

WISH UPON A STAR

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WARLOCKS SOMETIMES seize arcane power by swearing pacts to questionable entities beyond the world. Such shortcuts are sometimes judged foolhardy by lore-wise wizards who spend years studying their way to mastery.

Naysayers are especially suspicious of a warlock sworn to the star pact, which connects its follower to what many believe are simple stars, though others describe them as horrific monsters. Do star pact warlocks swear their oaths to simple stars or to unfathomable entities of the Far Realm. Or are these oaths given to a terrible combination of the two? For that matter, what is a "simple star" if it is more than a distant prick of light in a larger shroud of darkness? Not even star pact warlocks know for certain, but this dearth of understanding doesn't deter them from wielding the power bequeathed from the pitiless points of light that shine unchanging beyond night's void.

When you wish upon a star, sometimes horrifying dreams follow.



STAR PACT

Those with a passing knowledge of the lights speckling the night sky can point out constellations and the names of interesting or distant stars. However, those who swear the warlock star pact eventually discover new truths about what they might have earlier mistaken for mundane stars. Such devout scholars learn the secret names for common stars, and indeed, they discover constellations of alien lamps too far away for most eyes to discern unaided.

Star pact warlocks scour foes with icy banes and mouth curses given them in dreams born beyond the night sky and—though few enough admit the possibility—perhaps from the Far Realm. How is it that warlocks gain their connection to this aberrant, unknowable region outside time by way of the stars?

The truth might be that some stars have come under the influence of Far Realm entities. Such creatures use stars (some without conscious thought, but others with intention aforethought) as windows on the world. Warlocks draw influence from these creatures through the star for which each is named.

It seems unlikely that every star in the sky is associated with a mind-shattering monster (though some star pact warlocks wake from nightmares where every light in the night sky simultaneously blinks open, revealing eyes . . .). But few stars are definitely so associated, and these connections are scribed in a spidery, shaking hand on a parchment titled *Revelations of Melech*.

REVELATIONS OF MELECH

The scroll called *Revelations of Melech* is wound inside a narrow obsidian cylinder whose exterior is scribed with strange star constellations. The protective obsidian cylinder acts as a *rod of harvest*.

The following names and associated qualities are scribed on the manuscript inside the cylinder.

Acamar: Acamar is a corpse star whose motions and behemoth size send celestial objects that draw too close spiraling to their doom.

Caiphon: This purple star is usually on the horizon. It has the guise of a helpful guide star, but sometimes betrays those who rely upon it.

Delban: An ice-white star often visible only during winter, Delban might surprise the star-gazer with an impromptu flare during any season.

Gibbeth: Better not to write or think overlong on this greenish point in the sky.

Hadar: Hadar is the extinguished cinder of a star lurking within the cloaking nebula of Ihbar.

Ihbar: A dark nebula between stars, Ihbar is slowly expanding and eating the light of neighboring constellations.

Khirad: A piercing blue star, Khirad's radiance sometimes reveals secrets and gruesome insights.

Nihal: Nihal is a reddish star that writhes around the position it should hold in the heavens.

Ulban: Ulban's blue-white light disrupts cognition and the ability to recognize danger.

Zhudun: Another corpse star, Zhudun is historically described as shining a baleful light over the Ruined Realm of Cendriane in the Feywild before its fall.

If the worst fears of naysayers somehow prove true, what does it mean if you draw your arcane power from the Far Realm and other horrors of the cosmos?

"The stars don't influence me; if anything, I influence them!"

You could be a star pact warlock with an immense ego. Sure, you've learned aberrant creatures are associated with the innocent-seeming stars. Yes, strange visions of maddening landscapes have begun to infiltrate your nights. Granted, you sometimes hear strange atonal music when no one else can. But it's all manageable. You know you are up to the task of retaining hold of your sanity. You know the signs to watch. Too much star-gazing. Too much talking to yourself. Too much fantasizing about what Gibbeth *really* looks like despite the warnings in that dusty old tome not to dwell overmuch, even in thought, on this enigmatic entity. A lesser mind could falter and crack under the truths to which you are privy and under the strains of temptation you forego. But you are master of your own mind. You are confident that you can make use of the power the stars grant without falling victim to the madness that lurks behind their radiant light.

"Oh, you're quite the jester! I think I would have noticed if a great eye opened in the moon and blinked when I performed the ritual!"

