

DGM2 Moon-touched

By Dan Hass



Adding a distinct magic item to the adventure loot is a powerful reward, but caution must be taken to avoid overpowered items. Presented here is a collection of *moon-touched* swords with a variety of additional traits that are useful, but not overpowered.

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Supplement Summary

DGM2 Moon-touched is a 5th Edition supplement designed to help DMs broaden their campaign. It references the *Player's Handbook*® (PHB), *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*® (XGE), *Volo's Guide to Monsters*® (VGM), and *Dungeon Master's Guide*® (DMG).

As the title suggests, this supplement presents variations on *moon-touched swords*. The variations improve the utility of *moon-touched swords* without affecting the user's armor class, hit points, attack roll modifier, or damage on attacks. Also, there is no effect on the DC to save against the user's spells. These elements are used to define CR, and are expected to fall within certain ranges. It becomes a problem when a PC or other creature can stack effects that push these beyond the expected values.

Why Use the Enhanced Magic Items

Examining the inventory expectations for PCs in 5th edition (DMG 38) indicates that magic items are supposed to be exceptional. While the suite of magic items to pick from is wide ranging, enhanced magic items offer several improvements to the game.

The underlying presumption of the enhanced magic items is that a sentient creature (with relevant traits) was sacrificed to create the item, and as long as the item exists, the creature's eternal soul is imprisoned. This yields powerful opportunities:

- Negotiations around whether a particular criminal deserves the ultimate penalty of death by magic item crafting.
- Rogue magic item crafters who craft items without authorization.
- Searching for a way to destroy a magic item to free a noble soul.

Further, if the DM switches to **ONLY** utilizing enhanced magic items it elevates the importance of *Blessings* (DMG 227-228). This leads to further exceptional roleplaying, world building, and adventure design opportunities.

Using this Supplement

There are six different enhanced *moon-touched swords* presented. The *moon-touched swords* are designed so that they can be carried by a villain without increasing the CR. One avenue is to equip the villain with the *moon-touched sword* and give the

PCs an opportunity to acquire it as loot. This also presents unexpected effects to the villain encounter.

The exceptional nature of the *moon-touched sword* can often serve as a plot hook in a story. "How do we free this poor soul?", or "How do we keep this justly trapped villain's allies from freeing its soul?" "A rogue crafter has kidnapped an innocent victim and sacrificing the victim to create a magic item is imminent!"

Key Elements

There are two salient factors for *moon-touched swords*: **sword** and **light**. We want at least one representative sword from those available: shortsword, scimitar, longsword, greatsword, and rapier.

For the light element, the first look is to the *light* cantrip, leading to classes (bard, cleric, sorcerer, and wizard) and races that know (or can know) the *light* cantrip: high elves, variant humans (through Magic Initiate), aasimars (from *Volo's*).

Why Use Moon-touched Swords

Players like magic items, and those who have characters based around weapon-based attacks want magic weapons tailored to the character. There are many problems with entertaining this approach.

It can be difficult to adjust combat encounters to make them challenging (and interesting) for over-gearred PCs. There is a bounded accuracy expected, and the CR of many creatures depend on damage immunities and resistances. This alone is a reason to keep careful control over magic item access.

Also, for the DM's game world to feel authentic, there needs to be consistency; how do these powerful magic items find their way into the world?

Moon-touched swords solve these problems. The players still get a useful magic item – but not a dream item. And the enhanced magic items schema explains why *moon-touched swords* are the most common: there are a lot more creatures that can be sacrificed to create one.

Ayred

Weapon (longsword), unique (requires attunement)

In every way, *Ayred* is a *moon-touched* (XGE 138) *longsword*. It has the following additional qualities (requiring no action except those specified):

- **Cause Fear.** The creature attuned to *Ayred* can cast *cause fear* (XGE 150) without using a spell slot. The spellcasting ability is Intelligence. If the DC based on the creature's Intelligence is less than 13, then the DC is 13. Once this feature is used, the creature cannot use it again until it has completed a long rest.
- **Elvish.** A creature attuned to *Ayred* knows Elvish as long as the creature is attuned to *Ayred*.
- **Proficiency.** Even if the creature attuned to *Ayred* is not normally proficient in longswords, the creature is proficient with *Ayred* as long as the creature is attuned to *Ayred*.

Magically inscribed in Elvish along *Ayred*'s blade is the following:

Ayred was a high elf who embraced the dark arts of necromancy. Given an ultimatum to either forego necromancy or be banished from the elven enclaves, he was repeatedly caught engaging in the forbidden magic. He was exiled, and for several years wandered as an adventurer. Eventually he was caught by humans who had endured the products of his various necromantic experiments. With no advocate, he was sentenced to be sacrificed to create a moon-touched longsword.