The Boy Who Loved Minecraft by Zainy Bologney

 My room was a mess. We had just returned from our trip to an Arkansas rock mine. I was tired, but I'm never too tired to play Minecraft. I wanted to hurry and get to my PS4 before my sister Trina did so I could control the world we would play in. Just one of these days I would love to not have to share a game with Trina and play in creative mode. One of these days I wish she would just play in survival mode. My mom stood in my doorway and told me that if I wanted to play Minecraft, I had to be nicer to my little sister and clean my room. My special obsidian rocks from our vacation were in a jar on my desk. They glistened in real life as if they were magical. I could stare at them all day. I looked for diamonds too but could not find any.

 Trina, my five year old sis, came in my room and dumped over my dirty clothes hamper and said “Oops! Sorry!”

 “Trina! Pick it up!” I yelled. I wanted to play and she just made more work for me to do. Just then my mom walked in and saw me sitting in the middle of a disaster. It was like my suitcase, hamper and closet had all thrown up and I was sitting in it.

 I pointed to my little sister, who sucked her thumb even though she’s five and tried to explain. “But mom, it’s Trina’s fault! She messed up my room!”

 Trina sucked on her thumb and just shook her head. “No, I tripped over the laundry basket, in his room,” she said, “since it's so messy I couldn't see anything! If he had put away his clothes and rocks I wouldn’t have tripped Mommy."

My mom was tired. She gave me that look. You know the one. It was the “If you don’t stop making me mad I’m gonna tell your dad” look.

 I looked at my sister and asked “Aren’t you gonna help me?” Trina shrugged and said “I’ve got my own mess!” Then she sucked her thumb and waddled back to her room.

 “Mom, I’m cleaning my room, you don’t even have to ask me to do it,” Trina hollered. She always kissed up to my mom.

 What could I do? I wanted to play Minecraft. So I took a deep breath and started cleaning. I picked up my Minecraft shirts I had worn on vacation and started collecting Lego bricks to put away.

Then I stepped on a Lego. Owwww! I fell over and landed really hard on my butt, knocking over my jar of obsidian rocks. I started to see lights all over like Minecraft diamonds. It was so bright I had to close my eyes. My obsidian glowed from the inside. I shut my eyes and blinked really hard.

 When I opened them I was not in my room anymore. Well, it was my room but it was a room in a Minecraft house! It was a cabin I built before we went on vacation! Wow! I looked down at my body, now clad in diamond armor! I had a diamond helmet and it was so light on my head it felt good. I saw out the window of my cabin and I saw villagers! Whoa. This was so cool. If it was a dream I didn't want to wake up! This was almost better than playing Minecraft! I walked around and saw everything: the bricks, the chests, the torches. Then I went outside—the sky, the clouds, the grass and the fields of flowers.

 I saw a sheep, a cow and a pig and I didn’t feel hungry so I didn’t need to hunt anything. I decided I should check my inventory. While I was looking down I saw a bright green thing out of the corner of my eye. I knew it had to be a Creeper, and it was. I put my hand on my iron sword. The Creeper popped out at me but didn’t harm me. Now I understood why they called them Creepers! If I could be sweating iron bullets I would have been. I was glad he didn’t get me because my iron sword was really heavy in Minecraft world and I couldn’t lift it as fast as I could in the real world. In the real world I only had to push a button or use a key stroke.

 Then I remembered. Yesterday I had saved the game in creative mode!

Phew! I was sort of mad that I had to change it to creative mode to make it just a little bit easier for Trina to play with me but now I was glad. I told myself I would thank Trina for that when I got back to the real world. I went down by the lake and waterfall. It was beautiful. The pixels were so much brighter when I looked at them with my Minecraft eyes. I smelled some roses by the lake. They smelled like real roses. Running all over the place, I decided I could look around faster if I flew around. So I flew around and looked down at my world. It was so much fun! I felt like a superhero and I could see everything. I saw a ravine that looked like there could be some good stuff in it. So I swooped down and landed in it. I found a mineshaft!

