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"The Legends of Adventure Kay"

Prologue by Cirrel© 2004

He cracked open the large book one more time. He could access it just as easily from his terminal in the Furry University dormitory, but there was something about being in this library that made the Adventure Kay stories so much more real. Professor Kayngi herself had actually roamed these very stacks doing her research into legendary artifacts and bygone civilizations. Her archeological adventures across the globe had been widely reported back then, but time had blurred the line between reality and fiction, and many 'legends' had sprung up from hear-say and rumor. Not all of them agreed with each other, but that didn't matter. Legends were like that sometimes. He glanced fondly at the title page. Underneath the title were the words:

"Legend is merely the Truth with a Heart and a Soul."

He ran his finger down the stacked pages and arbitrarily stopped. Opening the book to that page, he found the beginning of the chapter and began to read...

ADVENTURE KAY: THE QUEST FOR PURPOSE.

or

"When Opportunity comes knock - knock - knocking on your Front Door!"

By Professor Emeritus Cirrel Shodatan

Note to Furry University Students: I wrote this with the intent of shining the light of truth into the dark and dusty corridors of your minds - so knock off the hormone-soaked fantasies and start thinking with your **other** head already.

Da 'Professor' has spoken. :P Now - on with the story.

Kayngi Tunishi eyed Zeema Hoots with no little envy. For as long as Kay had known the gryphonic hybrid, Zeema had possessed a set of knockers that could turn the average teenaged male into quivering goo. Kay knew that hybrids on Planet Furry matured faster than purebreds, but that excuse had lasted only until all the other females began to sprout charming chest ornaments.

All except Kay.

"18 years old and flat as the Plains of Jane," she thought.

She'd tried exercises, but all that gave her was an upper body to rival any on the bantam wrestling team - the *male* team. She had no rival on the female team. Unfortunately, this wasn't much of a bragging point. It seemed most guys preferred females who couldn't twist them - literally - around their little fingers.

Kay looked away from the bountifully bulging Zeema and back at her history textbook. 'Study Period' was supposed to be for studying - not dreaming about the impossible. She tried to read her assignment, but her mind just wasn't on the subject - not that this mattered much. She knew most of what was in the book already. Her mind literally soaked up information. She was a cinch for summa cum laude of this year's senior class.

"Which doesn't help in the 'getting the guy' department either," she thought glumly. What she needed were tits the size of Toledo, not a brain the size of a planet.

Kay was at an age when interest in things sexual was only slightly less powerful than the gravitational attraction of a black hole. However, for the attraction between opposite 'bodies' to be mutual, those bodies needed certain 'attractors'. In the case of the female body, that meant frontally friendly fun-bags - something Kay's body must have forgotten about in its quest for adulthood. But even if the female *was* 'blessed with breast', chances were the male she wanted was either in a trajectory headed for some other female's galactic core or in a retrograde orbit that was opposed to anything 'female' in the first place.

Ah yes.

The physics of the physical.

Kay thought it good evidence in support of the chaos theory, and further evidence could be found in the maniacal maneuverings of students asking for dates to the Spring Prom.

"I wish I had more than three months left to try," thought Kay. Then she shook her head. Who was she fooling? No guy was going to ask her to B.E.D.

Kay wondered if the faculty member who named the Spring Prom the "Blossom Equinox Dance" had ever bothered to check the acronym. It didn't matter in any case. She wasn't going. She hadn't been asked to any of the others in the past three years. Why should this one be any different?

Because it's the last chance I'll have.

Kay tried to ignore the tightness in her throat and turned the page. There, tucked into the binding was a school flyer.

"Archeology Field Trip to the Furry University Museum this Friday. Sign up with Mrs. Mole in the history classroom."

Kay idly fingered the flyer. Most field trips turned into fiascos with faculty monitors chasing after disappearing pairs of students who were more interested in each other's 'anatomy' than in what the field trip had to offer. Kay wished for once she could be part of one of those pairs doing extracurricular research, but as time went on, that seemed more and more unlikely. Also, she didn't like archeology. The subject held unpleasant, if vague, memories for her.

She was about to toss the flyer into the trash when she turned it over. On the back was a note from her adoptive stepmother, Dasha Swift, a petite vixen who'd never been able to have kits of her own. She must have noticed the flyer and written the note last night when Kay had her homework spread out on the dining-room table.

"Your 'Uncle' Cirrel would like to meet you for lunch if you are going on this field trip. Please consider it, and let him know by Thursday."

That *did* make Kay smile. 'Uncle' Cirrel was not a real relation, but ever since she could remember, he'd been part of her life - a good part. He'd even known her real parents before they...

