

The Tusker Tribune

The Student Newspaper of Somers Middle School

**NEXT
WEEK:**

**Living History
Day Coverage!**

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Spring 2017



"Uranium"— Chapters 13-14-15

A NaNoWriMo Story



**By Nitin Seshadri
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer**

Editor's Note: Somers Middle School Eighth Graders have been writing novels during the school year for the NaNoWriMo program. The name is short for National Novel Writing Month. Nitin Seshadri, a Tusker Tribune Staffer, has been presenting his NaNoWriMo entry chapter by chapter in the Tusker Tribune. Chapters 11 and 12 were featured in the April 13 Tusker Tribune. Chapters 13-14-15 of his story, "Uranium", appear today.

Chapter 13

Derek was woken up sharply at 7:15 by Jose. "Get UP! Our ride comes in 15 minutes. Here's something to eat. Get it down quick. The ride is going to be very bumpy and I don't want you barfing all over your shirt. Besides, you already smell like you haven't showered in months. We don't need more of that smell."

Jose tried to swat the foul smell away.

Derek took the mush and shoveled it down. It tasted so good, like food he hadn't eaten in years. Just then, Derek heard a loud buzzing noise similar to Andrew's dad's weed whacker.

"Okay. That's our ride." Jose pointed to an ATV parked outside the hut. "Let's go."

As Jose and Derek got into the ATV, the blond-haired man driving asked who Derek was. "Who's this little feller here?" he said in a Texan accent.

"Oh, Chris, he's that smart kid I was telling you about. You know how my dad's a math teacher? This guy's his best student. Apparently,



he killed a Cannibal with his cell phone. I think he can become a BlobBuster. You?"

"Well, that sure seems interesting, mate," Chris said, "So let's not be so late." Chris gunned the ATV's engine and within a few minutes, they arrived at a concrete building that probably was once a shopping mall but had been blasted by the Cannibals a long time ago.

"Time to get off. The committee meeting is going to start in less than a minute now," Chris said. "I'm going to park this ATV out back and I'll come in."

"Okay, buddy," Jose said. Jose and Derek walked into the building and sat in one of the chairs around a round table near the entrance. Many of the men and women sitting around the table were chatting.

"So this is the fifth weekly BlobBuster committee meeting. You should introduce yourself," announced Jose. "We have a new member candidate, referred by me."

Everyone's attention turned to Jose, then Derek.

"Who's he?" a woman yelled.

"This little man here"—Jose ruffled Derek's hair—"He's allegedly killed a Cannibal with his cell phone."

The other members looked at him with a quizzical look.

"How can that be?" a woman asked.

"Tell 'em your story," Jose whispered to Derek. "Go for it."

Over the next hour, Derek narrated his story. By the end, everyone was staring with their mouths hanging open.

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SMS Year-End Calendar

May 24th: ILS Lab Assessment
May 25th: Living History Day
May 26th-29th: Schools Closed (Memorial Week-end)
May 29th: Fife and Drum in Memorial Day Parade
June 1st: Chorus/
Orchestra Concert @7pm
June 2nd: Chorus to High
Note Festival
June 2nd: Harlem Wizards
June 1st & 2nd: Regents
Earth Science Lab Practical
June 5th: ILS Written
Assessment
June 7th: Band Concert
@7pm
June 7th: Special Olympics
Dinner Dance @SHS
(4:00-7:00pm)
June 8th: Yearbook Distribution
June 12th-16th: 7th Grade World Language Final
(one piece per day)
June 13th: Algebra Regents
June 14th: 7th Science final



June 14th & 15th: 7th and 8th Grade Math final
June 15th: Earth Science Regents (PM-students
report by 11:30am)
June 16th: 6th Grade Math final
June 16th: Geometry