 I opened a chest and pulled out three diamonds. Wow. They were so pretty. I wanted so badly to bring them to my real home. I knew my mom liked diamonds. She told us so when she played Minecraft with us after I did my homework on weekends. Yes I know what you are thinking. Homework on the weekends? It’s not from school. It is math, reading and writing practice sheets that my mom finds at the book store. My homework is not easy but it is not hard. I was glad there wasn’t any homework in Minecraft world.

 Another Creeper came up behind me. I was afraid at first, but then I remembered that it couldn’t harm me in creative mode. Then something strange happened as I was about to put my diamonds in my inventory. Someone else joined my world. It was a player in a tennis outfit. Looking closer it was definitely my sister Trina! Trina had logged on in the real world while I was stuck in Minecraft world. She found me and in a very strange voice that sounded like hers but echoed, she yelled out, “I don’t know why Travis’ guy is walking around in here. Travis isn’t even playing. Mom, come see--this is weird!"

 “It’s just a glitch in PS4 dear,” Mom said, her voice grew distant.

 I tried to yell at Trina, “Hey, I’m in here. In Minecraft World!” But she could not hear me. I tried to tell her I was not “just a glitch”--that I really was in the world of the game. I threw a pork chop at her from my inventory. She just ate it. I couldn't believe it. If she did think I was a glitch, she sure was liking my pork chop! I threw her a potion to enchant—I wasn’t thinking of what I was doing, I was just trying to get her attention. She just picked it up and chirped “This glitch is awesome!” She never called me awesome before.

 Then it hit me. That smell. Mom was making spaghetti and meatballs! But I wasn’t hungry because I was in Minecraft world in creative mode! It was so weird how I could whiff real food from the real world in Minecraft world! Following Trina around the game world, I had to save what inventory I had just in case. So instead of trying to get her attention by throwing things at her I decided to try and spell something out to tell her that I wasn’t a glitch, that I was Travis, her brother, her “Bubba” as my whole family called me. I used redstone, since I had a lot of it. I started to spell out: I AM HERE. But I spelled it like a sentence at school and I forgot—Trina couldn’t read that well yet. She was too busy anyway building a farm fence. She was always trying to have a ton of animals.

 I started to think I wouldn’t be able to get out of Minecraft World! Did I even want to leave? This was the way to play it without having to clean my room or do homework! I never got hungry and nothing could kill me.

 Trina finished her farm, her cabin and a fort with lava running down it. I heard her say “Time to try Survival Mode!” Then the lights went out and I was left in total darkness, but I wasn’t scared.

That is, until the lights came on and I realized she had switched to survival mode on the PS4! Uh oh. I was standing where I was before, but it was day time. Thank goodness I still had inventory leftover from creative mode! Now I had to really figure out what I was going to do. Sure it was fun to play around in creative mode, but now I was in real danger because I was a real kid stuck in Minecraft World!

 The only way I could even make sense of it all was that I must have went through a time warp! Then I realized what happened, I had found real magical obsidian on our trip.

The old man who had bagged it for me had warned me about it saying that it was not just any ol’ obsidian. He had one tooth that was made of obsidian now that I think about it. He was a little creepy so I hurried out of the store, running past my mom and dad. I thought about all these things while I slept uncomfortably in MC world. I mean, can you imagine trying to sleep in armor? I decided the best thing for me to do would be to protect myself from Creepers. I put up a dozen more torches and I inventoried my weapons. Then i just stood there. I couldn’t explain it. I missed my mom and dad, even bratty Trina. But I knew I’d have to plant crops and eat if I wanted to stay alive. It was time to get busy.

 The fruits and veggies that I liked to eat at home were somewhat different than here. I had my favorite crop in both worlds, which was carrots, so I planted a lot of those.

I also planted wheat and potatoes and then I went to find a chicken to eat. I didn’t feel cold or hot in this world but I did start to feel hungry. I couldn’t smell my mom’s spaghetti any more but I did smell chocolate. Were they having chocolate cake without me? They knew I loved chocolate cake. I started wondering when my mom might come looking for me. I heard a door shut and keys jangle. I knew that sound was usually my Dad. My Dad would wonder where I was.

