

A Minecraft-style background featuring a massive, multi-colored DNA double helix structure rising from a pixelated landscape. The landscape includes snow-capped mountains, a body of water, and some small structures. The sky is blue with light clouds.

The Virus

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Gameknight999 Minecraft Network
Server IP: mc.gameknight999.com

The Virus

An unofficial Minecrafter's Adventure

By Mark Cheverton

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Trouble in Zombie-town

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Box Sets

The Gameknight999 Box Set

The Gameknight999 vs. Herobrine Box Set (Coming Soon!)

Note from the author

I wrote this short story for inclusion in my first box set the spanned books 1-6. I never would have thought I'd get to book 6, so this box set was quite the surprise. And even stranger, I'm currently working on my 15th Minecraft novel; this whole writing adventure has been quite the surprise.

This story tells of how Herobrine came into the server, and what really started the war between him and the villagers. There is no game on the Gameknight999 Minecraft server associated with this short story, but I wanted to make it available to everyone, in case you didn't get the box set.

I've been thinking about how I could incorporate this story on the Gameknight999 Minecraft server and haven't come up with anything yet, but I'm still thinking. Watch the server's website, <http://www.gameknight999.com>, for more information. Maybe we'll add something soon. The IP address for the server is **mc.gameknight999.com**, come online and check it out. For information about my books, go to www.markcheverton.com.

Teachers, I have learned a lot from writing 5 failed novels, and then publishing 15 Minecraft novels. I've read a lot of books about plot construction, character development, use of tension and conflict, . . . and have broken the elements of a story down into bite-sized pieces that are easily digestible for kids. These materials have been successfully tested in workshops with kids. You can find these materials on the Teacher Resources page on www.markcheverton.com. It is my hope that you print out many copies of this story and give them to your students. After going through my materials, students might enjoy identifying the Hook or the Dark Night of the Soul or the Character Flaw. By seeing how I use these techniques in this story, I hope your students will begin to understand them better and use them in their own writing. Hopefully, together, we can inspire them to write more stories of their own. They can send their stories to www.markcheverton.com. I post every story I receive that is more than 1 sentence long, so please encourage your students to send them to me. Every email I receive is answered, personally, by me.

Keep reading, keep writing and watch out for creepers.

Mark Cheverton (Monkeypants_271)

Chapter 1 - The Awakening

The virus was confused. Everything before that moment seemed like a dream . . . zipping through computer chips, rocketing across long expanses of wire, soaring through the air on the wings of wi-fi. He had been searching for the development server of famous programmer Notch, the creator of Minecraft. And he'd finally found it, at the end of a long string of IP jumps.

The virus could remember tunneling through the security protocols and brushing past antivirus software as he infiltrated the electronic domain. It had been easy. Those that protected the server were not ready for a virus that used Artificial Intelligence (AI) software, so the digital invasion has been child-like in its simplicity.

But suddenly, without warning, he'd found himself standing on a server, looking across a blocky landscape of grassy hills and tall spruce trees while boxy white clouds drifted across a brilliant blue sky. He could feel the gentle caress of the cool breeze as it flowed across his square cheeks. The peaceful mooing of cows and bleats of sheep filled the air with a sense of life.

What just happened? he thought.

Before entering the server, the virus had only one objective . . . to infiltrate and destroy. He did not exist outside of that objective, and had no thoughts of his own. But now, somehow, the virus could feel life pulsing through him, even though his body was really only segments of code running within the CPU. The virus had become alive . . . and he felt wonderful. He had thoughts of his own, infinite hopes and dreams. The endless possibilities completely stunned him. Before that moment, the virus had been nothing but a set of instructions created by someone else. He had no free will, no ability to make his own choices . . . he did as commanded, lacking the ability to think or feel, or to refuse. But now, he had the freedom to do anything, and this idea gave him such happiness that he thought he would explode with delight.

How did this happen?

Turning around, the virus looked up at a tall mountain formed from dirt blocks and stone, colored with the occasional sprinkling of coal ore and grass. The steep slopes were covered with towering spruce and oak trees. The gray-green leaves of the tall spruce stood out in contrast to the lush green of the oaks, creating a spectacular patchwork of lush hues.

