

Aidan's Minecraft Christmas

„You can't be serious!“ Mom switched the light on and glared at him. Aidan froze with his fingers hovering above the computer keyboard.

“It's two thirty in the morning! What on earth are you doing here?”

Aidan blinked. His eyes went back to the screen.

“Just a few more minutes, Mom, please?” he begged, although he knew it was no use. She grabbed his arm and pulled him up from the chair.

“You are going to bed right away and don't even ASK about the computer until the end of the holidays!”

“But, Mom, I just wanted to...”

“I don't care what you wanted! You know the rules and sneaking down here in the middle of the night to play Minecraft is just NOT ON!” his mother interrupted him heatedly and pushed him towards the door. Aidan cast a last, frustrated glance at the screen and then lumbered off to his room, head hanging dejectedly.

He lay in the dark, his mouth clamped into a tight line. It wasn't fair. For weeks he'd been preparing everything. He had collected items - really cool, rare items! – and hidden them carefully, so his friends wouldn't plunder him. It had been such a hard piece of work! But he had managed; none of his friends had caught on. Only to have everything ruined by Mom. He squeezed his eyes shut and a single tear rolled down to his ear. It wasn't fair. She didn't even listen to him! Well, if she ruined his Christmas surprise, he would ruin hers. He turned over and pulled the cover over his head.

“Aidan?” Mom gently shook his shoulder. “Aidan, wake up!”

“No,” came his muffled answer from under the cover. Mom looked surprised.

“You don't want to wake up? It's Christmas, remember?”

“Who cares?” Aidan asked with a choked voice. Part of him wanted to run downstairs and see the presents. But the other part knew it wouldn't make him happy. His joy had been ruined together with his surprise.

Mom left the room. It made Aidan even sadder and he started to sob. For a long time he was alone. He felt miserable. Should he go downstairs after all? It was awful to be here all alone. He rose, got dressed and went slowly downstairs. Mom was in the kitchen. Dad was in the living room, reading. When Aidan came in, he put his book down and looked critically at Aidan.

“What's the matter with you?” he asked. “First you sneak into the office to get at the computer and now you ruin our Christmas day!”

Aidan looked at his feet. He didn't know what to say. The doorbell rang and Dad got up to answer the door. That would be Grandma and Grandpa. They would also ask him what was wrong with him.

Aidan turned on his heel and ran back to his room. He could hear voices downstairs. He stood by his window and stared outside. After a while it got quiet downstairs. Then the door of his room opened.

“Hello, Aidan,” Grandpa said softly. Aidan turned around. Grandpa opened his arms and in a moment Aidan was wrapped in a loving hug. Grandpa sat down on the bed and invited Aidan to sit really close to him.

“Now tell me, my boy. What happened?” No accusation. Just a question. Aidan looked at Grandpa and took a deep breath.

“I wanted to surprise my friends. I collected items for them in Minecraft and I wanted to hide the items in their houses. And when they would play the next time, they would find all these cool items in their houses and they would be really happy! I wanted to create a Minecraft Christmas for them.

But I couldn't. Mom wouldn't let me." Aidan looked at his hands. "She didn't even listen to me! She wouldn't let me explain." Tears started to roll again. That was what hurt most. Grandpa hugged him and Aidan cried into his shirt. Grandpa didn't say anything. He waited for Aidan to stop crying.

"Maybe you should have told your mom beforehand what you wanted to do," Grandpa suggested, but Aidan shook his head.

"She would never have allowed it. She doesn't care about me. All she cares about is her rules."

Grandpa rose.

"I'll see what I can do," he said softly and left. When he came back, Mom and Dad followed him.

Mom and Grandpa sat down on the bed on both sides of Aidan. Dad stood by the window. Aidan looked from one to the other. Now what?

For the first time in a long while, Mom really looked at him. Not like she wanted to check if he had dirt in his face or ripped clothes.

"Is it true, Aidan? You wanted to prepare a Christmas surprise for your friends in Minecraft?" she asked. Aidan nodded.

"But why didn't you tell me?"

Aidan hesitated. He felt a reassuring squeeze on his arm from Grandpa. He stared at his hands again.

"You didn't listen to me," he whispered. "You never do." He could hear her intake of breath and knew she would deny it. But she didn't. Instead she put her arms around him and said "I'm sorry."

In the first instant, Aidan couldn't believe it, but then he hugged her back and cried with relief.

"I don't think your friends will be playing Minecraft today, so why don't we go and see if we can get those items hidden like you planned?" Dad asked. Aidan's head snapped up, his eyes shining with newfound joy.

"Oh Dad, could we? That would be the best present you could give me!" he cried.

For the first time, Dad looked at what Aidan had built in his Minecraft world and he was truly impressed. Together they hid all the presents in his friend's houses and Aidan kept giggling with anticipation. To him, it was the best Christmas ever.