

# **STORIES** from the **GOLDEN AGE**

## **Literature Guide for Teachers & Librarians**

*Based on Common Core ELA Standards for Classrooms 6–9*



## **On Blazing Wings**

**Literature Guide with book & audio drama  
includes full comprehensive glossary to build vocabulary**

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## ABOUT THE STORIES FROM THE GOLDEN AGE

The library of the Stories from the Golden Age presents the best of L. Ron Hubbard's fiction from the heyday of storytelling, the Golden Age of the pulp magazines of 1930s and 1940s America. In the collection, comprising eighty volumes, readers are treated to a full banquet of 153 stories, a kaleidoscope of tales representing every imaginable genre: science fiction, fantasy, western, mystery, thriller, horror—even romance—action of all kinds and in all places.

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## ABOUT L. RON HUBBARD

With 19 *New York Times* bestsellers and more than 280 million copies of his works in circulation, L. Ron Hubbard is among the most acclaimed and widely read authors of our time. As a leading light of American Pulp Fiction through the 1930s and '40s, he is further among the most influential authors of the modern age. Indeed, from Ray Bradbury to Stephen King, there is scarcely a master of imaginative tales who has not paid tribute to L. Ron Hubbard.

## ABOUT ON BLAZING WINGS

(Originally published in the May 1940 issue of *Five Novels Monthly*)

American fighter pilot David Duane believes in but one cause—his own. Just as Bogart came to Casablanca to escape his past, Duane has come to the icy white wastes of Scandinavia to wage a private war in the skies. Heading off to war in Europe, he sells his deadly skills to the highest bidder. But now he's about to take off on a flight that will open his eyes—and his heart. Because sometimes you have to make a choice, and for Duane, making the wrong one could cost him the woman he loves....

Grade Level: 9

Lexile: 910

GRL: Z+

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## COMMON CORE ELA STANDARDS SUPPORTED

### KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.1** Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1** Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.3** Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3** Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3** Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3** Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

## CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone) including analogies or allusions to other texts.

## INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.7** Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.7** Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.7** Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.7** Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (e.g., Auden’s “Musée des Beaux Arts” and Breughel’s Landscape with the Fall of Icarus).

## MULTIPLE CHOICE ASSESSMENT

Select the correct answer from the multiple choices after each question

### 1. SEQUENCE

What belongs in the middle?

- a) Losing altitude, David Duane's plane dives into a deep bank of snow.
- b)
- c) An officer in a white cloak saves David from his Russian captors.

David shoots down Dmitri Rossov's plane.

David visits the city of tall minarets and gold domes.

David catapults himself out of a plane and twists his ankle.

David resigns his commission with the Finns.

### 2. CAUSE AND EFFECT

The Democratic People's Government of Finland are driven out of Finland, so

they fight the Russians.

they take refuge in Russia.

they decide to go to America.

they bargain with the Russians to stay alive.

### 3. CAUSE AND EFFECT

Major Rossov discovers David shot down his brother Dmitri's plane, so

he demands Lieutenant Aro turn David over for questioning.

he demands to know what Dmitri told David in *Puhjola*.

he wants to export David back to Spain.

he orders David to be taken out and shot.

### 4. CONTEXT CLUES

David was a \_\_\_\_\_, so he sold his flying and fighting skills to the highest bidder.

pilot

mercenary

patriot

Russian



## MULTIPLE CHOICE ASSESSMENT (Continued)

### 5. CONTEXT CLUES

*Puhjola* is a city in the clouds where

- the Wind Mother lives per Latvian mythology.
- warriors killed in battle go.
- Galahad was last seen.
- mirages and visions are created.

### 6. PREDICTION OR INFERENCES

After David's last aerial battle, what do you think happens to the Second Regiment of the *Ilmavoimat*?

- They all surrender to the Russians.
- They are so mad, they invade Russia.
- They are saved by David's heroics and relocate their base.
- They join forces with the Democratic People's Government of Finland.

### 7. FACTS AND DETAILS

When David was a boy he dreamt about

- becoming a great fighter pilot.
- traveling around the world painting unusual scenes and people.
- becoming a successful artist.
- traveling the world and fighting for foreign nations.

### 8. FACTS AND DETAILS

In *Puhjola*, one of the men in blue said David could not see clearly or remember because

- he arrived between the veil.
- he was beaten up by the Russians.
- he hit his head when his plane crashed.
- a fine mist of oil covered his goggles.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE ASSESSMENT (Continued)

### 9. FACTS AND DETAILS

Sampetso is an important military target for the Russians because

- it is part of the Mannerheim Line.
- it is the last defense post before Helsinki.
- it is a key supply base for the Finnish Air Force.
- it is where pilots can come in contact with *Puhjola*.

### 10. FACTS AND DETAILS

Khulater reads David Duane his *Destiny* and tells him he will

- die when he is betrayed by Sabrina.
- become a chosen one in *Puhjola*.
- never again return to *Puhjola*.
- achieve oneness with himself.

### 11. FACTS AND DETAILS

David submits his resignation to General Paanenen of the *Ilmavoimat* because

- he is tired of flying in the freezing cold.
- he is patriotic and wants to fight for America instead.
- he gave his word of honor to the Russian officer who saved his life.
- he is afraid of his plane being shot down.