Kay looked away to hide her reaction. It was one of the reasons she didn't like archeology. Her parents had been archeologists, and they'd been killed at a remote dig by

offended locals. Kay loved her adoptive parents, but she couldn't help wondering what life would have been like if her real parents had lived. Cirrel was an archeologist too - a professor of archeology, in fact, at Furry University, but he never flaunted his profession in front of her. He was just himself - the one who always came to her birthday parties with the most unusual and interesting presents - the one who always had a word of encouragement when she felt down - the one who always told her she was the most beautiful fur on the planet - even if she didn't believe him. Well, she was feeling rather discouraged right now, so maybe a word of encouragement was just what she needed.

When the period bell rang, she headed straight for Mrs. Mole's office and signed up for the field trip.

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"THIS way, students!" shouted Mrs. Mole. "That means YOU two as well, Ms. Conju and Mr. Gation! None of that 'funny' stuff!"

"Don't you mean 'fun' stuff, Mrs. Troll?" shouted someone from the middle of the group. The students guffawed, and Mrs. Mole bristled at the intentional mispronunciation of her name. She scanned the crowd with her hopelessly beady eyes. She was so nearsighted that her prospects of catching the speaker were almost nil. That she could spot couples sneaking off to do the nasty was a mystery to everyone. Maybe she could 'smell' trouble. In any case, it made her a good field trip monitor.

Kay heaved a disgusted sigh. This was turning out just like all the other field trips and she couldn't wait for lunch time to arrive so she could talk to someone intelligent for a change.

"We will now enter the "Hall of Legends," continued Mrs. Mole as she entered what was obviously a bathroom.

"Wow!" yelled another student. "We get to see King Tut's Toilet Lozenge of Terribleness!"

"How about the Winger Dynasty's Wee-wee Pot of Wanton Wickedness?"

"That's *Wanger* Dynasty, stupid!"

"Whatever."

"I vote for the Poletemic Pooper Scooper of Doom!"

"Solomon's Sink of Silliness!"

"Buddha's Butt-Wipes of Enlightenment!"

For furs with their heads up their asses, no doubt, thought Kay. "This way. Mrs. Mole," she said as she guided the nearsighted rodent to the proper doorway.

"Thank you, dear," replied the mole.

As they walked into the cavernous hall, Kay thought she heard some of the males whispering about 'no fun tomboy' and 'stone cold, tit-less wonder'. She gritted her teeth and ignored them.

They'd made their way through most of the exhibits in the Hall of Legends when they came across a dimly-lit, free standing case containing a small, square box covered with strange symbols and markings.

"Ah! We seem to have a new exhibit since I was here last!" stuttered Mrs. Mole with obvious excitement. "I wonder what it could be." She peered closely at the exhibit sign, ignoring the growing number of whispers and giggles behind her.

"I believe it says "The Powerful Rubies? Or maybe it's the Power *of* Rubies - although they spelled 'Rubies' with a double 'o' instead of a 'u'."

"Oh it's the Power of *something* alright," suggested Zeema, thrusting out her chest and poking a not-so-nearby student in the eye. Some of the female students snickered. Most of the males drooled.

"Well, rubies are at the heart of many legends," stated Mrs. Mole.

"And *on* the heart of many females!" commented a female lynx named Glomma Tatas, who bounced up and down to show off what she meant.

"Oh knock it off," grumbled Kay.

"Don't you mean 'Knocker' it off, Ms. Pancake Chest?" shot back Glomma.

"Students! Pay attention!" Mrs. Mole pointed. "The sign goes on to explain that whoever can solve the riddle of the runes on the box will be endowed with a most fantastic and powerful set of Rubies - Rubies with the power to compel if one discovers how to use them."

"I already know how," piped up Zeema, wobbling a bit in front of a glassy-eyed lion.

Glomma Tatas snickered again and pointed to Kay. "If anyone needs the 'Power of Rubies', it's this poor imitation of a female."

It was a good thing Mrs. Mole called for the lunch break just then, otherwise a certain lynx would have found herself in the middle of a nasty catfight - one in which her 'Rubies' wouldn't have helped at all.

The lunch with her 'Uncle' Cirrel had been a welcome break from the nattering of the other students, however, having lunch in Professor Cirrel's office had its drawbacks. There was the smell of old books and manuscripts. Also, there was the chalk dust from the blackboard that was covered with mysterious scribblings. Finally, there were the statues with the staring eyes. Those were the most disturbing.

Kay thought about that for a second and then shook her head. The statues weren't disturbing in any 'foreboding' sense. It seemed more as if they were sizing her up to see if she was worthy. She looked back at Cirrel.

"So what got you into archeology?" she asked. She really wasn't all that interested in the question, but it was the only question she could think of now that the eating part of lunch was over.

"Predator instinct." answered Cirrel.

"Huh?" Kay gawped. This was the last thing she thought he'd say. "Predator instinct? I thought it might be because you found the legends and stories interesting or something."

