

L. RON HUBBARD



The
Devil
-With **Wings**

GALAXY
P R E S E N T S

The Devil—With Wings

CAPTAIN ITO SHINOHARI

HERO IN KILLING OF *AKUMA-NO-HANÉ*

TOKYO, JAPAN— May 9 (Tekko News Agency)—General Ytoshō Shimokado, commanding Japanese Imperial Troops at Port Arthur, Manchukuo, announced today that *Akuma-no-Hané*, infamous white pilot, was killed last week near the Amur River.

Captain Ito Shinohari, famous and gallant figure of the Imperial Japanese Military Intelligence, was credited with the slaying.

Akuma-no-Hané, “The Devil With Wings,” has long conducted his lawless operations against the Manchukuo government and, it is reported, recently attempted to bring about the overthrow of the Son of Heaven, whose gentle rule of Manchukuo is well-known.

It is also rumored that *Akuma-no-Hané* was in the pay of Russia and played considerable part in instigating the recent clash of arms between Japan and Russia in the unknown reaches of the Amur River.

A will-o’-the-wisp figure, the as yet unidentified renegade will long be remembered for his three-year reign of terror.

The details of the slaying have not been reported. It is said that Captain Ito Shinohari will be rewarded with the Order of the Rising Sun.

The Night Marauder

DARKNESS and silence lay like velvet paws upon the Japanese Intelligence Headquarters at Port Arthur.

The far-off midnight hum of the city did not reach into these musty, tomblike corridors or touch the dungeon files wherein lay the yellowing bones of countless "Asiatic incidents."

The blue chill of moonlight seeped cautiously in through a grimy window to touch a pencil of shining steel, the bayonet of the sentry.

The Japanese dozed against his rifle, mustard-colored cap pulled down to leave only the highlights of his cheekbones visible.

He was dreaming, perhaps, of glory to be won in Manchukuo. Or of the fair ladies of Nippon. More probably he dreamed of nothing, trained as he was until he marched and ate and talked like a life-size military doll.

A tread softer than a cat's sounded below him on the steps. He did not look up. Mice were too frequently out in patrols to forage through the gloom of this dingy building.

A board creaked forlornly and still the sentry did not turn.

A shadow crossed the gleaming pearl of the moon and melted against the dark silence. The sentry shifted his gun and looked up, conscious of a curious prickling sensation along the base of his skull.

A hand in a black glove came over the sentry's shoulder and touched the insignia there. The Japanese stiffened, whirled. His strap slapped and his boots grated as he brought his rifle up.

Moonlight sparkled on the butt of a .45 automatic. The bayonet lanced upward toward a space of white throat.

The sentry grunted and sagged back. The black glove caught the released rifle in midair before it could clatter against the floor and then laid it down beside the relaxed Japanese soldier.

Gary Forsythe wasted no time inspecting his handiwork. He stood up in the patch of moonlight and looked down the steps up which he had come. To a Japanese, Forsythe would have looked like a giant, though he was only half an inch over six feet. He would have given any observing yellow man a shock in other ways besides size.

From Shanghai to Vladivostok, the sight of this black-garbed white man had, for three years, been occasion for various types of heart failure among the soldiers of the Rising Sun.



Gary Forsythe

Of his face only his nostrils and mouth were visible. The black leather flying helmet and the huge goggles were more effective than any mask. The black artillery boots looked staunch and solid but he could walk like a panther in them.

There were only three spots of light about him: the lens of each goggle and the large silver buckle of his belt.

His lips curved downward into a chilly grin as he stepped noiselessly over the Japanese and slid silent as a thundercloud along the black passageway.

He turned a corner and came to a stop. The glazed glass of one door exuded a thin yellow light, diffused until it spread like a saffron fog through the gloom. The ideograph on the door said, "Records."

Forsythe reached toward the knob but an instant before he touched it, a shadow became sharply outlined on the other side. The cap and profile of a Japanese, the silhouette of a fixed bayonet.

Instead of touching the knob, Forsythe stepped closer and made a fist of his glove.

He knocked sharply and the sound of it went booming through the brooding structure like a war drum.

The silhouette straightened and turned. The knob rattled. Yellow light spread from top to bottom in a long, widening line. The sentry stood there with bayonet at ready, peering into the gloom.

He saw the tall black shadow before him, caught the terrifying glitter of the goggles. The sentry needed no time for decision. He lunged and light streaked down the cold steel.

Forsythe stepped nimbly aside. He knew bayonets.

The gloves gripped the barrel as the bayonet dashed past. With a wrench, Forsythe whipped the weapon out of the sentry's hands and delivered a vicious butt stroke to the jaw.