### 12. FACTS AND DETAILS

Sabrina is sent to destroy the base at Sampetso, but she is betrayed by

- David who tells Erkki about the *Destiny* read to him at *Puhjola*.
- Captain Mikko who doesn't want David to resign.
- Major Rossof who alerts the Finns via radiogram.
- by the DPGF when they discover she helped David escape.

**FREE RESPONSE ASSESSMENT**

Answer the following questions in short sentences.

1. What does Captain Duane see in the clouds after his plane is hit in combat?
2. Why does Khulater tell David he is not wanted in *Puhjola*?
3. What does Lieutenant Aro do the first time she meets David Duane?
4. Why does David have no quarrel with any political philosophy?
5. Why are the Democratic People's Government of Finland fighting with the Russians against their own country?
6. Why is the date February 20, 1940 so important to David Duane?
7. What accusation does Major Feodor Rossof make against Captain David Duane?
8. Why does Lieutenant Aro land by parachute behind enemy lines near Sampetso?

**CITING TEXTUAL EVIDENCE**

1. Why is David Duane considered an enigma and a paradox to his friends?

1a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #1?

2. What was Major Rossov's intention in sending Sabrina on the mission to blow up the base at Sampetso?

2a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #2?

3. Why do you think David became a mercenary?

3a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #3?

4. What changes the outcome of the events destined to take place on February 20, 1940?

4a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #4?

## CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Describe a characteristic of each of the following characters and cite evidence from the text of something that the character says or does that demonstrates that characteristic:

1. Captain David Duane

2. Lieutenant Sabrina Aro

3. Major Feodor Rossov

**OBJECTIVE SUMMARY**

On a separate piece of paper, write a summary of the story in approximately 150 words. Then write a summary of the story in a single sentence of 10 to 20 words.

**THEME OR MAIN IDEA**

1. Which of these do you think is the main idea of the story?

- A person can control his own fate.
- War is dangerous for everyone concerned.
- Mirages and legends are real.
- Something else? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Explain some of the ways that the author gets this idea across through the characters, setting and plot of the story.



## KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS

Common Core Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.3

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.3

## PLOT ANALYSIS

The turning point of the story is when David Duane arrives in *Puhjola* and meets Khulater, ruler of the dead, and judge of those between the veil, who reads the Destiny that was cast for him.

Answer one or more of these questions:

1. How does this event reveal aspects of David's character?
2. How does this event help the reader to understand the author's main idea for the story?
3. How does this event move the story towards its resolution?

## FIND THE MEANING

For the following section circle the correct answers.

1. *bombastic* means
  - pompous
  - explosives
  - moderate
  - artillery man
2. *trifle* means
  - fungus
  - slightly
  - weapon
  - rifle
3. *gaunt* means
  - obese
  - excessively thin
  - graceful
  - careless
4. *recollection* means
  - memory
  - library
  - recreation
  - forgetfulness
5. *jeered* means
  - laughed at
  - shoved
  - applauded
  - tossed
6. *surly* means
  - friendly
  - bad tempered
  - good looking
  - joyful
7. *browbeaten* means
  - boxing match
  - bullied
  - respected
  - rhythmic
8. *qualms* means
  - confidence
  - misgivings
  - quakes
  - contentedness
9. *vengeance* means
  - violent revenge
  - forgiveness
  - kindness
  - venerable
10. *confounded* means
  - reached
  - confused
  - concealed
  - untroubled

## COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

1. The crowd \_\_\_\_\_ the politician who wanted to raise taxes.  
confounded      surly      gaunt      jeered
2. When Susan looked at the family photos, she had a fond \_\_\_\_\_ of her grandmother.  
vengeance      bombastic      recollection      trifle
3. The lion expressed a \_\_\_\_\_ attitude that frightened the audience at the circus.  
confounded      gaunt      surly      vengeance
4. The English teacher had no \_\_\_\_\_ in giving low grades to students who used poor grammar.  
qualms      vengeance      trifle      browbeaten
5. He swore \_\_\_\_\_ on the man who betrayed him.  
bombastic      recollection      vengeance      trifle
6. The defense attorney was \_\_\_\_\_ by the lack of evident in the murder case.  
jeered      confounded      bombastic      surly
7. Although the politician's personality was \_\_\_\_\_, the voters continued to elect him.  
gaunt      bombastic      vengeance      recollection
8. After several weeks of dieting, the model appeared tired and \_\_\_\_\_.  
vengeance      gaunt      jeered      recollection
9. Sam was so \_\_\_\_\_ that he pledged more for the campaign than he should have.  
surly      bombastic      browbeaten      trifle
10. The tennis player's arm was a \_\_\_\_\_ better in the afternoon match.  
surly      confounded      trifle      qualms

**COMPARING TEXT TO PERFORMANCE**

Listen to the audiobook version of the conversation between David Duane and Khulater, ruler of the dead, and judge of those between the veil. Write a short essay that compares and contrasts this experience to your experience of reading the story. What did you notice about the production techniques used to produce the audio version? Did the actors portray the characters in ways that matched your own impressions of them that were formed when you read the book?

