

## Clocking Out

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## Clocking Out

by [Random\\_Reviewer](#)

### Summary

Bdubs wakes up after the end of the world. He wasn't expecting to, and he was expecting even less to wake up in one of his gas stations with Etho waiting patiently for him to ring up his purchases, but here we are.

Otherwise known as: A moment between seasons and between shifts at a local convenience store in the void.

### Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

- Inspired by [A Gas Station at the End of Time](#) by [CannedCrow](#)

Bdubs awoke with a gasp which bordered on a scream as he heard Etho call out his name. Which was odd, because the last thing he remembered was the moon falling, and being right in its path of destruction. Which just so happened to be nowhere near where Etho had been basing with Iskall. Bdubs felt like he would remember having been close enough to Etho at the end of all things to hear him call for him.

“You awake now?” Asked Etho, as he looked over Bdubs with a skeptical eyebrow.

“Wha-? H-huh? Where am I?!” Bdubs exclaimed, frantically trying to take in his surroundings as he stood from his previously sitting position (which he hadn't noticed he was in till he stood up).

The first thing he noticed was that he seemed to be in a convenience store of some kind, immediately reminding him of his Pass 'n Gas stations he had made with Keralis and Tango. Ignoring Etho's increasingly bemused look, Bdubs focused further on his surroundings and realized that he was, in fact, in a Pass 'n Gas of some kind. The specific shop layout was unmistakable, and the various goods on sale all came from Season 8 of Hermitcraft. (It helped that Beef's custom food was impossible to miss). So he glanced out the front of the store to see if there were any identifying landmarks within render distance. However, seemingly the only thing out the front of the shop was nothing. If this had been the overworld, he would have been able to see at the very least the vague outline of shapes through a shaded gloom (though in recent nights, the moon had made even the night seem almost as bright as day: the stars slightly washed out due to the amount of light being reflected from the moon's surface. Bdubs had heard of arctic summers from Etho's brief stint in a tundra biome last season where the sun barely, if ever, set around midsummer, and thought that the encroaching moon was similar. Unfortunately, the increased light level was still too low to prevent mobs spawning at night.). No, this darkness through the windows reminded Bdubs more of the void beneath the world. Even in the end there was the feeling of static and visual 'buzzing' that made staring into the reaches of the End an unwise pastime. Nothing of the sort seeped through the front windows or humble oak door, only the continuing confusion of why he had awoken here.

"You doing alright there?" asked Etho, his bemusement now tinged with concern. Bdubs turned his gaze back onto Etho, his turmoil seemingly obvious as Etho's face twisted more into one of concern.

"Why am I behind the counter of a Pass 'n Gas?" asked Bdubs in reply, finally able to get one of the many questions roiling in his brain past his lips.

"Well I would assume working your shift. I'm actually here to take over for you, since your shift ends in like 5 minutes."

Bdubs had the feeling of existential crisis one expects to have when their entire world feels like they've just stepped into a pair of shoes that aren't theirs. "Ah," is about the best way he can verbalize that sentiment, but follows it with, "well what about the moon?"

Etho returns to his bemusement, and seems to jokingly ask, "what about it?" He picks up the 'Hermiton Herald' that he had set on the counter and gives the front a passing glance. Bdubs manages to catch the large, bold title with a prominent picture of the moon moments before the crash saying "MOON BIG". Etho gives a considering hum and then sets the paper back down onto the counter and asks, "how much do I owe you for the paper by the way?"

A seeming encyclopedia of information popped into Bdubs beleaguered brain, and he found himself saying, "1 Iron please. We stopped taking Derpcoin about a week ago when they all suddenly changed into iron nuggets." Etho nodded like this was reasonable and fished in his inventory for the correct change. Bdubs felt the information wash out of him again, and he came back completely by the time he had finished the transaction with Etho. "Ooooooh, I need to get out of here, it's not doing me any favors."

Etho nodded in sympathy, though Bdubs wondered if he thought Bdubs wanted to quit or if he wanted to leave his shift. Not like it mattered much to Bdubs, since he knew instinctively that this would be the only time he would ever see this strange void bound Pass 'n Gas. And if he had any input in the matter, he never planned to come back of his own volition. That left him with many questions still, particularly how he would travel through the void without any protective gear, but that would wait for a moment. A more important question was, "By the way Etho, is this where you've been disappearing to all season? Making some side diamonds for your shopping

addiction?”

Etho grinned unrepentantly. “Who knows!” he said in his most chipper tone, the one he knew Bdubs found vaguely obnoxious. “I just work here sometimes.” He winked at Bdubs.