Forsythe placed the rifle against the wall and stepped over the Japanese and into the Records room.

An unshaded electric light was burning above a littered, scarred table. The walls were lined with the tarnished brass handles of the files.

Without hesitation he strode to a cabinet and jerked it open. The black gloves gathered up large handfuls of paper to throw them upward and back. The sheets rustled and settled like enormous snowflakes over the rug.

Forsythe located the file he required and chuckled softly as he read his name blazoned in large ideographs across the top of it: THE DEVIL WITH WINGS

He stepped to the table and started to sit down. A sound held him crouched for an instant and then he straightened up and paced to the window and studied the street below.

A chunky Japanese car had drawn up to the curb before the office and now three officers were getting out. They looked squat and bearish in their greatcoats under the hard light from the street lamp.

Looking down at their precise round hats, Forsythe tried to recognize them. They stood talking for several seconds and then the leanest one of the lot started toward the entrance of the building. He looked up just before he stepped inside.

Forsythe drew hastily back.

It was Shinohari of the Japanese Intelligence.

The other two officers stayed by the car.

Forsythe paced again to the table and ripped into the file he had found. He tossed papers to the right and left until he came upon a thick wad of posters. He crammed a number of these into his jacket and then raced his glance across a clip of letters, singling out a pair, one of which read:

Captain Ito Shinohari
Imperial Japanese Army Headquarters

Honorable Sir:

The American engineer Robert Weston was murdered yesterday near Aigun on the Amur River. Evidence indicates that he was killed by The Devil With Wings, *Akuma-no-Hané*.

N-38 at Aigun
Decoded by Lt. Tatsu
April 2

The other said:

Captain Shinohari:

Enclosed herewith a letter from Robert Weston to one Patricia Weston, his sister, mentioning value of a Confucius image. Original letter forwarded to Patricia Weston. As image may contain some secret document, suggest you follow lead to Patricia Weston. The hand of *Akuma-no-Hané* is quite plain in this.

Colonel Shimizu
Commanding Aigun
April 6

He wadded these into a small packet and slipped them into the heavy money belt at his waist.

For a moment he stood listening, looking at the door. He knew that Shinohari would find the unconscious sentry at the

top of the steps, but *Akuma-no-Hané* preferred to let events take their own course.

Again he shuffled through the papers, watching for any detail which might serve him well. He missed the copy of the original letter to Patricia Weston though he tried hard to find it.

Another communication came under his hand:

Captain Ito Shinohari
Imperial Japanese Army Intelligence
Port Arthur

Honorable Sir:

May this unworthy agent be allowed to report that, after two days of constant watching, Patricia Weston has not yet contacted *Akuma-no-Hané*. May this one humbly request relief from his post, knowing he can better serve the gallant Captain in other departments better.

In information it has been learned that Patricia Weston is without funds and it is not likely that she will leave Port Arthur. As ordered, this one has carefully undermined her credit at her hotel and at the cable station. There is therefore no likelihood of her leaving, or communicating with any possible friends in the United States.

This one suggests that it might be prudent to cause her to be deported at government expense.

N-16 at Port Arthur
May 3

Akuma-no-Hané slid this with the others into his money belt. He slapped the file into chaos about the room and strode to the Records Office door, .45 drawn.

Before he could reach the knob it slammed toward him!

Shinohari, Luger in hand, was framed in the opening. Three feet from him Forsythe had centered the muzzle of the .45 automatic upon the yellow greatcoat.

They stood there, deadlocked, glaring at each other.

It was Shinohari who first recognized the stalemate. His small pockmarked face wreathed into a smile which was no deeper than his teeth. His metallic, obsidian eyes remained very calm.

“The Devil,” said Shinohari, “With Wings.”

Forsythe bowed mockingly from the waist. “The gallant Captain Shinohari.”

“Of course. I am so sorry I did not know you were coming. I might have arranged a suitable reception for you, worthy of your fame.”

“I grieve that I did not apprise you of the fact, Captain. May I extend my apologies for being delinquent in paying my respects recently, Captain?”



Captain Shinohari

Shinohari bowed and clicked his heels. "It has been so long since I have had the pleasure of meeting you, sir."

"My regrets for your sometimes, shall we say, hasty marksmanship, Captain."

"If I could but match your excellent accuracy, sir, I should be a most happy man." The black eyes never left Forsythe's face, the Luger did not waver an inch. "You have doubtless been amusing yourself against my coming?"

"Quite," replied Forsythe. "You have a great deal of correspondence. You must be as busy as you are great, Captain."

