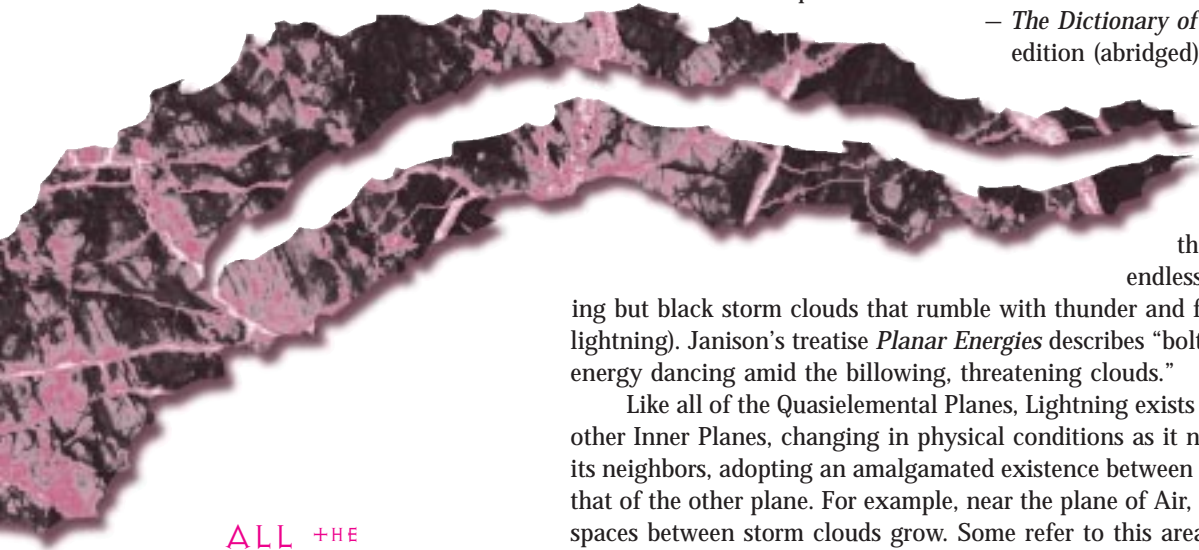


(Ti'adel the Never Forgotten, a Guvner scholar of planar mechanics, provided this chapter.—the Editor)

**LIGHTNING, QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF:** One of the so-called positive Quasielemental Planes (due to its proximity to the plane of Positive Energy), this Inner Plane exists as an extension of the primary Elemental Plane of Air infused with energy. The interaction between the fundamental material of air and positive energy creates the visible phenomenon of lightning. This Quasielemental Plane exhibits the entire broad spectrum of the phenomenon, including billowing storm clouds, churning winds, brilliant electrical discharges, and deafening thunder. See “Elemental Interrelations: Quasielemental Creation” for more information.

— *The Dictionary of Planar Composition*, 17th edition (abridged)

# THE QUASIELEMENTAL PLANE OF LIGHTNING



ALL THE  
QUASIELEMENTAL  
PLANES  
ARE EQUALLY  
DANGEROUS.  
SOME ARE  
JUST MORE EQUAL  
THAN OTHERS.  
—A LIGHTNING  
QUASIELEMENTAL

In appearance, this quasiplane resembles the Elemental Plane of Air that sired it, but rather than endless blue skies, it holds nothing but black storm clouds that rumble with thunder and flash with inner fires (heat lightning). Janison's treatise *Planar Energies* describes “bolts of lightning and balls of energy dancing amid the billowing, threatening clouds.”

Like all of the Quasielemental Planes, Lightning exists as a border between many other Inner Planes, changing in physical conditions as it nears the essence of one of its neighbors, adopting an amalgamated existence between its own unique nature and that of the other plane. For example, near the plane of Air, the storms lighten and the spaces between storm clouds grow. Some refer to this area as the Subdued Cacophony. Where the quasiplane of Lightning meets the plane of Positive Energy, a wall of cascading energy stands as a permanent barrier.

Where Lightning meets Smoke or Steam, the clouds become thicker and blacker. Confusingly, both of these areas are called the Dark Land. The mephits from Smoke and Steam do not get along with those from Lightning, and these areas often host great conflicts between the creatures. Lightning also borders the quasiplane of Radiance, however, and this region carries the opposite name: the Bright Land. It resembles the rest of the quasiplane of Lightning, except that the storm clouds all glow brightly, carrying the blinding danger of Radiance.