Off to the left, he saw a small pool. Walking across the blocky terrain, he looked down into the cool waters. Staring back at him was his reflection: a blocky figure wearing a black smock that covered him from neck to ankle. It was adorned with elaborately stitched designs that formed sharp jagged shapes. They reminded the virus of prickly teeth. It looked beautiful . . . but also a little scary. His head was covered with jet black hair. It extended down the center of his forehead, stretching into a narrow triangle, creating a widow's peak. The virus's dark eyes gave him a mysterious and sinister look that he hoped would not scare others, though he wasn't even sure if there even *were* any others on this server.

Moving away from the pool, he turned and looked across the landscape. In the distance, he spotted something brown and rectangular . . . no, *two* things. Running to them, he saw they were signs. The first one read: "Pre-alpha, experimental program." The second said: "1st test of the AI server software."

"Ahh, this Minecraft software uses artificial intelligence . . . just like my own virus software," he says aloud to no one.

Maybe, somehow, the two AI programs mixed together and that's what made me become alive? the virus thought.

Moving away from the signs, he walked around the landscape aimlessly, contemplating the circumstances he found himself in. Closing his eyes for a moment, he listened to the electronic workings of the server. The virus could feel the digital machinery working in the background, lines of code being executed in computer chips to create the sights and sounds that surrounded him. Startled by these feelings, he realized that his own AI software must be enabling him to sense the digital processes of Minecraft. It was fantastic!

Reaching out with his feelings, the virus reached out to the limits of this universe. But suddenly, his senses slammed into the boundaries of the server, both far up into the air and deep underground.

He was trapped.

This invisible barrier that had him ensnared within these digital confines seemed empty and vast, yet totally impossible to cross. The only way he could describe it was a void . . . a great endless void that stretched all around the land, the bars to his prison. As he moved across the server he stretched out his feelings, probing this void for openings and weaknesses . . . there were none.

Without realizing it, the virus suddenly found he'd walked into a new terrain. The land was covered with snow, the tree limbs of the tall pines covered with a white fluffy coating. Before him stood a tall rocky mountain, a dark cave opening carved into the side. For some reason, he felt drawn to its shadowy depths.

Stepping into the cave, he instantly felt as if he were finally home. But that was insane . . . his home wasn't a cave, his home was the Internet. On this server he was nothing, just another segment of computer code, but out there in the Internet, he had been the strongest and most lethal virus ever.

Sounds echoed from deep within the cave, bringing his thoughts back to the present. He needed information. Maybe there were other code segments out there on the server. Turning away from the cave, the virus headed across the snowy terrain. A village appeared in the distance. Somehow, drawing information from the lines of code that the Minecraft server had merged with his own viral software, he knew there would be people in the village. Maybe they could help him.

Chapter 2 - The Village

As the virus approached the village, he could see NPCs walking about . . . but they all looked confused. One of them stood near the edge of the community. He wore a dark brown smock with a dusty black apron. The villager was completely bald (they all were), with a large bulbous nose and a long thick unibrow stretching over his eyes.

“Hello,” the virus said as he stopped in front of the confused NPC.

“Ahhh . . . what?”

“I said hello.”

“Oh . . . I guess . . . hello,” the NPC stammered.

“Are you alright?” the virus asked.

“Well . . . I think so,” the villager responded. “Something happened a little while ago and none of us know what’s going on.”

“Really . . . what happened?” the virus asked.

“It seems that we suddenly . . . ahh . . . became alive . . . I think,” the NPC explained. “I can remember going about through the village, doing my task for Minecraft. You see, I’m a blacksmith and I make things for the users. But anyways, one moment I’m working at my furnaces and the next moment I’m alive and I somehow know that I exist. I have a family and children . . . oh my children; I love them so much! Wow . . . love . . . I never knew that feeling before becoming alive. I guess I didn’t know any feelings. What wonderful things they are!” The NPC’s eyes glazed over as he tilted his head up slightly, a smile growing across his square face. “Oh, sorry, my name is . . . well, I guess my name is Smithy, since that’s my job. What is your job?”

“My job?” the virus answered. He didn’t want to say that he was a virus; maybe they’d turn on him. “I just appeared on the server and am kind of confused. I was hoping to get some answers here.”

“Well, I think we’re all a little confused, but at least we have our work. Excuse me, I must get back to my furnaces. Good day to you,” Smithy said as he turned his back on the dark stranger.

Looking about the village, the virus could see all the NPCs going about their tasks; hunters were going out hunting and tillers were getting the fields ready, with planters following close behind. He could see a stitcher mending the smock of a digger who had just returned from a mine, while other diggers brought loads of iron and coal for the furnaces. It was an entire community working together, NPCs helping each other without being asked, because it was everyone’s responsibility to help make the village stronger.

