

Our story takes place in a mythical, yet technically modern world. It's a world where people are born with magic and enhanced abilities. Our tale will follow the tale of two adventurers: the dark thief with powers of sneak, and a talented mage named Lulu.

We find these two at the local adventurers' guild, looking for a quest to do. Dark was staring at the board, covered in quests, looking for anything that catches his eye. When he spots something really intriguing, he pulls the request off the board to get a better look and reads it to himself.

"There is a rumored artifact living in a dungeon to the south of town that grants the user the power to regain one's lost youth. The dungeon has just recently been discovered, and it is rumored to be the one from legends of old, thought to be lost to the ages. The reward for recovering this artifact is 100,000 briggens."

Dark saw this and, while skeptical of the thing actually existing, he wasn't going to turn down

the chance if it was real. He wasn't all that interested in the reward as much as he was in the artifact. He figured the price of the reward was enough to convince his companion, Laulu, though she was a sucker when it came to big payoffs.

So, he took the request over to the lobby where he was about to accept it on behalf of the two of them when Laulu came through the front entrance, immediately spotting Dark holding the request. She said, "What do you think you're doing, Dark?"

Dark simply said, "I found a big reward quest on the board," while holding it up, trying to only show the reward portion of it. Her eyes went wide when she saw the price and she said, "Oh yes, now that's what I'm talking about. So, what are we doing?" while trying to get a better look at the request.

Dark said, "It's a dungeon dive looking for a relic."

She stopped and thought for a minute, and asked, "You're not talking about that one dungeon they claim is an ancient legendary dungeon? Wait, is it for that artifact said to regain one's youth?"

Dark kinda got less confident and said, "Well, yeah, but it's no big deal. With my sneak skills, we can go straight through without even having to fight anything. It wouldn't be the first time we've done something like this."

Laulu was a little skeptical, but she really couldn't argue with that. After all, they had done similar things before. She thought for a moment and then agreed to taking the request. She then said, "But when we're done, we're splitting it 60/40."

Dark was somewhat peeved she'd have the gall. After all, he'd be doing most of the work if they weren't forced into combat. But she was the more offensive fighter in the party, so he didn't really have a leg to stand on since she does

most of the fighting.

After everything was settled, they stocked up on any potions or other items they would be needing and began to set out. It would be a day's ride or three days by foot. Fortunately, Laulu, being an extremely capable mage, had wind magic that gave her the ability to fly. So she imbued herself and Dark in a flying wind spell, and they made the trip in record time compared to those who took alternate methods of travel. They arrived in a mere hour or so, using a mana potion or two to keep up her strength and not deplete her reserves. They arrived at a mountain's edge with a large stone door that was recently excavated. It was slightly ajar, as that's as far as the excavation team could open it. They landed near it and began to prepare to enter the dungeon.

Most adventurers would likely take a rest after arriving, but not them. Laulu had large enough mana reserves where she wasn't too drained

from the flight, and Dark's magic made it so fighting would be kept to a minimum. It was more than ample time for her to regain her lost mana. After preparing, they made their way inside. Once inside, Dark cast his signature invisibility spell, which is what gave him his title of the Dark Thief. Now unable to be spotted by enemies, he also cast it on Laulu, concealing them both. Next, he put up a detect life forms spell, which should detect any creatures that were unaffected by his invisibility spell but could still find them through smell. Laulu used a detect undead spell, as it was fairly common to find undead lurking around old ruins.

They then made their way through, careful to not activate any traps, thanks to one of Dark's special abilities unique to the thief class: "Detect Traps." Dark and Laulu were walking through when Laulu asked, "So, you have your eye on this relic, huh? What makes you want something like that anyway?"

Dark looked over to Lulu and replied, "I don't know what you're talking about. I just want to get my hands on that reward money."

Lulu simply chuckled and said, "Oh, is that how it is? Seems like you might be fibbing," while making a playful face. She continued, "Well, if that's true, you wouldn't mind if I used it to take off a few years. I could definitely stand to lose some of these wrinkles."

Dark made a face and said, "What wrinkles? Your skin is flawless. If anyone could stand to lose a few years, it's me." He then put his hand over his mouth, knowing that she had baited him, and she started to laugh. She then said, "Wow, Dark, you are too easy."

Annoyed that she caught him wanting to use the artifact, he turned red and said, "Let's just go and try to be quieter. There are creatures here, even if they can't see us."

She agreed, still wearing a big grin on her face.

They continued further and further, avoiding more creatures and traps as they went through. They then reached a dead-end room that looked like an altar with an item on a pedestal in the center. Dark responded, saying that this was undoubtedly a booby-trapped room. He then used his ability on the altar and saw that it was indeed booby-trapped, but that wasn't a big deal for Dark.

Laulu, though, had her attention centered on something else. She looked around the room and saw what was left from others who tried to retrieve the artifact, although she had no idea that's what she was looking at. She examined the bones sprawled around the room and found that they were the bones of children ranging from the ages of 1 to about 10, if she had to guess. This was extremely unsettling for her, confused as to why there would be so many children here who died. She tried to put it out of her mind and went to help Dark retrieve the artifact.