June 16th: 7th Social
Studies final
June 16th: 6th & 7th
Grade Health final
June 19th: FLACS Exam
June 19th: 7th Grade
Splashdown trip
June 19th: 8th Grade
Graduation practice; 8th
Grade Graduation Dance
@Villa Barone (7-10pm)
June 20th: *Raindate for
7th Grade Splashdown
trip
June 20th: 6th Grade So-
cial Studies final

June 20th: 8th Grade Lake Compounce trip
June 21st: 6th Grade Science Final
June 22nd: ½ day (dismissal at 11:30AM)
June 22nd: 8th Grade Graduation (2:00PM)
June 23rd: Last day of school for 6th/7th Grade (1/2
day – dismissal at 11:30AM)

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Waiting for that Last Bell



By Sabrina Cheung
Tusker Tribune Staff
Writer

Kids in such a hurry;
 The best day of the

year;
 The hallways fill with paper;
 Laughter, happiness, and cheer.

I wish that this could happen
 sooner;

The finals will soon begin;

Kids are still unhappy;
 Where are the joyful grins?

Only another couple of weeks;
 Filled with hard work and determina-
 tion;
 But once this is all over;
 It's time for a relaxing vacation!



The Tusker
Tribune Staff

Nitin Seshadri
Ian Marr
Sabrina Cheung
Nate Marcus
Matt Kahn




KEEP CALM
BECAUSE
 SCHOOL IS
ALMOST
OVER.

“Uranium”

From page 1

“That is pretty darn interesting,” a man said.

“Raise your hand if you want Derek in the BlobBusters!” Jose announced. Hands shot up like rockets.

Unanimous vote. Derek was in.

“You’re in, kid. Good job,” Jose said to Derek.

“Thanks, Jose.” Derek said.

“Now that you’re in, here’s the best gift of all. Look around, son. There’s a surprise waiting behind you,” an elderly man said from the far side of the table.

Derek spun around and saw Andrew and Andrea. “Oh boy,” he said. “You’re back!”

“Yes we are,” they said. “And we’re also BlobBusters. Let’s go.”

“What happened?” Derek asked.

“Here’s the lowdown, Derek,” Andrew said. “We (the BlobBusters) have befriended a group of aliens called the Woks. They look exactly like the Cannibals, but with one striking difference. They are slightly more opaque than the Cannibals. Also, they cannot morph into humans. You might be wondering how the Cannibals got their name. Due to limitations of their more primitive digestive system, they only can eat humans alive.”

Derek shuddered.

“On the other hand, our friends the Woks, they have a more advanced digestive system and can eat nearly everything they find or you feed to them. Salad, sushi, dog food, doughnuts, you name it. Everything except grass. That causes them to get a form of dysentery.”

“How the heck to they look so similar?” Derek questioned.

“Well,” Andrea said, “They evolved amongst one another, but a long time ago, the smarter Woks developed a DNA hack that gave them the ability to subsist on everything. They injected the hack into every Wok’s blood, and when they had children, the children had the DNA hack as well. So while the Woks could survive on anything, the dumber Cannibals still ate meat. Eventually, the supply of alien goats ran out on the homeworld, and the Cannibals came here to eat us. We are the only species that taste even better than the goats, for some reason.”

The Woks tried to prevent them, but the Cannibals developed a way to morph into humans

like those nurses that we woke up with. The Woks have come to Earth to stop them from eating us and wiping the human race from the face of the Earth. They’ve now dedicated their entire lives to obliterate the Cannibals because they don’t believe in altering the course of other worlds.”

“How’d you guys get to know them?” Derek asked.

“That’s irrelevant. We just need to find a way to infiltrate the Cannibals and kill them,” another BlobBuster, Doug, explained. “Up until now, we’ve only been able to send Woks on reconnaissance missions, but we can’t have them bring in weapons or the Cannibals will become suspicious.”

The Woks can masquerade as Cannibals and go in and come out, but not much more than that. Your job is to find a way by tomorrow. We’ll execute the plan the following day. Make it quick, Derek.”

