

Game Start!

As soon as the bell rings, I sprint out of class.

“Hey, Izzy! Wait!” My best friend Roxanne matches her pace with mine. A slight breeze erupts from all the kids running by. I slow down barely. “Now that we don't have to worry about school anymore, do you want to hang out tomorrow?” She asks. I nod.

“Yeah, my house?” I insist. Roxanne agrees and parts to catch the bus. We wave to each other before the bus speeds away from the school. I begin to walk home, thinking about which game we should play next.

I check my clock. Roxanne was supposed to be here by now. I grab my phone off of my nightstand and begin to dial her number. Right as I tap on the final digit, the doorbell rings and I drop my phone to rush to the door to let in Roxanne.

“Ok, I was thinking about all the games I own and I decided on one we can play together!” I explain. As we walk to my room, I tell her how to play.

“Sounds easy enough!” She smiles. I smile back and insert a piece into the switch to get in running. I grab the nearest controller and hand one to Roxanne. Once we are both ready to begin, I click on the “start” button and begin the game.

After a few rounds of losing to the zombie boss, I throw down my controller and crash to the floor.

“This game sucks! Let's do a different game.” I shout.

“Come on, Isabelle. We were so close! Lets try one more time” Roxanne pushes. I sigh and attempt to pick up the controller off the ground, but my hand goes right through it, like a ghost. I look up at Roxanne. She looks back at me in terror as I realize my room *isnt* my room anymore.

“Izzy... you see this too right?” Roxanne begins before being interrupted by a deafening, booming voice.

“Game start”

I shriek as I realize what's happening. Could anyone, including Roxanne, even hear me? I look over at her. Both our eyes lock. We stare at each other in terror as gravity flips. I open my mouth to yell but my voice is silent. My hair whips in the air as I struggle to get back to the ground. The scenery of my room fades away into bright colorful pixels. As if on cue, everything stops and me and Roxanne fall to the ground with a *thump*. I lay on the ground for a bit, but eventually call out. "Roxanne?" she replies with a painful sigh. Bright green grass with a thick outline brushes my feet as I stand. I walk over to Roxanne and attempt to pull her up, off the ground.

"How are we going to get out?" I say sternly. In the distance I see a small green dot, gradually growing larger as it nears me. "Roxanne! Get up! Get up! Get up!" I scream as I realize what's happening. I drop Roxanne and run to the nearest tree. I tear off a branch and clutch it in my hand in front of Roxanne on the ground. Eventually, the dot seems to transform into a zombie. Its pixelated arms reached out in front of himself, and his mouth lolled open. Its feet slowly shuffle towards us whilst my hands become increasingly sweaty. "Stay back!" I yell at the zombie. My face is burning, even though the pixelated sun produced no heat. I was never good at this "*game*" even if I was right inside of it. If anything, I was worse. Before I know it, the zombie is in front of me. I screech as I strike the zombie with the stick. After the first hit, a health bar appears above its head, but each hit makes an unnoticeable change to the health. My arms are tired before I'm even a quarter over with health, when more zombies begin to catch up to me. Out of the corner of my eye, I see a glowing orb appear above the tree, A powerup. But it's out of my reach and Roxanne is still on the ground. I turn my head back to the increasingly dangerous battle and swing my stick. The zombies push me down to the ground as I scurry to back up. One of the zombies grabs my hood and lifts me into the air. I flail my arms and scream Roxanne's name to no avail. A larger zombie pulls back his weapon, ready to hit me. I shut my eyes, bracing myself for the hit, but it never comes. Instead, I hear a loud noise as the zombies fall to the ground, dropping me. Roxanne stands atop them, hitting them rapidly. Each of their health bars drain to nothing before they simply disappear without a trace. It's

as if they were never there, apart from a shining sword that matches the one grasped in Roxanne's hands. "Where did you get that?" I ask her.

"It was in the tree." she responds. We smile at each other, but it doesn't last very long. The ground shakes with the powerful footsteps of the final boss. This is where I had lost time and time again. If I wanted to live, I would have to win. The giant zombie steps into view and begins to charge at us. I scream and dart out of the way of its large feet. Roxanne stabs the blade into the earth-like zombie as it screeches and falls backwards. I take my chance and run up its body to its head. Its health had depleted an inch, but it was better than nothing. Me and Roxanne continuously hit the mud figure, half health, quarter, an inch, I look at Roxanne as I lift the blade high and bring it down with a large hit. The world spins as gravity flips and drops us to the ground. We were free.