

Aura of Terror - Dragon



Illusion/Phantasm

Level: 2

Range: 0

Components: V

Casting Time: 2

Duration: 1 turn/level

Area of Effect: The caster

Saving Throw: Special

By using this spell, a dragon enhances its ability to strike terror in creatures subject to its fear aura. See the general "Dragon" entry of the MONSTROUS MANUAL Tome for an overview of the details of dragon fear.

When the spell is cast, the dragon weaves an illusion that enhances its image of rage and battle experience: multiple battle scars, altered or disfigured features, longer spine-spikes, fangs, and talons, and so on. All this makes the dragon seem even more menacing than usual. The illusion cannot change the dragon's size or species, but the spell does make the dragon seem older.

Once the spell is cast, the dragon gains two age categories for purposes of determining the range, saving throw, and effect of its fear aura. Young and juvenile dragons gain a fear aura that they would normally not be entitled to; older dragons gain a more powerful aura.

Because of the shift in effective age category, saving throws against the fear aura of dragons of "young adult" age and older suffer a -2 penalty. Thus, the usually unmodified saving throw for a dragon of old age becomes a saving throw with a -2 penalty, a great wyrm dragon's aura inflicts a -5 penalty, and so forth.

Furthermore, the enhanced power of the aura allows the dragon to strike panic into creatures of up to 2 Hit Dice and fear into creatures that normally would be unaffected (that is, those with up to two more levels or Hit Dice than the dragon).

The dragon need not concentrate to maintain an aura of terror and can engage in other actions as desired (for example, combat, using its breath weapon, or casting additional spells). The dragon can end the spell at will.

Creatures attempting to disbelieve the illusion gain a saving throw vs. spell to negate the aura. Even if this is successful, however, normal saving throws against the dragon's regular fear aura still apply. Detect magic can indicate the presence of an aura of terror, and a successful dispel magic can remove it.

This spell is popular among younger, weaker dragons, though dragons of all ages and types have been known to use it. While non-dragon versions of this spell have yet to surface, other spellcasting creatures who produce a fear aura (such as liches) have shown interest in the aura of terror spell.

Notes: Restricted to dragons; uncommon. (Updated from DRAGON Magazine.)