Battle At Immunesburg

POZ asked 16-year-old HIVer Justin LiGreci to submit a journal entry detailing first period to eighth period in his Staten Island, New York high school. Teens knowing best, LiGreci instead presented us with a revealing slice of inner life. Call it Saving Private Ryan meets Dawson's Creek.

April 1, 2000 By Justin LiGreci

Day 1: This was what we had gone through training camp for. General T. Cell had a record of 10 victories and zero losses, and under his command, we were fearless. We thought no intruder could get into our lands.

Then we received reports of a violator that had appeared without warning, consuming and devouring all that came in its path. (We were lucky to even get the report, as the scouting party was almost wiped out.) General TC led us to the front. And we saw it—the intruder. We rushed to the invader, confident we could kill it. But even though it was quite small, it attached itself to Celly—a private fresh out of the lymph training facility—and ate into him as we watched in horror. The violator destroyed him from the inside, and what was worse, when Celly's structure broke down, hundreds of fresh violators were released. Seeing the danger, General TC ordered an immediate retreat.

But it was too late. The new violators attached to others, almost destroying our army within moments. We scattered. I saw Cylabell, a good friend, fall apart right near me. I got so scared I ran. I ran as fast as I could, the road beneath me a red haze as I stumbled over those who had fallen, sucked up by the violator. Thousands of them now. I ran across that red road until I fainted…

Day 3: I awoke to see General TC. He'd never seen anything like this—a parasite that takes your men and uses them against you. If our numbers keep being decimated at these rates…. Every time it attacks, we have to run—
losing more and more troops. The Lymph training center cannot keep up with our heavy casualties. We know we are doomed.

Day 20: 16 days running and we lose a good man every day. Maybe it's our fault for not attacking sooner. Maybe we could have recognized the threat and not put it off until we felt ready to take it on. Who knows how long it was here, observing, watching us.

Day 22: A new ally has appeared. It says nothing, but its insignia reads AZT. Cautious, General TC sent out a small platoon to attack a position held by the parasite. It saw us coming and attacked, but AZT worked as a shield. We destroyed the monster and reported back to General TC, overjoyed.

Day 60: After a long offensive, after all the ground we recaptured, the parasite “evolved” and can get around our shield. General TC is recalling all of our garrisons to fortify our positions. And retreat if necessary.

Day 75: Today General TC himself escorted something new into our camp. Protease. Many of us were suspicious after AZT’s failure, but Protease told us that we can win. It led us on the offensive, in a turnaround, and went inside the parasite to do something to make it seem ineffective. It was a hard battle, but we’ve stuck it out so far. Only time will tell….

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Battle-At-Immunesburg-10446-5699