Fantastic Terrain: Elemental Motes

By Charles Choi

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Little fires up the imagination more than a vision of the impossible, such as an island defying gravity by floating miles high up in the air. This might be why castles in the sky are so common in fantasy, from the ethereal cloud kingdoms seen in fairy tales such as Jack and the Beanstalk to the ominous flying citadels of Krynn in Dragonlance.

Islands in the sky made their debut in 4th Edition as earthmotes in the updated Forgotten Realms® setting, and now they can be unforgettable elements in your campaign as

well. The awe-inspiring heights that motes often soar at carry the promise of death-defying acts of derring-do that can stick with players for years. Although the constant risk of a potentially lethal fall underlies the greatest strength of motes as a storytelling tool—spine-tingling suspense—unfortunately, it is also their greatest weakness. One wrong step on the part of either Dungeon Master or player, and a player character or valuable nonplayer character can inadvertently go hurtling into the brink. However, such challenges can be overcome easily with a little forethought.

MOTES IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

In a game that includes monster-infested dungeons, lost islands populated by dinosaurs, and the demon-haunted depths of the Abyss, there still remains something indescribably exotic about castles hovering in the sky. It might be because that although motes are too far away to reach, they still look as if they're close enough to almost touch. In comparison, dungeons are hidden underground, lost isles are over the horizon, and other planes of existence are separated by gulfs of magic.

Motes can be a great way to include monsters and environments that you could not readily explain otherwise in your campaign setting, such as an iceberg with white dragons and frost giants floating above a blazing desert. Over the course of a campaign, the constant visible presence of a mote but the forbidding distance between it and its surroundings could lead to escalating suspense until a method is found to finally cross that gap—when the characters discover a way to fly up, for instance, or demonic hordes find a way to invade an angelic refuge.

The often remote nature of motes makes them ideal locales for refuges, strongholds, vaults, and prisons that can hide any monster or treasure you want. The fact that they are generally cut off from the rest of the world often shrouds them in mystery—who knows what they hold, or what takes place there?

On the flipside, in settings where air travel is common, such as the EBERRON® setting, motes could become common ports of call. Such mote-ports can brim with adventure and serve as home to all kinds of intrigue. In the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting, for instance, the floating fortress Yaulazna is home to bands of mercenaries, smugglers, merchants and pirates.

Just as with any island, bizarre societies can pop up on motes—feral halflings or mad albino dwarves or anything else you want—potentially leading to intriguing relationships with nearby lands. One unusual possibility is that monsters on motes might not even know the rest of the world exists if the monsters have no safe way off and are prevented from seeing their surroundings by, say, banks of clouds or walls of flame. How will the inhabitants of the motes deal with any strangers that pierce such veils?

A Dungeon Master could set an entire campaign on motes. Indeed, the world could consist of nothing but motes, with no solid ground visible underneath them. Fundamentally, such a campaign might be much like a campaign set on regular islands, except that travel from one realm to another would have a more fantastic character and carry the inherent danger of plummeting to parts unknown. An excellent example of a world consisting entirely of floating islands is in Karl Schroeder's Virga series.

One could also imagine setting an entire campaign on just one mote—one not the size of a mountain, but the size of a continent. What civilization would develop on the top and bottom surfaces of such a mote or within its honeycombed interior Innerdark? How would the people of the mote treat those dwelling in its perpetual shadow on the surface of the world, or deal with other surface-dwelling civilizations?

FACTS ABOUT MOTES

Motes are often born from breaches between the mortal world and the Elemental Chaos, when matter explodes from that tempestuous dimension into the sky, as explained in the *Manual of the Planes*. Although the most common elemental motes are the floating mountain-sized chunks of rock known as earthmotes, other kinds exist as well, such as the semisolid pockets of cloudstuff (see below) dubbed airmotes, which storm giants and other monsters covet for their lairs. A few motes even emerge from elsewhere in the cosmos—shadowmotes, feymotes, demonmotes, hellmotes, and farmotes are not unknown.

Elemental motes often still crackle with primeval energies and surge with fire and storm. The matter they are made from is unstable, just as it is in the Elemental Chaos from which they come. Motestone and cloudstuff generally dissipates if taken away from the rest of the mote, much like the bodies of summoned creatures disappear after they die. But not everything in motes breaks down—at times, motes have stable veins of valuable ore running through them, including gold, diamonds, mithril, adamantine, and orichalcum, a naturally occurring ore rich in residuum. These ores make them valuable targets for prospectors.