Lastly, a strange, cold realm called the Glistening Crystal lies at the junction between the incongruous border of Ice and Lightning. The storm clouds here are filled with huge floating icebergs, all of which glow with the unnerving electrical light found throughout Lightning. *Bright ice*, a substance found only in this area, keeps its tremendous magical shine until it melts. Naturally, it carries great value off the quasiplane—that is, if a merchant can find the means to safely transport and store it. Often, ice mephits are hired to help achieve such ends.

## ◆ PHYSICAL CONDITIONS ◆

The sheer display of raw energy inherent in this quasiplane makes a trip here well worth the effort. Few places in the multiverse outside the Positive or Negative Energy Planes exhibit such visible shows of primal force.

### WIZARD SCHOOL ALTERATIONS

Earth	<
Air	+
Water	◆

## GETTING HERE

The Grand Archives of the Fraternity of Order list a total of 143 portals leading to and from the Quasi-elemental Plane of Lightning, although surely many more exist. Evidence indicates that those who discover portals to this and other quasiplanes are 46% less likely to divulge their knowledge than are those who find portals to better-known planes such as Fire or one of the Outer Planes.

Portal Number 22 lies on Arcadia. Known as the Storm King's Gate, it offers easy access to the quasiplane of Lightning. However, the portal is well guarded by the Storm King's servants, and the key is a blast of cold wind.

Portals Number 81 through 85 lie on Mount Olympus, where at least four storm deities claim to rule over two-way portals to Lightning.

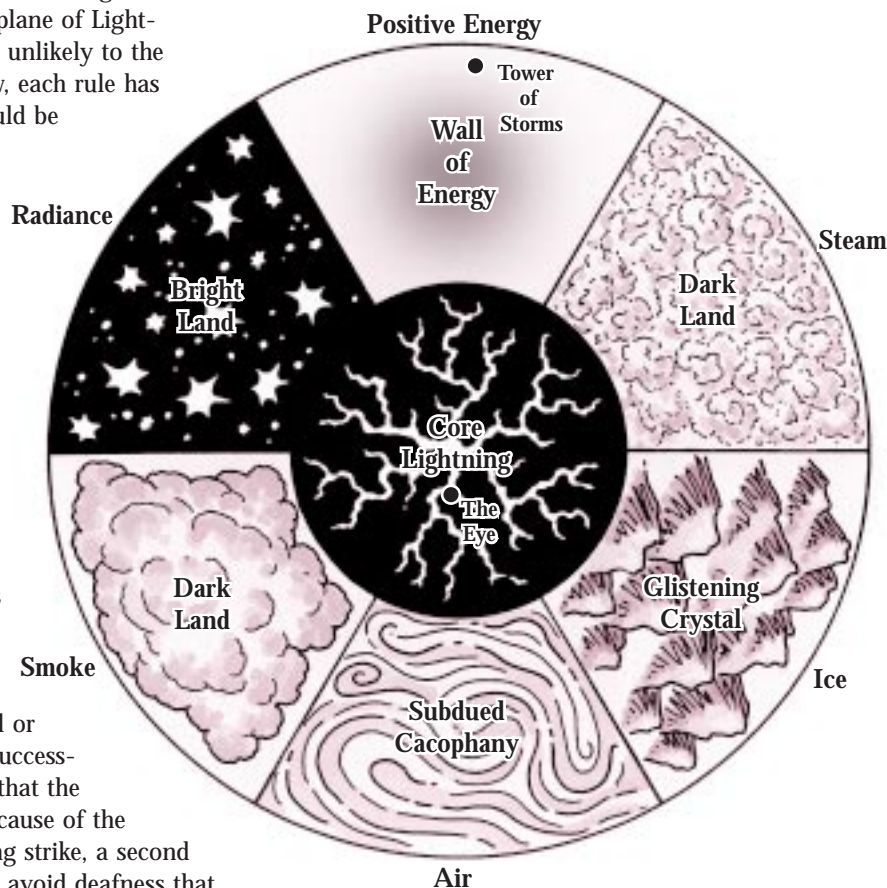
Great and powerful storms on the Prime Material Plane often contain vortices that lead to the quasiplane of Lightning. Common tempests are usually short-lived. Some scholars believe that every storm of sufficient power holds a vortex.