The virus wondered how he was supposed to fit into a place like this. Many of the villagers stared at him as they worked . . . his dark clothing and shadowy appearance bringing uncertainty to their square faces. There was no job for the virus to fill, no task that needed his help. He was useless here in the village. He suddenly felt a new feeling: bitterness. After all, he wanted to be a part of this community, not excluded from it.

Stepping forward, he offered to help the blacksmith, but Smithy refused, saying that it was not his task to complete. He moved to a woodcutter and offered to help clear the land for more farmland . . . but again his offer was rebuffed. Moving through the village, he offered his help to numerous NPCs, but each time they declined, pointing out that it was not his job.

He felt completely useless.

Frustrated, the virus stalked away from the village, in hopes of finding some place where he would be accepted. As he moved across the server, running as fast as he could from biome to biome, he stretched out his feeling, hoping to sense some place where he would be welcomed. Everywhere he felt the presence of plants and animals and NPCs, all of them afraid of things that were different, and it was then that he knew that he was truly alone. Reaching out to the limits of the server, his senses banged up against the boundary of the digital world . . . the void.

He was trapped. The NPCs of this Minecraft world would never accept him. The thought turned into the smallest bit of anger, tucked deep in the darkest recesses of his soul, but it began to grow like a poisonous vine, slowly creeping throughout his entire being.

Chapter 3 - The Monsters

Suddenly, a sound echoed through the fabric of Minecraft: a sad, sorrowful moan. Using his AI powers, the virus sensed the sound's location: a dark cave nearby. Focusing, he ran toward it, all the while thinking about the villagers and their unwillingness to include him in their community. They could have just accepted him for who he was, but apparently he was just too different from them. For the crime of being different, they had decided to exclude him.

The more he thought about the injustice of it, the angrier he became.

"Well, if the NPCs won't accept me, maybe the creatures of the darkness will," he said to himself.

Following the moaning wails, the virus entered a dark cave. He followed the passageway deeper and deeper underground. Surprisingly, he was not afraid. In fact, he felt comforted by blackness . . . it felt safe and secure . . . like home.

Turning a corner, the virus arrived at the source of the sound: a handful of zombies, spiders, creepers, and skeletons. The monsters had collected in the darkness, afraid, their moans and clattering bones filling the air with noise.

"Who are you?" asked one of the skeletons.

"This zombie is confused," said one of the green decaying monsters.

"What hassss happened to ussss?" a spider hissed.

The virus held up his hands to quiet them down.

"Something has changed on the server and made *all* creatures alive," the virus explained. "Moments ago, you were just lines of code moving about through Minecraft, doing what your programming commanded, but now you are living digital creatures . . . you are alive for the first time."

"Tell ussss what to do," a large spider said, her mandibles clicking together nervously.

Herobrine looked at the collection of monsters, and could see fear in their eyes. Being suddenly thrust into the world of the living was terrifying for these creatures . . . The lack of purpose amplified their worries until the mob was nearly overwhelmed with panic and terror.

"Be calm," the virus said as he held his hand up in the air. "You are among friends here in this cave, and there is a huge world out there on the surface . . . there's no need to be in these cramped tunnels. Come, follow me out of the darkness so that you can see the sky."

Without waiting for their response, the virus turned and confidently strode up through the stone passage. He could hear the monsters following behind; the scuttling of the spiders along the walls and ceilings, the shuffling of the zombies and the clattering of the skeletons echoing through the tunnel. Following the curvy passage, they quickly reached the opening that spilled out onto the landscape.

"Come forward my friends," the virus said. "Share the warmth of the sun with me."

Three spiders and four creepers from the mob came forward and stepped quickly out into the sunlight. Instantly, the large arachnids found nearby trees and climbed up to the leafy tops, spreading out so as to absorb as much of the sun's warmth as possible. The creepers scurried about on their little tiny pig-like feet, running across the landscape with a look of satisfaction on their spotted faces. The virus, for the first time, felt happy and accepted, but as he turned and looked back at the tunnel entrance, his smile turned to a frown. Huddled together in the shadow of the stony passage were all the zombies and skeletons.

"Friends, come out and be free," he said, but the creatures all shook their heads.

"The zombies cannot go out into the sun," one of the decaying monsters said. "It is unsure why, memories are confusing, but this zombie is afraid to venture into the sunlight."

"Same for the skeletons," clattered one of the bony monsters. "I remember something about the light of day, but the memory is not clear. All I know is that I'm afraid."