"Oh, there is that," chuckled Cirrel, who seemed amused by Kay's confusion. "Take our newest exhibit for instance. You can't deny that a legend about the 'Power of Boobies' is interesting, but there is a lot more to archeology than a good story. There's the mystery to solve too. Legends can be fanciful in the extreme, but many have some basis in fact. It's the hidden facts that I find most fascinating. No one's been able to discover the secret of the runes on the Power of Boobies box yet, and its metal is particularly impervious to x-ray and other non-intrusive imaging techniques. What's inside is a mystery - BUT - it's also the *quarry*. Archeology is really the thrill of the chase experienced in an entirely different way. You run down rumors, hunt for facts, and sniff out clues. It's the *chase* that makes it interesting!"

Kay could see the predatory sparkle in Cirrel's eyes and knew it must be true for him, but she doubted she would ever find the enthusiasm to chase the past the way he did. Once again she glanced up at the statues lining the shelves. For an instant, she thought they looked disappointed. She looked away. What did stupid statues have to do with anything?

"Is there something else you wanted to talk about?" asked Cirrel. "You look like a fur with a lot on her mind."

Kay nodded slowly. Cirrel seemed to have answers to some things even her adoptive parent didn't.

"You talk about solving mysteries, and I have one I have no answer for."

"And that is?"

"Why am I different from other girls?" She pointed to her chest. "Were my real parents different?" Kay knew Cirrel had known her real parents. Maybe there were some answers there.

Cirrel seemed to scrutinize her for a long time - so long, in fact, that Kay began to get nervous. Maybe it hadn't been an appropriate question after all. Finally Cirrel spoke, but not in condemnation. His was a gentle voice.

"I take it that some of your fellow furs are making fun of you for not being as well 'developed' as other girls." He reached out and gave Kay an affectionate tap on the cheek. "Ignore them. I will always consider you the most beautiful fur on the planet." Kay gave a weak smile at the compliment, but said nothing, so Cirrel continued. "However, I sense from your question that you feel you don't 'fit in'. You want be part of something bigger than yourself - and you think your appearance is denying you that?"

"Yes," said Kay in a low voice.

"And what is this group you are not a part of?"

"The rest of the world!" Kay said letting some of her deeper frustration show. "I'm not the same as other girls. None of the guys pay any attention to me and its all because of this!" She pointed to her chest. "I'm a freak!"

Cirrel grabbed the hand that she'd used to point out her differences and jerked it away with a growl. Kay looked at him with astonishment. Cirrel had rarely shown anger, but now he was mad - at her!

"Don't ever call yourself a 'freak!' You are in no position to make that sort of judgement! Only those around you can do that!"

"But that's what everyone IS telling me!" wailed Kay, letting more of her frustration out.

Cirrel squeezed her paw hard. "And I'm hearing this drivel from a fur who mastered algebra at age 7? If you hadn't noticed, I happen to be included in the algebraic set known as 'Everyone', and I am NOT telling you that you are a freak! Therefore your statement can't be true. Also, your adoptive parents have never called you a freak, nor has Mike over at the Library. In fact, I think he's referred to you as one of the most refreshingly curious furs he's seen in his Library in a long time."

"Well, you can't deny the fact that I'm different!" said Kay, unwilling to drop the subject.

Cirrel let go of her paw and sat back in his overstuffed chair. "No, I won't deny it. I will only say that what makes furs different can also make them interesting. If everyone was exactly the same, it would be a dull world indeed."

Kay grumbled, still feeling defiant. "I just wish I had something on my chest that would justify buying a bra. I don't want a set like Zeema's. I know in my head that those must give her as much grief and my lack of them. I..." Kay heaved a sigh and dropped her head. "I just want to be normal."

"Because 'normal' is safe," continued Cirrel. "'Normal' can't be made fun of. Normal is acceptable in any situation. Normal is... so... damned... *normal*." This last was said with a hint of disgust that wasn't lost on Kay. "However, I don't think that's the main reason you wish to acquire breasts - ones with volume, anyway. You already have mammary glands, as all furs do - just not ones that catch and occasionally poke out an eye. *That's* what I think you truly want - to catch the eye of some of your male peers."

"Is that such a bad thing?" Kay asked in a small voice as she looked up at her friend.

"Not really," answered Cirrel dropping his serious manner with a chuckle. "The only problem is that males at your age have eyes that get caught on just about anything. It's a miracle they don't go blind. What's worse is the things that catch their eye aren't always the same things that catch their hearts or their minds."

Cirrel reached out to caress Kay's cheek again. "However, I will not deny that this matter is of great concern to you, and I won't degrade you by dismissing it as 'trivial'." He sighed and leaned back. "So what do you plan to do about it?"

"I'm not sure, yet," Kay said, lying a little. In reality, the beginnings of an idea were forming in her mind - an idea that had to do with a certain box in a glass case in the Hall of Legends.

Many legends have their basis in fact.

Could this one have its basis in fact as well? She noticed that the eyes in the statues around the room seemed to gleam brighter. She gave a small grin. Maybe there *was* something to this archeology stuff.

