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DUNGEON DRESSING: CAPTIVES



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DUNGEON DRESSING: CAPTIVES 2.0

Tired of your dungeons lacking in verisimilitude? Want to add cool little features of interest to your creations but don't have the time to come up with non-essential details? Want to make your dungeons feel more realistic? Then Dungeon Dressing is for you! Each instalment focuses on a common dungeon fixture such as stairs, pillars or pools and gives the harried GM the tools to bring such features to life with interesting and cool noteworthy features.

This instalment of Dungeon Dressing presents loads of great captives to add to your dungeon. Designed to be used both during preparation or actual play, Dungeon Dressing: Captives is an invaluable addition to any GM's armoury!

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CAPTIVES

Captives are a staple feature of almost every dungeon. No doubt, the dungeon's denizens have dealt with intruders before—or emerged from their lair in search of slaves, sacrifices or food; captives (of all sorts) are the result.

CAPTIVE ADVENTURERS

Every would-be hero looks rather alike when they're tackled to the ground, stripped of all possessions and flung into a cell to await judgement, execution or subjection to the cruel whims of their jailor. Use the NPCs below, to portray adventurers rescued by the party.

D20 CAPTIVE

1 Nagunt Vromir (LG male human paladin 1) has languished here a long time—long enough for his scraggly black beard to reach his chest and his greasy hair to reach passed his shoulders. Bright blue eyes roll in their sockets before fixing on his rescuers, as if he isn't used to focusing on faces. The tattered tunic covering his now-scrawny chest has a faded, golden crest emblazoned upon it. Perhaps his captor allowed him to keep this badge of service as a form of mockery. Nagunt mumbles constantly through cracked lips though whether in madness or prayer, it is impossible to say.

2 Undel Sprocksten (LG male dwarf fighter 3) gazes out the window of his cell, unchained but obviously not desperate enough to try battering down the door. His huge, scarred hands are clasped behind his back, as if he's preparing to give a speech. Copper and brass rings are woven into his reddish brown hair and beard, and it's hard not to imagine him clad in a noble's garb, rather than the simple grey robe he now wears.

3 Oliv Nothuen (NG female half-elf druid 2) is on her hands and knees; her wrists and ankles shackled together. Yet she still finds the strength to crawl across the floor, peering at the stones comprising her cell, dragging bloody fingertips through the grooves between each stone. A grungy pelt, the remains of her beloved wolf companion, lies in a corner. She is distraught at her pet's demise and plots bloody revenge on her captors.

4 Anera Kanak (CG female half-orc fighter 3) glares at rescuers from the corner of the cell—which is little more than a cave hewn into solid rock—where she's been stashed. Thick chains wrap around her equally thick arms, thighs and waist, keep her from moving too far. Her automatic threats diminish to growls and her black-green eyes glint with curiosity as she recognises the characters aren't her captor. She is a proud warrior and doesn't take kindly to her rescuers pointing out her predicament.

5 Filahn Thorpe (CN female halfling thief 3) is apparently asleep, curled up in the middle of the cell. A perceptive character notices, however, the bony halfling is listening intently and waiting for the characters to make the first move. A soiled shift is the only thing covering her tiny frame, and the blood on her feet reveals she's been recently beaten or tortured.

6 Wollop Thous (N male halfling fighter 2/thief 2) looks up in surprise when the cell doors swings open. He's kneeling on the other side, trying to pick the lock with a piece of straw drawn from the thin bedroll allowed him. A quick grin cuts between his cheeks, and he springs back with easy energy, brandishing the straw as if it were a dagger. Wollop's captivity has not subdued his zest for adventure and he eagerly joins the party—if properly outfitted.

7 Jool Thims (N female human wizard 1) has a permanent pout which doesn't move even when the possibility of escape emerges. Willowy and well-kept despite her imprisonment, she's grouching about her adventuring partner who tripped her up and ran ahead when they were being chased. When she finds him again, she has a series of inventive (and painful) punishments in mind.

8 Elsar Quindle (CN male elf fighter 1) is bald, with a hawk-like nose and equally predatory eyes. His fingers twitch and drum along the chains binding him, as if he could snap them like a bowstring. A broken arrow sits on the floor in front of him, just out of reach. The scent of a misty forest, all dew and fresh breezes, somehow clings to him, and his skin has a greenish tint, as if a light layer of moss is growing on it. He craves sight of the sky and leaves the dungeon as quickly as possible—even if the party will not escort him to safety.