You might play a star pact warlock who is merely naïve. Perhaps you are too fresh from the swearing of your pacts to have noticed anything particularly aberrant in the power that begins to flow into your

hands. If strange dreams sometimes trouble your rest, what of it? Who hasn't had a nightmare or two, especially after a day spent rousting undead and other monsters from their lairs? The stars are distant points of light with strange names, and if invoking their names transfers powers, why worry overmuch about the source of that power? True, some of your spells have horrific-sounding names and frightening effects, but then, are not many wizard spells hardly less ominous? Isn't it true spell names and flashy magical effects are meant to impress foes? Unless and until a pseudopod bursts from an unexpected wall or ritual

book and pulls you shrieking into the earth, you're happy to retain your view of reality.

"Get away from me! I said, get away! Oh. Sorry. I thought I saw . . . well, nevermind."

Perhaps you really have begun to lose your reason. Feelings that started out merely as mild discomfort grew into avid dislike, and finally graduated to fits of rabid fear; you know that when you react so strongly merely to the sight of, say, fish, something is probably

not quite right in your head. But despite this realization, you forge ahead. You can fake it well enough to get by, despite some episodes of screaming into your bedroll at night. Your friends might suspect that your sleep is disturbed by your red eyes, but how will they ever know you dreamed last night of red stars? Crimson points swirling and flocking through the skies like birds, alternately merging together and breaking apart in a hideous dance that slowly but surely traced the outline of a tear in space. A hole in the very air through which an amorphous mass lurked, a shape composed of countless tiny worms who, from tiny putrid mouths, called out your name. Your friends won't know of course. But sometimes they ask you to stop laughing, because you're starting to act like a crazy person.

The stars are just a road to power—same as any other. The pact has its risks, sure, but by my lights, seeking wisdom among the stars is better than believing a devil's lies, or plucking out your eye to use a crazy artifact."

You might be a star pact warlock who believes it's all so much hype. You know full well there could be eventual repercussions for learning too much—possibly even eventual madness could resist. But no one said the life of an adventurer was easy. You might be up to holding onto your sanity, or you might not, but you're not naïve about the shocking true nature of night's gaudy coat of stars. Your ego isn't so overweening that you are certain you can avoid doing the bidding of an aberrant monstrosity, but heroes of previous ages, whether they swore pacts or not, have always risked the same. No, you know the risks and accept them in return for all the potent spells you gain in return. You accept with open arms what these alien entities can teach you, knowing that you can turn the spells to your own ends. You're not stupid, so you don't willingly risk the lives of your acquaintances if a strange dream urges you to, or if one of your spells tries to squirm out of your control.



PROPHECY OF DEIMOS

"The world doesn't end with water, fire, or cold. I've divined the coming apocalypse. It ends with tentacles!"

WARLOCK FEATS

Warlocks can choose from the following new feats. These feats are not necessarily meant only for star pact warlocks.

Any feat in the following section is available to a warlock character who meets the prerequisites.

Prerequisites: Con 13, warlock

Benefit: When you attack with an encounter power that has targets and you miss all targets, then you can deal damage to yourself equal to the level of the power. If you do, you immediately recover the power.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, warlock

Benefit: When you deal damage with a power that has the radiant or fear keyword, immediately roll a saving throw to relieve a condition of your choice from which you are suffering.

Prerequisites: Int 13, warlock

Benefit: While you have concealment, you also have radiant resistance 5 + one-half your level.



Any feat in the following section is available to a warlock character of 11th or higher level who meets the prerequisites.

Prerequisites: 11th level, tiefling, warlock

Benefit: You gain a second Eldritch Pact. You gain the at-will spell and pact boon of both pacts. You can use only one of your pact boon benefits at a time, however.

Prerequisites: 11th level, tiefling, warlock

Benefit: Your fire resistance improves; you now have resist fire 8 + your level.

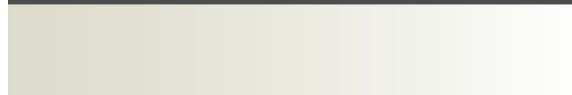
The following feat is available to a warlock character of 21st or higher level who meets the prerequisites.

Prerequisites: 21st level, Int 15, warlock

Benefit: Once per day when you use a daily power, you regain the use of that daily power at the end of the encounter.

WARLOCK POWERS

Warlocks can choose from the following new powers.