"My. My. Look at the time," Cirrel commented suddenly, interrupting her thoughts. "Well, I mustn't keep you from the rest of your field trip, but remember, if there's anything I can do to help in this matter, don't hesitate to contact me. I think Mr. Regan over at the Library would be willing to help out as well"

They got up from the desk and headed for the door. When they reached it, Kay gave her 'uncle' a big hug. "Thanks," she said.

"Any time," answered Cirrel.

Kay was out the door and halfway down the hall when she realized that her backpack was noticeably heavier than it had been before lunch. Curious, she slung it off her back and peered in at the contents. Besides her regular textbooks and odd sundries, it now contained a fat folder and a dusty old book. Kay pulled them out. The book was entitled 'Deciphering Runes by Hiro Gryphon'. The folder contained copies of copious notes, and there was a label on the folder.

"The 'Power of Boobies' Artifact."

Kay looked back to Cirrel's closed office door with a grin. "Thank you." she whispered, and was off to join the others.

The chase was on!

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"Whatcha doing, Kay?" piped up the bespectacled badger.

Kayngi sighed and closed the book she was reading on Ancient LitterBox Pictoglyphs of Some-Area. "Hello, Elric," she said. "I'm studying."

"I see. Whatcha studying?"

Kay turned to Elric and was about to blast the nosey class nerd for invading her privacy when she noticed the desperate look in his small, black eyes. She wasn't sure why she hadn't noticed it before, but lately she'd been looking at a lot of things differently. Interpreting ancient writing and glyphs demanded an observant eye.

"Uh, why don't you have a seat, Elric, and I'll show you," offered Kay, not liking the desperation she saw. It reminded her too much of her own.

The change in the squat badger's expression was like night and day. He grinned, sat down beside her, and pointed to the book. "I didn't know you were interested in the ancients. I am, too! They were some of the best hydrologists and dam builders ever. Even though I'm going to be a civil/mechanical engineer working with the best materials, it still pays to learn from past knowledge. The ancients did stuff with mud and sticks you wouldn't believe!"

"I think I would," commented Kay. "I've read about some of it - in the original Geek and Messed-Up-Potamian script."

"Wow! You can actually read that stuff?" replied Elric. "I only know a little Geek myself. My brother, Radar, knows more. He's in college for electrical engineering, but I think civil and mechanical engineering is better. It still works when the power fails. Take for instance all the stuff the ancients did without electricity - things like ingenious traps to protect valuables. That required some pretty fancy *mechanical* engineering. Now-a-days all you got for protection is hyped up electronic detection and surveillance systems - ones just about anyone can get through. Even if you can't, the only thing that happens is an alarm of some sort goes off. Not so with the ancients! Step on the wrong stone and splat!" The badger slapped his paw on the table causing Kay to jump in her seat. "A two ton boulder on your noggin finishes you off for good! That takes *real* engineering!"

Kay nodded and smiled at the gleam in the badger's eyes. He really liked what he was going to be doing after he finished college. And that thought gave her pause. What was *she* going to do after her schooling was done? Nothing she'd done in the past had inspired her as much as this present project of hers.

But to become an archeologist? Was that what she really wanted?

"Um, Kay?"

Kayngi turned her attention back to Elric and saw that the desperation was back. "Yes?"

"Well, Kay, what I really wanted to talk to you about," began Elric, suddenly not looking at her directly. "Um, I know you're a feline and badgers are members of the weasel family." Elric looked really nervous now. "Anyway, I'd really understand if you, well, uhh..." Elric's nose had gone pale and he was trembling now. Kay put out a paw in concern.

When she touched him, it was as if she'd hit him with 50,000 volts. He yelped and jumped up, knocking over his chair with a crash. "I'm sorry! It was dumb. Never mind! I'll go now!" With that the badger bolted for the door.

Kay had no idea what was going on, but the sight of a panicked and running fur triggered something in her. Maybe it was her predator instinct. Maybe it was just an overwhelming need to find out what Elric was trying to get at before he panicked. Whatever it was, she was up in a flash and after the badger. Out in the school hallway she skidded to a stop before she could run into the opposite wall. Elric was streaking away to her left. She turned, dug in, and leapt after him.

It wasn't much of a chase, but considering his short legs, the badger gave an amazingly good account of himself before Kay brought him down from the rear. Unfortunately she tackled him in front of the principal's office - in full view of a hall monitor.

No words were spoken. The hall monitor merely pointed and they went.

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Kay fumed. The principal was right! She could have lost her chance at summa cum laude with too many detentions on her record. Fortunately, this was her first one. If she had any say, it would be her last!

She and Elric were seated across from each other in the study-hall detention area and hadn't spoken since they'd been brought here. Kay had just finished copying a drawing of the Boobies box from the notes Professor Cirrel had given her. She thought that drawing

out the object of her quest would give her some clue as to what to do next. So far, it hadn't worked, and she was running out of options. However, in drawing the runes, she'd noticed that several of them contained similar markings or motifs. Since she had nothing else to do, she decided to color code the runes that had similarities.

