magic is obscure and rarely practiced outside the shadow plane. Its practitioners have been likened to elementalists who manipulate shadow instead of fire, earth, air, or water.

This school is not simply about controlling shadow, however; its focus is simultaneously light and the absence of light. Starlight, in particular, holds special meaning within this school. Illumination mages study the ever-shifting alignment of the stars in their effort to read the road map of fate—a study that inevitably leads them out of the starless shadow plane and into contact with the mortal world.

## School of Illumination

Members of the School of Illumination, called illuminators, use the stars to predict when danger is near, and draw on the power of darkness to attack their foes. This school is popular with delvers into the underworld, because its spells work best where light is dim or absent.

### Illumination Savant

Beginning when you select this school at 2nd level, the gold and time needed to copy illumination spells into your spellbook is halved.

### Omen of Warning

Starting at 2nd level, you can forecast danger for the next 24 hours by studying the stars for one hour. The stars must be visible to you for you to use this ability. Studying the stars this way gives you advantage on up to two initiative checks. The bonus remains available for 24 hours or until the end of your next long rest. Instead of using an omen yourself, you can grant advantage on an initiative check to one other creature you can see when initiative checks are being made, but this prevents you from using the benefit yourself in that combat. You can choose whether to use an omen at the moment when initiative is rolled, but you must make the decision before rolling the die.

### Master of the Endless Night

At 6th level, the spell attack modifier and spell save DC for cantrips you cast in dim light or darkness increases by 1.

### Illusions of Permanence

Beginning at 10th level, illusions cast by you that require concentration last for 1 round after you lose

concentration or stop concentrating, provided the spell hasn't exceeded its maximum duration.

### Comprehension of the Starry Sky

Starting at 14th level, during a long rest you can consult the stars and comprehend some meaning in a cosmic event. The stars must be visible to you for you to use this ability. The insight you gather is stored



BRYAN  
SYME

as a small reserve of magic inside an item that has meaning to you; a star chart or astrolabe is commonly used, but any item that can be held in your hand will suffice. When the item is in your hand, you can consume that stored magic as a bonus action to invoke one of the following effects. The insight is expended by one use, and it's lost if it hasn't been used within 24 hours or by the start of your next long rest.

- **COMET:** Comets are the harbingers of change and instability. You can change your appearance as if you'd cast an *alter self* spell, but the effect doesn't require concentration and lasts until you take a long rest.
- **CONJUNCTION:** Planetary conjunctions destabilize minds and emotions. You can give one creature you can see disadvantage on a saving throw against one enchantment or illusion spell cast by you.
- **ECLIPSE:** Eclipses plunge the world into darkness and strengthen connections to the shadow plane. When you cast a spell of 5th level or lower that causes necrotic damage, you can reroll a number of damage dice up to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one). You must use the new rolls.
- **NOVA:** The nova is a powerful aid to divination spells. You can treat one divination spell you cast as though you had used a spell slot one level higher than the slot actually used.

## Feats

Illuminators mine the movements of the heavens to extract valuable insights. Heavenly bodies neither predict nor control the future, but all things are interconnected by patterns of light and darkness. A person who understands the patterns can discern information about one thing by studying another.

### STAR AND SHADOW READER

**Prerequisite:** The ability to cast at least one spell. By tracking the movements of the heavens, you gain the following benefits.

- When you gain this feat, choose either radiant or necrotic damage. Spells you cast ignore resistance (but not vulnerability) to the type of damage you chose.
- You can cast *augury* once between each of your long rests without expending a spell slot.
- You gain darkvision to a distance of 15 feet. If you already have darkvision, increase its range by 15 feet.

## Illumination Spell List

### CANTRIPS

*Shadow Bite*  
*Shadow Blindness*  
*Silhouette*  
*Starburst*

### 1ST LEVEL

*Cloak of Shadow*  
*Guiding Star*  
*Shadow Hands*

### 2ND LEVEL

*Orb of Light*  
*Slither*

### 3RD LEVEL

*Compelling Fate*  
*Shadow Trove*  
*Shield of Star and Shadow*

### 4TH LEVEL

*Black Hand*  
*Flickering Fate*

### 5TH LEVEL

*Starfall*

### 6TH LEVEL

*Black Well*

### 7TH LEVEL

*Icy Grasp of the Ether*  
*Last Rays of the Dying*  
*Starry Vision*  
*Sun*

### 8TH LEVEL

*Summon Star*

### 9TH LEVEL

*Star's Heart*

## New Spells

### BLACK HAND

*4th-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 30 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You gather the powers of darkness into your fist and fling paralyzing, dark flame at a target within 30 feet. With a successful ranged spell attack, this spell siphons vitality from the target into you. For the duration, the target has disadvantage and you have advantage on attacks, ability checks, and saving throws made with Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. An affected target makes a Constitution saving throw (with disadvantage) at the end of its turn, ending the effect with a success.