Rending Fear of Khirad Warlock (Star) Utility 6

A pale blue flame springs up from your brow as you incant the apocalypses over which Khirad has burned, thus hoping to frighten your foe into an admission.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Charm, Fear, Implement

Standard Action Close touch

Target: One helpless intelligent enemy

Effect: You demand that the target answer one question.

If you share a language, your helpless target provides the answer to the best of its knowledge, without distortion. Each round, ask a new question if your target remains helpless, up to a number of questions equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier.

Far Realm Phantasm Warlock (Star) Attack 7

You give brief life to the image of the creature you periodically see in visions hungrily whispering your name. Though your breath comes quicker, your target is caught unprepared for the mind-wrenching vision.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Fear, Implement, Psychic

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Charisma vs. Will

Hit: 1d6 + Charisma modifier psychic damage, and the target spends its next standard action making a basic attack against the empty air.

Star Pact: The target takes a -2 penalty to its Will defense until the end of your next turn.

Influence of Acamar Warlock (Star) Attack 7

Crackling black energy shrouds your body as you briefly take on the least aspect of Acamar, a dark and distant star. Your closest foe is struck by a stray bolt and is pulled toward you.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement, Necrotic

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One enemy closest to you

Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex

Hit: 3d8 + Charisma modifier necrotic damage, and you pull the target a number of squares equal to your Charisma modifier.

Star Pact: This spell's range is 20 instead of 10.

Brood of Hadar Warlock (Star) Attack 9

You call upon Hadar the Ebon Hunger. Your foe screams, clutches its head, and falls. Flying, fluttering, fanged shadows pour from your foe's open eyes, mouth, and ears, and descend upon one of your foe's allies.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Necrotic

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Constitution +2 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d10 + Constitution modifier necrotic damage. If this damage is enough to drop the target to 0 hit points, make a secondary attack.

Secondary Target: One enemy within 3 squares of the primary target.

Secondary Attack: Charisma vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d10 + Charisma modifier necrotic damage. If the secondary target is cursed, it takes extra damage normally if hit.

Miss: Half damage, and no secondary attack even if the enemy drops to 0 hit points.

Troublesome Aid of Caiphon Warlock (Star) Utility 10

When an ally grants you the grace of renewed health, you leverage your knowledge of Caiphon's healing lore to gain even greater advantage than was offered—but at what price?

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement

Immediate Interrupt Ranged 10

Trigger: One ally in range grants you the use of a healing surge.

Effect: In addition to the normal number of hit points you regain, you regain a number of hit points equal to your healing surge value. However, until the end of the encounter, you die after failing your second, rather than third, death save.

Blaze of Ulban Warlock (Star) Attack 13

You channel the blue-white fire of Ulban, whose burning glory captivates mortal minds even as it consumes them.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement, Radiant

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Charisma vs. Will

Hit: 2d8 + Charisma modifier radiant damage, and slide one enemy within 5 squares of the target 2 squares.

Star Pact: If this attack hits, the target takes a -2 penalty to its next saving throw.

Visage of Zhudun Warlock (Star) Attack 15

You manifest an aspect of the blank face of dead Zhudun, creating a zone of horror that hammers at the sanity of those caught within it.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Fear, Implement, Psychic, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 1 within 10 squares

Effect: The burst creates the semblance of a monstrous face until the end of your next turn, blocking line of sight.

Creatures that enter the zone or start their turns there take 3d10 psychic damage.

Sustain Minor: When you sustain the power, you make a secondary attack.

Secondary Target: Each creature within the zone

Secondary Attack: Charisma vs. Will

Hit: 1d10 + Charisma modifier psychic damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Far Realm Glimpse Warlock (Star) Attack 15

You call up a vision of a space inhabited by vast entities whose vile, miles-long limbs churn an amoebic sea to bloody froth. Your foe screams and scrambles to get away.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Fear, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged 10**

Target: One creature

Attack: Charisma +2 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d8 + Charisma modifier psychic damage and the target is dazed (save ends). A target who does not move its full speed away from you on its next turn takes 2d8 + Charisma modifier damage and is dazed (save ends).

Caiphon's Disquieting Liberty Warlock (Star) Utility 16

You call out to Caiphon, the Dream Whisperer, an entity who is both unimaginably far and worryingly close. Caiphon gives you your liberty, but sips a bit of your life in return.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement
Minor Action **Personal**

Effect: Choose one of the following conditions that you currently suffer: immobilized, restrained, or slowed. That condition immediately ends. However, you also take 5 damage.