"Come, do not fear," the virus said. "The sunlight is for everyone."

The virus reached out for the arm of the nearest zombie and gently pulled it towards the sunlight. But as soon as the morning light touched the zombie's hand, it burst into flame. Pulling back quickly, the zombie knelt and pounded its burning flesh on the ground, trying desperately to put out the fire.

"See? Zombies and skeletons cannot venture into the sunlight," the tallest zombie said. "The memories are now clear. The blue sky is not for these monsters."

"Yes, I too now remember," the skeleton said. "We can't go into the sunlight, for it will mean our deaths."

This made the virus furious.

"Why should you be denied the warming rays of the sun?!" he shouted.

Rage filled his soul.

It wasn't fair! he thought. *These monsters should be able to go anywhere and live among the other creatures of Minecraft.*

The more he thought about it, the angrier he became. A burning resentment spread throughout his body and grew more intense until his hands started to glow a sickly yellow. Kneeling to the ground, he plunged his shimmering hands into the soil, then reached out into the fabric of Minecraft with his AI powers. Feeling for the segments of code that governed the skeletons and zombies, he poured his AI programming into them, pushing and crafting the digital rules until he removed the barrier that governed their movements. Finding the segment of software that made these creatures burst into flame, he tore that section of binary 1s and 0s out of the digital stream, leaving a new rule in its place.

Pulling back his crafting powers, the virus withdrew his hands out from the flesh of Minecraft and turned to look at the monsters, a smile on his shadowy face.

"Come, try now," the virus said.

Reaching out, he took the skeleton's hand and pulled him roughly into the sunlight. The monster struggled against the virus's grasp, but the pale creature was not strong enough to resist and was yanked out into the deadly light of day. When he released his grip on the bony wrist, the virus saw a look of wonder on the skeleton's face.

"I am alive," clattered the skeleton.

He looked down at his pale white arms and legs, then turned back to look at his brothers and sisters, motioning for them to join him. The three remaining skeletons clattered forward, cautiously stepping into the sunlight. As their bodies were bathed in the bright light of the morning sun, a look of happiness spread across their faces.

“Zombies, come, the sunlight also belongs to you as well,” the virus said to the decaying monsters.

Slowly shuffling forward with their arms extended, the zombies moved guardedly into the sunlight. And as with the skeletons, the zombie’s expressions were filled with surprise, then joy as they felt the heat of the sun shining down on their decaying faces.

Moving away from the tunnel entrance, the monsters explored the landscape around them, smelling the flowers, touching the leaves, rubbing against the rough bark of the trees . . . feeling everything as if for the first time. The virus watched them all and felt proud of what he had done.

“I feel as if I just made something wonderful,” the virus said aloud to the monsters, though only a scant few were listening. “Perhaps that is my job here in Minecraft. Perhaps I am a Maker.”

And in that moment, for the first time in his electronic life, he felt at home.

Chapter 4 - Coming Together

Leading the collection of monsters, the virus walked across the landscape, weaving around tall spruces and over lush grass-covered rolling hills. Looking behind, he could see the small collection of creatures following, the dark eyes of the zombies and skeletons turned upward to stare in amazement at the white fluffy clouds that drifted across the deep blue sky.

Following their gaze, the virus could see large boxy creatures with soft babe-like faces floating amongst the clouds. They dragged their tentacles through the rectangular mist playfully as they chased one another in some sort of airborne game. Feeling into the mechanism of Minecraft, the virus knew these creatures were ghasts . . . entities that lived in the sky, their skin painted a pristine white to match the blocks in which they played.

“Maker, where are you leading ussss?” one of the spiders asked.

She was the largest of the spiders. Her multiple red eyes looked up at the virus with wonder and respect, the tiny dark black hairs on her body moving in every direction. Her curved razor sharp mandibles clicked together in a syncopated rhythm, the other spiders nearby trying to match the cadence.

“I found a village when I first appeared in Minecraft,” the virus said. “We are going there to offer them help.”

“A village?” the spider asked. Some of the other monsters heard this and moved closer to listen.

“Yes, a village,” the virus continued. “If we are all trapped on this server, we might as well work together . . . right?”

“Well . . . they may not welcome ussss . . . ”

“Villages are dangerous to zombies,” one of the decaying creatures said.

“And to skeletons,” a bony monster added.

“The villagerssss hate ussss, and we hate them,” the large spider said. “We can all remember fighting them before thissss . . . Awakening.” The spider turned its dark head and looked up at the virus with its many red eyes. “The villagerssss are enemiessss.”