## MULTIPLE CHOICE ASSESSMENT: ANSWERS

### 1. SEQUENCE

- Duane visits the city of tall minarets and gold domes.

### 2. CAUSE AND EFFECT

- they take refuge in Russia.

### 3. CAUSE AND EFFECT

- he demands Lieutenant Aro turn David over for questioning.

### 4. CONTEXT CLUES

- mercenary

### 5. CONTEXT CLUES

- warriors killed in battle go.

### 6. PREDICTION OR INFERENCE

- They are saved by David's heroics and relocate their base.

### 7. FACTS AND DETAILS

- traveling around the world painting unusual scenes and people.

### 8. FACTS AND DETAILS

- he arrived between the veil.

### 9. FACTS AND DETAILS

- it is a key supply base for the Finnish Air Force.

### 10. FACTS AND DETAILS

- never again return to *Puhjola*.

### 11. FACTS AND DETAILS

- he gave his word of honor to the Russian officer who saved his life.

### 12. FACTS AND DETAILS

- Major Rossoff who alerts the Finns via radiogram.

## FREE RESPONSE ASSESSMENT: ANSWERS

1. What does Captain Duane see in the clouds after his plane is hit in combat?

**Answer:** He sees the legendary city of *Puhjola*.

The first sight of it was blinding. Tall, tall minarets reached up into the crystal air; low domes of gold confined the streets. A wide park stretched greenly before a spreading palace of delicate design. (Page 19)

2. Why does Khulater tell David he is not wanted in *Puhjola*?

**Answer:** Because David vacillates between beauty and battle and has never achieved a oneness with himself. He has no singleness of purpose and so is not strong enough to command entrance to *Puhjola*.

“You have never been one with yourself. You vacillate between beauty and battle, and consider the one weak, while you hate the other. You are neither warrior nor artist and, if you have not achieved a oneness with yourself, do not expect your being’s very essence to be strong enough to command entrance back to this place.... You have no singleness of purpose. You are not of the material we want here. No, One Who Fights With Half His Heart can never be a Chosen One.” (Page 30)

3. What does Lieutenant Aro do the first time she meets David Duane?

**Answer:** She saves him from the Russian soldiers and then apologizes for their behavior.

“You think we are barbarians,” said the girl. “I must apologize....”

“An apology!” said David. “But you’ve saved my life! Troops always act like this—anywhere, in any army. I don’t blame them much. I’d have deserved whatever I got, God knows.” (Page 39)

4. Why does David have no quarrel with any political philosophy?

**Answer:** He had seen all political philosophies fail and viewed people as individuals and not as an ideology.

He had no quarrel with any political philosophy, for he had seen all of them fail and had come to the conclusion that the right one had yet to be invented. And so, to him, people were individuals, and individuals only. (Pages 43-44)



5. Why are the Democratic People's Government of Finland fighting with the Russians against their own country?

**Answer:** They believe their government is oppressive to the people and in need of change.

“Why is Finland trying to commit suicide by fighting us? It's their capitalist element, that's what! Ask a worker in the fields if he is happy about the government of Finland and he'll tell you no!”

“...And when the Red Army at last succeeds, we shall set the people of Finland free from the burden of debt and poverty under which they labor now.”  
(Page 43)

6. Why is the date February 20, 1940 so important to David Duane?

**Answer:** That is the date he is destined to be executed for treason.

“On February 20, 1940, Sabrina Aro is dropped behind Finn lines on sabotage mission, is captured and executed. In attempting to repay your debt to her, you also are caught—and executed for treason.” (Page 30)

7. What accusation does Major Feodor Rossov make against Captain David Duane?

**Answer:** Major Rossov accuses him of being a traitor to the Party.

“Comrade,” said Rossov to Sabrina, “you must surrender him now. There are other questions which I cannot ask here.”

Sabrina's face was taut with the struggle within her. “You'll have him shot. I know you, Rossov.”

“He is a traitor to the Party.” (Page 49)

8. Why does Lieutenant Aro land by parachute behind enemy lines near Sampetso?

**Answer:** She is sent to blow up the hangars and in doing so reveal the location of the base so Rossov can bomb it.

“You cannot touch those, David. They are to go off in less than thirty seconds. They'll go off, David, and the flames of these bandits' planes will guide Rossov to his target! You are too late. And if I die, I will have died for what I believe is right.” She was vitalized by the thought of that, and he squared her slender shoulders to face him. “Turn me over to them, David. I have done my duty, and now you should do yours.” (Page 73)

## CITING TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: ANSWERS

1. Why is David Duane considered an enigma and a paradox to his friends?

1a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #1?

**Answer:** On one hand he is an artist while on the other he is a skilled fighter; two seemingly opposite qualities existing in one man.

To his friends David Duane was an enigma and a paradox. On earth he was silent and still, his sensitive, even delicate face seeming to hide a secret shame. Some said it was for his battle lust, which he regretted as a drunkard regrets and deplors drink.

