

Once upon a time, in a world strikingly similar to our own, there lived a young man named Ethan. At twenty years old, Ethan led an ordinary life, complete with a stable job at a local bookstore and a close circle of friends that included Sarah, an aspiring artist, and Jake, a passionate mechanic. He was generally content with his existence, occasionally seeking adventure by exploring the nearby woods on weekends.

One sunny Saturday morning, Ethan ventured into the woods for a solo hike, eager to embrace the serenity of nature. As he walked deeper into the forest, he stumbled upon an extraordinary stone, half-buried in the soft earth. This peculiar stone, unlike any he had ever seen, featured an intricate pattern of swirling colors that seemed to dance and shimmer under the dappled sunlight filtering through the trees. Captivated by its beauty, Ethan carefully picked up the stone and placed it in his backpack, intending to show Sarah and Jake later that evening.

In the following days, Ethan began noticing strange changes in his life. Gradually, he found himself becoming shorter, losing inches in height as the days went by. His hair seemed to have a mind of its own, growing shorter one day only to transform into a full mop overnight. His body not only shrank in height but also in density, as he started feeling lighter and more fragile.

Growing increasingly concerned about these changes, Ethan turned to his friends for help. He met up with Sarah and Jake at their favorite local café and showed them the peculiar stone he had found. Intrigued by the stone and worried about their friend, Sarah and Jake agreed to help Ethan figure out what was happening to him. They speculated that the bizarre stone might be responsible, possibly possessing some sort of magical or supernatural properties.

Together, the trio began researching ancient artifacts, folklore, and legends, in hopes of finding a clue that might explain the unusual transformations Ethan was experiencing. They spent hours poring over dusty books in the library, consulting experts in mythology, and scouring the internet for similar occurrences. All the while, Ethan's physical changes continued, making him more determined than ever to unravel the mystery of the extraordinary stone.

As Ethan's physical changes persisted, the urgency to uncover the secret of the extraordinary stone intensified. Determined to find some information or guidance from experts in ancient artifacts, the trio decided to visit the local museum. Excitement filled the air as they wandered through the museum's exhibits, taking in the wealth of knowledge and history that surrounded them.

In the rare manuscripts section, an old, weathered book caught their attention. The tome, titled "Ancient Mysteries and Enchanted Artifacts," seemed to call out to them, promising secrets hidden within its pages. Eagerly, they began poring over the book, hoping to find a clue that would help them understand the mysterious stone.

To their amazement, they stumbled upon an illustration that closely resembled the stone Ethan had found. The accompanying text provided a detailed account of its history, revealing that the artifact was known as the 'Ageless Stone.' This powerful relic was said to possess the ability to manipulate time and aging for the person who discovered it. Created centuries ago by a powerful sorcerer in search of eternal youth, the stone held unimaginable power. However, the sorcerer eventually discovered the stone's power came at a great cost, and he decided to hide it away, hoping it would never be found again.

Realizing they were dealing with a dangerous artifact, the friends grew more determined than ever to find a way to reverse the stone's effects on Ethan. They focused their research on the sorcerer's life and the rituals he used to create the stone, hoping to uncover the key to undoing its power.

As the days passed, Ethan's transformation continued unabated, and he began to resemble a teenager in both appearance and demeanor. Although he still retained his memories of being an adult, his knowledge and skills regressed to those of a high schooler. With each passing day, he lost more of his adult abilities, making it increasingly difficult for him to participate in the research.

Seeing Ethan's dwindling capabilities, Sarah and Jake knew they needed to work even harder

if they were to solve their friend's plight. Driven by their unwavering commitment to helping Ethan, they worked tirelessly to find a solution, delving deeper into the world of ancient magic and forgotten rituals.

They worked unreleanted to find a solution to the Ageless Stone. Much of what they discovered came from the book at the museum, which spoke of how the stone would eventually stop affecting the user. However, it didn't state when that would happen, leaving them guessing at how young Ethan would actually wind up. It wasn't looking too good for him as the transformation began to take him beyond the cusp of teenhood.

It was around the time he reached the age range of 12-13 that Ethan's real problems became more prominent. His intelligence and emotional maturity began to reflect his age, as he struggled with simple things his adult

counterpart would easily recall, such as his address, his phone number, and his motor skills. His movements became more clunky—although still normal for someone of his new age group. He would stumble here and there, most likely from dragging his feet, an issue his mother had always corrected him on until the age of 14.

This was about the time that Sarah and Jake decided they couldn't let Ethan live on his own anymore. While they had been doing regular checks on him at his home and practically never leaving him alone, it became clear to them that this arrangement was no longer viable. They decided to have Ethan take turns staying at each of their houses, ensuring he wouldn't be left alone as they continued their quest to find a solution to the Ageless Stone's curse.

