

## **Dragon Sword** (Author Unknown)

Any millennia ago, the arch-lich Vecna, by far the most powerful lich to ever exist, began to conceive a dark plan to open The Seven Gates of Doom. According to legend, much before man or elf was created the balance of the Multi-verse tended heavily towards evil. This was due to the existence of a diabolic god whose power greatly exceeded that of all other gods. He was called Satan.

Satan ruled supreme among all other evil gods, often treating them as slaves, which made them fear and hate him above anything else. Though the power of all the gods of good together was not enough to defeat Satan, they knew the gods of evil nurtured immense hatred for him. With great diplomatic skill, they were able to make the gods of evil put aside their fear and join the other gods in an alliance without precedence: all gods, good, neutral and evil, were to unite against Satan (as usual, evil turns upon itself).

The alliance of the gods battled Satan fiercely, but even all their combined power could not destroy him. The gods then decided to create seven concentric planes of existence, with portals connecting them, and imprison Satan inside the innermost plane. The portal to the outermost one is located on the Prime Material Plane. One can only reach Satan by passing through all the portals, which were called "The Seven Gates of Doom". Inside is the gigantic form of Satan, the most powerful and evil being on the Multi-verse, sitting at his burning throne and sleeping. His sleep is full of dreams of malice, conquer and revenge, and it is said that many of the evil deeds committed on the Material Plane are motivated by the evil power of Satan's dreams, which can not be fully contained by the Gates.

The plan of Vecna was to use his army of undead, humanoids and monsters to conquer and enslave mankind and force them to worship Satan. With this and his immense personal power, he hoped to awake Satan and open the Gates of Doom, thus throwing the Multi-verse in darkness once again.

When the wars began and the dead rose to fight the living, many heroes tried to defy Vecna's power. Most of them died, but some were able to achieve some success. Among these was Angus Thalgurn, a brave man and a true paladin. He exposed himself to great risks in a mission to request the help of Draltahn, a Great Gold Wyrms of awesome power.

When Angus returned home riding the dragon Draltahn, the victory against the forces of Vecna seemed possible again. Many battles were won with his help, but soon all hope was lost when Vecna was able to lure the dragon into a trap and slay him.

In a night spent by the paladin in prayers and despair, the image of the dead Draltahn came to him with a plan. They would not give it up so easily...

Angus took the remains of the dragon to the dwarves in the south and asked them to make three items: from the bones and blood of the dragon and from gold and adamantite of the dwarven mines, they forged a sword. From the hide of the dragon and adamantite, they forged both a shield and a suit of armor. The wizards and priests of the land then enchanted these items. The shield and armor were remarkable, but the sword was even more special, for their magic and the power of Draltahn were able to summon the soul of the dead dragon and allow it to enter and inhabit the sword. Then it became the Dragon Sword.

Through the Dragon Sword, Draltahn was able to allow the paladin to use most of his dragon powers. With the aid of the three Dragon Items, Vecna was destroyed. Only his hand and eye remained. These two were locked in a hidden place with powerful magic and wards to prevent

entrance and forgotten.

The Dragon Sword has the form of a long sword with a golden blade inscribed with ancient runes. The hilt is made of gold and dragon bones and has the form of a dragon head. From the open mouth of the dragon sprouts the blade. Two diamonds make up for the dragons eyes. When in battle, the sword glows softly with a golden light.

The Dragon Sword is a *longsword* +5, *Holy Avenger*, inhabited by the soul of the Great Gold Wyrn Draltahn. It has an intelligence of 18 and an ego of 22 and can communicate by either speech or telepathy. In addition to the normal powers of a Holy Avenger, the paladin wielding this sword is able to call upon the powers of the gold dragon. Nearly all his powers (including his breath weapon) are at his disposal. However, it is not easy to use them and if the paladin fails an attempt, there may be some (very) adverse side effects. The powers of the Dragon Sword are listed below. To use one of them, the character must make an experience level check (roll his level or less in the d20). The number in parenthesis are modifiers to this roll. The '-' sign indicates a penalty and the '+' indicates a bonus to the roll (as usual, an unmodified roll of 1 is always a success and a 20 is always a failure). If the character fails the roll, he must roll the d20 again in the adverse effects table. Any modifiers to the first roll also apply to this one.

All powers/spells are as if actually cast by the dragon. Therefore, they are cast at the 23th level.

They are:

1. Bless: 3/day. (-1)
2. Speak with animals. 1/day. (-2)
3. Detect invisibility. (dragon senses) in a 120 feet radius. Duration is 11 turns and 5 rounds. 1/day. (-2)
4. Detect gems, 30' radius. Duration is 1 round. 3/day. (-2)
5. Water breathing. 1/day. (-3)
6. Polymorph self. 3/day (each change in form lasts until the character chooses a new form or the 46 turn duration expires). (-4)
7. Detect lie. 3/day. (-4)
8. Animal summoning I. 1/day. (-4)
9. Dragon fear. May be used only right before entering battle, in the moment the paladin utters his battle cry and the sword begins to glow. Some people (who failed their saving throws) would swear that they saw the shadow of an enormous dragon hover above the paladin and utter a frightening roar in unison with the hero's battle cry. 1/battle. (-4)
10. Immunity to fire. Duration is 2 turns. 1/day. (-5)
11. Immunity to gas. Duration is 2 turns. 1/day. (-5)
12. Luck bonus. (see the gold dragon description on the Monstrous Compendium). 1/day. (-5)
13. Quest. 1/day. (-5)
14. Shape change: into a gold dragon of as many hit dice as the character has levels of experience. The paladin must be at least 10th level to become a hatchling gold dragon. 1/day. (-9)
15. Breath weapon: (fire or chlorine gas, for 24d12+12 points of damage). May be used up to 3 times per day, but with at least 3 rounds between each use. (-10)
16. Dragon spells (each spell can be used once per day):  
a Wizard