By his superiors he was ever regarded with some slight awe, as though he had come down among men by accident; for he knew more tactics than had been invented and spoke more languages than he ever would have need of. But on those rare occasions when he broke through his stillness on earth, it was to talk of music and literature and especially art, bewitching even the most academic of his listeners. (Page 3)

2. What was Major Rossov's intention in sending Sabrina on the mission to blow up the base at Sampetso?

2a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #2?

**Answer:** Rossov's intention was to have Sabrina killed for helping David escape. He does this by alerting the Finns so they will capture and kill her.

"A strange thing has happened," said Mikko. "A radiogram from a station we can't locate came through a while ago...it said that a woman named Sabrina Aro, of the Russian Intelligence, was thought to have landed behind our lines, and that she would be waiting at five-thirty for her plane to pick her up somewhere north of the river stage. Want to join the hunt?"

"Was it signed?" said David.

"No. It must have been one of our agents over in their lines," said Mikko....

"No," said David, trying to keep steady. He did not need any signature for that message. She had some duty to perform, of course. But it would either be performed by now or within the next two hours. The signature was very

plain to David Duane. For releasing a captive, she had been sent to suicide, unknowing. *And Rosso was making sure!* (Page 71)

3. Why do you think David became a mercenary?

3a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #3?

**Answer:** David could never give his spirit to a cause, so he fought in wars for pay instead of for a purpose.

“Receives commission in US Army Air Service, immediately resigns. Attempts painting, sculpturing, gives up. Rif Campaign as lieutenant of Air Service. China—Ethiopia—Arabia—Spanish Civil War.... Weary of war, seeks refuge in Finland, witnesses first bombing Helsinki and contracts as captain in Finnish Air Service. Record to date— What a record this is!”

“But it’s all too clear that you have always sought to avoid war, and have never been able to stay away from it. Have you never given your whole spirit to anything?” (Pages 28-29)

4. What changes the outcome of the events destined to take place on February 20, 1940?

4a. What textual evidence from the story supports your answer to question #4?

**Answer:** David decides to take action to change his fate so the predicted Destiny does not come true. After Sabrina dies, he is no longer a disinterested bystander in war, but instead has a single purpose of avenging a wronged death. In this way he changes his Destiny.

Suddenly he turned his skis toward the field. He was not out of the service, and he was under no cloud. He would change this fate. He could shift enough lesser details to make the whole thing pivot. He was certain of that.... (Page 69)

Not that he cared about anything but trading death for death.

He was not sitting outside himself looking critically on now. He was all within, and all with just one thought. And like a dynamo within him ran the power of battle lust, until his fingers on the trips scorched with the desire for death. (Pages 78-79)

And David Duane, his Destiny changed, had won *Puhjola*. *Puhjola*, where waited warmth and peace and beauty, and Sabrina Aro. (Page 81)

## THEME OR MAIN IDEA

**Answer:** A person can control his own fate.

## FIND THE MEANING: ANSWERS

1. *bombastic* means pompous
2. *trifle* means slightly
3. *gaunt* means excessively thin
4. *recollection* means memory
5. *jeered* means laughed at
6. *surly* means bad tempered
7. *browbeaten* means bullied
8. *qualms* means misgivings
9. *vengeance* means violent revenge
10. *confounded* means confused

## COMPLETE THE SENTENCES: ANSWERS

1. The crowd *jeered* at the politician who wanted to raise taxes.
2. When Susan looked at the family photos, she had a fond *recollection* of her grandmother.
3. The lion expressed a *surly* attitude that frightened the audience at the circus.
4. The English teacher had no qualms in giving low grades to students who used poor grammar.
5. He swore *vengeance* on the man who betrayed him.
6. The defense attorney was *confounded* by the lack of evidence in the murder case.
7. Although the politician's personality was *bombastic*, the voters continued to elect him.
8. After several weeks of dieting, the model appeared tired and *gaunt*.
9. Sam was so *browbeaten* that he pledged more for the campaign than he should have.
10. The tennis player's arm was a *trifle* better in the afternoon match.

## EXPANDED BOOK GLOSSARY

**ack-ack:** (noun) an antiaircraft gun or its fire. [He hoped that the Finns wouldn't recognize the engine sound and give them a bath of *ack-ack*.]

**adjutant:** (noun) a helper; an assistant. ["There is no news," said the *adjutant*.]

**aileron:** (noun) a hinged flap on the trailing edge of an aircraft wing, used to control banking movements. [One *aileron* was a skeleton and the fabric was ribboning back from the bones.]

**altimeter:** (noun) a gauge that measures altitude. [His tach was revving up and his *altimeter* going down, and a wall of air was screaming by, air suddenly laced by dark streams, as though someone sprayed black water at him.]

**armament:** (noun) a body of forces equipped for war. [It would be slow, and there was no sign of *armament*.]

**ASI:** (noun) airspeed indicator. [He raked the panel with worried eyes and found that his *ASI* was dropping, that his tach had fallen a thousand revs and was starting on a second thousand, and that his oil pressure was slipping steadily down as his engine heat came up!]

**balefully:** (adverb) in an ominous manner. [David looked *balefully* at them and then, with a sudden contempt he could not explain, began dusting the snow from his cap and shoulders.]