Delban's Eye Warlock (Star) Attack 17

A slanting shaft of frigid starlight shines down and illuminates your foe, revealing it in a spasm of chill agony. Your foe realizes you've turned the dire attention of a fell entity upon it.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Cold, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged 10**

Target: One creature

Attack: Charisma vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d10 + Charisma modifier cold damage, and the target is marked until the end of your next turn. The target loses concealment and total concealment while marked.

Star Pact: All attacks against the target deal an extra 1d6 + Charisma modifier damage while it is marked by the power.

PARAGON PATH

Envoy of Nihal

Warlock (Star) Attack 27

You call beyond the boundaries of matter, space, and perhaps even sanity. Nihal answers by sending a humanoid-shaped hole in reality filled with writhing red worms, which fall upon your foe.

Encounter ♦ Acid, Arcane, Fear, Healing, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Charisma vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d10 + Charisma modifier acid damage. If your target takes damage from this attack, you can spend a healing surge.

Star Pact: Add double your Charisma modifier to the hit points regained from the healing surge.

Caiphon's Abominable Melody

Warlock (Star) Attack 29

The atonal song of Caiphon, the Dream Whisperer, pierces the fabric between worlds. Your foe covers its ears, closes its eyes, and begins to shriek. Even so, notes of the horrible tune are still faintly audible above the screaming.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Fear, Implement, Psychic

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Charisma +2 vs. Fortitude

Hit: 6d8 + Charisma modifier psychic damage, and the target is deafened (save ends), blinded (save ends), and slowed (save ends); a separate save is required to relieve each condition. Each round a target begins its round suffering from any one of the conditions you inflicted upon it, it takes another 1d6 + Charisma modifier psychic damage, and you can slide the target a number spaces up to your Charisma modifier. Until the end of the encounter, any time you take damage roll a d20. If you roll 10 or higher, reduce the damage to 0.

Special: Each round a target is still affected by this spell, the ally (or you) closest to the target hears an echo of abominable melody and takes 1d10 psychic damage.

"The Dream Whisperer pays more attention to the world than any other of its ilk. It might have a plan and a part to play in the world's final destiny."

Prerequisites: Warlock class, star pact

You studied the limitless abysses and the bright points of enigmatic light that hang between them. You listened to the baffling disordered sounds that emerged from the simple astronomical lenses you used for your study. You learned the stars were not the innocent lamps above the world that most assumed. Despite this unsettling knowledge, you continued your study, eventually narrowing your concentration to just one star—a star named Caiphon. That's when the dreams began.

You dreamed of a fitful star of purple fire. You walked in its light to the edge of a slime-lined pit that pulsed and heaved like a living maw, eager to consume. You hurled yourself into the cavity as the purple star flared. You fell into an amoebic sea, where you were digested over the course of a thousand years, or perhaps just one night.

When you woke, your eyes were opalescent purple orbs, and Caiphon began whispering—*whispering*—into your ear. Even though you could hear only the merest fragments of Caiphon's never-ending instructions and insights, a knowing smile stitched itself across your face.

Star Bright (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, if you use your action to make an attack that hits, that hit deals ongoing 5 radiant damage (save ends). Such powers are considered to have the radiant keyword.

Caiphon's Guidance (11th level): You can score critical hits with fear and radiant powers on a roll of 18–20.

Caiphon's Intercession (16th level): You can choose to use Caiphon's Intercession in place of your Fate of the Void pact boon when an enemy under your Warlock's Curse drops to 0 hit points or fewer. One ally of your choice within 10 squares of you can make an immediate melee basic attack against a target you choose; if the attack hits, it deals ongoing 5 radiant damage (save ends) in addition to normal damage. If your ally makes the attack, Caiphon takes its due and deals 5 damage to your ally. If your ally refuses to accept Caiphon's Intercession, you take 5 damage (despite the fact no attack was made); in such an instance, you regain the use of Fate of the Void pact boon for the dropped target.

Trust in the Guide Star

Student of Caiphon Attack 11

You squeeze tight your eyes and call upon the Purple Star to grasp your mind and guide your strike true.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement, Radiant

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Charisma vs. Will

Special: You ignore penalties for cover (but not superior cover), concealment, and total concealment. You can attack an invisible target as if it wasn't invisible.

Hit: 2d10 + Charisma modifier radiant damage.