“Meeting is over!” Chris announced. “You may leave now.” Chris looked at Derek. “And you, young man, you need to do your homework. Due tomorrow.”

Derek sighed. *Homework? Really? Isn’t this more like “save-the-earth” work?*

Chapter 14

The next day, the BlobBusters regrouped at the committee building.

“Here’s the lowdown,” Derek explained. “What we’re going to do is to first set up a small-time cell phone network using a homebrew cell tower one of you will make.”

“I’ll make it!” a man said. “I have a lot of spare parts laying around near my hut.”

“Where would we put the cell tower?” a woman with a French accent asked.

“We’d probably put it near the Cannibal base so it can have the best cell reception for what I’m going to say next. We’re then going to capture a Cannibal—somehow, one of you take care of that—and we’re going to inject a cell phone in its body.”

“How can you inject a cell phone in someone’s body?” a man asked.

“We’ll need to make a microchip cell phone that we can get into the Cannibal’s body,” Derek replied.

“I’ll take care of making that. I know a Wok who is very good with electronics. It’ll be ready tomorrow.”

Continued on page 4



Uranium

From page 3

"One of us will call the cell phone microchip through the network when the Cannibal goes back to its home base," Derek continued. "The moment the phone receives the cell radiation from our cell tower, the intense radiation will level all the Cannibals so we don't need them to morph into a human form."

"How would we power it?" a blond-haired woman asked. "Solar power?"

"Yes, that would be our only option."

"Unfortunately, I don't know how this would affect the Woks, so you'd need them to clear out of the Cannibal base—wherever it is—before we can execute Derek's master plan. Understood?" Jose said.

There was a tense one-second pause. Then, the entire committee nodded like a swarm of bobbleheads.

"Let's go," Chris said. "Tomorrow, we are going to kick their little stinkin' butts."

Chapter 15

It was the big day. Derek woke up around 7:00 AM and dusted his dirty, smelly clothes off.

"How you doin' today?" Jose muttered as he got up, half-asleep.

"It's the big day, Jose. Let's go! Hustle!" Just then, Chris' ATV pulled up to the hut. "The guys have captured a Cannibal! That's the good news. But there's bad news too!" he yelled. Derek walked out of the hut.

"What's the bad news?"

"Doug is dead and your buddy Andrew was injured heavily by those damn Cannibals. They almost bit off Andrew's head and they were going to eat him up, but I whipped out my cell phone, turned it on, and the Cannibal died right on the spot. We were able to escape."

By then, Jose had heard the entire thing.

"Oh my, Chris, why didn't you tell me earlier?" Jose exclaimed.

"Uhh... You two were sleeping. Didn't want to wake you up. Anyways, we can't spend time crying over spilled milk. We need to go. Get your things and hurry up. We have some major alien butt to kick."

Derek and Jose jumped on the ATV and they sped towards the Cannibal hideout. "This is

where they all live," Chris explained. "The Woks were able to explode the Cannibal spaceship, but not before the Cannibals sent that goddamn uranium asteroid careening towards Earth to avenge the spaceship. The Cannibals were responsible for the entire damn thing."

"Don't worry, the asteroid only contained a very small amount of uranium. Not enough to kill anyone," a red-haired woman said. "At the very least, it hasn't killed any of us."

"Let's go and wipe *their* existence off the face of the earth, before they wipe *our* existence off the face of the earth. Hustle, BlobBusters, HUSTLE!" Jose barked.

Derek and Jose rushed to the scene. Andrew and the captured Cannibal were laying down in the sand in a bloody mess. Derek's mouth fell open.



"Andrew is fine. You need to simply feed the Cannibal—he's not awake, don't worry—the little cell phone pill," a voice hissed from behind. Derek wheeled around and caught his breath as he saw what looked like a Cannibal. After further inspection, Derek

knew it was a Wok. It was a bit more opaque than the Cannibal laying on the ground in front of him and it hadn't died even though it was holding the cell phone microchip in its hand.