**bandolier:** (noun) a broad belt worn over the shoulder by soldiers and having a number of small loops or pockets for holding cartridges. [He found that he had left the rifle and *bandolier* back there beside Sabrina.]

**bedeviling:** (verb) tormenting. [Small whirlwinds of snow went dancing through the darkness, engulfing and *bedeviling* sentries.]

**bemused:** (verb) bewildered; confused; puzzled. [He answered mechanically to everything and, once or twice, was *bemused* into expecting to look up and find himself talking to some fellow who had been dead for years, or to hear immediate reports on battles which had been won and lost and long forgotten.]

**caissons:** (noun) chests to hold ammunition. [A Russian patrol, some thirty gaunt ghosts in a gaunt and ghostly land, wallowed through the drifts of a road, past the upset shell of a tank, past a mass of frozen dead and broken *caissons*, making its slow way toward the blazing plane.]

**choom:** (noun) (Lapp) a tent made of skins or bark. [The pilots huddled about an oil fire in an odorous *choom*, pretending to find heat in it, but quite able to see one another's breath, and all continually flexing their ungloved hands to keep the frost from creeping in.]

**cordite:** (noun) a family of smokeless propellants, developed and produced in the United Kingdom from the late nineteenth century to replace gunpowder as a military propellant for large weapons, such as tank guns, artillery and naval guns. Cordite is now obsolete and no longer produced. [The interior smelled of hot oil and sweat and *cordite*, and David told himself that it must be this that made him reel.]

**cowl:** (noun) a removable metal covering for an engine, especially an aircraft engine. ["Thanks," said David, and the puff of breath which came out with the word was so instantly frozen that it tinkle-tinkled as it dropped on the metal *cowl*.]

**Democratic People's Government of Finland (DPGF):** (noun) also known as the Terijoki Government; a Soviet puppet regime created in the occupied Finnish border town of Terijoki on December 1, 1939. It was used for both diplomatic and military purposes. They hoped it would encourage Socialists in Finland's army to defect. [You see, we are part of the *Democratic People's Government of Finland*.]

**demur:** (verb) to object; to hesitate or be reluctant to do something that one thinks may be wrong. [At Murmansk, officers were beginning to ask questions and *demur* at the rate of replacement required by Otriad 178.]

**drome:** (noun) short for airdrome; a military air base. [And he located, finally, a suitable expanse of clear ground, about half a mile from the outskirts of the town and about a quarter of a mile from the *drome*.]

**effrontery:** (noun) behavior that is shamelessly bold; impudence. [Major Feodor Rossof was in a bitter mood, had been, even before word had come to him that a certain Lieutenant Aro of the DPGF Guard had had the *effrontery* to state that



any prisoner taken by her was strictly a DPGF prisoner and would be handled in any way the DPGF wished.]

**enigma:** (noun) an action or thing which cannot be satisfactorily explained; a puzzle. [To his friends David Duane was an *enigma* and a paradox.]

**flimsy:** (noun) thin paper usually used to make multiple copies. [Rossov reached into his coat and brought out a radio *flimsy*.]

**floundered:** (verb) struggled or stumbled; moved with jerks or agitated motion. [David *floundered* along, swearing at his ankle, at the snow, at Mikko.]

**Fokker D.XXI:** (noun) a fighter plane designed in 1935 and used by the Finnish Air Force in the early years of World War II. Designed as a cheap and small but rugged plane, they were very suitable for the Finnish winter conditions. They performed better and for much longer than other fighter planes acquired prior to the start of the war, and were more evenly matched with the fighter planes of the Soviet Air Force. [It was becoming barely possible at this hour of 9:00 AM to make out the *Fokker D.XXIs* which spread their wings close against the breast of earth, shadows against the weirdly beautiful luminescence of the snow.]

**Galahad:** (noun) Sir Galahad; the noblest knight of the Round Table, who succeeded in his quest for the Holy Grail (cup or plate that possessed miraculous powers; according to medieval legend it was used by Jesus at the Last Supper and later became sought by medieval knights). Upon this achievement, he was taken up into heaven, leaving behind two companions and fellow knights who also sought the Holy Grail. [“What he saw was a mirage—like the city *Galahad* saw when he parted from Sir Percivale and mounted up into the sky.”]

**G-men:** (noun) government men; agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. [He could write on any subject, in any genre, from jungle explorers to deep-sea divers, from *G-men* and gangsters, cowboys and flying aces to mountain climbers, hard-boiled detectives and spies. –Foreword]

**hearse plume:** (noun) on antique horse-drawn hearses, a feather plume, usually ostrich feathers dyed black, used to decorate the tops of the horses’ heads. [Standing up like a great *hearse plume*, a cloud of greasy gases marked the final resting place of a fighting plane.]

**I-15:** (noun) Soviet fighter biplane. [Instead of a bomber, he found a sky full of I-15 single-seat biplane fighters.]

***Ilmavoimat, Lentorykmentti:*** (noun) (Finnish) a flying regiment in the air force. [Squadron Three of the Second Regiment of the *Ilmavoimat, Lentorykmentti*, complained like sleepy eagles upon the line, their Mercury VIIs clanking and wheezing, dying out and revving up as though suddenly emerging from a nap into instant awareness of their responsibilities that day.]

