

## Mystery envelops Homo naledi child skull fragments found in South African cave

Named “Leti,” this is the first known skull belonging to a *Homo naledi* child—a fossil that’s shedding new light onto this mysterious group of extinct humans.

The skull fragments, all 28 of them, were found in a tight passage measuring just 5.9 inches (15 cm) wide and 31.5 inches (80 cm) long. So narrow was this passage that researchers had to lie flat and perform a “superman crawl” to pull themselves through, the AFP [reports](#).

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How Leti’s skull ended up on that spot remains a mystery.

“However, there is no visible predator or scavenger damage on any parts of the skull, nor is there any evidence that suggests that the sediments surrounding Leti have been moved by water or other means that may have resulted in the depositing of the skull into this remote location,” [anthropologist Juliet] Brophy told me. “Therefore, we hypothesize that Leti was placed in the passage by another individual.”

The reason for such a particular placement may have something to do with the way ancient peoples treated the dead. Early hominins are [known](#) to have placed bodies deep inside of caves, either as some kind of death ritual or to keep them away from animals.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)