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Living Spells

**Bind, Fall, and Spray****Part 4 of 4**

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One of the innovative new ideas in the **Eberron** campaign is that of the living spell—a spell giving permanent form and semblance of life during the terrible battles of the war that eventually created the Mourmland. This unique use of the template mechanic applies a template to a spell rather than an existing creature, opening up a vast number of possibilities for new creatures. In this series we'll create stat blocks for various "common" living spells (saving you the work of doing so) and explore the boundaries of the living spell template by applying it to unusual spells or those that don't quite fit its requirements. The end result for you is a series of useful living spells, some of them less predictable than others. This time out, we'll create a living *web*, a living *reverse gravity*, and a living *prismatic spray*.

Living Web

Web is a stable of low-level battlemages, as it entangles multiple foes, is useful as a defensive barricade as well as an attack spell, and can even be burned as a deterrent, barrier, or signal. Because of its utility, some low-level mages in Cyre were lent a *wand of web* just to take advantage of this useful spell. Because of the frequency of its use living webs are a common sort of living spell in the Mourmland. Most visitors who find a web-wrapped corpse may assume giant spiders are near, but if the body was beaten to a pulp rather than drained of fluids then it is a sure indicator of a nearby living web. Recently a group of salvagers operating out of Aruldusk in Thrane reported seeing a very large living web in a cavern, worshipped by ettercaps as if it were some kind of god; they fled before they were attacked but noticed some sort of golden war engine partially buried at the back of the cave.

Note: As written, the web spell must be anchored or the webbing collapses and disappears. As the single-target effects of a living spell's attack would never gain such anchoring, applying the exact effects of the spell would be useless. This living spell uses a slightly modified version of the spell effect which doesn't require anchoring so that the creature remains an effective foe for its CR.

This living spell was formed by a *web* spell with caster level 4.

A roiling bundle of thin pale strands moves about, leaving behind a trail made of cast-off material from its own substance. It casts long hair-like lengths of this material outward like probing limbs, adhering to whatever they touch.

Living Web CR 4

N Medium Ooze

Init -1; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Listen -1, Spot -1**AC** 11, touch 11, flat-footed 12

(-1 Dex, +2 deflection)

hp 26 (4 HD); **DR** 10/magic**Immune** critical hits, flanking, gaze attacks, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, and effects that rely on sight**SR** 14**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2**Weakness** vulnerable to fire**Spd** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** slam +4 (1d4+1 plus web)**Base Atk** +3; **Grp** +4**Atk Option** engulf**Special Actions** web**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 9, Con 12, Int --, Wis 9, Cha 12

Web (Su): A creature hit by a living web or engulfed by it is affected by a *web* spell (Reflex DC 13 negates). Rather than affecting a large area and requiring anchoring, this attack only affects the target creature and anything in its space.

Engulf (Ex): A living web can flow around a Medium or smaller creature as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. The living spell merely has to move over the opponents, affecting as many as it can cover. Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the living spell, but if they do so they are not entitled to a saving throw against the engulf attack. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed at a DC 13 Reflex save or be engulfed; on a success they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the spell moves forward. Engulfed creatures are subject to the effect of the *web* spell (see above) each round on the living spell's turn, and are considered to be grappled.

Living Reverse Gravity

Though most of the living spells in this article series are based on combat spells, many battle spells have non-combat uses. One of these is *reverse gravity*; while it is very effective at breaking enemy lines (leaving a gap where the spell is cast) or hurling melee opponents into the sky, because the spell has no weight limit it is also very useful in situations where large weights need to be moved in a hurry. A mage may use *reverse gravity* to hoist boulders out of a mountain pass buried by an enemy's avalanche, tear apart a hastily-stacked stone barricade, raise a counterweight for a giant siege engine, or lift a sunken ship. These alternate uses make living spells born of this unusual magic slightly more common than others of its level (but still rare, of course).

Variant: By default a living reverse gravity causes its targets to fall upward and float in the air several rounds before falling again. As a variant, have the target fall upward for 1 round, then fall to the ground again on the living spell's next turn. This keeps the creature from moving its opponents out of reach as soon as it attacks, and gives the PCs less time to compensate for the unexpected falling.

Variant: Due to its nature as a counter-gravity magical creature, let the living spell move in any direction at its normal ground speed, similar to an *air walk* spell. This allows it to harass flying opponents or creatures affected by its *reverse gravity* attack.

Notes: Whether or not the first variant is used, this creature is especially effective in underground or indoor areas, as creatures will fall upward, take falling damage when they hit the ceiling, then take falling damage on the way down again. Second, any creature engulfed by a living reverse gravity is going to fall upward (out of the creature's body) when the spell effect occurs. Do not have the creature attempt to hold its engulfed prey, as this weakens the creature relative to its CR. Lastly, a creature affected by the living's spell's *reverse gravity* power provokes attacks of opportunity for this movement.

The living spell presented here was formed from a *reverse gravity* spell with caster level 16.