**incendiary:** (adjective) a bomb or weapon designed to cause fires. ["It's an *incendiary* grenade."]

**inertia starter:** (noun) a device for starting engines. During the energizing of the starter, all movable parts within it are set in motion. After the starter has been fully energized, it is engaged to the crankshaft of the engine and the flywheel energy is transferred to the engine. [Presently the sound stopped and in its place came the unwilling wheeze of *inertia starters*.]

**Kalgan:** (noun) a city in northeast China near the Great Wall that served as both a commercial and a military center. Kalgan means "gate in a barrier" or "frontier" in Mongolian. It is the eastern entry into China from Inner Mongolia. [Surely he could never mistake Tommy Lawton—Tommy Lawton, shot down in flames over *Kalgan*, how long—how long ago?]

**Lapland:** (noun) a region of extreme northern Europe including northern Norway, Sweden and Finland and the Kola Peninsula of northwest Russia. It is largely within the Arctic Circle. [In the black crystal of a *Lapland* night, men spoke in whispers while they awaited the coming of dawn and battle.]

**Lufbery circle:** (noun) an air combat tactic that was most commonly used during World War I. It was purely defensive in nature and involved all members of the defending aircraft forming a horizontal circle in the air when attacked, with each plane theoretically protecting the plane in front of him. This tactic was intended for slower, less capable aircraft when attacked by aggressive enemy fighters, and with bombers it had the added benefit of defensive gunners that further prevented enemy fighters from attacking the formation. [David's squadron leader signaled for the *Lufbery circle* and, like cogs in a perfectly running machine, his six remaining ships fell into line.]

**luminescence:** (adjective) the quality of being luminous; emitting or reflecting light. [...the Fokker D.XXIs which spread their wings close against the breast of earth, shadows against the weirdly beautiful *luminescence* of the snow.]

**M-17:** (noun) a Soviet-licensed copy of a German BMW aircraft engine used in the early versions of the TB-3 heavy bomber. [The sound of an *M-17* came to them faintly, but growing louder.]

**mags:** (noun) magnetos; small ignition system devices that use permanent magnets to generate a spark in internal combustion engines, especially in marine and aircraft engines. [He cut in his *mags* and the Fokker leaped like a struck horse.]

**Mannerheim Line:** (noun) a defensive fortification on the Karelian Isthmus (a land bridge between Russia and Finland) built by Finland against the Soviet Union. During the Winter War (1939–1940) it became known as the Mannerheim Line, after Field Marshal C.G.E. Mannerheim who designed the plans for it. Some of the most fierce fighting of the Winter War took place along this line. [We hear that a tank column has taken the *Mannerheim Line*, and then we have occasion to see the column and we find every tank in it a smoking ruin.]

**Mercury VII:** (noun) type of engine in the Fokker D.XXI plane. [Squadron Three of the Second Regiment of the *Ilmavoimat*, *Lentorykmentti*, complained like sleepy eagles upon the line, their *Mercury VII*s clanking and wheezing, dying out and revving up as though suddenly emerging from a nap into instant awareness of their responsibilities that day.]

**militzka:** (noun) (Samoyed, the language of the nomadic peoples of northern Siberia) winter coat made of reindeer hide. [...these men looked like Arctic bears with human masks; their *militzkas* were huge and shaggy, and bulging because of the flying suits underneath...]

**minarets:** (noun) tall slender towers attached to a mosque and surrounded by one or more projecting balconies, from which the summon to prayer is cried by the muezzin. [“Golden *minarets* and domes, parks and wide streets—”]

**mirage:** (noun) an optical effect that is sometimes seen on the ocean, but more frequently in deserts, due to total reflection of light at the surface common to

two strata of air differently heated. The reflected image is seen, commonly in an inverted position, while the real object may or may not be in sight. [“What he saw was a *mirage*—like the city Galahad saw when he parted from Sir Percivale and mounted up into the sky.”]

**monoplane:** (noun) an airplane with one sustaining surface or one set of wings. [The great TB-3 (ANT-6) *monoplanes* looked gaunt and starved, despite the fact that each of the three ships in the three flights had its belly crammed with its long ton of bombs.]

**motor cannon:** (noun) a type of gun that shoots through the propeller hub of a fighter plane. [Even if a man escaped the bullets of the Finn attackers, escaped the possible explosion of his own bombs hit by 20mm *motor cannon*, and got safely out without getting his chute hung on the tail surfaces, all he could look forward to was speedy death by freezing in this endless monotony of snow.]

**mufti:** (noun) civilian clothes; ordinary clothes worn by somebody who usually wears a uniform. [It shows him in *mufti*, a thin and graceful figure whose half-smiling, sardonic mouth is in contrast to his wondering, dreaming eyes.]

**mujiks:** (noun) (Russian) peasants. [It would be a great disappointment to these *mujiks* if the pilot had been burned to death...]

**Murmansk:** (noun) a city of northwest Russia on an inlet of the Barents Sea. A major ice-free port, it was an important supply line to Russia in World Wars I and II. [At *Murmansk*, officers were beginning to ask questions...]