The magical quality that keeps motes hovering in the air is known as elemental buoyancy. Motes and matter that comes from them are not subject to the force of the world's gravity—indeed, floating chunks of motestone can be a flying hazard before they dissipate. However, creatures, plants, and other items usually are bound to the world's gravity, although a few motes do possess their own gravity fields (see below).

Earthmotes are typically named after the terrain they support–junglemotes, desertmotes, and so on. They usually teem with life, due in part perhaps to the raw elemental energy that permeates them. Seeds of all kinds are carried in by winds and set up root, watered by clouds and growing rapidly in the abundant sunlight. Birds, insects, bats, and drakes then follow, roosting in the vegetation and caves, and in turn these all help serve as prey to help support larger flying predators such as griffons, chimeras, rocs, manticores, and dragons. Unusual herbs and rare creatures might live nowhere else but on motes, at times prompting special missions to gather them.

The epic Shift Mote ritual can force a mote to move (*Forgotten Realms Player's Guide*, page 145), but motes are normally stationary. A few do wander, acting essentially as low-orbiting moons, potentially bringing trouble and adventure wherever they go. Motes normally do not rotate, though exceptions to the rule exist (see below). Neither do they grow or shrink in size.

UNFETTERED MONSTERS

One easy way to invent flying monsters is by unfettering existing ones. In the Forgotten Realms, unfettered animals are swimming creatures no longer bound by the edicts of gravity. To create your own unfettered monsters, such as flying sharks, simply swap their swim speeds for fly speeds.

Not all islands in the sky are motes. Some, like the flying citadels of Krynn or the airborne citadels of Arkhosia (*Dungeon* #165, "Remains of the Empire"), were torn from the ground and held aloft in the air by powerful rituals. The matter from these citadels is not unstable, and it might fall as normal when knocked off.

Ten Flying Islands of Adventure

Here are ten islands in the sky that you can drop into your campaign:

1. **The Fountain of Heaven** is a junglemote from which a mighty waterfall a mile high cascades down to a desert oasis, which helps support villagers and wildlife for leagues around. However, a cruel efreet has claimed the mote as his own, causing a drought by damming the water until he receives tribute. The characters can work with local druids who provide them with giant bats, eagles, or bees to fly to the mote, where they have to deal with the efreet and his elemental and archon lackeys, as well as the strange creatures that call the floating jungle home. And what happens when a couatl or dragon decides to interfere?

2. Recently warlocks of the star pact and cosmic sorcerers have felt an unnatural wound in the fabric of the world. A new aberrant moon, **Alghul**, has emerged in the sky, upsetting the balance of the universe. The characters must deal with the fell taint minions of the rogue moon, fight their way into a corrupted mountaintop observatory they can use to find the satellite that has hidden itself from mortal eyes, and then edge their way past vacuum rifts, entropic fissures, and time wrinkles on Alghul to defeat the farmote's star spawn masters before these masters succeed in their twisted plans.

3. **Xenthar** is a forbidding octahedral flying citadel, a floating double pyramid that has long been said to serve as the ultimate vault, remote from almost any robbers. The characters secure transport there–but after surviving flights of gargoyles and countless deathtraps, that is when they find out Xenthar is not a vault but a dungeon, holding horrors that should not have been roused. And judging by the cyclopean size of its halls, it was not made for humans. . . .

4. **The Eye of Stone** drifted over the horizon one day–a giant floating red eye whose gaze petrifies whatever lies directly underneath it, leaving behind a swath of petrified forest at least 100 miles long. Is it an eye from the primordial mother of all medusas or from the largest beholder of them all? Is it a weapon deployed by a far-off kingdom to wreak havoc, or did the being who sent it away want to remove it from the hands of a still greater evil? In any case, now it's headed right for a large town, and the characters have to figure out a way to blind it. What dread creatures live on the Eye of Stone?

5. **The Neverending Storm** is a cloud kingdom that was once home to an infamous storm titan, but this mote has remained quiet for centuries. Now the mote has begun to rain lightning down with increasing frequency, and the mote itself is growing larger, threatening nearby realms. The winds surrounding the floating island make it impossible to approach from the outside, so the characters must first venture through the land below, negotiate with the dour, suspicious folk who live in the unending shadow of the clouds and fly into the eerily tranquil eye of the Neverending Storm to confront its new master.