Bdubs threw his hands up, though they both knew he was amused at the response despite his mild infuriation. Etho liked to play with him sometimes, though Bdubs also knew it was all in good fun. He also knew Etho rarely lied to him, and doubted he would start now. Perhaps this store was just as much an enigma as Etho himself was.

“Well in that case I suppose I should head out then so you can start your shift.” Bdubs looked around, realizing there wasn’t a clock hanging in view. “Question though.”

Etho hummed in reply, working his way around the counter to come and settle beside Bdubs.

“What time is it? I don’t have any clocks on me, and I don’t see one around.”

Etho gasped in mock concern. “Bdubs without a clock? Why, whatever will we do!” Bdubs gave a short, “HEY!” and lightly punched Etho in the shoulder. Etho chuckled in response and continued. “But yeah, it’s the start of the graveyard shift so it’s way past your bedtime old man.” Bdubs continued to sputter as Etho continued to chuckle and gently move him out from behind the counter. Once their positions were reversed, and their chuckling (which Bdubs had devolved to eventually) had slowed, Etho gave him a considering once over. With a quick glance around the store, he seemed to find the only clock in the store (which was conveniently behind the counter on a little shelf under the register which Bdubs had managed to completely miss) and placed it on the counter between the two of them.

Bdubs was shocked into silence as he gently picked up what began to look like a worn, old-style golden clock from the Minecraft Beta days. “They don’t make them like they used to, do they Ladders?” he muttered to himself, absorbed in turning the clock over and over in his hands as he inspected it. ‘It’s **the clock** he gifted you,’ murmured the knowing part of him. Which didn’t quite make sense, since Etho had gifted him a couple of clocks over the years, and none of them ever really stood out as one quite so important as a definitive clock. But on the other hand this seemed to embody bits and pieces of all those old clocks in one. A shifting kaleidoscope of clocks in one solid package, a tribute to their long friendship that extended beyond Hermitcraft. He could feel an emotion boiling inside of him, but instead of acknowledging it, he asked Etho, “so how much for the clock?”

Etho grinned under the mask, a telltale wrinkle in the fabric and crinkle of the eyes giving him away. “It was in the lost and found, so I’d say it’s yours to keep! Take good care of it will ya?” Bdubs nodded as he reverently slipped the new-old clock into his inventory. Suddenly, he remembered his predicament of getting out of the void unscathed.

“Say, how do I even get to the next season from here??” asked Bdubs, side-eyeing the door to the void like it would have all the answers.

Etho raised an eyebrow. “Through the front door?” he asked like it was as simple as walking across the street. “Unless you wanted to do something else before the next season, in which case I’d say the same thing.” He shrugged, and leaned back into the chair that Bdubs had awoken in.

“But it’s the void out there! How is that...” he trailed off as Etho continued to give him a blank look like he was being completely stupid. “Right. Through the front door. I guess I’ll just...” With that he walked up to the front of the shop, right up to the door. He took a steadying breath and wondered how Etho would be getting to the next season.

“Awww, nothing else to say to me Bdubs?” Bdubs turned around to see Etho giving him puppy eyes from behind the counter. This guy, he swears.

“Etho, I’m your friend, not your dad.” The puppy eyes get bigger, and Bdubs lets out a good natured sigh. “Yes, yes, have a good shift. Play nice with the customers and all that.” Bdubs paused, one last question eating him from the inside. “Will you be making it to next season after your shift is done?” It had been known to happen where Etho would miss a season. Actually Bdubs was surprised it hadn’t happened this season actually. Etho’s track record had certainly been a bit on and off again with the seasons, taking regular breaks from Hermitcraft as his single player worlds called to him when he got burnt out from the massive undertaking that Hermitcraft usually entailed.

Etho gave him a considering hum, and replied with, “who knows... Certainly not me!” Bdubs gave him a final sigh of good natured exasperation and placed his hand on the door.

“Well till next we meet Ladders! And remember, play nice with the other customers ok?” Bdubs called behind him, turning the knob on the door to open it. The door creaked open not to the blackness of the void, but to the light of an anti-void, pure white and momentarily blinding. Distantly, Bdubs heard Etho call out his own goodbye, and with a moment of hesitation, walked through to the other side.

## End Notes

Here I am with more Etho&Bdubs friendship. Bit on the short side, sorry lol. I saw a post on Tumblr that I linked in hopefully the works inspired by area and I thought I would write something super vaguely connected to it. Admittedly, the original is based on an idea by someone else on Tumblr, so the rabbit hole gets ever deeper. I hope you enjoyed and feel free to leave comments about your thoughts down below! I love hearing from y'all, and it's nice to know when people enjoy my work. :)

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