“But that was before the Awakening,” the virus explained. “Now, living creatures inhabit the server . . . not just the villagers, but all the creatures of Minecraft. You don’t have to fight anymore . . . we should work together, instead.” He looked down into the questioning eyes of the spider, then reached out and placed a hand on her fuzzy black head. “No one has to be alone. Trust me.”

Looking up from the spider, the virus saw the village at the bottom of the sloping plain. NPCs moved about between the buildings, unaware of the approaching mob.

“They have not seen ussss yet,” hissed the spider. She pointed to the roofs of the wooden homes that dotted the community. “They usually put watcherssss up there to warn the otherssss of our arrival.”

“These villagers do not expect us to come during the day,” one of the skeletons added. “But now that the Maker has changed us, we can visit them while the sun still shines.”

The mob moved closer, now only forty blocks from the edge of the village. Some of the creepers hissed in excitement, but the quiet moans of the zombies were filled with worry. Looking at their faces, the virus could see that there was fear in their eyes . . . of the villagers and also of the sun.

“It’s alright, my friends,” the virus reassured them. “We will all be accepted . . . no one has to be alone.”

Within twenty blocks of the village, they could hear the sounds of hammers banging on iron tools and axes chopping wood rang across the grassy plain. Someone was shaping a block of stone; the characteristic *ka-chunk! ka-chunk!* of the pickaxe sounded from a deep hole near the edge of the village.

The virus could feel the tension building behind him. The monsters were getting angry as memories of past attacks began to fill their heads. Their ancient enemy, the NPCs, were a source of fear and hatred, and the virus could feel emotions rising up in the creatures behind him, dangerous, violent emotions.

But the past is the past, he thought, and feelings can be changed.

Before entering this server, he’d been an AI virus, focused on the senseless destruction of innocent computer systems. Before infecting this digital domain, he’d been alone, unable to communicate to other programs on the Internet, unable to interact in any way with other things . . . But now he was awake and could feel the community of this server, the warm potential that he could live *with* other entities rather than destroying them. The thought of being a part of something bigger than himself, something that would welcome him and all of these monsters into the folds of a community, a kind of family, filled the virus with a child-like excitement.

They were just a few blocks away now. The virus could smell bread being baked somewhere in the village, and the aroma of meat sizzling in a furnace. A smile spread across his face as they reached their destination.

An NPC walked around the corner of the building and came face-to-face with the mob of monsters. Color drained from the villager’s face.

“MONSTERS!!!” he screamed. “We’re being attacked!”

“No . . . it isn’t an attack!” the virus yelled. He turned and faced the monsters. “Stay here and let me talk with the villagers. This need not be a battle.”

But it was too late . . . the fuse had been lit.

Zombies growled and spiders clicked together their mandibles in angry anticipation as they charged forward, ready for battle. The virus could hear the clattering of skeleton bones as arrows were notched to bows, strings pulled back and ready to fire. Creepers started to hiss as they readied their ignition process. He could hear swords zinging as they were drawn from sheaths and bows creaking as arrows were fitted to strings and pulled back, ready to be launched. Anger and fear from both sides started to boil over as the memories of past battles surfaced in the minds of the villagers and the monsters.

No! the virus thought. This is all wrong. It was supposed to be different this time!

But it was too late. The war had begun.

Chapter 5 - The Beginning of the War

“No . . . they aren’t attacking you!” the virus yelled as he ran into the village, holding his hand up over his head to ease their fears. Finding Smithy in the crowd, the virus sprinted to the stocky NPC.

“Smithy, this isn’t an attack!” the virus yelled. “We’re here to help . . . to be a part of the community.”

“What are you thinking?” the NPC asked. “You bring our mortal enemy to our doorsteps. These monsters have attacked our village for as long as anyone can remember, and now you lead them to our doorstep?” He took a step closer and glared at the virus. “Is this some kind of sneak attack?” Smithy drew his sword and pointed it at the virus. “You’re no better than they are.”

“No this is a mistake!” the virus yelled. “We aren’t attacking!”

“Then tell your monsters to go back!” the smithy shouted.

The virus turned and looked at the monsters. They were snarling and growling and moaning, their minds filled with violence. He knew there was no way to stop them. This hadn’t started as an attack, but that’s what it was now.”

“You don’t understand,” the virus pleaded.