9 Punct Lillisth (LN female gnome cleric 5) moans constantly, a noise which is audible through the cell door. The reason is soon obvious—someone has smashed the poor gnome's delicate hands with a hammer, ensuring she can't cast spells. Her face is hidden by her bowed head and long, purple hair, but observers see the teardrops falling to patter her lap and ruined fists all the same. Punct is in terrible pain, both physical and emotional—she fears she may never be able to commune with her patron again.

10 Luthia Mollos (LN female human wizard 3) watches the party with calm, green eyes, their every movement observed and calculated according to whatever formula is being concocted in her mind. A leather strap gags the woman, while her hands are bound behind her back. She wears a many-pocketed robe that has been slashed many times by a bladed weapon, though she appears uninjured.

11	Havik Lopsom (LG male dwarf fighter 3) raises bloody fists, revealing several broken knuckles gained trying to punch through the thick wooden and iron-strapped cell door. His face is mostly hidden by curly black hair and a beard, but the bestial look in his brown eyes is unmistakable. Stripped to a simple shirt and leather trousers, scars pockmark his face, forearms and practically all his exposed skin. Havik is an aggressive fellow and is particularly vicious and merciless in battle—traits at odds with his goodly personality.
12	Eda Ripples (LG female halfling fighter 2) has scratched out odd charts and diagrams on the cell's mud-caked walls. The scrawling reaches as far as her chains allow, and pride fills her clear, grey gaze. (The drawings are astronomical charts, despite her having no way to see the sun, moon or stars during her incarceration). Eda believes the drawings are inspiration from her patron and that they show an upcoming alignment of stars that heralds a momentous event. She does not know if that event will be good or bad.
13	Qualla Uncet (NG female dwarf cleric 1) is kneeling, hands in prayer when the characters discover her. She's tried to cobble together a miniature altar out of the detritus in her cell: a little mound of mud, straw and stones. Silky brown hair frames her face as she rises and smiles peacefully at the party. "And so my prayers are answered," she says in a croaking voice.
14	Plathe Remoste (CG female half-elf cleric 2) loves to curse. She promises her god's wrath upon any who don't immediately free her. She promises her god's wrath upon her captor as soon as her blessed weapon is restored to her hand. She especially promises her god's wrath upon the jailor who fondled her before throwing her into the cell. It seems, she has a long list of wrongs to right.
15	Indonoste Veruthen (NG male human fighter 4) keeps his face averted, casting his visage in shadow even as the characters study him. The reason becomes apparent with the lift of a lantern or torch, revealing what must've been a handsome set of features marred by a nose that's been sliced off, ears that have been gnawed on, one missing eye, and bloody gouges down his cheeks. Realising the party has noticed his disfigurement, he moans, showing his tongue has also been cut out.
16	Nok Drithy (CG male human fighter 1) is deep into the twelfth round of a drunken song when discovered. Even if he wasn't chained to the wall, he appears too besotted to even walk a step or two without help. The stench of him reaches well beyond his cell. When he's able to focus enough to realise someone else is there, he fixes a snaggle-toothed grin on the party. His eyes are bloodshot. He talks loudly and incessantly—even if the characters are evidently trying to remain silent.

17	Asden Xerl (LG male halfling thief 3) is flipping a copper coin in the air, laid back and casual despite his situation. With a bored air, he makes little bets on every possible action, such as whether or not the party will leave him to languish, how long it'll take them to get the door open and chains off him, whether or not the jailor will see him coming before he gets his hands wrapped around the villain's throat...
18	Sindla Bovrelle (LG female gnome fighter 5) sits quite still for a gnome, none of the fidgeting or shifty eyes that characterises many of her kind. She appears possessed of a grim purpose, and solemnly thanks the party for their aid, before they even offer it. Golden-haired and amber-eyed, she is one of the noblest-looking people the party have ever seen, both in her stature and composure. Her imprisonment does nothing to mute her determined spirit.
19	Jickers Mertun (CN male human fighter 2) booms greetings in a jolly voice the instant he sets his wide, brown eyes on the party. Rotund and plump-cheeked, capture has failed to destroy his positive outlook on life, though there are hollows under his eyes that probably weren't there before. He pats his belly in anticipation of a good meal to celebrate his release, should the party be kind enough to facilitate such. He knows of a nearby inn where they serve the most delectable roast and foamy beer. Of course, that's also where the villains responsible for his capture just so happen to lounge about, when not preying on adventurers and innocents.
20	Tulla Flavian (CN female gnome illusionist 4) barely misses the lead characters' head with a bolt of flame when they peek into her cell. Her powers would explain the charred marks all around the walls of the chamber, plus the distinct stench of burnt hair. Her profuse apologies follow, though she's quick to light another flame on her fingertips just in case the party even think about abandoning her. Green hair and silver eyes give her an oddly reptilian look. She loves setting fires—and sometimes these fires can accidentally or "accidentally" get out of hand.