### BLACK WELL

*6th-level necromancy*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 300 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You summon a seething sphere of dark energy 5 feet in diameter. The sphere pulls creatures toward it and devours the life force of those it envelops. Every creature other than you that starts its turn within 90 feet of the *black well* must make a successful Strength saving throw or be pulled 50 feet toward the well. A creature pulled into the well takes 6d8 necrotic damage and is stunned; a successful Constitution

saving throw halves the damage and reduces the stun to incapacitation. A creature that starts its turn inside the well also makes a Constitution saving throw; the creature is stunned on a failure or incapacitated on a success. An incapacitated creature that leaves the well recovers immediately and can take actions and reactions that turn. Creatures take damage only upon entering the well—they take no additional damage for remaining in it—but if they leave the well and are pulled back in again, they take damage again. A total of nine Medium creatures, three Large creatures, or one Huge creature can be inside the well's upper-dimensional space at one time. When the well's duration ends, all creatures inside it tumble out in a heap, landing prone.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the damage done by the well increases by 1d8 and the well pulls creatures an additional 5 feet for each slot level above 6th.

### CLOAK OF SHADOW

*1st-level illusion*

**Casting Time:** 1 bonus action

**Range:** Self

**Components:** V

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You draw upon the endless night to cloak yourself in shadow, giving you advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks against creatures that rely on sight.

### COMPELLING FATE

*3rd-level divination*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 30 feet

**Components:** V, M (a sprinkling of silver dust worth 200 gp)

**Duration:** 1 round

You view the actions of a single creature you can see through the influences of the stars, and you read what is written there. If the target creature fails a Charisma saving throw, you can predict that creature's actions.

This has the following effects:

- You have advantage on attack rolls against the creature.
- For every 5 feet the creature moves, you can move 5 feet (up to your normal movement) on the creature's turn when it has completed its movement. This is deducted from your next turn's movement.
- As a reaction, you can warn yourself and allies that can hear you of the target's offensive intentions; any creature targeted by the target's next attack gains a +2 bonus to AC or on its saving throw against that attack.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the duration is extended by 1 round for each slot level above 3rd.

### FLICKERING FATE

*4th-level divination*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** 1 round

You or a target that you touch can see the flickering shadows of fate a few seconds into the future. When the spell is cast, all other creatures within range make Wisdom saving throws. Those that fail must declare, in initiative order, what their next action will be. The subject of the spell declares his or her action last, after hearing what all other creatures will do. Creatures that declared an action must follow their declarations as closely as possible when their turn comes. For the duration of the spell, its recipient has advantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws, and creatures that declared their action have disadvantage on attacks against the target.

### GUIDING STAR

*1st-level divination (ritual)*

**Casting Time:** 10 minutes

**Range:** Self

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** 8 hours

By observing the stars or the position of the sun, you are able to determine the cardinal directions, and the direction and distance to a stated destination. You can't become directionally disoriented or lose track of the destination. The spell doesn't, however, reveal the best route to your destination or warn you about deep gorges, flooded rivers, or other impassable or treacherous terrain ahead.

### ICY GRASP OF THE ETHER

*7th-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 120 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You summon the cold, inky darkness of Stygian space into being around a creature that you can see. The target takes 10d10 cold damage and is restrained; a successful Constitution saving throw halves the damage and prevents restraint. A restrained creature gains one level of exhaustion at the start of its turn from frigid cold and lack of air. Creatures immune to cold and that do not breathe gain no exhaustion.



A restrained creature repeats the saving throw at the end of its turn, breaking free from the darkness and ending the spell with a success.

### ORB OF LIGHT

*2nd-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** 1 round

An orb of pure light the size of your hand shoots from your fingertips toward the target, which takes 3d8 radiant damage and is blinded for 1 round. A successful Dexterity saving throw halves the damage and prevents the blindness.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the damage dealt by the attack increases by 1d8 for each slot level above 2nd.

