

## The Cursed Treasure

"Is this stupid thing recording? Ugh- Hello, my name is Elliot Wood, today it is July 15th, 2023. Two decades ago on this very day, marks the loss of my best friend. I don't even know what happened. In search of him I have found all that remains, his journal. We shall embark on a journey through his words."

### ALEX'S JOURNAL:

"Journal entry #1, July 15th, 2003—Following the map

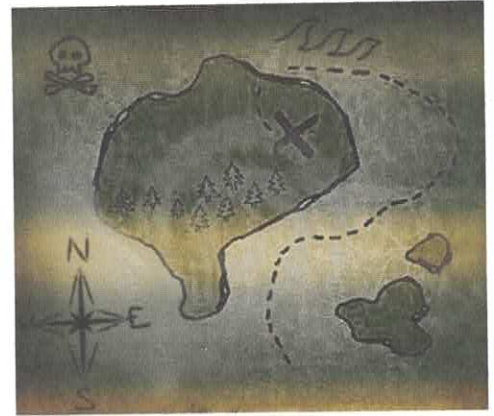
I am an explorer, always looking for new adventures and discoveries.

Two days ago, one dark and lone night, I found a rather weathered-looking map.

According to it, some amazing treasure should be just on top of the cliff I'm currently standing below. It's quite high up.

The public was told to never go near this cliff, as many have died scaling it.

Even some of the best climbers have fallen from it."



"Journal entry #2—Halfway up!

I am currently sitting on a small ledge of the cliff.

It's a bit more frightening than I expected.

All I can hear is the crashing of the waves below me.

Maybe I shouldn't have followed this map, but I must go over this cliff to find the X."

"Journal entry #3—I made it!

I'm on flat ground now, thank god. I nearly fell at one point.

The map shows that I am near the X, but where is it?

I'm going to walk around for a bit to try and find it.

I hope I find it soon, I didn't scale that cliff for nothing."

"Journal entry #4—Where am I?

My head is throbbing.

What happened, where am I?

All I remember before everything went black was the ground giving out beneath me.

I think I'm in a sort of cavern, all I can see is the night sky through the hole above me I fell into.

...I have fully regained my consciousness.

The only choice I have now is to walk around this cavern and hopefully I will find my way out."

"Journal entry #5—Stuck

I don't think I'll be getting out of here anytime soon.

I have walked around for what is probably hours...I don't know...

But my watch broke when I fell.

The only way to tell time now is from the hole above me.

Just big enough for the average human to fall through.

All I can make out are tunnels upon tunnels, I guess I'll go try to find a way out again."

"Journal entry #6—A miracle would be great

I have been walking from tunnel to tunnel for hours now.

My head is still aching.

I ran out of water and didn't think to bring food.

I'm scared, hungry, and dehydrated. How am I supposed to get out now?

I shouldn't have followed the map,

why did I have to find this map?

"Journal entry #7—I did it!

I found something...Uh oh

IS that...is that a pirate ahead?

When I was little, my mother would tell me tales about pirates.  
But I never believed her;  
until now.  
Maybe I should have, because I think I found one!  
How he got here, I have no idea, but I know it's a captain.  
He has the infamous hat with the sword symbol.



*(Sketch of the pirate)*

Of course, centuries later he's been reduced to bones.  
All that remains is his partially intact hat.  
I must take a closer look!"

"Journal entry #8—DISCOVERY!

I see something in his hand— it might be a coin?  
After turning the coin over in my hand a few times, I catch a glimpse of some  
words.



'Thou shall not steal'.  
I wonder why that's inscribed?"

*(A coloured sketch of the pirate coin, in the middle is a  
map-like design, and inscribed on it is "Thou shall not  
steal".)*

"Journal entry #9 —Not good.

"I don't know what happened, but there's a rash stretching from my fingertips up to my palms.

My head is dizzy and lightheaded.

My vision is starting to warp.

Is it because I fell earlier?

Or maybe,,,

Maybe this is what the inscription meant.

'Thou shall not steal'

I should have never touched that coin

I should have never gone on this adventure."

—Alex Foster

Elliot:

*"Journal entry #1, July 15th, 2023— What happened to Alex?"*

*I've finally found Alex's remains, after many years of searching.*

*How do I know it's him?*

*I found his journal.*

*Pirates always protect their treasure, your mom told you that as a child, didn't she?*

*Alex slowly faded away from poison.*

*The poison on the coin.*

*I hope it wasn't that painful.*

*He didn't deserve that.*

*I'm sorry.*

*Rest well, dear friend."*

*"Journal entry #2, — My own fate*

*Hopefully, no one else meets the same fate as us.*

But, someone is bound to come looking for me too.  
Poor Alex fell into the cavern and couldn't get back out.  
I doomed myself to the same fate  
Now I shall perish, in the same place he did.  
He lies next to his discovery, the poisoned coin, deceased.  
All that remains is his journal and bones.  
In this same very place, I shall draw my last breath."

— Elliott Wood