JOINING THE PARTY

Some of the captive adventurers listed above may offer to join the party. However, all need equipment to do so effectively. Alternatively, the prisoner could offer to become a character's henchfolk for a year or so as thanks for rescue. Finally, rescued adventurers could become useful contacts able to introduce the party to rich patrons, influential spellcasters, magic item crafters and the like.

MERCHANTS AND THEIR TRAIN

When you carry plenty of coin and goods around, it can be difficult to flee quickly when someone decides you need to be locked up. You can hear merchants and their guards moaning leagues away, wondering what their captors are doing to their fine wares and coins while they languish in captivity.



D20 CAPTIVE

- 1 Grenda Tacker (LN female dwarf) was known throughout the land for her fine ales, beers and wines she carted from inn to inn. Unfortunately, dealing with clients who tend to get drunk off her wares made it likely that she'd fall afoul of some ill-tempered brute sooner or later. While her caravan of guards and a private brewer languishes with her in the cells, her captors are getting quite soused off her stock.
- 2 Avul Tilamon (LN male elf) made a good living selling reagents, scrolls and other spell-making and casting supplies to mages, alchemists and other practitioners for years. He was the business end of the venture while his lovely wife used her magical abilities to prove the efficacy of their offerings. Now he's been beaten and cast into this cell while his wife has gone missing, likely suffering at the hands of their captors.
- 3 Riva Rallery (LG female gnome fighter 2) is a travelling blacksmith lugging around her tongs and anvil to care for everything from broken armour to forging new horseshoes, despite her diminutive frame. A roving band of marauders decided she'd serve their needs well enough, keeping them supplied with weapons and armour. They keep her working the forge to near exhaustion each day. She wants revenge.
- 4 Dasel Ivora (LG female human thief 1) headed up a roaming caravan of tinkers, tailors and traders. Rumours the caravan was a front for spies, though, got them all chained and thrown into the nearest jail for interrogation. It doesn't help that one of the tailors actually broke during questioning and admitted to be gathering information for an "interested party". Whether any others are involved is unknown, but Dasel claims innocence.
- 5 Munley Teppel (N male human) is a roguish man with a gaggle of children who help run his baking business. But when a local lord choked on a bit of stale bread, blame was placed squarely on Munley's shoulders. Of course, he's never baked anything stale in his life, and he considers this claim an insult to his craft. He worries about his helpers and what has become of them.
- 6 Everett Agrail (CN male human) owns a gallery of fine art, selling paintings, sculptures and other work by notable artists from across the land. However, while transporting a consignment of art she was robbed and her fellows slain. She is more worried about her lost art than her companions.
- 7 Poda Jummil (LN male half-elf) travelled between two major cities, using her train of pack mules to cart huge loads of goods. But during one such trip, her hired hands decided they'd make more money if they took off with the goods and sold them elsewhere. Poda shortly thereafter fell foul of marauders.