Steps on the Purple Stair

Student of Caiphon Utility 12

At Caiphon's bidding, you take a half step into a temporary echo plane where wind shrieks like the screams of tortured lunatics and where indescribable colors squirm across your skin. Something shudders on the horizon, but you step fully back into the world before its identity resolves.

Encounter ♦ Arcane

Minor Action Personal

Effect: You gain invisibility and flying until the start of your next turn. On your next turn you take ongoing 3 psychic damage (save ends).

Caiphon's Hungry Mercy Student of Caiphon Utility 20

Your guide star offers all who heed your sudden rant to "Trust in Caiphon!" a boon of renewed power. Your lord requires only a sip of life from each ally who partakes. So little in return for so much!

Daily ♦ Arcane

Minor Action Close burst 10

Target: You and all allies in range.

Effect: You and each ally in range can spend a healing surge to recover a power. Each player's character choosing to do so rolls 1d6. On a 1-5, that character recovers an encounter power. On a 6, that character recovers a daily power.

EPIC DESTINY

The world and its echoes are but motes in the eye of a far grander, if more terrifyingly incomprehensible, vista. You are unafraid, nay eager, to risk even madness unending, if only you can learn the underlying truth of existence.

Prerequisite: 21st level

Lesser souls than you were overwhelmed by their study of the uncaring stars. Instead of commanding their own fate, they were transformed into mere pawns and cultists. With features shadowed under voluminous hoods, they toppled glare-eyed and drool-speckled into the clutch of mad entities. That is not to be your fate. You've divined a different truth in the cold pinpricks in night's endless void. Instead of pawn, you intend to be the master. You plan to have your force of will shine, burning forever. Unlike other stars that serve as windows, perhaps, to monstrous entities of an impossibly distant realm, your radiance is merely your own cognizance spreading ever outward.

The unschooled believe a radiant one is nothing more than a servitor to the vast enigmatic creatures you court. True, others who have traveled your path

have burned out, unleashing cataclysms that killed allies, corrupted monarchs, and even laid waste to kingdoms (and some whisper, previous ages of the world). You know these cautionary tales, and so forewarned you are forearmed should any of the powers from whom you draw your strength seek to suborn your will. Your allies have nothing to fear from you—if you are careful.

Ultimate knowledge, bereft of all filters, easy illusions, and misleading metaphors is what you seek. Soon enough, it will all be yours.

First Light: When you complete your final quest, the last pieces of the puzzle of reality begin to fall into place. The stars themselves began to sing to you, their sibling. You begin to gleam, as if your skin is but a shell covering a mighty lamp. Upon putting your affairs in order, you travel to a far place. Finally, you ignite in an explosion of stellar glory. Like a demigod, you ascend into the night sky, becoming finally a star yourself—one associated with eldritch wisdom. Or, perhaps madness. Either way, your name takes its rightful place among the constellations and becomes one by which you invoke your abilities.

All radiant ones have the following features.

Starborn (21st level): You gain resistance to radiant fire damage equal to 10 + your level. Any time you deal damage to a target who gives you combat advantage, you deal extra radiant fire damage equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Starburst (24th level): The first time you are reduced to 0 hit points or fewer each day, you gain the immediate use of a healing surge and deal radiant fire damage of equal value to all enemies within 3 squares of you.

Starry Rift (30th level): Your dawning understanding of reality and the façadelike nature of time

and space allow you to take "shortcuts" through time itself. Once per day you can tell the DM that your turn has come up again. Treat this action as if you had chosen to take the delay action (even if you took your last turn normally without delaying).

Star Flesh

Radiant One Utility 26

With a flare of starfire, you ignite with eye-searing flame. Your foes find it difficult to target you, and your starfire burns away many attacks that would have otherwise found you.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Fire, Implement, Radiant

Standard Action

Personal

Effect: All spaces within 20 squares of you are lit with bright light. You gain an untyped bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier to all your defenses.

If a ranged, area, or close attack hits you, roll a saving throw

If you succeed, the radiance and fire of your form

incinerates the attack, and you are unharmed.

Your *star flesh* lasts until the end of the encounter. ☞

About the Author

Bruce Cordell is a D&D designer, but during his twelve years in the game industry, he has dabbled in miniatures, board games, collectible card games, d20 games, and more. Bruce has over a sixty listed credits to his name, including the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*, *Libris Mortis*, and *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft*. His body of work also includes three published *Forgotten Realms* novels (*Lady of Poison*, *Darkvision*, and *Stardeep*), with more on the way.