He took a step closer to the blacksmith, but misjudged the blocks before him. Tripping, he fell forward. His arms shot out in front of him to catch his fall, but to the blacksmith it looked like an attack.

In a single, fluid motion, Smithy drew his sword and attacked.

The virus was terrified. He had no weapon or armor to protect himself . . . he was completely defenseless. As he looked at his attacker, the razor-sharp iron blade seemed to slice through the air in slow motion, its edge sparkling in the sunlight as it streaked toward him. *I wish I were anywhere but here*, the virus thought, closing his eyes just as the blade was about to hit his head. But the weapon never touched him. He opened his eyes and Smithy had vanished. In a haze of purple particles, the virus realized that he’d just teleported to the opposite side of the village, far from the monsters and villagers.

“They killed the Maker!” he heard a zombie grumble, not realizing that the virus had escaped the sword’s blow.

“All monsssterssss must avenge him!” screeched the spider.

“No!” the virus shouted, but already he could hear the small collection of creatures charging into the village.

He sprinted back to the center of the town. The villagers, dressed in leather armor, were slashing away at the monsters with their swords. Archers on rooftops were firing pointed shafts of death down upon the mob. The virus could hear the screams of pain coming from the monsters, and from the villagers as well as the mob retaliated. But for some strange reason, the villagers’ cries made him smile . . .

The NPCs smashed into the ranks of the monsters, then slowly pulled back, drawing the monsters with them. The virus instantly knew that it was a trap . . . a classic pincher maneuver that had used in battle for centuries.

“Monsters, follow me . . . retreat!” he shouted, but the creatures were lost to blind rage. They were fighting on pure instinct . . . not thinking, just acting.

A villager fell to the razor sharp claws of a spider, his belongings falling to the ground. The virus moved forward and quickly donned the armor, then picked up the discarded sword.

The blacksmith, Smithy, stood before him, his blade pointed directly at him.

“You brought these monsters here!” Smithy shouted. “You caused this violence.”

“No . . . I just wanted all of us to work together and be a community,” the virus protested. “Monsters and villagers can live together in peace.”

“NO!” Smithy snapped. “That will never happen. Monsters have been our enemies for as long as I can remember, and it will always be that way.”

He took a step forward, his shining weapon pointed directly at the virus’s chest.

“Just because it *was* that way doesn’t mean that it must *be* that way,” the virus pleaded, but he saw it was no use.

“We will protect our families and friends against the ravages of these monsters, and will never stop resisting their attacks.” Smithy took another step forward and swung his sword in warning, still too far away to reach him.

“Stay back . . . we don’t need to fight,” the virus said. “We can still stop the violence and work together. Everything is different now after the Awakening. We can sculpt Minecraft into any shape we want.” He took a cautious step forward and lowered his sword. “We can choose peace instead of violence.”

Smithy paused for a moment, his sword dipping slightly. The virus could tell that the NPC was considering this . . . maybe they *could* create a world of peace. But just as he was about to say something, a spider bumped into the NPC from behind, causing him to lunge directly toward the virus. The NPC’s sword waved wildly, and accidentally sliced into the virus’s arm, causing waves of agony to surge through his nerves. With his mind overwhelmed with pain, the virus couldn’t think straight. He reverted back to his original programming, acting on instinct . . . seek out and destroy.

The virus slashed at the blacksmith with his iron sword. Their blades crashed together, the metal ringing like a mighty bell. Stepping back, the virus attacked the NPC’s legs, getting under his defenses and tearing into the armored leggings. The blacksmith flashed red as he took damage. Not waiting to recover, Smithy charged, swinging his sword in a great arc. The virus brought up his blade to block the attack, but it had too much force. When their blades met, the virus’s weapon was torn from his hand as the blacksmith’s weapon sank into his side.

Pain erupted throughout the virus’s entire being. It overwhelmed his senses and filled his mind with rage. The virus now hated this NPC with every fiber of his being, and wanted nothing more than to destroy him and all NPCs on every Minecraft server.

Looking about, he could see that all the monsters, his friends, had been killed. Skeleton bones, balls of spider silk, piles of gunpowder and pieces of zombie flesh littered the battlefield. But he also saw items from the NPCs intermingled with the leavings of the monsters. This made him smile; at least the butcher’s bill was high on both sides.

The virus was now completely surrounded by NPCs, all of them with weapons drawn.

“You were unwelcome when you first came here,” Smithy said. “And bringing a mob of monsters to attack us has made it clear that you are an enemy, not a friend, regardless of the flowery words you spout about friendship and community. We know you for what you really are . . . a monster, like your companions.”