8	Dizi Maneral (CG female gnome cleric 2) sits in a cell crowded with at least a dozen other gnomes (her fellow engineers). She was captured while surveying a route for a new road. Her captors hold her for ransom—a ransom her employers have no interest in paying. She is despondent and depressed.	15	Surrel Treyps (N male gnome illusionist 2) believes there's little more important than a good education. As such, he's gathered a roving library, wagons and carts full of books and scrolls he took from town to town for sale. He also had a team of scribes accompanying him, constantly copying new texts. One particular town had a nasty run-in with a warlock recently, and have both confiscated his scrolls until they can be proven as non-magical as well as run Surrel out of town. He then fell prey to the dungeon's denizens. In prison, he can't cast any spells and his scribes' whereabouts are unknown (but he fears the worst).
9	Roppels Quieve (N male halfling thief 2) sold numerous maps to would-be adventurers, detailing dungeons and treasure troves throughout the kingdom. While researching a new map that fell into his possession he snuck too far into this dungeon, and was captured. Now the denizens beat him to discover who else he told about the place.	16	Hilda Felks (CG female half-elf cleric 2) inherited the merchant trade from her mother, and has fostered her own family to continue the tradition, with her husband being one of the caravan guards and her children tending the wagons and pack animals. When she shrewdly refused to give a discount to someone who claimed to be an "old family friend" of her mother's, the client flew into a rage and hired mercenaries to run her out of town. While fleeing she fell into the clutches of a band of raiders and was separated from her husband and children. She is beside herself with worry and begs the characters for help.
10	Hundle Dotor (CN male dwarf fighter 1) loves few things more than a keen blade and the coin he can get for it. Problem is, he wasn't too fussy about who buys his weaponry. After his latest deal went bad he was incarcerated until he gives up the names of his suppliers. Thus far, he has refused his captors' demands out of sheer bloody mindedness.	17	Velluin Prast (NG male elf fighter 2) was once a caravan guard, until the merchant group fell to a band of roving orcs and wolves. He alone survived and managed to get a cart of goods to the next city along the road. There, he set up a new caravan under his own name, which prospered for several years—until someone claimed Velluin was responsible for the ambush that killed his former master. He fled to a nearby dungeon to hide until he could restore his good name.
11	Japada Lounk (LE female half-orc fighter 1) has a keen eye for choosing the best of her wares—in this case, slaves. She made good coin in the flesh trade, until she dealt with the wrong band of evil humanoids. They've eaten her "wares" and now demand she fetches more—or she'll fill the pot herself! Japada has had a taste of the helplessness feelings brought on by imprisonment, and she doesn't like it.	18	Lika Thodren (LG female human) is a wandering tailor, creating clothes on order, stitching up tattered garments or embroidering filigree on nobles' robes. She also sells bolts of cloth and fine threads to anyone with coin. Raiders stole her coins and carried her off, but not before burning all her unwanted goods in front of her.
12	Yrellin Onolivus (LG male elf fighter 4) sells pets—exotic pups from lands far away, unhatched eggs he claims are draconic, or trained bats and birds. He had a large group of handlers and trainers to help with the feeding and care of his merchandise during their journeys. When they bumped into a group of fervent druids, though, the nature lovers smashed the cages, freed all animals that could escape and killed many handlers. Yrellin fled into a cave to escape where he fell foul of his captors.	19	Kandra Sororis (N female human cleric [Morden] 5) is fascinated with relics, especially magical ones. She had a private museum in a nearby city. While exploring this dungeon in search of more relics she was captured. Her ransom is the choicest item in her museum; thus far she has refused to pay.
13	Brank Deppit (NG male human fighter 3) somehow managed to get a source of cheap healing potions, which he sold to various martial training centres and bands of adventurers. Now, though, he's being held by a group who are trying to torture out of him his supplier's identity. He knows that revealing this information will likely spell his death, and so remains tightlipped about the reason for his incarceration. He is desperate for rescue.	20	Lenkle Castar (LN male human) is a travelling cook, selling not only herbs, cooking equipment and rare meal ingredients, but also his fine skills to those who appreciate good food prepared by a master's hand. One particular tyrant has taken Lenkle into custody, setting up a kitchen in the dungeons where the cook slaves away, preparing food for servants, slaves and guards, as well as the tyrant.
14	Guinel Counder (NG male halfling) sold all manners of powders and potions from his wagon, guarded by a fierce pair of half-orc guards. As it turns out, the half-orcs were working with local raiders. They betrayed the hapless halfling and left him here to rot. A burning lust for revenge burns in the halfling's breast; if not extinguished the lust for revenge will pull him into darkness.		