6. Deep underground in the Feydark, in the foulest of the foul caverns of the fomorians, floats the swiftly tilting prison of **Annuvan**, where captives rot in darkness and are kept alive unnaturally through abominable means to suffer for eternity. What if the characters have to stage a jailbreak? They must partner with gnome spies, deal with a paranoid turncoat cyclops, sneak past a colony of myconids, avoid the spriggan guards, and survive the mad fomorian warden of the relentlessly tumbling, disorienting mote.

7. The earthmote **Kethilir** has a stone bridge a mile long that links it to a nearby mountaintop. The goliaths who live on the mountain say the mote, once home to a secretive arcane academy, is cursed, and that recently someone or something has been raiding their cliffside villages. Will the characters wander across the bridge to Kethilir to fight what dangers lurk inside, discover what magic secrets it might hold, and rescue any captured prisoners?

8. **Ir-Lan** is a clockwork mote whose many windmills help power the elevators that lug people up and down the floating island. Until recently Ir-Lan held a bustling colony of dwarves that honeycombed the mote with tunnels and vast chambers while mining for orichalcum, but now Ir-Lan has gone silent. Did the dwarves delve too deep and uncover something that should have remained hidden? Will it be a fatal mistake to travel up by elevator?

9. Astronomers a decade ago spotted what appeared to be an island hidden on the firemote known as **Secondsun**, but mounts and vehicles cannot draw near it without perishing in flames. Now a local king has unveiled a giant catapult meant to hurl a party of daring adventurers onto this hidden island, and these folk should land safely using parachutes. Who dares fly to Secondsun? Will the fireproofing on the parachutes work? What about intrigues from neighboring kingdoms, who are convinced the king is really scheming to build a siege engine powerful enough to attack their castles from afar?

10. **Highground** is a moteport, a harbor in the sky. The floating island is covered entirely in berths for airships and ruins from the many kingdoms that once claimed Highground as their own. The mote lies over the middle of a vast wasteland or an especially perilous sea, seemingly making it the safest port of call for hundreds of miles—although the many criminals and other creatures that lurk in its nooks and crannies might belie that reputation. Every now and again some villain wants to build a coalition among the sky pirates to create an unbeatable air navy, but the dragons, couatls, and efreets that call Highground home fiercely protect the status quo.
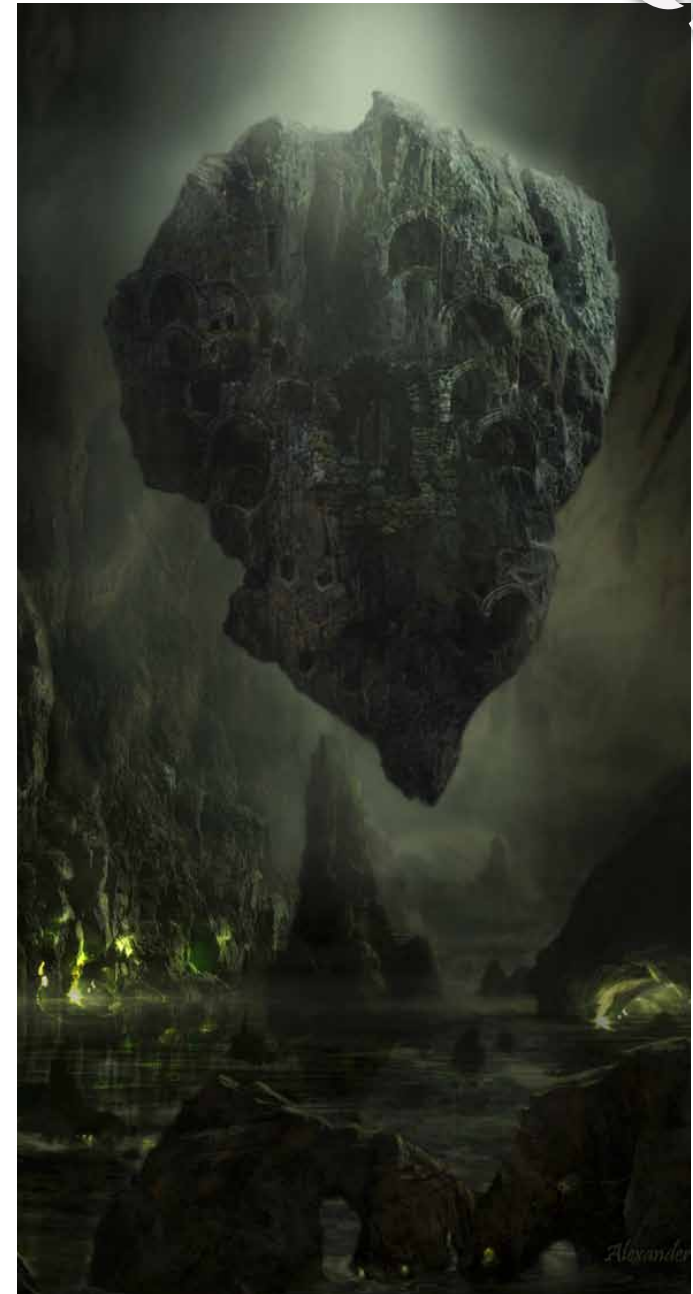
GETTING THERE