### SHADOW BITE

*Illusion cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You create a momentary needle of cold, sharp pain in a target creature. The target must make a successful Constitution saving throw or take 1d6 necrotic damage and have its speed halved until the start of your next turn.

This spell's damage increases by 1d6 when you reach 5th level (2d6), 11th level (3d6), and 17th level (4d6).

### SHADOW BLINDNESS

*Illusion cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** 1 round

You make a melee spell attack; if it hits, the target's innate darkvision is negated for 1 round. This spell has no effect against darkvision that derives from a spell or a magic item. The target retains all of its other senses. When this spell ends, the creature's natural darkvision returns.

### SHADOW HANDS

*1st-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self (15-foot cone)

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

A freezing blast of shadow explodes out from you in a 15-foot cone. Any creature caught in the shadow takes 2d4 necrotic damage and is frightened; a successful Wisdom saving throw halves the damage and negates the fright.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 2nd level or higher, the damage dealt by the attack increases by 2d4 for each slot level above 1st.

### SHADOW TROVE

*3rd-level transmutation (ritual)*

**Casting Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** 5 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (ink made from the blood of a raven)

**Duration:** 1 hour

You paint a small door approximately 2 feet square on a hard surface to create a portal into the void of space. The portal “peels off” the surface you painted it on and follows you when you move, always floating in the air within 5 feet of you. An icy chill flows out from the portal. You can place up to 750 pounds of nonliving matter through the portal, where it stays suspended in the frigid void until you withdraw it. Items that are still inside the *shadow trove* when the duration ends are lost forever. You can designate a number of creatures up to your Intelligence modifier who have access to the *shadow trove*; only you and those creatures can move objects through the portal.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the duration increases by 2 hours for each slot level above 3rd.

### SHIELD OF STAR AND SHADOW

*3rd-level abjuration*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self

**Components:** V, S, M (a star chart)

**Duration:** 10 minutes

You wrap yourself in a protective shroud of the night sky made from swirling shadows punctuated with twinkling motes of light. The shroud grants you resistance against either radiant or necrotic damage (choose when the spell is cast). You also shed dim light in a 10-foot radius. You can end the spell early by using an action to dismiss it.

### SILHOUETTE

*Illusion cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You create a shadow play against a screen or wall. The surface can encompass up to 100 square feet. The number of creatures that can see the shadow play equals your Intelligence score. The shadowy figures make no sound but they can dance, run, move, kiss, fight, and so forth. Most of the figures are generic types—a rabbit, a dwarf—but a number of them equal to your Intelligence modifier can be recognizable as specific individuals.

### SLITHER

*2nd-level transmutation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self

**Components:** V, M (ashes from a wooden statue of you, made into ink and used to draw your portrait, worth 50 gp)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You momentarily become a shadow (a humanoid-shaped absence of light, not the undead creature of that name). You can slide under a door, through a keyhole, or through any other tiny opening. All of your equipment is transformed with you, and you can move up to your full speed during the spell's duration. While in this form you have advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made in darkness or dim light and you are immune to all damage except force, psychic, or radiant. You can dismiss this spell early by using an action to do so.

If you return to your normal form while in a space too small for you (such as a mouse hole, sewer pipe, or the like), you take 4d6 force damage and are pushed to the nearest space big enough to hold you within 50 feet. If the distance is greater than 50 feet, you take 1d6 extra force damage for every additional 10 feet traveled.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, you can target an additional willing creature that you can touch for each slot level above 2nd.

### STARBURST

*Evocation cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous



You cause a mote of starlight to appear at a point you can see within 60 feet. The mote explodes a moment later, doing 1d8 radiant damage to any creature in the mote's 5-foot space. A successful Charisma saving throw negates the damage.

This spell's damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5th level (2d8), 11th level (3d8), and 17th level (4d8).

### STARFALL

*5th-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You cause bolts of shimmering starlight to fall from the heavens, striking five targets within 60 feet of you and in your sight. Each bolt strikes one creature, doing 8d6 radiant damage, knocking the target prone, and blinding it. A successful Dexterity saving reduces damage to half and prevents blindness and being knocked prone. If there are fewer than five targets, excess bolts strike the ground harmlessly.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th level or higher, you create one additional bolt for each slot level above 5th.