EVIL HUMANOIDS

Dungeon denizens often argue and ambitious tribal warriors often scheme to slay the incumbent chief. Use these NPCs as renegade humanoids among the captives discovered by the characters. The NPCs below can be of any (dungeon appropriate) race.

D20 CAPTIVE

1	Thums Plockett snarls in no discernible language, but his intent is clear enough. He wants death and blood and plenty of it (preferably those of the individual sticking him in this squalid prison). He was captured sneaking into an enemy camp to thief a bit of food, and his scrawny frame shows how successful he's been at past such attempts.	10	Mavick Ruckles looks like little more than a mummified corpse until he twitches and raises his head to gaze at the party with sunken eyes. What could be keeping him alive at this point? Dark rumours of cannibalism surround his incarceration, though he denies them.
2	Ogutt Wensk is drooling on himself, but startles awake at a rough prod. His dumb grin shows blunt, chipped teeth. He seems safe enough, but there's a feral glint in his eyes. He was imprisoned for accidentally throttling his lord's favourite concubine to death.	11	Bosot Tonny hums a jaunty tune and promises to accompany the party as a bard should they free him. He has some musical talent, but his true passion is setting fire to things (and people).
3	Lockle Sanchen is always shaking and tossing a pair of dice, and they somehow always wind up rolling the exact numbers he predicts. Perhaps this has something to do with how he wound up beaten and thrown into this cell.	12	Ferag Druft speaks in little more than grunts and groans, straining at her chains as if she can pull them from the wall. Her scarred visage bears witness to countless battle.
4	"Behind You" Vleck is a smooth-talker for sure, starting up an easy stream of patter as soon as the characters arrive. He found himself jailed for trying to steal from his chief.	13	Uila Eddran is not the most gorgeous captive but her jailors evidently found her attractive as they threw her into the cell nude. (Or it could have something to do with her being a bloodthirsty maniac with a penchant for hidden weapons.)
5	Zeratah the Chained isn't just chained to the wall, but iron chains are actually embedded in her flesh, apparently for decorative purposes. She smiles and asks if the characters worship the lord of pain. She was locked up for trying to forcibly convert others to her faith—even when they begged her to stop.	14	Oborit Xesuid chatters obscure alchemical formulae, pointing out strange observations and facts that don't seem related. Whatever his unique approach to alchemy, it seemed effective enough when the various explosions he caused cost the lives of a dozen tribe members.
6	Yullis Meisteral holds a sword hilt with the blade snapped in half. The chains and stones around her are chipped from futile attempts to chop herself free. Jailed for flying into a bloodthirsty rage in the middle of a tribal feast she is destined to have a central role at the next such gathering.	15	Pheldram Polinous doesn't speak. He just strokes his chin and eyes the party as if they are a particularly juicy cutlet. He is a noble of the tribe ensconced in his own dungeons by his own servants after beating several of them to death.
7	Luthestrum fingers a string of dried ears hung around his thick neck, and licks his lips as he eyes the adventurers.	16	Torry Laggums doesn't like to brag, but he's the best assassin in the tribe. He tells many stories of his cunning, but is reticent on the method of his capture. If released, he sets about slaying all involved in his imprisonment. As long as the party stay out of his way, he does not offer them violence.
8	Darra Flusterval has clawed at the floor and walls of her cell until her fingers have been worn down to the bone. Despite her agonized whimpers, it's evident she'll continue to scabble for freedom until she bleeds to death. She was imprisoned for trying to assassinate a shaman.	17	Creast Ujulit flashes a broad smile, revealing teeth filed to points. A thin, pale tongue pokes out for a moment, but his wheedling voice promises he's been fed recently. He was imprisoned for eating the tribe's young, and is wholly and completely without a moral compass of any kind.
9	Ilgithonius the Third haughtily demands freedom, promising riches and wealth beyond imagination. However, he is penniless and does everything in his power to fool the party.	18	Erasas the Grimy barely appears barely alive behind the skein of filth covering his skin. He is blamed for bringing disease to the tribe which claimed several lives. He might infect his rescuers.
		19	Wongle holds out his arms as if offering a hug. He enjoys crushing people to death, and imprisonment has not dampened his enthusiasm.
		20	Grayser Serfil huddles in on himself, hands wrapped around his knees as if he can hide behind his own limbs. His fingers are still bloodstained from clawing open the throat of a rival after an argument over looting rights.

