New World

I came home from Best Buy excited to use my new keyboard. I could finally be rid of the old bag of buttons we used with our computer. It was a good computer and it deserved a better keyboard. Especially since I started using it for gaming. I had my friend Tyler over to hang out a bit. One of the first things on our agenda: *Minecraft*, our favorite game.

I eagerly hooked up the new keyboard to the computer and loaded up a Minecraft server. "Ok, Tyler I'm on cookiecraft.me." Cookiecraft was run by Kyle, a friend of mine. It was a fairly basic survival server. "Do you want to stay in our old world or join a new one?"

"Let's do a new world, Ross."

"Good." At that moment, I thought I saw something move in the corner of my eye. It was probably just our cat, Fluffy, short for William von Fluff III. I spawned near small dirt house Tyler and I had created. It had a sign on it that said 'poop hut'. Maturity is not something that comes naturally to us. I crafted a stone pick out of some materials that I already had.

BZZT! An electric shock pulsed through my fingertips. The screen image blurred and wavered for a second. "OW! What the..." I exclaimed as I drew my fingers back. But the keyboard was stuck to my hand! When I tried to wrench it off with my other hand, it became stuck too!

"Ross!" Tyler shouted as he jumped to my aid. He grabbed the keyboard and tried to tear it from my grasp. This was a mistake. "AAH!" he shouted as he realised that now he was stuck to the device with me.

The edges of my vision became opaque black darkness, slowly closing in on the center of my eye and which flickered white on occasion. My screen was turning into static. As my vision approached complete failure, I saw two white glowing eyes staring at me from somewhere. And for a moment I felt as though a curse had descended upon me. But as quickly as the moment arose, it ended. As I fell into unconsciousness, the moment fell with it, forgotten.

"Muhhhh...whhat happened?"

No response. As I got up to stretch my legs, I looked down.

"AAAGH!" Where my leg was, there was just a big box! My arms too!

After screaming for a moment, I calmed down enough to look around and saw a very odd

landscape surrounding me. I appeared to be standing at the edge of a river, with a forest on one side and a desert on the other. But everything looked weird. First off, how could there be a desert this close to a lush forest? However, the oddity that struck me first was the weird geometry of this place. Everything seemed to be composed of cubes, each one a bit more than half as tall as me. The ground, the trees, the sand, and even the water seem compacted into a cube. Then it hit me.

I have no idea how it took me so long to understand where I was. I was inside my game! I looked up and saw a name tag labeled 'Rossome'-- My username. I lifted up my hand and found a blocky stone pickaxe in my hand, something I had just made in my game a few minutes ago.

I realized that I had no idea how much time I'd been out. I wasn't sure it even mattered now.

I turned around and found the poop hut that Tyler and I had created in the game. "Hello?" I called for anyone out there.

Just then, a rapidly flailing pixelated man with a name floating over his head that read "AwkwardIndustries" ran at me from the forest, screaming his head off.

"Tyler! Is that you?" I called out.

"Wait," he said, breathing heavily after all that scream-panicking. "Ross?" And as he said my name, I saw the approaching pack of almost twenty zombies and a creeper.

A different person would have been doomed if they were here. The creepers and zombies would have killed them before they knew it. Luckily, Tyler and I had faced the often savage world of *Minecraft* for long enough to know its tricks. We knew what to do. I swapped my pickaxe for a stone sword and charged at them. I killed one zombie and damaged another, but they nearly killed me in the process. I retreated and let Tyler have a go at them while I regained a bit of my health. I then saw the creeper and knew how to take the monsters out.

The way a creeper attacked was by sneaking up on you and exploding. Their explosions could easily kill a player if he/she was too close when it blew, but the good thing was that it also killed other nearby monsters and creatures. I knew how to get it to blow up without harming us too much.