Red for the runes with the four-breasted bull somewhere on the tile (tits on a bull?)

White for the tiles containing the fox giving the scarred dragon thing a wedgie.

Green for the three monkeys pelting each other with what looked like cream pies.

Blue for the Flying Whale with the Bowl of Petunias.

Purple for the stylized dinosaur with the idiotic grin.

Yellow for the runes with the double arches and some big-footed, balloon-nosed fur.

"I'm sorry," came a quiet voice from the opposite side of the table.

Kay ignored it.

"Kay? I'm really sorry."

Kayngi shot a look at Elric. The badger looked about as crestfallen as one could be without actually falling through the floor. Kay set aside her drawing and gave the badger a stern look. "I'll accept your apology only if you tell me what you were trying say before you took off like that." Kay noticed apprehension begin to replace the badger's dejection.

"Um...", Elric looked down. "Okay. I've got nothing to lose now anyway." He straightened up, returned his gaze to Kayngi, and adjusted his glasses before speaking in a very respectful voice. "Kayngi Tunishi, I would be honored if I could take you to B.E.D."

Kay stared. Elric figgited. Kay stared some more. Elric dropped his gaze. Kay stared on. Finally, Elric mumbled something.

"What?" asked Kay in a quiet voice.

Elric looked up. "Um. I'll take your silence as a 'no'. It's okay. I understand."

"No. I'm not saying 'no'," said Kayngi, "It's just that I'm... trying to *think* about it."

She dropped her head. The feelings and thoughts she had now were all mixed up. Go to the senior Blossom Equinox Dance with the class nerd? A part of her screamed "NOOOOOOO!!!!!!", but who was she to be choosey? Wasn't she just as much a 'nerd' as Elric with all her studying? He was no 'looker', but wasn't she as much of an outcast as he

with the way *she* looked? But what would the others say? She could just imagine their taunts.

"Kay?"

Kayngi looked up.

"I asked you because you're the only one I *could* ask," said Elric. He gulped and went on. "It's because you don't have those - distractions - up front." Kay started to frown, but Elric held up a paw. "Please Kayngi, I mean no disrespect. Honestly! It's just that at my height, when I look at Zeema or any of the other girls, I'm staring them right in - well, you know - in the *tits*! You don't know what that does to me. I can't help it! My brain turns to Jello, and I don't like that! One of the things I know I do well is *think*. I'm no dummy! I can do calculations in my head that even the teachers have to work out on the board or on a calculator. I hate it when I can't think!"

Kay was surprised at the badger's vehemence, but it revealed a side of him that Kay thought he'd never revealed to anyone before. That took courage.

"Then when I do try to talk to you," continued the miserable badger, "instead of talking intelligently, I panic anyway and get you sent to detention. I'll understand if you're completely disgusted with me."

Kay was silent for a bit longer, before pushing the drawing of the Boobies box toward Elric. "I, too, hate it when I can't think. This is something I'm working on now, but I've come to a dead end, and I can't think what to do. It's an artifact that's supposed to have the power to give me boobs." She dropped her head. "I've been beating myself because I don't look like other girls. I've been thinking that without tits, no respectable guy would ask me out on a date. Truth is, even if I did have tits, I'm not sure what I would do if they *did* ask me out." She gave Elric a resigned look. "Now you, a truly *respectable* guy, ask me out and prove my fears to be true. I can't think what to do."

"I'm sorry, Kay," said Elric, looking from her to the colored drawing. "I didn't mean to upset you. I can't help much with your decision about the dance, but maybe I can help with this?" He pointed to the drawing. "I haven't seen the new exhibit in the museum, but I've seen something like this before."

"What?" Kay's eyes shot open in surprise. "Where?"

"At home, actually," replied the badger.

"What is it? What do the runes mean?"

"I don't know about these runes. The one I have at home doesn't have them," explained Elric. "What I was noticing about this drawing were the *colors* and the *box* itself." He pushed the drawing back at Kay. "What you have here looks like the world's oldest Rubik's Cube."

Kay stared at Elric. Then she looked at her drawing, and the obvious leapt out at her like a predator at the kill. "YES! That's it!" Before Elric knew what hit him, Kay was on him and giving him a big kiss right on the mouth - and she didn't care if it got them another detention.

It did.

#

The two of them eyed the Boobies Cube in its glass case. It was close to closing time on the Thursday night before the big dance, and the Museum was nearly deserted.

"The final move," whispered Elric, "is a 180 twist of the top two rows with the Monkey and the Whale motifs."

Kay jotted it down in her notebook before putting it back in her backpack. Then she shook her head. "I don't know how you figured out all the moves for that glorified Rubik's Cube in your head, but I'll trust they're correct."

"So when are we going to do it?"

Kay looked at Elric shaking her head once more. "I can't let you risk it. If you get caught, your dream of an engineering scholarship is in the crapper. Me? I've got connections here at the University. I could probably weasel my way out."