 “Hey Travis, are we going to play after dinner? I know I promised you,” my Dad said.

I was about to answer myself, but I heard a voice, like mine but a little deeper, like I had a cold. It was me in the real world but how could it be? I was here in MC world! The voice –it sounded like a villager –you know, like how they make those weird noises like they are talking out of their big noses? Well that's what I sounded like. I heard my mom ask me why I sounded weird. The Villager me answered that I had a sniffle. What? I felt fine! “Mom, I wanted to yell, Mom! It's not Travis, it's an impostor!”

“Dad, I don't want to play—I am not hungry either. I will just go to my room if that's okay. I need to organize my rocks from my trip,” The impostor said.

 I could tell my Dad was amazed by Villager Me's answer. “Wow Travis, that sounds good. I wish you felt better, you haven't even touched your food.”

So not only was the Villager Me switching identities with the Real Me, but he didn't even eat my dinner, which I was so hungry for. And what did he want to do with my rocks?

 Out of the corner of my eye I spied a chicken. “Come here chick chick chicken!” I yelled, though no one was really listening. I ran all over the field after this chicken. It was so much harder to catch a chicken in MC world. My legs weren’t used to running in the armor so I was a little slower trying to get this chicken for breakfast. I would probably never eat chicken for breakfast but I was getting real hungry!

 Finally I put my sword on the chicken and just like that I was able to go cook it in my oven in my cabin. I smelled it, although the smell wasn’t like real chicken, I ate it, but what was strange was instead of the chicken going into my mouth it just disappeared into thin air and my hunger was gone.

I walked out of my cabin ready to kill any creeper that came my way. I decided it would be good to go to the neighboring village and find villagers to trade with. I needed more swords and arrows just in case, and I wanted to get some fish for dinner.

 I walked through my garden and down along the creek by my cabin. A black spider passed by me, but it didn’t attack me, so I just left it alone.

I was almost to the village when I saw something whizz by me really fast. It was a figure in white. I thought at first it was a ghast. I did not really want to see a ghast in MC world because they were scary. It was a ghast though, following me. I ran faster to the village, I hit him with my diamond sword and he went away.

 I finally got to my first villager and offered him an emerald for information. I asked how to get back to the real world, but the villager just shrugged and gave me some fish. I got two, and I realized how excited I got in MC world over two fish. I was never excited about fish unless it was my favorite tuna salad that my mom made. I was really starting to miss being in the Real World. What if I was stuck here forever?

 I went to another villager and offered him some coal for more flint and I offered him a diamond pickaxe and an emerald so I could get an enchanted pickaxe. I asked around if anyone knew of a villager that went missing—of a villager that may have gone to the real world.

Then there it was again, a flash of white. I decided I wasn’t going to wait around to see it again…it was probably another ghast coming to get me in broad daylight. I ran home to my cabin. I was almost there but I saw a pig in the distance, so I made it into pork chops. The white thing was coming again, following me. But it wasn’t a ghast.

 By the time I passed my garden, the white thing was waiting at the front of my house. It was Trina, my sister—probably trying to steal stuff! But I was actually happy to see her. She wore her white tennis outfit and carried a leash, trying to get it on her dog to come into my cabin. It was starting to get dark. I opened my mouth to try to talk to her. I could not get any sounds out that she could hear.

 “Trina!” I yelled. I even yelled her first name. “Katrina! I’m here, it’s Bubba!” She only looked at me and jumped. I felt like she was trying to tell me she was happy to see me. I jumped up and down excitedly over and over to tell her without words that I was happy. I walked inside the cabin and she followed me.