I charged at the creeper in the midst of all the zombies. When I came within a few pixelated blocks of it, it began to fizz and spark, meaning it was about to blow. At this point, I

quickly backed off to avoid being hit full on by the blast, but made sure not to get so far away that it would change its mind.

BLAM! The characteristic cloud of smoke appeared around the explosion. When it cleared, there were only six zombies, two of which were limping pretty badly.

"Ross, you're a genius!" shouted Tyler.

We took out the hurt zombies pretty easily, and the sun began to rise soon afterward. Monsters could only spawn during night and zombies and skeletons would burn up when exposed to sunlight. So we were safe for a while and could concentrate on a more pressing issue: how to get out of the game.

"Hey look! A village!"

Sure enough, there it was. Tyler and I walked through a group of pigs on our way to a cluster of wooden houses, a blacksmith and a stone church marked the edges of the gravel path ahead of them. Of course, we used our axes to collect the pigs for pork supplies. A villager walked out of his house and walked towards us.

"Greetings, and welcome to our humble burg. I am villager number 14. What is your name?"

"My name is Ross," I said, approaching the villager.

"Rose," he said.

"Ross."

"Rocks."

"Ross!"

"Red?"

"Why can't you...uughh..." I said, giving up.

"We want to know how to get out of this game," Tyler said. "Do you know how?"

"Game? What do you mean game?"

"Fudge."

"Tyler, maybe we need to dig around for any clues ourselves."

We searched the chest that we knew always appeared in the blacksmith's forge to see if there was anything in it. There was nothing but normal chest-stuff.

We searched for anything in the library. Nothing.

We searched all the other houses twice. Still nothing.

We were almost getting ready to give up when Tyler inspected one of the houses a third time.

"Ross?" I heard from inside the house.

"What?" I shouted.

"I found a button."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"WHY DID YOU NOT TELL ME THIS BEFORE?!!"

"I DIDN'T SEE IT BEFORE!!"

"Sorry."

"Ok."

I came into the house, and sure enough, there was a little wooden button on the wooden wall. It was easy to miss, since both the button and the wood block it was on were made of the exact same pixelated wood. Without looking closely, it blended right in.

I went up to the button and punched it.

There was a click of the button being pressed, and then silence.

"I am dissatisfied," I said quietly.

"What did you think it would do, open a door right in front of you?"

That actually was what I was expecting, despite how illogical that was, considering there was open air behind the wall of the house. Very frustrated, I walked over to the library to cool down for a bit. I sat down and wondered whether it was possible to get out, whether it was worth trying, and whether I was just dreaming this whole predicament up. But then something caught my eye.

A book had fallen off of the bookshelf. The cover said *Herobrine*. I picked up the book and opened it.

Dear reader, my name is Cookie_eater132, owner of this server. I am leaving this note behind to help anyone else who may become lost in this dimension. I was, for a time, trapped within the game, too. I think I have found the way to get out. Unless I am mistaken, Herobrine has--

"Hey!" I exclaimed as a villager tried to grab the book out of my hands.

"That's my book," the villager said.

"Just let me read it first!"

"No." He snatched it from my grasp and ran out the door. I followed him.

"How about I trade you for it?" I said after catching up with him.

"Ok. Fifty emeralds?" he said.

I didn't have any emeralds. They were hard to come by. I looked at my supplies to see what I could counter offer. "How about some pork?" Pork, emeralds, same difference, right?

For a few seconds, he stared at the pork chop as I held it up in my hand, deciding whether to accept or decline. He then dropped the book on the ground before me.

"Done."

I gave him the pork chop and went back to the library to continue reading.


Unless I am mistaken, Herobrine has created some sort of portal that teleported me from the real world into this game. After trying every other way, I think that I know how to get out. The only way to escape is to kill Herobrine, and to kill Herobrine, you have to crash, or at least temporarily disable the server. I found this out after I got angry at my failures and blew up a large cave with TNT. When the TNT began to blow, I closed my eyes to shield them from debris. When I opened them, I was back in the real world, slumped in my desk chair in front of the computer screen. I was surprised, and naturally, this made me blink my eyes. But after I opened my eyes again, my home was gone, and I was again lost in the game.