One day, while Jake had Ethan over, he brought up that he'd been trying to track the rate at which Ethan was regressing. He pointed out

that it wasn't exact since they didn't have a precise way to measure his age at any given time, but it appeared that Ethan was losing a year of age every 2-3 days. At that point, Ethan seemed to be around 11 years old. Jake estimated that they would have less than 33 days until the regression would stop, assuming Ethan would end up as a mere few days old. This didn't instill a sense of hope in Ethan, but Jake argued that it would be smart to know the timetable they were working with, to which Ethan reluctantly agreed.

They came to the conclusion that they had a month to fix this, or Ethan would be stuck enjoying a second childhood. They recalled a section from the book at the museum that pointed out if the regression ran its course, it would become permanent. Sarah made a point to reference Disney, saying it was a "kiss at midnight" situation, which no one really wanted to hear, but based on the script, those were the rules.



In the early days of getting younger, Ethan had ditched the stone, assuming that being near it was what was causing the regression. This turned out to be partially true. The book described that the longer contact with the stone occurred, the younger the person would become. However, it also stated that separation from the stone would not cause an immediate halt to the transformation, meaning it would persist whether the stone was near or not. Unfortunately for Ethan, he had kept the stone in his bag, which he carried with him everywhere he went, including work and his spontaneous hikes. As a result, he had spent more than enough time with the stone to be regressed to a significantly younger age.

This information, however, ended up being irrelevant to actually finding a solution. While the book did state that once the regression halted, it would be permanent, it failed to mention how

one could reverse the regression before then, or at least stop it early to prevent further regression. So, there they were, stuck researching something with little to no information.

They scoured the library, museum, and the internet for some kind of solution, but to no avail. Another week passed by, and Ethan was now around 8-9 years old. He had become a hyper, bored child who spent a lot of time crying due to his circumstances, but the other half of the time, he was too hyper to sit still, metaphorically bouncing off the walls. He began to wear on Sarah and Jake, causing them issues they hadn't planned on dealing with. After all, they hadn't expected to be dealing with one of their best friends randomly getting younger to the point of becoming a hyper child.

Although they did start to get annoyed by Ethan's newfound childish ways, they also found

that they were growing closer to each other. The constant group research project they had taken on was a good way to bond. With Ethan now being 8 or 9, it was clear he was oblivious to their newly close relationship, as he didn't even remember what it meant to have romantic feelings for others.

As they continued to work on finding a way to fix Ethan, their hope began to dwindle. As they grew closer together, the drive to solve the issue seemed less and less likely to succeed. It wasn't as if they had much hope to begin with; after all, it wasn't like treating a cold where you simply give medicine and wait it out. They were forced to deal with the fact that their friend of many years was now a snot-nosed little kid.

It was around the time when Ethan reached the age of 5 that they completely dropped the search for a solution and began to seek a different kind of resolution. They decided to

adopt Ethan and raise him as their own son, not seeing any other option since Ethan didn't have any other family to look after him.

After deciding this, they also had to consider the fact that in less than a week, they could very well be changing diapers, and they would need to prepare for that. As it stood, they had been buying clothes and returning them, but the younger Ethan got, the more he would mess up those clothes, making them unreturnable. But now that they knew they would be stuck taking care of him for the foreseeable future, they stopped returning any clothes, figuring he would grow into them. As for the issue of Ethan soon going through a reversal of potty training, they decided to have one of them stay home and watch Ethan while the other went out to get the bare minimum of what they would need, just in case the regression didn't stop before that point.

Jake had the lucky draw of going to the store,

so he made it a quick trip. He picked up a pack of pull-ups, a pack of size 6 diapers, and a couple of other baby items that might come in handy, like sippy cups. He even grabbed a pacifier just in case, not knowing when kids stopped using them. He figured that if Ethan ended up in diapers, he would probably want it either way. Then, he crossed over to the toy aisle and found a teddy bear that he thought would be perfect for Ethan, something he could give him as soon as he got home. So, that's what he did: he paid and made his way back home.

When Jake got home, he decided to leave all the baby stuff in the car for now, only bringing in the teddy bear and some food items he had grabbed. When he walked through the door, he called out, "I'm home!" This prompted Ethan to run up and say, "Welcome home, Daddy!" But he caught himself and corrected, "I mean, Jake." Jake knelt down and said, "Hey, bud, if you want to call me Dad, you can. Who knows, this regression could stop tomorrow, and you'd be

stuck like this. If that happens, I promise that Sarah and I will take care of you." This made Ethan very happy, and although he wasn't thrilled about being forced to start his life all over, he was okay with who his new parents would be. He had given up hope of fixing this about a week ago. Jake then handed Ethan the teddy bear, causing him to squeal with excitement. Ethan grabbed it and ran to show Sarah. Sarah made sure to act excited about the bear, saying how cool it was. They all ended up laughing at Sarah's obviously fake enthusiasm, although Ethan didn't quite understand what they were laughing about but joined in nonetheless.