Dark, meanwhile, was disarming the trap using tools he brought for locked doors, magical traps, and the like. He eventually managed to break the trap so it wouldn't activate and then recovered the artifact. He placed it into his bag and told Laulu that it was time to get out of there. She nodded and used her magic to warp them to the exit. By the time they got out, it was clear they wouldn't have enough time to get home before it was too dark outside, which meant they wouldn't be able to navigate, even while flying. They decided to camp nearby for the night, so they went about setting up camp. It took them only about 20 minutes to fully set up the campsite, so they sat by the fire and celebrated completing the request.

As they enjoyed themselves, Dark said he'd be back and wandered over to his bag. He returned shortly with the artifact and looked it over, trying to figure out how it worked. Laulu said, "You probably shouldn't mess with that thing." She wasn't sure, but she had a pretty good feeling that those skeletons in the artifact room were



from adventurers being hit by the artifact's power. She couldn't be sure, but it made the most sense, and she was sure that Dark wouldn't want to accidentally turn himself into a milk-drinking child.

Dark responded, saying he just wanted to look it over. After all, he didn't think there would be any harm in it. He examined it thoroughly and finally, he knew how it worked. He found a dial on it with ancient numbers, which he did, in fact, know the meaning of. It was a dial from 1 to 100. The only issue was he wasn't sure what the numbers signified. It was set to 30 when they grabbed it, so he switched the dial, thinking the age on the device meant how old it would make him. He set it to 26, deciding to lose 2 years, and he pressed the button that he assumed activated the device.

He pressed it, and the machine began whirring and glowing. A magical glow engulfed him and the device. As this happened, you could hear Lailu calling out to Dark to stop. But the light

subsided, and Dark said, "Does it look like I got any younger?"

But Laulu stared and squinted, saying, "I don't think so. You seem the same to me." She shrugged, and so did Dark, putting down the device, saying, "It probably doesn't work anymore, stupid old piece of junk."

But right as he said that, he appeared to shrink, and his skin smoothed out. All the while, Laulu stared in shock. Smaller and smaller he got until he was that of a mere toddler, sitting in a puddle of his former gear. He sat there and blinked dumbfoundedly as Laulu stared. It was about a minute of pure disbelief on what just happened, but it was Laulu who finally burst out in laughter, unable to control herself. She said, "You made yourself a baby, oooo boy! I know you wanted the artifact to shave some years off, but you really ended up getting a complete buzzcut, didn't you?" She said, laughing even harder.

Dark was even more speechless now that she

was laughing at him. He knew what happened and was absolutely devastated he had done something so foolish. His eyes began to tear up, and this caused Laulu to stop laughing at him, now feeling guilty about her actions. She picked Dark up and patted his back, saying, "It'll be okay. There's gotta be a way to fix it. Besides, I think you're way cuter like this." This didn't really make Dark feel much better but did end up calming him down. While she was cradling Dark, he ended up passing out in her arms, hearing her heartbeat and feeling how warm she was. The smaller body he now had hit him quite hard.

He woke back up in the morning, and he was in a tent. But it wasn't his own tent. He was in Laulu's tent. He sat up and realized that he wasn't in his gear, or naked at least from the waist down. He looked and saw something wrapped around his bottom. He recognized it as his old shirt. He was confused why Laulu had dressed him like this, since it's not like he couldn't have just worn a blanket over himself. That was until he stood up and saw that the shirt he wore was damp for

some reason. He was confused why it was like this but ended up figuring that asking Laulu would be the easiest way to get to the bottom of this. So he looked around, and she wasn't anywhere to be seen. He peeked out of the tent, his new height making him a bit insecure as he did. She was indeed right outside the tent, looking like she was making food of some sort.

Dark stepped out of the tent, clad in a damp shirt that was wrapped around his butt, with the look of a toddler, which made Laulu's heart melt when she saw him. She then said, "Hey, little Dark, ya hungry?"

Dark looked over and said, "Uhhh, a wittle, I guess," shocked by the sound of his own voice since this was the first time he was hearing it. She said, "Alright, just sit over there. We'll have a quick breakfast. I'll put away the tent, and we'll head back to town to see what we can do about your situation. Sound good?"

Dark simply nodded, not wanting to hear his

newly regressed voice. So that's what they did. They ate, and then Laulu packed up the campsite, while Dark kinda just hung around while she did it. Halfway through her packing up, he mustered the nerve to ask, "So, why did you put me in uh, wet shiwt anyways?"

She looked over to him and said, "It wasn't wet when I put it on you, sweetie." This made her grin as Dark wore a confused look until he finally understood what she was getting at. "Yeah, you went potty in your shirt diapie, hun," interrupted Laulu.

Dark was absolutely mortified by this and just went silent, while staring at the wet shirt. Laulu, telling him that she understood he was very upset, said, "Hey, don't worry about it. After I'm done, we're gonna fly home, and I'll get you some real clothes to wear, okay?" This made Dark feel less embarrassed, but little did he know what she really meant by that. She finished up, and they made their way back to the town while carrying all the equipment, Dark, and the artifact,

ready to fix this by any means necessary.