The journey to a mote can be adventure in and of itself–they are essentially far-off lands typically hundreds of feet up in the air after all. The common assumption is that characters fly there, and so the challenges they face would be aerial in nature–flying monsters and dangerous weather.

Still, D&D is nothing if not a game about fantasy, so why not try reaching a mote using other methods? Imagine if the characters had to get to a mote using stairways, bridges, webs, vines, ropes, ladders, elevators, catapults, rainbows, sunbeams, or moonbeams. That could greatly add to the kinds of monsters and hazards they could face on their way up.

- ✦ Perhaps the only safe way up and down is through a ritual that summons a stairway of ravens, and dread servants of the Raven Queen take umbrage with its use.
- ✦ Perhaps trolls lurk under the windy, snowy bridge.
- ✦ Perhaps giant spiders or chokers climb up and down the webs and ropes.
- ✦ Perhaps some of the vines are predatory.
- ✦ Perhaps a veritable army of kobolds occupies the stairway, bringing the risk of traps on each step.
- ✦ What happens if it rains or snows, and the rungs on the ladders start getting slippery?
- ✦ Do the elevators work all right, or are the cables in danger of snapping?
- ✦ Did the catapult aim right? Did the projectile carrying the characters hit too hard, or threaten to skitter off the edge of the mote? Did it hit the wrong spot on the mote or miss the mote entirely?

- ✦ Do angels or fell taints travel up and down the sunbeams or moonbeams?
- ✦ Does the rainbow bridge only appear three nights of the year and disappear with the morning light, necessitating very quick climbs up and down?

And of course, Dungeon Masters can still throw aerial challenges at characters going up by these methods.

FEAR OF FALLING

All motes pose a pair of dangers for your game. The first, most obvious threat is that if characters fall and do not make the saving throw to catch themselves (*Player's Handbook*, page 284), they meet almost certain doom from their plummet. It's an ignominious way to go, and no player wants to lose a character to a lone save-or-die roll. The second, subtler risk is that even if a character survives a fall, he or she is now potentially stranded, split up from the rest of the adventure and the party with no clear way back.

Dungeon Masters can make many items available that can safely slow a character's fall–*rings of feather fall*, parachutes, giant umbrellas and so on–but they remove the character from the action. This might serve well for an exciting Hollywood finale–allowing the party to jump to safety as the mote explodes behind it, for instance–but dismal for use mid-adventure.

The best idea might be to solve the fall with combat encounters or skill checks. These can both save a character's life and provide a way for them to return.

During combat, a falling character might try clutching onto flying opponents with a grab. With a hit, instead of immobilizing the enemy, the character can try steering it, forcing the grabbed target to move (*Player's Handbook*, page 290). The character can then make his or her way back to solid ground, or perhaps leap to safety with an Acrobatics or Athletics check. The monster likely tries to escape on its turn, prompting a struggle as the character attempts to sustain the grab if he or she does not yet have a place to land. Letting go is a free action, and the character might take falling damage if appropriate. (Characters might even intentionally use this tactic to leap onto and ride monsters!) If the character's fall does not take it near a monster, you can have one attack the character to get it close enough to grab–perhaps griffons or other flying creatures regularly circle the mote as scavengers, waiting to snatch any scraps of food that fall off.

The Dungeon Master could place vines, branches, webs or other objects that characters can grab onto with a successful Acrobatics or Athletics check. They can then try Climb checks to bring them back to the rest of the party.