The next couple of days passed fairly uneventfully until one night, Ethan woke up in his bed soaked with pee. He had wet the bed and was confused about how this could have happened. This prompted Sarah to come and handle the situation with the bed while Jake went to get the pull-ups from the car, which he had planned on sneaking into the house but

never got around to doing. She went about cleaning up the mess and getting Ethan undressed. He was currently somewhere between 3 and 4 years old, so it didn't surprise Jake or Sarah that the bed had finally been wet. They knew that once that happened, it would mean that Ethan would have to switch to pull-ups, and if he continued to get younger, diapers would soon follow suit.

She finished changing the sheets and consoling Ethan, then said it was bath time. She got the bath running and helped Ethan in while Jake got a fresh pair of pajamas and the pull-ups out, setting them on the bed for when the bath was done. He knocked on the bathroom door and let her know about the change of clothes, then said he was going back to their room. She made her way back to the bedroom after Ethan was all cleaned up and dried off.

As they returned to the room, Ethan

immediately noticed the pull-up on top of the pile of clothes and started getting upset, saying he wasn't a baby and didn't need diapers. Sarah told him it wasn't a diaper, but a pull-up, and it was only for bedtime since it was clear he was no longer sleep potty-trained. Ethan wanted to protest, but he had just wet the bed and wasn't getting any older. Sarah dressed Ethan and tucked him back into bed. Sarah and Jake also went to bed after the mini-catastrophe.

Over the next couple of days, Ethan wore pull-ups. At first, he didn't have any accidents aside from during the night and nap time, but slowly he wasn't making it to the potty more and more often. It eventually came to a head one day when it was clear he couldn't sit on the grown-up toilet. He had needed help getting on it for a little while, but it got to the point where he had no chance of being able to use it properly. This led to his first messy accident of many: after not being able to get on the toilet earlier in the day, he had shrugged it off, just wetting his pull-up. He had



felt like he had another issue, but after getting his pull-up changed, he was told they would get a training potty for him. Before they even had a chance to leave, Ethan got into a squatting position, and without even realizing what he was doing, he filled the back of the pull-up.

Jake and Sarah saw this and figured it might be time for diapers, as even after Ethan filled his pull-up, he just went about like nothing had happened. So they went up to him and asked him if everything was okay, and Ethan just looked up, puzzled about what they were talking about. He said, "Yeah, why?" now with a heavy lisp as he had begun to un-grow his baby teeth. Sarah decided to take this one, saying, "Uhh, well sweetie, you definitely just, uh, how do I say this?" Jake then interrupted her, saying, "Dude, you just pooped yourself." Ethan refused to believe it, saying, "Nuh-uh." Sarah then said, "Actually, buddy, you did, and you filled that pull-up. We're starting to think it might be time for you to start using diapers. You've gotten a lot

younger since we put you in the pull-ups, and it just seems like a good time. Besides, you're not getting any older yet, right? So it's either diapers now or diapers tomorrow; either way, you're going to be in them."

Ethan just stood there and took it all in. Half of him wanted to throw a tantrum, but the other half wanted to act like a big boy. He had grown used to wearing the pull-ups, and he didn't really mind the diapers; it was like it was all he ever knew anyway. But he knew he wasn't supposed to be wearing them and how he was supposed to be a big boy, but he decided to just agree and held out his arms, wanting to be picked up by his new mommy. She went about diapering him up for the first, but most certainly not the last, time.

It was about another three days or so that they concluded the regression had stopped, leaving Ethan around two years old. He had lost so much of his knowledge, but he still remembered

a lot of important things, although not all of them. One day, when Ethan was playing, he noticed that the bathroom door was open, and he wandered in, looking at the toilet, unsure of what it was. He waddled over to it in just a diaper and T-shirt, holding his favorite teddy under his arm. He then noticed a little piece of wood hanging from a chain and pulled it. This ended up scaring him so badly that he filled his diaper and ran out of there as quickly as he could to find his mommy.

Ethan then found Sarah and said, "There's a monster in the bathroom!" So she asked if he could show her, picked him up, and led him into the bathroom. Once they entered, he pointed at the toilet and said, "It's right there; it roared at me." Sarah chuckled and said, "That's just the toilet, hun. Don't you remember using it when you were bigger?" He shook his head no, and she looked at him, a bit worried but figured it was just one of the side effects of that cursed stone. She told him it wasn't anything to worry about

and that they should get some nummies in that belly. She put him in a highchair, and they all lived happily ever after, at least when the diapers stayed clean.