### STAR'S HEART

*9th-level transmutation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 50 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (an ioun stone)

**Duration:** 1 minute

This spell increases gravity tenfold within a 50-foot radius of you. All creatures in the area other than you drop whatever they're holding in their hands, fall prone, become incapacitated, and can't move. If some solid object (such as the ground) is encountered when flying or levitating creatures fall, they take triple the normal falling damage. Any creature besides you that enters or starts its turn in the area must make a successful Strength saving throw or fall prone and become incapacitated and unable to move. A creature that starts its turn prone and incapacitated makes a Strength saving throw. Failure means the creature takes 8d6 bludgeoning damage; success means the creature takes 4d6 bludgeoning damage but it's no longer incapacitated and it can move at half-speed. All ranged weapon attacks inside the area of effect have a normal range of 5 feet and a maximum range of 10 feet. The same applies to spells that create missiles with mass, such as a *flaming sphere*. Creatures under the influence of a *freedom of movement* spell or comparable magic have advantage on the Strength saving throws required by this spell, and their speed isn't reduced once they recover from incapacitation.

### STARRY VISION

*7th-level divination*

**Casting Time:** 1 reaction

**Range:** 100 feet

**Components:** V, M (a sprinkling of gold dust worth 400 gp)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

As *compelling fate* except as noted above (*starry vision* can be cast as a reaction, has twice the range of *compelling fate*, and lasts up to a minute). At the end of each of its turns, the target repeats the Charisma saving throw. On a success, the spell ends.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 8th or 9th level, the bonus to AC increases by 1 for each slot level above 7th.

### LAST RAYS OF THE DYING SUN

*7th-level evocation*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 40 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

A burst of searing heat explodes from you, doing 6d6 fire damage to all enemies within 40 feet of you. Immediately afterward, a wave of frigid cold rolls across the same area, doing 6d6 cold damage to enemies. A successful Dexterity saving halves all the damage.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 8th or 9th level, the damage from both waves increase by 1d6 for each slot level above 7th.

### SUMMON STAR

*8th-level conjuration*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 90 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You summon a friendly star from the heavens to do your bidding. It appears in an unoccupied space you can see within 90 feet and takes the form of a glowing humanoid with long, white hair. All creatures other than you who view the star must make a successful Wisdom saving throw or be charmed for the duration of the spell. A creature charmed by the star repeats the Wisdom saving throw at the end of its turn. If successful, that creature is no longer charmed and is immune to the effect from this star. In all other ways, the star is equivalent to a deva. It understands and obeys verbal commands you give it. If you do not give the star a command, it defends itself and attacks the last creature that attacked it. The star disappears when it drops to 0 hit points or when the spell ends.

## NPC: Talithe Val'Shiar

Talithe Val'Shiar is an illuminator who uses the secrets of the stars to gain personal power and comfort. She is always on the lookout for adventurers to serve as disposable minions but prefers to meet with them at night when her power is strongest.

Val'Shiar may be willing to join forces with a group of adventurers on two conditions. First, they must be pursuing a mission that aligns with her own goals, such as exploring ruins where she believes she can find magical items or knowledge specifically useful to her. Second, she must have an equal voice in the group's decisions and an equal share in the spoils. Anything less would be an insult to her prowess and to her considerable ego.

### ILLUMINATOR TALITHE VAL'SHIAR

Medium humanoid (high elf), chaotic neutral

**Armor Class** 13 (16 with mage armor)

**Hit Points** 55 (10d8 + 10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

**Saving Throws** Int +7, Wis +4

**Skills** Arcana +7, Nature +7

**Senses** darkvision 75 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Fey Ancestry.** Talithe has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

**Innate Spellcasting.** Talithe can innately cast the following spell, requiring no material components.

1/day: *augury*

**Master of the Endless Night.** Talithe increases the spell save DC and spell attack modifier of cantrips she casts in dim light or darkness by 1.

**Omen of Warning.** Talithe has advantage on initiative checks.

**Star and Shadow Casting.** Spells cast by Talithe ignore necrotic resistance.

**Spellcasting.** Talithe is a 9th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Talithe has the following wizard spells prepared.

**Cantrips (at will):** *light, ray of frost, shadow bite, shadow blindness, silhouette*

**1st level (4 slots):** *cloak of shadow, mage armor, magic missile, shadow hands*



**2nd level (3 slots):** *misty step, orb of light*

**3rd level (3 slots):** *compelling fate, fireball, shield of star and shadow*

**4th level (3 slots):** *black hand, dimension door*

**5th level (1 slot):** *starfall*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

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