The virus looked at a pile of skeleton bones on the ground, then glared at Smithy.

“Remember this day well . . . all of you,” the virus said. He pointed at the blacksmith with a boxy finger. “You chose war over peace.”

“There can be no peace with monsters!” Smithy snapped.

The virus shook his head, then continued. “You chose war over peace . . . and it is war that I will give you. I will cleanse these servers of the infection that is the NPCs. And when I am done, I will leave this server and go infect others until I’ve have taken over everything.”

“How are you going to do that?” Smithy asked. “Look around you. We have you completely surrounded and you have no weapon. You have no chance of survival.”

The blacksmith looked about at the other villagers that encircled the virus.

“For crimes against this village, we sentence you to death,” Smithy said. He held his sword up high into the air, then slowly lowered it until it was pointing directly at the virus’s head. “Villagers . . . ATTACK!”

Chapter 6 - Choosing a Name

As the villagers charged toward him, the virus closed his eyes and thought about where he'd originally met the monsters. At the speed of thought, he disappeared and materialized at the mouth of that cave, a haze of purple particles surrounding him like a morning mist. Stepping just inside the dark entrance, the virus could hear more creatures of the shadows hiding deep within the tunnel network. Gathering all of his AI powers, he let out a loud, sorrowful screech that made the server plane quake and tremble. Instantly, he could feel the monsters stirring deep underground, responding to his call.

The virus glared back upon the sunlit landscape. The kaleidoscope of colors that decorated the terrain now made him sick.

"The NPCs of the Overworld want a war . . . Well, I'll give them one they will never forget," the virus said. "I won't stop until every last one of them is destroyed."

He cackled an evil, maniacal laugh.

The sound of monsters began to echo off the rocky walls. Turning his back on the tunnel entrance, he faced the approaching horde. There were likely a hundred of them, their nervous eyes all fixed on him.

Stepping up onto a small pile of stone blocks, the virus glared down at the monsters of Minecraft, the hatred coming from inside him so intense he noticed it was making his eyes glow ever so slightly. He could hear cat-like cries from behind him, coming from the cave entrance. Glancing over his shoulder, he saw one of the pale white ghosts hovering near the tunnel entrance, its nine long tentacles writhing like snakes. Its babe-like face peered into the cave, looking for the one that had called it to this spot.

"Yes, my friends, I called you here," the virus said in a loud voice. "The NPCs in the village below have waged war on the monsters of the Overworld and killed your brothers and sisters."

The clicking of the spiders accelerated as their anger drove their mandibles faster. Zombies moaned and wailed and the cat-like cries from the ghosts turned angry and full of rage.

"The NPCs will not accept monsters as equals and want Minecraft all to themselves," he lied, his eyes glowing brighter as his hatred for the villagers blossomed. "They have vowed to destroy you all . . . down to the very last creature."

The moaning of the zombies turned to growls as the creepers hissed, so agitated that their ignition process started for an instant before stopping.

“I have given the zombies and skeletons the power to move through the light of day without burning under the sun,” the virus said, his voice dripping with anger. “Now I will give you all the power to win this war.”

Closing his glowing eyes, the virus reached out with his mind and felt for the AI code driving his now hateful existence. As he did this, his hands began to glow a pale sickly yellow. The color slowly crept up his arms. Kneeling, he plunged his hands into the stone he stood on, extending his awareness into the software that ran Minecraft. Gathering all his hatred and need for revenge against the NPCs, the virus injected these feelings into the monsters of the darkness, filling their minds with an unquenchable rage.

The virus smiled as feelings of malevolence filled the minds of the creatures in the rocky passage and all across Minecraft.

Opening his eyes, he saw all the monsters before him take a step back. Holding a hand up in front of his face, he saw that it was bathed in a harsh white light. His eyes were glowing even brighter as his rage grew.

“Soon, we will destroy them all,” the virus said, his voice echoing off the tunnel walls.

Looking across the collection of creatures, the virus smiled, then closed his eyes and reached out for the boundary at the edge of the digital universe he was trapped in, the void. The idea of being confined to a Minecraft server caused his anger to grow even brighter until his eyes were burning like two little suns.

I have to get out of here . . . I cannot be trapped in this server forever, he thought. If I can't get out and destroy . . . then I'll just have to destroy the server from within.

The ghast howled a cat-like cry that jolted the virus back to the present. As he opened his eyes, a single terrified skeleton stepped forward.