"Hey! Who's the weasel here anyway?" protested Elric. "I was the one who spotted the light and motion sensors when we came in here, and I'm the one who can deactivate them!"

"I was planning on doing it during business hours tomorrow," answered Kay. "Sensors will be turned off and with all that's going on in town tomorrow no one will want to visit a stuffy, old museum. I'll have the place to myself."

"Remember Kay - tomorrow it's to B.E.D. for both of us, remember? You promised!"

"Oh, I'll be finished before it's time to go," replied Kay. "You want me to look my best at the dance don't you?" She pointed to her chest.

"You still believe this hocus-pocus is going to work?"

"Belief *assumes* unproven action," intoned Kay. "I *assume* nothing. However, I *anticipate* everything - including the fact that Incredible Legend and Truth may be one and the same." Kay grinned. "A few words of wisdom from my uncle, the archeologist."

"Then I will *anticipate* a pleasant, brain-gelling surprise at the dance," replied Elric. "I just hope your Prom dress has an adjustable bodice. If not, I'll be in dire need of adjustable pants."

#

Kay stared, dumfounded.

"Where did *my tits* go?"

It was Friday afternoon at the deserted Museum with only six hours until it was time to go to B.E.D., and the case with the Power of Boobies Cube was *gone!*

"Pardon me miss?" asked a male skunk/fox hybrid, who was the lone security guard in this wing of the museum. "Did you say you lost your tits?" The skunkfox went through his jacket. "None here." He patted his shirt pockets. "Nope. Those are mine." Finally, he rummaged deep in his pants pockets. "Oops! *Those* aren't tits." He pulled his paws from his pockets and raised them in a gesture of helplessness. "Sorry miss, looks like I'm fresh out of rug-rat filling stations."

Kay gave him a hard look. "Very funny. I was just wondering where the latest exhibit went."

"It was on temporary loan to us from the Got-Amala Antiquities Museum. It's due to be shipped back tomorrow morning."

"But where is it? I need it to...," Kay thought fast, "I need it to finish an extra curricular assignment I got from Professor Cirrel."

"You could try talking to him about it tomorrow then," offered the skunkfox. "That is, if he gets back in time. He's attending the annual "Old Farts Who Dig Up Even Older

Farts" convention. He's the one who authorized the return of the artifact and locked it in the security vault."

Kay merely grunted, pulled out her cell-phone, and punched in a code as she walked away from the guard. "Elric!" she hissed into the phone. "Yeah, yeah. I know you're getting ready for the dance, but we got problems and I need your help. What problems? This one! The Cube has been locked in the security vault and is due to be shipped out *tomorrow morning!*"

"Ah! A security vault you say?" answered Elric. "Now, that *would* be a challenge. Vaults are mechanical as well as electrical. I've got just the things for it. Be there in about an hour. If we're lucky, we might even make it to the dance."

Elric cut the connection, and Kay wondered if he sounded too enthusiastic about this new development. Well, this B.E.D. dance was the first time for both of them, and Kay had the impression from others that dances could be both nerve-racking and incredibly dull at the same time. It might not be such a bad thing if they missed it.

Kay shook her head in sudden disagreement. No! She *would* go! All these years she'd made excuses for her lack of attendance - excuses that centered on her appearance. It was time she faced up to the fact that she might never look like other girls, and stop letting her differences rule her life.

She gazed back at the spot where the Boobies Cube had been.

Still, it would be so nice...

#

Elric had the sensors placed equidistant around the tumbler. He was listening for the clicks. As each tiny noise sounded he shot a look at the electronic pulse generator. It registered the click and sent a booster pulse through the electronic timer lock, fooling it into thinking it was 8:00 am instead of 5:30pm. The last click sounded and the massive bolt mechanism came to life. When the bolts had retracted fully, he pulled the door open a crack. "Now, Kay!"

Kayngi slapped the electrolytic leads on the five separate bolt faces and stuffed the other end of the leads into their respective holes. "Lock electronics bypassed!" she breathed softly. "Your brother, Radar certainly has some interesting toys."

"Doesn't he, though." Elric grinned and pointed another device at the interior of the vault. "No sensors inside. Let's go!"

"NO!" Kay whispered more harshly than she'd intended. "We don't know what else might be in there!"

She clicked on a flashlight and pointed it into the darkened vault, slowly swinging it around the interior and keeping a close eye out for anything unusual. Sure enough, several very fine trip wires could be seen. "Bypass or disable?" asked Kay.

"Bypass the center wire only," came Elric's quick response. "Ignore the others. We'll slip around them." He pulled out a thin, wrapped bundle. Pulling off the wrapping, he let the device snap itself into place in a large 'U' shape. He placed it next to the central wire and delicately snapped the ends onto the wire. Then he cut the wire in between the device ends. He waved Kay forward. "After you."

