

The Hut

02

You cower at the edge of the hut. You feel a slight chill in the air, a cross breeze as you skirt along the side, your hair animating in all directions. The hut is there, small and seemly, but you know that's just a façade. You know you best avoid its hollow gaze. You peek around it.

> No, you don't.

You don't peek around it. You stop, unsure what's going on. Worried who this new voice is, telling you what to do.

> Walk.

And you begin walking. The sky darkens and your joints click into place. You continue to glance up at the hut, afraid. Its old roof folds over walls not made to last much longer. There is a single door. It doesn't look inviting.

> Let's go in.

Oh, bugger. Doesn't the voice know that the hut is haunted? That all manner of vile creatures, with slits for eyes and spears for teeth, roam in there? Doesn't it know that it's a place you *intentionally* cowered at to signify its danger?

> I wonder what's in there.

You really don't share that curiosity. You decide to name the voice "Idiot." You focus intently, staring up at the sky—not necessarily because Idiot is above, but because it feels better to be talking to the sky. You see the giant, floating textures in the heavens. They've always been there, showing something important. You say: "Hey, Idiot. This is a bad idea."

> Probably. But I want to see what happens.

Really? *Wonderful*. Dead at the mercy of a curious child. Just how you always imagined it. Your purpose, your whole existence spawned for this moment, created just for you to die. As if that was the point. Maybe it is, you think, in a last, desperate thought while staring at the door.

> Open the door.

Yes, yes. All right. *Fine*. "I know how to enter a house," you say.

> Clearly not.

You grimace. Whatever. Got no choice but to go to your doom headfirst. You tap at the door, inching it open as you peer into the darkness. No sounds. Cobwebs. Old wood, musty air.

You step in.

It's a dark room, full of... nothing. You scour every corner of the little place, but they're all empty.

> There's nothing?

The voice is taunting you, goading you on, blaming you for being scared. But, no, you know better. You cower around, poised, waiting for movement in the shadows, for a slip of focus to overtake you.

> This is boring.

You stop. The words seem to come from some faraway place, yet stay present in the nooks and tiniest bones in you. It sounds genuine. But that's just rude. You stand there, fearing for your life, fearing the world is about to end and monsters with spears for teeth are about to eat you—and Idiot up there is just *bored*? What little twat considers the agony of a cursed man to be—

> Let's go outside again.

Yes! Ok. Phew. First good words out of that mouth. You're anxious to leave the shadows and get—

> The Door's gone.

It is. Idiot realized same time as you. The door is gone. While you were looking away, the door vanished behind you, leaving only an odd crack in the wall, protruding out like a glacier in a mountain range.

> Try punching the wall.

What? You have to piece the information together before realizing what the voice's asking you to do. Then, because you don't have a choice, you go over and punch the wall.

It hurts. It seems ineffective. The wood doesn't break at all—until it does. As if by magic, the wall with the crack crumbles down, and each little piece of geometry fall and fade out of existence. You stare dumbfounded at the new opening.

> Knew that would work.

Smug prick. But maybe that outcome is a tinge comforting? Idiot might know what's going on here. Maybe Idiot can help?

> Walk.

Right. Leave the hut. You walk forward, wind and harsh sun crashing into you. Before you relax, though, you realize there's something wrong. Dead wrong. It's

difficult to see in the outside brightness after being trapped inside, but once you get used to it, you see a pair of eyes staring at you. Two glowing spotlights staring from the shrubbery.

> What's that?

"Well, I don't bloody know," you say. It looks bad. They are large and glowing, yellow and green at the same time.

> Let's go say hi.

You try to sigh, but you give up. You accept that this voice *might* know what it's doing. The eyes crane along as you approach, following your movement. As you get closer, you hear a roar from the eyes and a giant creature the size of a house reaps out at you, claws first, nailing through you, and teeth—that, you must admit, are like spears—unravel your body until it is only pieces.

> Whoops.

You can't even laugh at that because your mouth is in three different places. Giant, floating text appears in the sky, red and uncomfortable, your two separate eyes cannot make out what it says before the entire world's gone, before the whole place unpacks and dissolves away.

> I can do better than that.

You agree. That wasn't Idiot's best performance. For once, you would have liked to stay alive.

01

You cower at the edge of the hut. You feel a slight chill in the air, a cross breeze as you skirt along the side, your hair animating in all directions.

> Let's not go in there, then.

At least Idiot won't get you killed the *same* way. But the voice has probably got more dumb ideas. You wonder if you'll ever finish this quest with Idiot controlling it all. You wonder if you'll ever get past the Hut. And there's tales of a whole world out there. Things Idiot will never believe; things not even you believe. The Hut is just the beginning.