 “Trina, I'm stuck here. I can't get out,” I said. She nodded, though she looked confused. It was hard to tell because her face was pixelated. She just stood there. I knew how I could talk to her. I opened my journal and wrote: *It's me, your brother. I think I warped into MC world because of the magic obsidian that the old Miner from Arkansas gave me, I fell right in the middle of it and now a Villager has taken over my life in the real world. Help! Get obsidian so I can make a portal back home!*

Then Trina wrote in her journal: *Then who is that acting like you and mumbling “Hrrrrmmm.” You're in your room now, with the door locked. Only it isn't you, is it Travis? I knew you weren't a glitch! Let's get to work!*

 Trina followed me out of my cabin and into a nearby mine. It was her secret mine that she'd been working on without me knowing. I couldn't believe she did so much work in here. There were torches put up, but I was still scared. Last time I was in a mine I battled two skeletons and a creeper.

We walked for a little while before I followed her down a cavern. At the end of the cavern was a lava flow. I threw buckets and bucket of water as fast as I could, with Trina helping me.

 She pulled out her diamond pickaxe and went to work, turning cooled lava rock into obsidian right before my eyes. I grabbed my diamond pickaxe just as a skeleton came up to us. I knocked it down and got an arrow. Then a creeper came up on Trina but she didn't see it. So I ran over and got it for her. I don't like anyone else besides me picking on my little sister, especially not a creeper!

 With those two out of the way, we finished the portal and I pulled out my flint and steel, and lit it on fire. I held my breath and walked through.

 My skin tingled and I saw sparkles like when I first fell into the portal in my room. I opened my eyes and I was in my room again! We had done it! I had come back to my real world. I looked at my hands, my fingers, they slowly turned from pixelated body parts to real human hands.

Standing across from me was the impostor—the villager that looked like me, except his nose was bigger. “Hrrrrmmmm, you made it back. That's too bad, I was just getting used to being in this world, and I kind of like it. I kind of like this family too, even that bratty little sister of yours,” he said.

“She's not a brat! She's my sister and you stay away from her,” I yelled. Just then Trina came into the room. “Travis! You're back!” She hugged me so hard I almost fell over. I was truly so happy to see her in person.

 The villager's face looked mean. He was getting angry.

“I don't want to leave, but both of us cannot exist in the same world. You must go back Travis—you accidentally made this portal so you must go back.”Trina held on to me “Noooo.”

 “No!” I said, “This is my family! You go back!”

 The villager lunged for me, trying to push me back into the portal. I moved to the side and he fell halfway in. His body started to pixelate, but I saw he had grabbed Trina's hand. “Ouch! Let go!” Trina yelled.

 “Stop it! Look,” I said, nervously picking up some green emeralds from my desk. I threw them into the portal. “Go get those emeralds, they are the best kind—from this world!”

“Hrrrrrmmm! Mine!” The villager said, letting go of Trina and jumping in to the portal.

 Through the portal doorway I could see he was picking up the emeralds greedily. I knew villagers loved emeralds. Quickly, I picked up my scattered obsidian and put them in a pile, which made the portal start to close. The villager looked at his handfuls of emeralds and looked back at us. The last look I gave him was that we had the last laugh. I had thrown a handful of green Lego gems and because he was so greedy for emeralds, he believed me.

 “Travis!” Trina hollered. “That was so awful, but also really super cool!”

 “Phew!” I said, putting a lid on my obsidian rock jar. “It's good to be home!

 I hugged Trina super hard and opened the door yelling for my mom and dad. They were watching the news in another room, as if nothing had ever happened. “Mom! Dad!” I hugged them and they hugged me back.

 “I'm so glad you're feeling better!” Mom said, “You were starting to sound like one of those villagers! I thought I was going to have to take you to a doctor.”

 Trina ran out behind me and started telling the story. “Mom, Dad, Travis and I made a portal to bring him out of the game and get him back here—and you were wrong Mom, Travis wasn't a glitch, he was really stuck in the game and I helped him! I helped him make a portal and get rid of the villager that was trying to take over!”Mom rolled her eyes. “Okay dear. That's great, settle down now.” I could tell they didn't understand what she was trying to say. They didn't believe her.

 Dad smiled, “See son, you and Trina can get along in the real world and the Minecraft world better than you thought!”

 I sighed. He was right after all.