**noita:** (noun) (Finnish) a shaman who by means of falling into a trance travels to the spirit world to meet the souls of the dead who can offer wisdom otherwise unattainable. [“A long while ago a *noita* here cast up a Destiny for you.]

**odorous:** (adjective) having or emitting an odor. [The pilots huddled about an oil fire in an *odorous choom*...]

**otriad:** (noun) (Russian) detachment; a military unit separated from its normal, larger unit for special duties. [Feodor Rossov, major commanding *Otriad* 178, Heavy Bombing Group, Red Air Force, thundered with his squadron into the eye of the sun.]

**paradox:** (noun) a tenent or proposition contrary to received opinion; something

seemingly contradictory, or opposed to common sense; that which in appearance or terms is absurd, but yet may be true in fact. [To his friends David Duane was an enigma and a *paradox*.]

**parole:** (noun) word of honor, especially that of a prisoner of war who is granted freedom only after promising not to engage in combat. [All I can give you is your freedom, and that, in this land, is a small enough gift. I must ask your *parole*—"]

**Percivale, Sir:** (noun) a knight of the Round Table who sought the Holy Grail (cup or plate that possessed miraculous powers; according to medieval legend it was used by Jesus at the Last Supper and later became sought by medieval knights). ["What he saw was a mirage—like the city Galahad saw when he parted from *Sir Percivale* and mounted up into the sky."]

**pimmies:** (noun) (Samoyed, the language of the nomadic peoples of northern Siberia) boots made of deerskin. [These men looked like Arctic bears with human masks; their *militzkas* were huge and shaggy, and bulging because of the flying suits underneath; their legs, encased in stumplike *pimmies*, enhanced the impression.]

**plied:** (verb) employed diligently; used steadily. [Men hugged closed fires in tents or snored and shivered in damp blankets; others *plied* icy wrenches on colder motors and jammed their fingers...]

**Pole Star:** (noun) North Star; a star that is vertical, or nearly so, to the North Pole. Because it always indicates due north for an observer anywhere on Earth, it is important for navigation. [The *Pole Star* was almost directly overhead, with all the close constellations spread around like the numbers on a clock, wiped out from time to time by the northern lights.]

**ponderously:** (adjective) with great weight. [A Russian tank column moved *ponderously* along a frozen riverbed.]

**Popular Front:** (noun) a political coalition of leftist parties against fascism; in 1936 the Popular Front was formed in Spain consisting of the Communist Party of Spain, Socialists and other left-wing organizations. ["Spain. *The Popular Front*...."]

**premonition:** (noun) a forewarning ["I think it is something which gets into a man's head—a *premonition* which takes the form of a vision."]

**Puhjola:** (noun) borrowed from *Pohjola* in Finnish mythology, it means “the home of the north” though the term is quite vague and without geographical significance. It is considered to be the land of heroes. [And their *Puhjola* isn’t unlike the Norse *Valhalla*.]

**repose:** (adjective) tranquility; freedom from uneasiness; also, a composed manner. [His lean, sensitive face was in *repose*, his gray eyes were pleasantly and politely interested, just as they would be if he listened to a friend telling a story he had already heard.]

**Rif:** (noun) Er Rif; a hilly region along the coast of northern Morocco. The Berber people of the area remained fiercely independent until they were subdued by French and Spanish forces (1925–1926). [Ten years ago this winter, David Duane resigned his new commission in the US Air Service to the sorrow of the *Rif* and the glory of Spain.]

**rudder:** (noun) a device used to steer ships or aircraft. A rudder is a flat plane or sheet of material attached with hinges to the craft’s stern or tail. In typical aircraft, pedals operate rudders via mechanical linkages. [Delicate pressure of toe to *rudder* placed the Red Squadron’s second flight of TB-3s in his sights.]

**samovar:** (noun) a large and often ornate Russian tea urn, originally heated by a built-in charcoal burner. [Sublieutenant Nikolai Vasilitch was hugging his knees on a rug; in a canvas chair beside the masked lantern was Lieutenant Sabrina Aro, her cloak thrown aside and the collar of her tunic unfastened, pausing in her duties at the *samovar* as she laughed with Nikolai at an anecdote Captain Duane was telling.]

**Scheherazade:** (noun) the female narrator of *The Arabian Nights*, who during one thousand and one adventurous nights saved her life by entertaining her husband, the king, with stories. [“Pulp” magazines, named for their rough-cut, pulpwood paper, were a vehicle for more amazing tales than *Scheherazade* could have told in a million and one nights. –Foreword]

**scudded:** (verb) moved swiftly; moved as if driven forward by something. [In a daze, following his deepest instinct, he snatched up the sentry’s rifle and *scudded* after Sabrina.]

**sicced:** (verb) urged or incited to hostile action. [Kalovitch stopped his digging and sicced two men on the work.]

**skulking:** (adjective) evading duty or work by pretending to be incapacitated. ["Come around, you *skulking* hog!" Kalovitch snarled.]

