

The Jungle Temple Oracle – Excerpt

Book Two in the Mystery of Herobrine Series: An Unofficial
Minecrafters' Adventure

By Mark Cheverton

As they moved away from the tree line, Gameknight999 heard a sound and spun his horse around. On the treetops, he could see dark figures sunken down amidst the leaves, the leafy foliage hiding their bodies but their multiple red eyes gave away their presence... It was spiders, and lots of them.

“We’re under attack, everyone run!” Gameknight shouted.

The villagers, battle hardened from the constant attacks on their village and the attacks in the forest, did not yell or scream, they just drew their weapons and waited for commands.

“Keep moving away from the trees,” he yelled. “They aren’t attacking yet, but they will soon.”

Crafter and Digger came running up, with Hunter close behind.

“What’s happening?” Crafter asked.

Gameknight pointed at the treetops.

“They’re probably waiting for more spiders, or instructions from their leader,” Crafter explained. “Spiders are solitary animals and do not like working together. They only do it when they are forced, so if the order hasn’t been given yet, they won’t move.”

“We need to take advantage of this,” Digger said in his deep voice. “Ahead is a hill, with rivers on either side. It would be a good, defensible position.”

Turning, Gameknight looked at the terrain and understood what Digger meant. Ahead, the ground slowly sloped upward, forming a large mound around which two rivers flowed,

then met behind the hill, forming a watery ‘V’ that protected their rear. That would be a good place to set up a defense.

“Digger, I need you to get the people moving as fast as you can.” He then dismounted and drew his sword. “Warriors, get off your horses and give them to the elderly and weak. We will be the rear guard while the rest of the village gets on that hill.”

Without questioning the order, the soldiers jumped off their horses and found another to ride them. They then returned with weapons drawn to stand at Gameknight’s side.

“Digger...go!”

The big NPC turned and ran off, shouting instructions to everyone else. Before Crafter could leave, Gameknight grabbed his sleeve.

“Crafter, you remember the little surprise we had for the monsters during the battle at the Bridge to Nowhere, after we had retrieved the Iron Rose?” Gameknight999 asked.

Smiling, Crafter nodded his head.

“Great-Uncle Weaver would like you,” the young NPC replied, then turned and ran off, yelling commands of his own.

“What...what?” Monet asked, she had just gotten to Gameknight’s side. “Who’s Great-Uncle Weaver?”

“He was Crafter’s Great-Uncle, and he said once, ‘Many problems with monsters can be solved with some creativity and a little TNT,’” Gameknight said. “Crafter is going to prepare a little surprise for these spiders.” And then he gave his sister an angry glare. “What are you doing here...you should be heading up the hill to safety.”

Glancing back up the hill, he could see Tiller waving and running toward her.

“I’m going to help you fight,” she answered. “You saw how good I’m shooting now with my bow.”

“Don’t be ridiculous, Monet, this is going to be dangerous. War is not for kids.”

“But you’re a kid.”

“Not in Minecraft,” Gameknight snapped. “Here, I’m the User-that-is-not-a-user, a seasoned warrior and you’re still just a kid. Now get back there where it’s safe.”

“NO!”

Gameknight sighed, then motioned for the blacksmith to come near.

“Smithy, please escort my sister to the hill with the rest of the villagers,” Gameknight instructed. “If she refuses, then pick her up and carry her. She can’t stay here. I...ahh...need her to help set up the defenses...” He leaned forward and stared into the eyes of the big blacksmith. “Do you understand? I can’t focus on protecting my kid sister while an army of spiders is about to attack.”

Smithy nodded, then grabbed Monet’s hand and started walking quickly toward the hill. Monet sighed, then turned and followed the big NPC, a look of disappointment on her face.

Grinning a satisfied smile, Gameknight could hear Tiller start to lecture his sister on the dangers of monsters, while Monet objected to her mistreatment. He was glad that Tiller was there...it made it a little easier to focus on keeping everyone safe from the monsters of Minecraft. Turning, he faced the forest and peered into its shadowy depths. As he drew his sword from his inventory, a voice spoke up to him.

“You could have been a little nicer about that.”

Turning, he found Stitcher next to him, scowling up at him, her unibrow furled with anger.

“What do you mean,” Gameknight replied. “She can’t be down here, she’s just a kid.”

“I’m just a kid,” she replied. “Should I go back with the old women and hide?”

“Of course not, Stitcher, I need you here. Besides, that’s different. You’re not a kid...you’re Stitcher. We’ve fought side-by-side through a hundred battles, and I know you can take care of yourself. But Monet is too young and not experienced enough yet. I can’t trust her to be smart out here on the battlefield.”

“Something’s happening,” one of the warriors yelled.

Turning back to the tree line, Gameknight could see more spiders on the treetops. As their numbers swelled, their agitated clicking grew in volume, the sound resembling a swarm of a million angry crickets. Through the leaves, the growing number of bright red eyes glared at them with a burning hatred that seemed so intense that Gameknight could almost feel the heat from their stares. This shocked him. These spiders hated the NPCs with such a passion that it was almost consuming their ability to think.

What would cause these monsters to hate NPCs so much? he thought.

“Everyone start backing up,” Gameknight commanded. “Draw your bows and get ready. Form two ranks and spread out. We can’t let the spiders get past us, no matter what. The warriors behind us need more time.”

The warriors cheered, then put away their blades and pulled out their bows. Fitting arrows to bowstrings, the warriors continued to move backward, arrows pointed at the monsters in the distance. Through the trees, Gameknight could see movement. Something green and spotted was moving between the tall oaks, creatures scurrying along a tiny little feet. As they moved to the edge of the trees, Gameknight could see what they were...creepers.

Great...more monsters.

Stepping forward, Gameknight turned and faced the warriors. Looking into their scared faces, he saw pride in their eyes, but also terror. They could see that they were completely outnumbered and fighting a horde of spiders out in the open was never a very good idea. But with all that going through their minds, they looked to Gameknight with hope and the expectation that he would save them.

Their lives are in my hands... They're relying on me to survive.

Whether he wanted to or not, he was the User-that-is-not-a-user, and he needed to figure out a way for these NPCs to survive the upcoming battle. And as he glanced at the spiders that were gathering on the treetops the puzzle pieces started to tumble around

in his head. And then one of the pieces fell into place...the creepers...and then the next fell home and the next and the next.

“OK, here’s what we’re going to do,” Gameknight yelled. “When the monsters charge, front rank will...” and he explained his plan to nodding heads.

When he completed his orders, Gameknight could see hope shining bright in their boxy faces...they all now had a chance to survive the impending battle.

“Here they come!” one of the soldiers yelled.

And as Gameknight turned to face the impending mob, that old familiar feeling spread through his body. It was a sensation that made his feet feel as if they planted in concrete and his arms feel weak. It made him uncertain if he was doing the right thing, or if his decisions would get everyone killed. It was a feeling that he’d felt so many times in Minecraft that it had become an old friend...or maybe a nemesis.

It was fear.

Pushing the fear aside, he focused on *the now* and gripped his sword firmly, then turned and faced the storm of monsters that were rushing toward them. With every bit of strength he had, he yelled out his battle cry and it echoed across the battlefield.

“FOR MINECRAFT!”

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