Kay smiled and ducked her head through the bypass device. She pointed, and Elric noted the pressure pad around the central storage pillar in the vault. Another rummage in his pack brought forth a compact, but sturdy 'bridging' device. He leaned through the 'U' device and placed it over the pressure pad. Then they both stepped inside.

"5:45pm," commented Kay, looking at her watch. "Not much time left if we want to make the dance." It was then that she noted the recording device on the wall. "Damn!"

Elric shook his head and pulled another device from his pack. He switched it on and ran it over the recording device. "Solid state recording media. It's toast now."

Kay nodded but felt foolish. She needed to be more vigilant if she wanted to capture *this* quarry.

The central pillar vault proved even more of a challenge. Besides the timed tumbler lock, it added a retinal recognition system. Elric used the pulse device to force it into boot-up mode. When it asked that an eye be placed near the aperture to record the new authorized retinal scan, Elric pulsed it again to go into default mode, which would let anyone in.

"Why didn't you just use your own eye? Oh! Nevermind." Kay had just realized that anyone doing what they were doing now, shouldn't leave evidence behind that could easily identify them.

As it turned out, doing the Rubik's Cube puzzle on the Boobies box was the easiest part. Elric did most of it before passing it to Kay. "I'm not the one who wants chesticles, thank you." He gave the box to Kay, and she made ready to give it the final twist.

"Ready?" she said.

Elric nodded.

Kay turned the required sections of the box and waited.

Nothing happened.

"Maybe it's broken?" suggested Elric.

Kay shook the box. Still nothing.

"What now?" asked Elric. "It's almost 6:30pm. The dance starts in half an hour and if you're not in the hall on time you're locked out."

"We take it with us!" said Kay.

They backed out the way they came, returning as much as they could to its previous state.

#

As it was, they made it to B.E.D. with only two minutes to spare. The dance monitor frowned at Elric's disheveled hair and merely clucked her tongue at Kay's dress. The bodice was flapping in the breeze.

Nothing to hold it up, thought a dejected Kay.

She was thankful that the only well lit area inside the hall was the bandstand. No one would notice the evidence of her dashed hopes.

Except, someone did notice.

Kay and Elric had commandeered a table near the refreshment table. It was darkest there. Evidently, Miss Poltroon's Catering Service didn't want the patrons looking too closely at the comestibles. The band was playing Herb Alpert of all things, and nobody with any sense of the contemporary was on the dance floor. Kay was now seriously

wondering why she'd wanted to come to this dance at all. Talk about insipid! Bored, she took the Boobies Cube out of her carry bag and looked at it.

Worthless piece of crap, she thought. What weren't they doing right? They had matched all the similar runes. All of the Four-titted Bulls were on one side - all the arches on another. All the faces of the Cube were matched up. It was perfect. They'd solved the Rubic Cube puzzle.

Why wasn't it working?

"Well, well! What have we here!" came a voice from behind Kay's left shoulder. Suddenly a paw shot out from behind her and snatched the Cube.

"Hey! Give that back!" Kay turned around, jumped up, and froze on the spot. Glomma Tatas was holding the Cube up and looking at it closely in the dim light.

"Oooo! Methinks Kayngi Tunishi is in real trouble now. This looks like something that belongs in the University Museum. A boobie prize perhaps?" Glomma dropped the Cube onto the cleavage between her breasts. "But no. I think you stole it. Did you?"

Kay wasn't listening. She was looking at the Cube held between Glomma's fundaments. The central square on the Whale and Petunia cubeface was starting to glow! It was changing! It was changing into...

"The Three Pie Throwing Monkeys!" shouted Kay.

"Huh?" mouthed Glomma with a stupid look.

Kay didn't think. She acted. One sideways leap brought her to the dessert portion of the refreshment table. The next instant a gooey cream pie hit Glomma square in the muzzle. The cube shot into the air.

"Food Fight!" yelled someone.

That was all it took to activate the torpid crowd.

Cocktail weenies became mystery meat missiles of mass destruction. Cream pies creamed. Punch punched. Pop popped. Shish kabob duels broke out everywhere. Inspired, the band broke into heavy metal, which instantly bludgeoned the dance monitors into quivering unconsciousness. In short, there was trouble in River City. Trouble with a capital T, which rhymed with B, and that stood for Beautiful Bedlam!

"Where's the Cube!" screamed Kay over the racket. "I know how it works now!"

Elric raised his paws in ignorance and was instantly buried under a mountain of Miss Poltroon's Perfectly Precious Potato Salad.

"Duck!" yelled someone else as a flight of Buffalo Wings flew by. More airborne edibles rained destruction from the skies.

Kay yanked on the only visible part left of Elric - his pants - which came off with a ripping sound. "Damn! Don't know my own upper body strength!" She pulled the leg that was now exposed and finally worked the dazed and sputtering badger out of the sticky glop.

That's when her jaw hit the floor.

The badger was short in most respects, but it seemed he was very 'long' where it counted. Even under a thick coating of potato salad he was impressive.