"Okay. I'm gonna inject the thing. Give it to me," Derek asked the Wok.

"Here it is." The Wok gave him a plunger-like object with a circuit board inside. "By the way, call me Alfred."

"That little thing inside the plunger is the little cell phone microchip you were talking about yesterday," Jose explained. "It is only capable of receiving calls, not making them. It tracks the vital signs of the organism it is in. Once you inject it, you've only got twenty-four hours until its battery dies. And if the Cannibal dies, the device self-destructs. Make it quick, son."

Derek slowly bent over, stuck the syringe into the Cannibal's blob body, and pushed it until the microchip went in.

"Awesome," Derek said. "This has got to work. It's seems to be almost foolproof."

"Good job, Soldier," Chris said as he walked over to Derek. "We've already set up the cell tower, so we just have to wait until the Cannibal regroups with its kind."

Continued on page 5

Hawaiian Dreaming



**By Ian Marr
Tusker Tribune Staff Writer**

I can't stop thinking of my trip to Hawaii. I always take a trip with someone to Hawaii every Christmas.

And lately, I couldn't think about anything but the next Christmas! Even though it's 10 months away. It took me 2 full hours to go to bed, just because I couldn't stop thinking of Hawaii.

At last, I had fallen asleep! After only about 6 hours of sleep, I was up and roaring, when I realized something. There were Christmas decorations all over my house! It was just like Christmas again!

I ended up ignoring it for 30 minutes while I was eating cereal, and having a great cup of coffee from Starbucks.

Until I saw December 25th on my phone's calendar. I figured that my phone just had something wrong with it, and started to continue my day, but almost right after that, I had a reminder pop up on my phone that said to remember my



Hawaii trip.

All of a sudden, I started to think it actually was Christmas, but how could it be? I looked at the website, and it said I had a trip scheduled, and the plane was leaving in two hours!

I thought about canceling my flight, but then I thought, I couldn't waste this opportunity. I packed my old luggage bag as quickly as I ever have before, grabbed everything else I needed to go, hired an Uber, and I was off to the plane! And after only 2 hours, I was on the plane. I tried to sleep on my way to Hawaii, but I was so filled with excitement, I could hardly close my

eyes!

And as time went by, I was only getting more excited! At last, the plane was landing! I could finally enjoy Hawaii again! I was about to take my first step out of the plane! Then, all of a sudden, I was in my bedroom.

I felt much more tired, and much less excited. No Christmas decorations were up. I slowly checked my phone's calendar, to see what day it was, and it was the middle of February.

School Hassles Do Pay Off Later



**By Matt Kahn and
Nate Marcus
Tusker Tribune Staff
Writers**

Goodbye vacation, hello misery;
Why teachers must give so much homework?
Who knows? It's a mystery.

The teachers don't stop yelling; it drives me berserk;
Textbooks, textbooks, we don't need to know science if we want to be cooks.

With enough studying and homework to last all day;

There leaves hardly any time to play.
Once I'm finally home at last;

The torture finally has passed.
I open my planner;
It reveals something lacking glamour;
My math homework, as well as my grammar.



What I realize at night that haunts like a ghost;
Then I know, what hurts the most;
I realize where I have to go soon;
Later I step off the bus, and into homeroom.

But I should realize that if I don't go to school
I'll be sweeping sidewalks, using a broom.

Uranium From page 4

The Cannibal is under a tranquilizer, so we need to dump it outside the Cannibal hideout, and de-tranquilize it so it wakes up. We'll take care of that for you, and we'll go to the committee build-

ing, which—luckily for us—is not too far from this place. Jose, get Derek and Andrew to the building and report back here."

"Aye, Chris," Jose said as he mounted the ATV and sped towards the committee building as Chris, the elderly man, the red-haired lady, and a few other BlobBusters carried the tranquilized Cannibal to the Cannibal hideout.