If a character's fall takes him or her near another character, that ally can try an Acrobatics or Athletics check, either to grab onto or be grabbed by the falling character. If a nonplayer character helped bring the party up to the mote in the first place, he or she might spot falling characters and fly by to save them.

If the mote is inhabited, it could have any number of safety measures. For instance, safety nets might be put up to catch people in case of emergencies, or flying lifeguards could regularly circle the motes.

At the very least, Dungeon Masters can have characters fall onto a ledge, bridge, or similar out-cropping, or not place the mote all that high off the ground. Although they would take falling damage—see *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 44 to determine safe fall severity by character level—players would likely consider themselves lucky their characters didn't die. Dungeon Masters should feel encouraged to make a fall intimidating and difficult, but not necessarily one that sends your players back to creating new characters.

Just as trapeze artists often work with safety nets, so too might Dungeon Masters place airmotes made of cloudstuff underneath the mote to cushion any character's fall. Once that character makes his or her way up to the airmote's surface, the Dungeon Master can set up an encounter with monsters or a nonplayer character that allows the character to make his or her way back to the rest of the adventure, or possibly to a different part of the original mote.

It could even be impossible for characters to fall off the mote in your adventure if it has its own gravity field. Such a mote appears surrounded by a shimmering bubble about twice its diameter representing the limit of the field, with the center of the field at the center of the mote. Once inside this field, the world's gravity disappears and the mote's gravity takes over. The gravity is typically uniform throughout the mote, not growing any stronger or weaker at any given point. These motes are usually spherical in shape.

After deciding on what safety options a mote has for characters, a Dungeon Master should introduce these as natural parts of the background as the characters approach the mote—point out the vines and branches wrapped around it, or the circling flocks of gargoyles, or the banks of cloudstuff through which they pass. Do not mention these are safety options during play—only bring these up as opportunities where the characters can save themselves if they happen to fall. This way the choices remain in the players' hands, and they feel as if they overcame challenges through skill and luck. Nothing kills excitement more than feeling coddled from any actual risks.

The greater importance that movement now holds in D&D means that characters and monsters have more options than ever to push, pull, or slide opponents. Battles on motes could make players try out combat maneuvers they might otherwise not have considered, such as bull rushes and moving grabbed targets. On the other hand, now more risks exist that could send characters hurtling to their deaths.

Take a good hard look at what powers characters and monsters have and design your mote accordingly. You might want to include blocking terrain that allows characters to move only so far before an obstacle prevents them going over the edge. Guardrails can help reduce the chance of falling, granting a bonus to the saving throw to catch oneself, but they usually are not all that strong and could break under repeated blows or a strong enough push.

Note that all these safety options could also help Dungeon Masters save nonplayer characters who were not supposed to fall to their deaths.

TERRAIN AND HAZARDS

Motes are made of motestone or solid elemental matter. Motestone is typically made of earth, but it could also be hardened fire, air, or water, although such motestone has no magical effect—motestone made of flame does not deal fire damage.

Aside from motestone, another common form of terrain on motes is cloudstuff, the light and breathable semisolid matter from which airmotes are made. Striding across cloudstuff feels like traveling across the snow—it feels a bit spongy but firm. One can walk across cloudstuff normally, dive through it at swim or burrow speeds as if it were normal terrain, or fly through it while treating it like difficult terrain. (The holes such travel makes through the cloudstuff seal up immediately behind the traveler.) Cloudstuff can also break falls—every 1 square fallen through cloudstuff reduces the distance fallen through air beforehand by 10 squares, and if the distance reduced equals the distance fallen beforehand, the fall ends and no damage is taken. Attacks that deal fire damage to squares containing cloudstuff can temporarily dissipate it, although it reforms at the end of the attacker's next turn. Creatures within cloudstuff can be targeted by attacks, although cloudstuff offers total concealment to anything within it.

As described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, swirling air eddies, flying debris, and other factors serve as difficult terrain for flying creatures, ordinary clouds provide concealment, hovering castles and other structures provide cover, air currents and whirlwinds can drag creatures along their paths, and high or extreme altitudes can tax endurance. Bolts and balls of lightning and flurries of ice can lead to blaster, lurker, and obstacle hazards. If the

mote is infused with energies from the Elemental Chaos or elsewhere, feel free to add planar hazards and terrains detailed in the *Manual of the Planes* and other places.