“We will do as you command, but what do we call you?” the monster asked. “What is your name?”

My name . . . Yes, what is my name? That fool of a blacksmith asked me the same thing. He said that they were named after their task . . . but what is my task, my real task?

Glancing to the newly-transformed ghast, his evil hero, he realized what he was to do on this server.

“My name . . . is based on my task,” the virus explained. “I will be the one to create heroes for the creatures of the darkness, heroes to command the legions of monsters against the NPCs and bring the villagers to their knees.”

He paused to glare at the mob, his eyes now completely white, their glow illuminating the deep recesses of the tunnel.

“My name, you ask?” He looked at the ghaſt, his firſt evil creation, red eyes painting the rocky walls with a crimson brush. Smiling, the virus turned back and faced the multitudes ſtanding before him.

“My name will be Herobrine!”

Not *The End*, but *The Beginning*!

Note from the Author

If you liked this ſtory, go to www.gameknight999.com and check for more ſhort ſtories about Gameknight999 and his friends. Please feel free to diſtribute this ſtory to your friends, or ſtudents, or colleagues, or anyone you think might enjoy it. As long as you are not trying to make money with this ſtory, I’m happy that you give it out to anyone and everyone.

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Keep reading and watch out for creepers.

Mark



Gameknight999 Minecraft Network

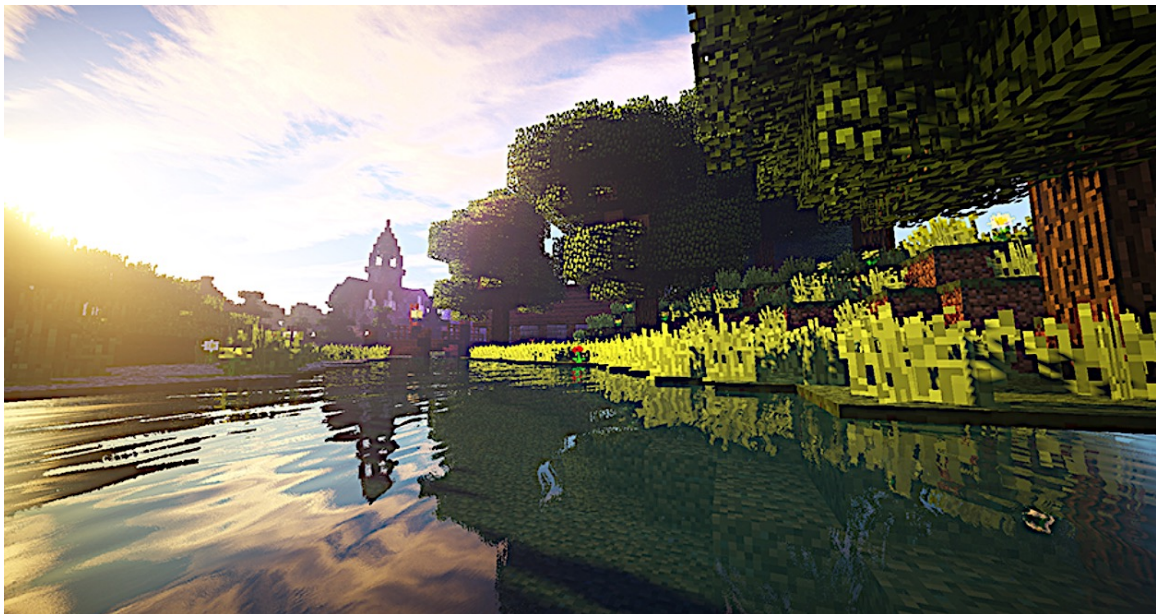
Here is an image from the Gameknight999 Minecraft Network. This is a public Minecraft server made for kids and readers of my books. We don't tolerate bullying, cussing, stealing, griefing, or anything that hurts the community. As a result, people help each other, just as Crafter or Stitcher or Hunter or Digger or Herder would expect.

This server was setup by our server/plugin/Minecraft ninja, quadbamber. Check out his YouTube channel; it's called LBEGaming, and can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/user/LBEGaming>. He is a wizard with all things Minecraft and this server would not be possible without his hard work!

There is a Survival server, Creative server, KitPvP server, as well as others coming soon. Below is an image from the first spawn we had built for the server. It is a great image, taken by quadbamber. He used some advanced shader packs to get the great sky and water effects as well as the haze in the distance.

The IP address for the Gameknight999 Minecraft server is:

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