**slovenliness:** (adjective) in a careless manner, or negligent of cleanliness. [There was no *slovenliness* here.]

**snaggleteeth:** (noun) teeth that are irregular, broken or projecting. ["I'll stop you with a bullet in your *snaggleteeth*!" said the officer.]

**stolid:** (adjective) hopelessly insensible or stupid; not easily aroused or excited; dull; impassive. [The *stolid* Finnish faces resolved themselves into swarthy expressiveness and yellow blandness and black sullenness, and back to stolidity again, without amazing him at all.]

**strata:** (noun) horizontal layers, especially parallel layers one on top of another. [At the zenith, the smoke met moving *strata* of air and swirled into weird patterns.]

**swarthy:** (adjective) dark-skinned. [The stolid Finnish faces resolved themselves into *swarthy* expressiveness and yellow blandness and black sullenness, and back to stolidity again, without amazing him at all.]

**tab-trimming:** (noun) adjusting the tab, a small, adjustable hinged surface, located on the trailing edge of the aileron, rudder or elevator control surface. It is adjusted by the pilot to maintain balance and to help stabilize the aircraft in flight. [See, it had *tab-trimming* control of an improved type and the skis were broader....]

**tach:** (noun) tachometer; a device used to determine speed of rotation, typically of an engine's crankshaft, usually measured in revolutions per minute. [His *tach* was revving up and his altimeter going down, and a wall of air was screaming by, air suddenly laced by dark streams, as though someone sprayed black water at him.]

**TB-3 (ANT-6):** (noun) (civilian designation ANT-6) a heavy bomber aircraft that was deployed by the Soviet Air Force in the 1930s. It saw combat as a Zveno project fighter mothership and as a light tank transport. [The great *TB-3 (ANT-6)*

monoplanes looked gaunt and starved, despite the fact that each of the three ships in the three flights had its belly crammed with its long ton of bombs.]

**Terijoki:** (noun) a town won from Finland in a treaty with Moscow (1940) and under the jurisdiction of St. Petersburg, Russia; located on the Karelian Isthmus (land bridge connecting Finland and Russia). The town became known to the world during the Winter War as the site of the Communist puppet regime, also known as the Democratic People's Republic of Finland. The Winter War (November 1939 to March 1940) broke out when the Soviet Union attacked Finland. [Before four of these was a small sign bearing the initials "DPGF" and, under those, the equivalent of "contact radio, *Terijoki*."] ]

**tracer:** (noun) a bullet or shell whose course is made visible by a trail of flames or smoke, used to assist in aiming. [He dodged the *tracers* and his wingmen dodged with him.]

**Valhalla:** (noun) (Norse mythology) the great hall where the souls of heroes killed in battle spend eternity. [And their *Puhjola* isn't unlike the Norse *Valhalla*.]

**vised:** (verb) held, or squeezed with or as if with a vise. [And suddenly her hands were *vised* upon his arm and she was sobbing.]

**voluminous:** (adjective) of clothing, loose and ample. [An officer in a *voluminous* white hood and cape stood at his feet, drawn pistol in hand, addressing them in a series of snaps and snarls which hurled them back even more swiftly than the menacing weapon.]

**welded:** (verb) united together as if joined, used figuratively. [It was Lieutenant Aro who had browbeaten her fellow Finn-Communists into accepting Russia's terms and, thereafter, had been the steel band that had kept them *welded* to Russia and to themselves.]

**whipstall:** (noun) a maneuver in a small aircraft in which it goes into a vertical climb, pauses briefly, and then drops toward the earth, nose first. [David watched the Red go swooping down, *whipstalling* every two or three thousand feet, coming up and flying up until another *whipstall* occurred.]



**White Russian:** (noun) a Russian who fought against the Bolsheviks (Russian Communist Party) in the Russian Revolution, and fought against the Red Army during the Russian Civil War from 1918 to 1921. [A pair of excited gray eyes looked back at him, gray eyes which were big and could be kind; a full and lovely mouth—why, only a *White Russian* could be as beautiful as this, and certainly there were few *White Russians* around anymore...]

**Wind Mother:** (noun) (Latvian mythology) Goddess of the Wind. Latvians called all their gods “father” and all their goddesses “mother.” They pictured all their deities as parents. Latvia is a country in northern Europe along the shores of the Baltic Sea. [In the north, the *Wind Mother* had already stilled her charges.]

**Wright Cyclone engine:** (noun) designed in the US by the Wright Aeronautical Corporation, formed in 1919, the Cyclone was a new high-powered, air-cooled engine used extensively by the US government through World War II. [He knew only that these ships could outmaneuver the Fokkers, and that the Russian pattern of the *Wright Cyclone engines* was strong enough to outclimb the Mercury VIIIs.]

**zenith:** (noun) the highest point reached in the heavens by a celestial body or other object. [There were twenty-seven I-15s, stacked up toward the *zenith* like steps on stairs.]

**Zveno:** (noun) Zveno project; a parasite aircraft project developed in the Soviet Union during the 1930s. It consisted of a TB-3 heavy bomber acting as a mothership for between two and five fighters. The fighters either launched with the mothership or docked in flight and they could refuel from the bomber. [His own brother, Dmitri, was heading *Zveno Two*.]



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