Rumors speak of individuals struck by powerful discharges of lightning—whether from a storm, a magical item or spell, or the breath of a dragon—who were transported to the quasiplane of Lightning as a result. This seems highly unlikely to the scientific mind, but as we all know, each rule has exceptions and loopholes, so it could be possible.

## HAZARDS

Staying alive in the quasiplane of Lightning is not as difficult as one might think. In fact, the realm can be as safe as the plane of Air, as long as one has no fear of lightning strikes. During each round spent in the quasiplane, any non-native has a 10% chance of attracting a lightning bolt. A being who carries more metal than a dagger automatically draws a bolt. These lightning bolts inflict  $1d8 \times 10$  points of damage; they're more powerful than similar discharges (natural or magical) found anywhere else. A successful saving throw vs. rod indicates that the blast inflicts only half damage. Because of the thunderclap that follows a lightning strike, a second saving throw vs. rod is required to avoid deafness that lasts 2d4 hours. *Protection from lightning* and similar spells render the target immune to the electricity (but not the thunder).

## BORDERS OF LIGHTNING



## BREATHING AND VISION

The air of the quasiplane is crisp and pure, easily inhaled by any being. According to most texts, however, it carries with it a smell of ozone and an almost metallic taste from its electrical charge.

Due to the ever-present storm clouds that blow about on violent winds, one's range of vision varies from a few feet to perhaps a few hundred. Fortunately, a light electrical halo quickly appears around any matter in the quasiplane, providing a small natural illumination—there's no need for torches or magical light here. Those who value stealth might wish to know that this aura makes *invisibility* utterly useless.

## ⊕+HER DANGERS

Aside from the common bolts of lightning, one should be aware of other hazards within the quasiplane.

**LIGHTNING BALLS.** Tiny dancing constructs of energy, these rare, chaotic formations strike as lightning bolts, but a successful saving throw indicates that the target creature dodges the ball and suffers no damage. However, lightning balls have an annoying tendency to follow a target, striking every round until they finally discharge.

**PLASMA POCKETS.** Sometimes the energy of the quasiplane gathers within a cloud until it carries a horrible potency. These pockets of plasma are the same size as normal elemental pockets (as determined by the table on page 14), and those who stumble into one instantly suffer 20d10 points of damage. The flash-frying effect spells doom for most any being. Even those immune to electricity suffer 2d10 points of damage.

## ⊞OVING AB⊞U+

Just as in the plane of Air or within a prime-material atmosphere, one can use any means of flight to propel oneself about in Lightning. Further, if one masters the knack of doing so, one can alter orientation such that the direction believed to be “down” changes. (This means of travel is explained fully in the chapter devoted to the Elemental Plane of Air.)

## ✦ INHABITANTS ✦

Although the quasiplane of Lightning is not without life, most of it is difficult to discern, since it resembles the lightning of the realm itself. Some theorists have speculated, in fact, that all lightning in the quasiplane is alive somehow, probably in the form of shockers, mephits, or quasiaelementals. This is far from being proved true, however, and most still assume that the majority of the lightning seen here is nothing more than it seems (which makes it no less incredible or worthy of study).

## QUASIELEMENTALS

Lightning quasiaelementals are playful creatures who take the form of lightning and whose laughter is said to be the thunder of the quasiplane. Such whimsical trivialities aside, these spherical energy beings travel about the quasiplane in a distressingly chaotic manner and have no known organization or society. Occasionally, they gather together in a conflagration of electrical energy, but no one knows exactly why.

Lightning mephits, for all their frenetic activity, have established tiny kingdoms amid the storm clouds. Rarely, in fact, is one of these creatures encountered alone. They get along well with the quasiaelementals and shockers—for some reason, the natives of the Thundering Realm rarely conflict at all.

## ANIMALS AND MONSTERS

The classification of animal, as distinguished from monster, is a difficult one at best. In the Thundering Realm, creatures known as mrebbe live amid the clouds. These tentacled, orb-like beings never attract lightning, but they often grab anything that approaches them and throw it into the energy bolts. Some scholars put forth the fanciful notion that by making such “sacrifices” to the lightning, the mrebbe buy their own safety—a theory that foolishly implies the intelligence of both mrebbe and lightning.