This semisolid haze stirs up a cloud of dust and debris around itself and is surrounded by levitating pebbles, bark, and other small items.

Living Reverse Gravity CR 15

N Huge Ooze

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 15

(-2 size, +2 Dex, +7 deflection)

hp 136 (16 HD); DR 10/magic

Immune critical hits, flanking, gaze attacks, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, and effects that rely on sight

SR 26

Fort +15, **Ref** +14, **Will** +14

Spd 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee slam +13 (1d8+4 plus reverse gravity)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +23

Atk Option engulf

Special Actions reverse gravity

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con 17, Int --, Wis 14, Cha 17

Reverse Gravity (Su): A creature hit by a living reverse gravity or engulfed by it is affected by the *reverse gravity* spell.

Engulf (Ex): A living reverse gravity can flow around a Huge or smaller creature as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. The living spell merely has to move over the opponents, affecting as many as it can cover. Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the living spell, but if they do so they are not entitled to a saving throw against the engulf attack. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or be engulfed; on a success they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the spell moves forward. Engulfed creatures are subject to the full normal effect of the *reverse gravity* spell (see above) each round on the living spell's turn, and are considered to be grappled.

Living Prismatic Spray

In clashes between powerful forces, a spell with random effects is very effective because it is unlikely the targets are protected against all of the spell's attack forms. *Prismatic spray* is such a spell, and because its damage output is enough to seriously harm or even kill mid-level enemies, it is a popular choice for mages who want to eradicate many enemies in the area. Though there are few living prismatic sprays wandering the Mournland (most likely due to its high level and possibly due to some inherent instability in a multi-effect spell), the few that exist are very dangerous and leave a trail of burned, petrified, and insane victims behind them.

Variant: Some oozes such as the black pudding can split into multiple oozes when attacked in certain ways. A living prismatic sphere is a perfect candidate for this special quality. As the spell is based on light (even though it doesn't have the light descriptor), thematically-appropriate split-causing spells are *darkness* and *deeper darkness*. If you use this variant, give the living spell the following special quality and increase its CR by +1.

Split (Ex): A *darkness* or *deeper darkness* spell cast on a living prismatic spray causes it to split into two living spells, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down) and half of its spell effects (one gets

red, yellow, and blue, the other gets orange, green, and indigo, with violet going to either one). A living prismatic spray with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

Variants: As an even more unusual variant, allow certain spells that match the seven component effects of the spray to trigger a split, destroying that beam component in the process so that neither resulting living spell inherits it. For example, if *fireball* is a split-triggering spell, the red beam (which deals fire damage, just like *fireball*) is eliminated entirely and the two daughter living spells divide the remaining six beam effects between them.

Variants: It is always dangerous to separate one PC from the rest of the group, especially if the PC is sent to another plane and has no easy way of returning (especially frustrating for the player, who can't participate in the rest of the game that day). Unlike a single-use spell, a living prismatic spray has a chance *each round* to send a PC to another plane, and there's no guarantee the PCs all end up at the same plane. To prevent the risk of scattering the PCs, have the violet ray effect temporarily banish the target to a border area between planes, visible to everyone and able to perceive her surroundings but unable to affect or be affected by anything. When the banishment ends (perhaps after a minute), the PC returns to Eberron. The net effect is the PC is out of commission for the fight but lost somewhere on another plane and requiring a separate adventure to return.

This living spell was formed by a *prismatic spray* spell with caster level 14.

A crawling puddle of shifting chromatic colors lurches about, sometimes shaping itself into a wedge or oval. It reaches out with bright tentacles of colored light, hungrily grasping anything nearby.

Living Prismatic Spray CR 14

N Huge Ooze

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Listen +2, Spot +2

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 15

(-2 size, +2 Dex, +7 deflection)

hp 119 (14 HD); DR 10/magic

Immune critical hits, flanking, gaze attacks, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, and effects that rely on sight

SR 24

Fort +14, **Ref** +13, **Will** +13

Spd 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee slam +11 (1d8+4 plus *prismatic spray*)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +21

Atk Option engulf

Special Actions prismatic spray

Abilities Str 17, Dex 14, Con 17, Int --, Wis 14, Cha 17

Prismatic Spray (Su): A creature hit by a living prismatic spray or engulfed by it is affected by the *prismatic spray* spell.

Engulf (Ex): A living *prismatic spray* can flow around a Huge or smaller creature as a standard action. It cannot make a slam attack during a round in which it engulfs. The living spell merely has to move over the opponents, affecting as many as it can cover. Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the living spell, but if they do so they are not entitled to a saving throw against the engulf attack. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or be engulfed; on a success they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the spell moves forward. Engulfed creatures are subject to the full normal effect of the *prismatic spray* spell (see above) each round on the living spell's turn, and are considered to be grappled.

About the Author

Sean K Reynolds lives in Las Vegas and develops worlds for Upper Deck as well as running his own small press d20 company. His D&D credits include the *Monster Manual*, the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*, and *Savage Species*. You can find more game material at [Sean's website](#).

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