- ii. Shield (-1)
  - iii. Magic missile (-1)
  - iv. Mirror image (-2)
  - v. Strength (casting time is 1 round) (-2)
  - vi. Haste (-3)
  - vii. Lightning bolt (-3)
  - viii. Fire shield (-4)
  - ix. Stoneskin (-4)
  - x. Cone of cold (-5)
  - xi. Dismissal (-5)
  - xii. Anti-magic shell (-6)
  - xiii. True seeing (-6)
  - xiv. Power word, stun (-7)
  - xv. Delayed blast fireball (-7)
  - xvi. Prismatic wall (-8)
- b. Priest:
- i.
  - ii. Command (-1)
  - iii. Cure light wounds (-1)
  - iv. Aid (-2)
  - v. Resist cold (-2)
  - vi. Negative plane protection (-3)
  - vii. Prayer (-3)
  - viii. Protection from lightning (-4)
  - ix. Cure serious wounds (-4)

The following modifiers also apply to the rolls:

- ! The character is not exposed to any immediate danger nor is he engaged in battle. (-4)
- ! Is acting out of alignment. (-1 to -6, at the DM discretion)
- ! The paladin is currently with than 10% or less of his maximum hit points. (+1)
- ! Is acting under his god's direct orders. (+2)
- ! The character or one of his allies is in a really desperate situation. A necessary (but not sufficient) condition for such a situation to occur is that the use of a power from the sword may make all the difference between the character dying in the current or in the next round or not. However, the DM must agree with the player that the situation is really desperate, and that he has no other option (or very few other unpleasant options) but using one of the Dragon Sword's powers. (+4)

If the character fails his experience level check the power will not activate (he may try again, if he wishes) and he must now roll a d20 on the following table. Any modifiers to the previous roll are also taken into account in this one (an unmodified roll of 1 is always considered as "Nothing happens". A roll of 20 is treated normally as any other roll):

- 1-6 Nothing happens.
- 7 Sword falls from character's grasp.

- 8 The Dragon Sword becomes powerless for 10 minutes.
- 9 Character takes 1d4 points of damage.
- 10 Character loses 1d4 points of dexterity for 1 turn.
- 11 Character takes 1d6 points of damage.
- 12 Character loses 1d4 points of strength for 1 turn.
- 13 Character takes 1d8 points of damage.
- 14 Character receives a -2 penalty to his "to hit", damage (1 hp minimum), initiative, saving throws and armor class for 1 turn.
- 15 Character takes 1d10 points of damage.
- 16 Character is blinded for 2 turns.
- 17 Character takes 1d12 points of damage.
- 18 Character is unconscious for 2 turns.
- 19 Character takes 1d20 points of damage.
- 20 A randomly chosen magic item the paladin possesses (with the exception of the Dragon Sword) becomes non-magical.
- 21 Permanently lose one point from a randomly chosen attribute. If this would leave the character with less than the minimum required to be a paladin (12 Str, 9 Con, 13 Wis and 17 Cha), he permanently loses two hit points instead.}
- 22 Character is *feble-minded* (no save).
- 23 Character ages 2d6 years.
- 24 Character is transformed into a gold dragon egg. The egg hatches in 4d4 days. A *wish* or similar magic can bring him back while in egg form, but if the egg hatches there is no way to reverse the effect. The character has become a gold dragon without any memories of his past life and must be removed from play.
- 25 Character falls in love with the next human of opposite sex and chaotic evil alignment he encounters. He will do anything he can to regenerate and marry this person. Despite the passionate love the paladin will feel, he still knows the difference between good and evil, law and chaos, and will not be easily corrupted by his "beloved" (unless the player decides to do so). If the character is already in love with someone, ignore this effect and roll again with an additional penalty of -2.

- 26 Character receives enough damage to leave him with only 1 hit point. If he already had only 1 hp, he goes to zero hp and must make a system shock. If the roll fails, he dies. This damage is very difficult to heal with magic. An nth level curative spell heals n hit points.
- 27 Anything the character is carrying or wearing, magical or not, is disintegrated. Magical items receive a saving throw versus disintegration, but normal clothes and equipment don't.
- 28 Character loses 1 level of experience.
- 29 Character sex changes.
- 30 Character must save versus death magic at -2 or die. No other modifiers to this roll are allowed, including any magical protections the character might have.
- 31 The Dragon Sword is teleported to another continent, world or plane of existence.
- 32 Character is teleported to one of the evil outer planes. The Dragon Sword, however, is not.
- 33+ Character is utterly and irrevocably destroyed.

The Dragon Sword is a legend among dragons: if a dragon sees it, there is an 8% chance per age category of the dragon that it will recognize it for what it is. If an evil dragon happens to recognize this artifact, it will probably attempt to kill the wielder and take away the sword. On the other hand, if a good dragon perceives the true nature of the sword, it will be favorably disposed towards the wielder, which will receive a +3 reaction adjustment when dealing with this dragon.