Insects called uun live within the lightning itself. An observer finds it extraordinarily difficult to study these fauna, however, since their life spans range from four to sixteen milliseconds. An uun’s entire existence lasts no longer than the bolt of lightning upon which it lives. When the uun dies, it leaves behind tiny eggs that hatch with the blast of yet another bolt of lightning.

Xag-ya from the Positive Energy Plane visit the quasiplane of Lightning frequently (and sometimes pass through a vortex into the Prime Material Plane). In addition, some blue dragons from prime-material worlds gain the ability to travel to Lightning as they mature. These creatures think of the Thundering Realm as a sort of heavenly paradise and retire here for long periods of relaxation, flying slowly amid the clouds and allowing the storm winds to blow them about. Disturbing dragons in such a restful state can be hazardous.

## ⊕+HER RACES

A race of beings known as shockers lives throughout the quasiplane of Lightning. They exhibit a complex culture involving two different classes: *sojourners* (who like to travel the cosmos) and *contented ones* (who prefer to remain in Lightning). Thus, visitors to the quasiplane are much more likely to encounter contented ones. These shockers are always peaceful, have no concept of time, and spend a large portion of their existence in the form of lightning bolts that arc from place to place.

The djinn are not unknown here. Somewhere amid the clouds, near the border with the Elemental Plane of Air, they maintain a city called Stormfront. From here, noble djinn gather in hunting parties and scour the quasiplane looking for quasiaelementals, mephits, and shockers. Obviously, this practice does little to endear them to the other residents of the realm.

## MAJOR PLAYERS

For all their somewhat chaotic nature, the creatures that populate Lightning do not seem to value individuality, as few single beings stand out from the proverbial crowd. Likewise, no deities dwell in the quasiplane, though many storm gods visit here frequently. Some may even have secret castles or other abodes not recorded in any text.



## ◆ THE SITES ◆

The vast majority of the quasiplane is little but one storm-cloud after another. A few areas, however, stand out as curiosities.

### THE EYE

Although reports usually place this spot at the “center” of the quasiplane, such a concept is, of course, fallacious. It is instead named for the core areas of prime-material storms, where conditions are usually calmer. As with those tempests, the Eye is free of torrents of wind and bolts of lightning. Most likely, it was created through potent enchantments; the entire area radiates a magic level of 4.35 on the Derithrex scale.

It’s possible that the creating spellcaster—if indeed such a being exists—lives in the Eye itself, on a small pocket of elemental Earth that was probably towed somehow to this location. Upon the floating chunk of stone, a small village has been built. This place offers shelter and services to those traveling to Lightning.

### THE TOWER OF STORMS

A structure of mysterious origin and purpose, this ancient tower literally projects out of the wall of energy that marks the absolute border with the plane of Positive Energy. The glistening, electric blue structure—which is composed of an unknown element—offers no egress within. The natives of the quasiplane, particularly the mephits, have no doubt that someone or something dwells within the tower.

## ◆ PLANEWALKERS IN LIGHTNING ◆

Records of travelers journeying to the quasiplane of Lightning are extensive, but they provide little indication of a consistent explanation as to the nature of their stay.

Some come to charge magical items, some to mine *vividium*—an extraordinarily rare substance found amid the storm clouds (essentially, it’s solid lightning)—and some to deal with the natives, whom many believe to possess secrets regarding the manipulation of energy for useful purposes.

### SPELL KEYS AND OTHER NECESSITIES

The detrimental effects of the quasiplane on certain types of spells can be overcome through the use of spell keys. The keys here take on unique forms: bursts of energy. To produce specifically controlled blasts of power, a spellcaster needs a device called an *accumulator*. This small magical storage cell draws in ambient energy and then allows the energy to be expelled. A typical burst released by an *accumulator* is too small to inflict damage on a creature or object, but large enough to serve as a spell key. Of course, the spellcaster must know the specific amount of energy and the type of burst required in order to fashion the desired key.

Interestingly, an *accumulator* functions only in the quasiplane of Lightning. In most other planes, it simply fails to work at all, while in the Positive Energy Plane, it overloads almost immediately and explodes, causing 2d10 points of damage to the person holding it.