One especially challenging scenario that Dungeon Masters could set up for characters is a rotating earth-mote. Motes can rotate two ways: horizontally and vertically. If the mote is spinning horizontally, characters might experience dizziness and must make a Fortitude check to avoid being dazed. The faster the mote is spinning horizontally or closer the characters are to the center of this mote, the higher the DC of the check.

With a mote that is spinning vertically, the walls regularly switch places with the ceiling and floor. To simulate this, figure out how fast these switches occur—say, every 5, 10, or 500 rounds. Switches occur more rapidly the faster the mote is rotating, but they also take place more quickly closer to the center of the mote. When a switch first takes place, the surfaces the characters are standing on become steep slopes—they are difficult terrain, and an Acrobatics or Athletics check might be necessary to keep from sliding all the way down that surface or to the closest obstacle. On the next switch, the floor becomes the wall—rotate your map of the mote 90 degrees, and check if anybody experiences falling damage. The cycle of switching then resumes. (An especially complex scenario would make the mote spin both horizontally and vertically, but that might be more trouble than it's worth to Dungeon Masters.)

FINAL TIPS

If the motes are lairs for flying creatures, be sure to make the motes' interiors take advantage of that fact by making them fully three-dimensional. For example, imagine battles over yawning pits, with vines crisscrossing the pit and covering the sides, and gargoyles flying back and forth cutting vines when expedient. Such environments are challenging for those who can't fly.

It can be surprisingly easy to make motes feel mediocre and just like any other locale on land. Be sure to highlight what is special about motes. Make them feel otherworldly, with adventurers striding through cloudstuff and avoiding unstable pockets of matter belching out elemental fire. Emphasize that they are high up in the sky—show yawning pits hundreds or thousands of feet above the ground, have them cross over gaps with rope nets and rickety bridges, and make sure that flying creatures attack from unexpected directions so that players feel at least slightly out of their element and comfort zones.

ENCOUNTER: STURM UND DRANG

Encounter Level 15 (6,100 XP)

SETUP

  1 adult blue dragon
  2 windfiend furies
  1 windfiend fury hidden in the cloud

This encounter can be used in any adventure featuring an airmote. In fact, for the paragon tier, it's a great way to introduce the terrain to your characters. When you construct the terrain, you can create an environment of several air motes. Just be sure to include at least three or more semisolid fog banks around the larger airmote.

A blue dragon has taken up its lair in the clouds, along with three elementals that venerate the dragon's electric might. Depending on the adventure, the dragon might be the lord of the entire airmote, jealously hoarding the treasure the characters want, or it could be a fearsome sentry guarding the entrance of the castle of an even more powerful monster.

The banks of heavy fog offer concealment and at first obscure the party from the dragon. However, one of the windfiend furies constantly patrols between embankments, looking for intruders. The other windfiend furies are hidden—one within the cloudstuff, the other in a small fog bank.

When you set up this area, the characters see only the dragon and empty fog banks. Another, smaller fog bank hides one of the windfiend furies, but the characters cannot see it until they've engaged the dragon.

When the characters enter the area, read:

Wisps of white fog curl around your ankles as you stride across the dark gray cloud. Banks of heavy fog partially obscure your view of this large area, but around the corner of one you see a large blue-scaled tail.

Perception Check
DC 18: *You hear whistling winds and low thunder drawing closer to you, as if a storm was approaching.*
DC 23: *Deep within the small fog bank, you spy flashes of lightning.*
DC 25: *You also spot flashes of lightning within the gray cloud.*

TACTICS

If the characters come within the line of sight of the windfiend fury hidden in the small fog bank, it waits until they draw near for a surprise attack. If the characters try and burrow through the cloudstuff instead, they might run afoul the windfiend fury lurking out of sight there.

If the dragon is alerted to the party's presence, it takes to the air immediately, spending an action point to use *frightful presence* and then following up with its *breath weapon*. The windfiend furies move to surround the party, teleporting with *storm burst* to keep characters boxed in.

If the party bloodies the dragon, it blasts the characters with its *bloodied breath* and then dives into the cloudstuff. It can burrow underneath at a speed of 5, lurking below until its *breath weapon* recharges or emerging to make *lightning burst* attacks. The dragon can also choose to engage the party directly with *draconic fury*; the round afterward, it tries to grab the weakest-looking character to drag it down into the cloudstuff to rip him or her to shreds.