HOOKS, COMPLICATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

Sometimes simply freeing a captive is not enough. Use these hooks, complications and opportunities to enrich (or complicate) the rescue of captives from the dungeon.

D20 HOOK, COMPLICATION OR OPPORTUNITY

1	The prisoner wears a rich robe and is obviously well kempt. They promise an enormous pile of gold or jewels or whatever precious items catches the party's fancy in exchange for freedom. Whether they'll actually follow through with the promise is anyone's bet.	10	This prisoner has been placed in a cell without any chains. However, several wild, starving wolves are also in the cell, chained to the walls themselves. The prisoner can only keep to one small corner if they want to escape being torn limb from limb by the beasts.
2	While considering whether to free the denizen of this particular cell, one of the party wanders a bit too close and the prisoners lunge out as far as their chains allowed and grabbed them around throat. Now they're threatening to choke the character to death or snap their neck if they are not immediately freed.	11	Oddly, when the party start to free this person, they get a wild look in their eyes and begs to be left in chains. A moment later, their eyes clear, and they beg not to be left in chains for a moment longer.
3	Despite their bruised and puffy face, the torn and filthy clothes, and the shadows that fill this cell, the party recognize this prisoner. They've done business with them before and know them as a reputable and honourable person. How did they end up here?	12	The person in this cell is obviously a lunatic, gibbering and foaming at the mouth as they strain at their shackles. They may very well kill themselves from the effort of trying to escape.
4	The person or creature in this cell has obviously been starved for weeks. If they are left here, there is little doubt they'll die within another day or two. Whether they've done anything wrong or committed a crime is almost a moot point now. Can they be left to suffer a slow death?	13	In a weak voice, this prisoner claims they have been poisoned by their captor and will die within the hour if not somehow cured. They offer to guide the characters to a distant treasure (which may—or may not—exist), if they are healed.
5	This prisoner's face is full of open, weeping sores and the cell stinks of disease and decay. If the party free the disease-riddled prisoner, they may be exposed to the disease.	14	Half a dozen children fill this cell, running about playing a game of tag and acting as if their imprisonment is no big deal. Their laughter is slightly creepy—and a bit forced. All wear ragged clothes and have not eaten properly for days.
6	As the party consider the many chains wrapped around this unfortunate person, they realize several of the chains are linked to a variety of traps set around the room. Any blatant attempt to free the prisoner triggers fire, acid, falling rocks and other dangers that could kill both the prisoner and the rescuers.	15	This prisoner is a known, vile criminal, but claims to be in possession of, or have knowledge about, an item or person vital to the success of the party's quest. They only impart this information when escorted to safety.
7	This prisoner's face matches a crude sketch of a person with a hefty bounty on their head. Of course, the prisoner loudly declares their innocence, and vigorously resists being turned over for the bounty.	16	When the party step into view, or attempt to communicate, the prisoner immediately calls for the guards, telling them to hurry up and arrest the party for attempted jailbreaking.
8	The prisoner hollers that they are the real jailer, and that the prisoner has just escaped! The jailer's master will reward the characters if they recaptured the escaped prisoner. Of course, the "prisoner" will almost certainly try to double cross the party later.	17	If a character enters this cell with the intent to free the prisoner, the door slams shut and locks itself. The prisoner is shortly thereafter revealed to be an illusion.
9	Arcane symbols on this person's robe as well as an undeniable air of crackling energy, denotes them as a spellcaster. They have been blindfolded and gagged in order to keep them from casting any magic. They need their magical implements and components to be able to assist the party.	18	The moment a character steps inside the cell to free this prisoner, they reveals the chains keeping him bound to the wall are already unlocked. The prisoner shakes the chains loose and rushes at the character, screaming for blood.
		19	The prisoner claims to be a follower of the god of vengeance. Free them and received the god's blessing; leave them, and be cursed forever. If the prisoner is left here, they scream loud curses at the party—perhaps alerting nearby guards to the presence of intruders in the dungeon.
		20	The attractive person in this cell claims to be the ill-begotten child of her captor, who doesn't want anyone to know about his illegitimate offspring, but doesn't have the heart to kill them. The captive has conflicted feelings about their captor; they don't know if they should help the party slay them or betray the party to gain their parent's love and gratitude.

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