I couldn't believe it--I knew Cookie_eater132! That username belonged to was my friend Kyle, who ran this server  And on a more scary front, Herobrine!

I had read online about Herobrine. He was sort of a spirit that haunted the game. The developers of the game claimed that Herobrine was a hoax and never was implemented in the game, although as a joke, they included 'Removed Herobrine' in their version changelog lists for every major update. Yet here he was.

I theorize that Herobrine is consciously holding my soul in the game and that if he loses focus or is impaired for long enough, I can get away. Since Herobrine is technically part of the game, the only way to impair him is to overload the computer that the game is running on. For example, when I let off all that TNT, my computer had trouble processing all the data. The server briefly froze, and Herobrine was frozen with it. It took a moment for Herobrine to regain control after the server got back up to speed, and it made me think that the lag harmed him and he needed a moment to recover from his injuries. Theoretically, crashing the server could disable him long enough to get away. I have used my powers as server owner to give myself a million blocks of TNT, half of which I have left in a chest for you. This chest, hidden underneath the church's back wall, contains all that TNT, plus some goodies. Use these gifts well.

This was amazing. I had to find Tyler now and tell him about this. "Tyler!" I shouted as I ran down the street, book in hand.

"WHAT?!" He shouted.

I came in to the house with the button.

"Jeez, why so angry?"

"THIS BUTTON ISN'T DOING ANYTHING!!!"

"Well, why not stop pushing it?"

"BECAUSE IF THIS BUTTON DOESN'T DO ANYTHING TO GET US OUT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL!"

"Then take a look at this," I said, tossing the book to him. "I'll be right back." I then headed off to the church to find the hidden chest. I followed the instructions the book gave me and broke the rear wall. Sure enough, there was a chest hidden underneath the block I had broken. I opened the chest and found a crazy amount of TNT blocks stuffed in there, along with some enchanted diamond tools and armour.

I took all of it. Then I waited.

As I had expected, Tyler, having read the note, came to find me.

"Thank goodness," he said. "I thought we were stuck here forever."

"That's assuming that this works," I said.

"Well, Kyle is still coming to school as far as I know. He would be gone from our lives if

it didn't work."

"That's true, but what if it doesn't work all the time?" I asked. "If this doesn't work, the explosion will just kill us!"

"That's a risk we have to take if we ever want to get out." There was a long pause where we both realized that we had no choice but to go for it. "Where should we set off this explosion?" Tyler finally asked.

"We should go somewhere far away so that we don't damage anybody's stuff," I said.

"Then that's the plan."

Half an hour later, we decided that we had gone deep enough into the desert that no one would be affected by the damage. We laid down the TNT, and I lit the fuse with a flint and steel.

Ten... Nine... Eight... Seven...

I looked to Tyler for reassurance. He nodded.

Six... Five... Four...

If this didn't work, we'd just be a bunch of scattered pixels.

Three... Two...

One...

The blast hit me like a cannonball. My ears ringing, my vision blurring, I fell to the ground, and all went black.


"Ross?"

The light filled my eyes as I woke up. I was lying slumped on the floor, holding a keyboard, next to Ross. My mother was kneeling down next to me, looking worried.

"Mom?" I said, dropping the keyboard on the floor and standing up.

"Ross! You're alive!" Tyler shouted.

"What do you mean?" Mom said in confusion. "Since when do video games kill you?"

I gave my mom a hug. Over her shoulder, I gave Tyler a look. He understood, and we decided not to mention our near-death adventure.


The keyboard still sits in my house, locked away in a safe in our attic. It gathers dust now, not souls. Both Tyler and I still like to play video games, but we haven't ever gone back to that new world and we now know that we never want to be inside a video game again.