"Thank you. I am rarely bored, sir. Your health? It is excellent?"

"Quite, Captain. I regret—"

"Oh, no, no, no. Regret nothing, sir. I am desolated that I was not here to receive you more properly. I . . . er . . . have been taking considerable interest in your recent itinerary, sir."

"You flatter my poor efforts, Captain."

"I am prostrated not to be able to attend your various calls in person. The Imperial Japanese government is quite attentive to your goings and comings, sir. You are . . . shall we say . . . a very great man. A power, as it were, in Northern Asia."

"You flatter me," replied Forsythe with a slight bow. "If my fame were only a tenth of your own, I should be content."

"These guns," said Shinohari, "are rather foolish, don't you think? When the great meets the great, they should not demean themselves with common brawling."

"I suggest," said Forsythe politely, "that we unload together."

I regret that I did not have time to put a shell under my firing pin.”

“Strange coincidence,” said Shinohari. “I was too startled to think of it and my Luger is in a like condition.”

They bowed together and then each one placed his left hand before him with great ostentation and slowly curved it in under his automatic.

“Shall we say at the count of three?” said Forsythe.

“Splendid. Shall we count together?”

“One . . . two . . . three . . .”

Twin clicks were sharp in the room. Two magazines slid out of the butts and into the reaching hands. Timing their movements exactly, they each placed the clips in their belts and lowered their automatics.

“I regret,” said Forsythe with a smile as brittle as the captain’s, “that I cannot stay. I have an urgent appointment elsewhere.”

“I also must extend my regrets,” said Shinohari with a bow. “I only came for the files of a new incident.”

“May I wish you success?” said Forsythe, moving toward the door.

“Thank you. And may great success attend your endeavors, dear sir.”

At the sill they bowed again, black jacket toward yellow greatcoat. They smiled as they went around until Forsythe had his back to the hall and the captain’s to the room.

Still bowing and still backing, Forsythe went toward the corner and halfway around it.

Abruptly the captain raised his Luger. He had carefully forgotten the shell under his firing pin until now.

Forsythe saw the motion and dodged around the corner. The bullet slapped the plaster close beside his face.

He leveled his .45 and squeezed. The captain was hastily throwing himself backward and out of sight. Forsythe's bullet sent the glass from the door in a stinging, glittering shower.

Forsythe had also forgotten his loaded chamber.

He whirled and raced down toward the steps. The officers by the car would be on the alert and he had to pass them. Behind him he heard a window crash open. The captain's shrill voice blasted a warning down at the sidewalk.

Forsythe took the steps four at a time, almost soaring through the blackness on the wings of his wind-harried jacket. He sped into the lower corridor and stopped just inside the main door, hastily loading his .45.

The two officers were stepping stiffly toward the entrance, watchful, guns in hand.

Forsythe leaped into sight.

One officer fired too fast, the other was too slow.

The .45 roared twice, the explosions blurring together. One Japanese sprawled out at full length. The other sagged slowly to his knees, still trying to bring up his gun.

The chauffeur leaped out of the car, stung to action by the yapping staccato of orders from the captain above. The chauffeur drew and chopped a frightened shot at the black terror which was streaking toward him off the steps.

Forsythe fired into the chauffeur's face and whipped around to stab two more bullets at the window.

The captain dodged back, shooting as he went at the small moving target under him.

Forsythe leaped into cover behind the car. He was waiting for the captain above to show himself again, but that intelligent intelligence officer was not given to foolhardy chances except when absolutely necessary. He made no appearance.

With a slow, amused grin, Forsythe drew out a poster and carefully slid it under the windshield wiper of the car.

He sent one more shot at the empty window and then rocketed down the street and out of sight into an alley. The sound of his boots faded out.

The chilly, hard light from the arc lamp beat down on three sprawled bodies and upon the white poster which read:

\$50,000 GOLD
WILL BE PAID BY
THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE GOVERNMENT
FOR THE HEAD OF THE DEVIL WITH WINGS

Wanted for:

Shooting down KDK-5 Pursuit plane at Harbin.

Derailing Imperial troop-train at Mukden.

Murder of Chinese advisor Shu-Sen.

Bombing Jelhi.

Killing government agent N-38 URG.A.

High treason.

Espionage.

The murder of Robert Weston in Mongolia.

The killing of four . . .

Captain Shinohari stepped over the bodies on the walk and stood for some time looking at the poster.

♦ L. RON HUBBARD ♦

He drew his lips back from his teeth and looked off into the northwest. A sign swinging in the wind against the cold moon made a silhouette like a gibbet.