

Lit. Page Deadline  
Noon Wednesday

*Literary*

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## V - Battle in the North

Cont.

Jack Bochner was not only the captain of both the basketball and baseball teams at Fredericton High but he was also the student body president of the oldest and largest (east of Montreal) high school in Canada.

Now, after the Visitor landings, Jack's position - representing over 3000 students, almost 1000 graduates alone - was even more important. Working directly with the school's teachers and principal as well as the city mayor, Hugh Spencer, made Jack Bochner one of the most influential people in the city.

This is what Matt thought early Friday morning at school. There had been no answer when he had phoned Jack's house earlier so he decided to pick up Mandy and his own girlfriend, Dawna Hudson, to drive them to school. Neither of them had heard from Jack either. Upon arriving at the high school, they met up with Dave and Joanne Lange, his girlfriend since the tenth grade. All five walked to their homeroom class discussing Jack's sudden disappearance.

Mandy, deeply worried about her boyfriend, went to the window to gaze at the early morning sun's glare from the snow-covered playing field. After being lost in thought for what seemed like an eternity, she screamed.

Racing to the window, everyone in the class gasped at what they saw . . .

Descending from the light blue sky was a lone Visitor shuttle, one of those Jack had seen land in the field last night.

Fredericton High School students became frantic as they watched the Visitor shuttlecraft hover for a moment above the school's parking lot before it landed. They recognized it from television news reports as a large personnel carrier.

Even though the Visitors had only come in limited contact with Canada during the second invasion, their presence was being felt by the entire world.

But since "V-Day" and the distribution of the Red Dust, the closest Mother Ships were over Miami and New Orleans. Because of that day, the whole country had almost returned to normal. Now, it was happening all over again.

What everyone at FHS couldn't understand was why the aliens weren't dying. The lethal Red Dust should have prevented the return of the Visitors.

The students watched in horror as about fifteen Visitors emerged from the shuttle's hatches. All of them, except one, wore red jumpsuits with black, tapering chest armor and visored helmets, but they were all armed.

The other, obviously their leader, was dressed in the regulation red uniform, a regular black baseball cap, sunglasses, and strapped to his right leg, a hand laser.

The Visitors' breaths condensed into white fog, then disappeared into the 20 degree Fahrenheit morning air. Their leader directed four of his men to accompany him while the rest stood guard around the shuttle, talking amongst themselves.

The leader and his guards went directly into the school. Frenzied teenagers had just enough time to move out of the shocktroopers' way as they marched through corridors and up stairways, to stop directly outside one classroom.

The 8:45 bell to start classes had not yet rung. Two of the guards stationed themselves outside each of the doors to the crowded classroom while the other two accompanied the leader inside. The students had horrified looks on their faces, as they discussed the sudden appearance of the

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Visitors. None of them had noticed the leader until he spoke.

"Which of you is Jack Bochner?" he enquired, his alien voice reverberating on several syllables in the sentence. Startled by the alien, some of the girls screamed.

"Which of you is Jack Bochner?" he asked again, his voice more forceful, more aggressive this time. One boy stepped forward.

"He - he hasn't-t come in y-yet, . . . s-s-sir," he stutered.

Another boy dashed forward to confront the former. "How can you sink to their level and treat him with respect?! 'Sir' - Hah!! He's nothing but a cannibalistic night crawler!!"

The leader took his hand laser and shot the outspoken boy in the chest. The boy slumped to his knees, then fell on his face, dead.

"What's your name young man?" asked the Visitor as he replaced his laser in its hip-holster. He seemed totally oblivious to what had just happened.

"D-David - David Foster, sir," replied the dark-skinned young man. He was still shaken at the sight of his dead friend, Matt Lester.

"Commander' will be fine, David. I'm glad someone here knows how to respect authority."

He used a communication device to inform the guards outside to come in and take the body to the shuttle. After they had done so, and returned with four more guards, the commander spoke again.

"Now, I want you, David, and you three, to come with me." He indicated three girls, all approximately the same age and height.

Joanne Lange stared disbelievingly at David. Mandy Davis had to help the sobbing Dawna Hudson walk, her expression mixed with grief and anger over Matt's sudden death.

The four reluctantly followed the commander while the guards closed in around the four prisoners. Still dressed in their ski jackets, the group quickly made their way back through the winding school corridors outside to the waiting shuttle.

Boarding the craft, the commander dismissed his guards to the aft compartment where the other soldiers had begun to assemble.

"What are you going to do with us?" Dawna demanded between tears.

"Nothing," a voice from behind them answered. Dave, Joanne, Dawna, and Mandy whirled to see Matt emerging from the aft compartment, alive and well.

"Matt!!" Dawna yelled ecstatically as she flung herself around him. She broke the embrace to step back and stare at her boyfriend. "But I saw you . . ."

"Die?" finished the commander, as he removed his baseball cap and sunglasses. "Let me explain." He reached around to the back of his neck and began to peel off his synthetic mask. Everyone began to turn away as they knew what SHOULD have happened.

Just barely peeking, Mandy watched as the Visitor tore the mask completely away to reveal the wearer's true face. When what she expected to see - the green and black scales of a lizard - was not what she saw, her eyes opened wide in surprise.

The commander was Jack Bochner.

What happened to Jack? Why is he disguised as the alien commander? Where has the mother ship gone? And what are the visitors doing in Fredericton? Find out after the Christmas break.