Characters that attempt to hide in the heavy fog or the cloudstuff quickly discover that although they offer concealment, they do not offer cover.

FEATURES OF THE AREA

Illumination: Light streaming down from above brightly illuminates the entire area.
Ceiling: The area is exposed to the open air.
Heavy Fog: Squares of heavily obscured fog should be scattered around the area. The heavy fog reaches up to 10 feet high. Any attack that deals more than 5 fire damage in a square where there is heavy fog dissipates it permanently.
Cloudstuff: The entire floor of the airmote is made of cloudstuff. One can walk across cloudstuff normally, dive through it at swim or burrow speeds as if it were normal terrain, or fly through it as if it is difficult terrain. (The holes such travel makes through the cloudstuff seal up immediately behind the traveler.) Attacks that deal fire damage to squares that contain cloudstuff can temporarily dissipate it, although it reforms at the end of the attacker's next turn. Creatures within cloudstuff can be targeted by attacks, although cloudstuff offers total concealment to anything within it.

Adult Blue Dragon — Level 13 Solo Artillery
Large natural magical beast (dragon) — XP 4,000

Initiative +9 — **Senses** Perception +13; darkvision
HP 655; **Bloodied** 327
AC 30; **Fortitude** 31, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 27
Resist 20 lightning
Saving Throws +5
Speed 8, fly 10 (hover), overland flight 15
Action Points 2

⊕ **Gore** (standard; at-will) ✦ **Lightning**
Reach 2; +18 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage, plus 1d6 lightning damage, and the target is pushed 1 square and knocked prone.

⊕ **Claw** (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; +16 vs. AC; 1d6 + 6 damage.

⸸ **Draconic Fury** (standard; at-will)
The dragon makes a gore attack and two claw attacks.

↗ **Breath Weapon** (standard; recharge ⚄ ⚅) ✦ **Lightning**
The dragon targets up to three creatures with its lightning breath; the first target must be within 10 squares of the dragon, the second target within 10 squares of the first, and the third target within 10 squares of the second; +18 vs. Reflex; 2d12 + 10 lightning damage. *Miss:* Half damage. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.

↗ **Bloodied Breath** (free, when first bloodied, encounter) ✦ **Lightning**
The dragon's breath weapon recharges, and the dragon uses it immediately. This attack does not provoke opportunity attacks.

↩ **Frightful Presence** (standard; encounter) ✦ **Fear**
Close burst 5; targets enemies; +18 vs. Will; the target is stunned until the end of the dragon's next turn. *Aftereffect:* The target takes a –2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

✻ **Lightning Burst** (standard, at-will) ✦ **Lightning**
Area burst 3 within 20; +18 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 lightning damage. *Miss:* Half damage.

Alignment Evil — **Languages** Common, Draconic
Skills Athletics +22, Insight +13, Nature +13

Str 23 (+12)	**Dex** 16 (+9)	**Wis** 14 (+8)
Con 19 (+10)	**Int** 13 (+7)	**Cha** 14 (+8)

Windfiend Fury — Level 12 Controller
Large elemental magical beast (air, earth) — XP 700

Initiative +11 — **Senses** Perception +10
Forceful Zephyr aura 3; the windfiend fury slides each creature that starts its turn within the aura 1 square.
HP 123; **Bloodied** 61
AC 26; **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 24
Immune disease, poison; **Resist** 15 lightning, 15 thunder
Speed 0, fly 8 (hover)

⊕ **Flying Debris** (standard; at-will)
Reach 2; +17 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage.

↗ **Lightning Strike** (standard; recharge ⚄ ⚅) ✦ **Lightning**
Ranged 10; +16 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 lightning damage, and the target is dazed until the end of the windfiend fury's next turn.

↩ **Storm Burst** (standard; at-will) ✦ **Teleportation, Thunder**
Close burst 2; +16 vs. Reflex; 1d10 + 5 thunder damage. *Effect:* The windfiend fury teleports to any space adjacent to the burst's area of effect.

Alignment Unaligned — **Languages** Primordial

Str 17 (+9)	**Dex** 21 (+11)	**Wis** 19 (+10)
Con 19 (+10)	**Int** 6 (+4)	**Cha** 16 (+9)

About the Author

Charles Choi is a freelance writer and journalist who has written for *The New York Times*, *Scientific American*, and *Nature*, among many other publications. This is his first professional work for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game.