"I... you... that... erf... wow!" was all Kay could mumble before her eyes shot to a square looking lump in the potato salad. She dived for it. Sure enough, it was the Cube! She looked back to Elric - then she forced herself to look at his face.

"The central square on each face is a sham! The rune on it isn't the real one!" She grabbed a pen from Elric's pocket protector. She didn't even question why he had one in a tuxedo shirt. Pocket protectors were a badge of honor with nerds. Quickly she scribbled '3 Monkeys' on the Whale and Petunia central square. Then she took the cube and rammed it between the hooters of a glassy eyed Zeema, who was still staring at Elric's endowments. Again the front facing central square glowed and changed momentarily before reverting back to its original form. Kay made a note on the face of the central square. Dodging more flung food, she did the 'pack the sacks' maneuver with four other girls to complete the correct information on the Cube. Then she shoved it back into a still woozy Elric's paws.

"Do it!" she yelled, and Elric looked down at the cube. He shook his head and started twisting the Cubes layers. One dance monitor had revived enough to come wobbling over to them. "Hey, you!" he yelled, pointing at Elric. "Put some pants on!"

"Not NOW!" Zeema screeched, grabbing the monitor in a headlock, and crushing him to her chest. The dance monitor passed out again - this time from heavy breathing, not heavy metal.

"Here," said Elric. "Just twist the top layer one quarter turn to the right and you've got it." Then he looked down at himself and around at all the 'hungry looking' females surrounding him. "Uh-oh. I think I'm in trouble now."

Once again, Kay wasn't listening. She'd moved off to the side and made the final twist. This time, the whole Cube started to glow and change. She stared, transfixed. It was morphing into a statue - one with...

"Huge Hoots! Glorious Gumballs! Magnificent Mammaries! Beeeyooootyful BaZOOOOMbas!"

Kay now held a golden 'frontally friendly' female statue with delicate wings. Rubies dotted the statue in various strategic places. Kay brought the fingers of her right paw up to the front of the statue and gently touched two of those ruby red points. Instantly she felt a glow that started at her feet and seemed to fill her with golden warmth. She closed her eyes. It was a glorious sensation and she savored each new wave - that is until her chest began to hurt from being squashed. She opened her eyes, took her fingers off the statues 'points', and looked down. Only one thought passed through her mind at what she beheld.

I'll never see my feet again.

"Kay! Help here please?"

Kay came out of her trance, grabbed her carry bag, stuffed the statue in it, slung the strap over her shoulder - and nearly fell over. "Whoops! Gotta recalculate my center of gravity. I think it shifted up a few inches."

Yeah - like about 42!

Then she saw Elric's plight. At any moment now, he would be pounced upon and suffocated under a pile of lust-crazed females. Kay looked behind her. Yep. There it was on the wall. She reached back and yanked the panel open. Then she looked back at Elric and instantly calculated trajectory. It would work.

"Hey Elric! Look over here!" she yelled.

Eric turned frightened eyes on Kay.

There was a tremendous ripping sound as bodice fabric shredded.

"The Power of Boobies compels you!"

Elric's eyes bugged. A certain part of him shot straight up and sent potato salad flying right into the circuit breaker box behind Kay. In an explosion of sparks, the entire hall was plunged into darkness.

Kay rushed forward and grabbed what she could. "Let's get out of here, NOW."

"Kay! That's NOT my paw!"

"Whatever!"

They got out...

...smiling all the way.



EPILOGUE

Cirrel smiled at the new freshman in his office. "The Boobies Cube is history, but the Got-amalans were glad to get a statue back in its place. They sent the Boobies Cube to me to see if I could solve its riddle, but quite frankly, I didn't have the time. I'm glad *someone* found the time."

"And what of its power?" asked the student. "Did they ever discover what it was?"

Cirrel shook his head. "I think the statue was a one shot deal. However, the Got-amalans found some obscure runes on its base hinting at a *second* statue. Maybe that's the one that holds the power to compel. I suppose they'll want someone to look into that, too... someday. In the mean time, they'll have to be satisfied with a pretty, if inert, statue."

"So what was the power I felt when I activated it?" asked Kayngi. "I know there was something more there than just the power to grow boobs. What was that?"

Cirrel reached out and tapped her on the head. "That, my fledgling college student, was the power of an intelligent mind combined with a strong sense of purpose. You don't need a statue, or boobies, to wield that sort of power." Cirrel leaned back in his chair. "So, have you found a purpose in life?"

Kay nodded. "Yes." She got up and walked to the door before turning around. "I hear from the other students that your archeology classes are tough." She winked. "I guess I'll be finding out just how tough they really are."

Cirrel winked back. "And I guess I'll be finding out just how tough it is to *give* a class with those new 'distractions' of yours."

With that, Kayngi Tunishi laughed, swung out the door...
...and promptly poked some poor freshman in the eye.

THE END...?

Nah. The fun's just starting!

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