



LITERARY

NB

The Invincible Squadron

Bessie Brinson

Prize Story

SQUADRON SIXTY-SIX was anxiously awaiting a new recruit. Sixty-six was a scout squadron flying S. E. 5's from an airdrome near St. Couer. It was made up chiefly of Americans, who had come over to English training camps with a greater number of hours in the air to their credit than many a Royal Flying Corps man had run up after months of active service. They were expert fliers, and had been trained in aerial combat by no less a champion of the air than Macready, the premier ace of the British forces, who had selected them with infinite care. The pilots of Sixty-six frankly worshipped Conrad, a recruit in their squadron, who had become an ace. They felt that their squadron was rivaled by no other on the western front.

Then Macready had transferred Conrad to England to command a squadron of his own, and he himself had gone to Paris in obedience to orders from Foch.

The officers of Sixty-six were foregathered to consider the problem of who would take Conrad's place. Wilson, the lanky tow-headed lad from Missouri, was pessimistic.

"You ask me," he said, "and I'd say this war ain't all it's cracked up to be. Conrad is a darn good scout, but you can't count on getting many more like him. I hear that some of these British recruits are humdingers for bravery, though."

"But washouts for flying," cried Denby. "We've got to see that we get the right man."

Wilson gazed upon his brother officer with a slight but humorous smile.

"Sure, send for a book of samples," he drawled.

Denby fired up. He was hair-triggered, reckless, impulsive, and proud. He lived on nerve and attacked the war with a colossal ambition and dare-devil bravery.

"We've one of the best squadrons in France, now, and the man who joins Sixty-six has got to be of the finest they've got," he exclaimed, his eyes flashing with excitement.

"How about Bishop, or Mannock, or McCudden?" asked Stevens, sarcastically.

"That's the stuff!" cried Denby, missing the sarcasm in his fervor.

"Leave it to Denby!" joined Morton. "He's right. Let 'em know up at headquarters that we rate the best recruits in the Flying Corps. There's not a man in this outfit who can't fly circles around the general run of them."

"Now," reiterated Wilson, "you're all getting a bit excited. As I see it, we've just been lucky in getting Macready in the first place. He just picked us up because we happened to be the first over from the States. He made Conrad and all of us what we are now, and he can make any other recruit who joins Sixty-six. You can't tell me there aren't lots more just as good coming along all the time. Since we've been over here, we've had a lot of tall combat practice, and we've been taught to save our skins and get our man at the same time. But you fellows don't seem to remember everything Macready set out to teach us, by a long sight. You seem to have forgotten the most important thing we might have learned."

"All right, professor, get right up and tell the little boys all about it,"

sang out Morton. All this without a trace of malice, for, after three weeks at the front malice does not exist among men who expect to die together.

"It's like this," continued Wilson. "You fellows seem to feel we're pretty good; that we've got the edge on most every aviator who ever flew in France. That's because we've been getting away with murder on every trip over the lines that Macready has led. Whenever we've met a German, we've had the pleasure of seeing him shake his rattle at us, and fly home like a streak of greased lightning. All the planes we ever brought down were herded up for us by Macready. All right. Now, what we've learned from that seems to be that we're a pretty hot crowd of airmen. Not so?"

"Say, Wilson, where'd you find the anvil?"

It was Denby rising in protest; and Morton backed him.

"Denby's right, Wilson. You sound like the last cab horse."

"Well, wait a minute," drawled Wilson. "What I've said is just facts. That's all we seem to have learned. Now, I'm going to tell you what we ought to have learned. Macready tried hard to get it into our heads that we weren't getting any real war at all. The Germans knew just as well as we did that Conrad and Macready, Conrad especially, were up in this part of the line, and so they didn't show fight. If you go shooting off all this crack-squadron stuff at headquarters, they'll laugh at you. The thing for us to do is to take the man they give us. If we rate it, we'll get a real good recruit, and if Macready puts on the report that I think he will, we'll rate it."

Thereupon strife broke loose in the disheveled parlor of the chateau that was Sixty-six's headquarters. Denby and Morton protested hotly against Wilson's policy of modest waiting, but, in the end, Wilson won out, and the trip to headquarters that Denby and Morton had planned was voted down. Squadron Sixty-six decided to wait for whatever man might be appointed to join them, and **Denby, Morton and Company** heatedly prophesied the worst.

"Just wait," said Denby, his black eyes smouldering. "We'll be given one of your armchair fliers with a monocle in his eye, and be the laughing stock of the Flying Corps."

"Or we'll get a hard-boiled recruit and have to walk on tiptoe, so as not to disturb him—and die before breakfast," grumbled Morton.

Three days after Conrad had gone his way, and Macready had not returned, the officers of Sixty-six were disturbed in their unaccustomed leisure by the appearance in the skies above them of a new and glittering S. E. 5. It came thundering across the hangars and turned into the wind at the lee side of the field to make its landing, but it turned in too quickly, so that it could not land without overshooting the 'drome.

"A rookie," snapped Denby, excitedly. "That kid needs another ten hours."

"Gosh, what a turn!" criticised Stevens, as the unfortunate pilot opened his throttle and skidded in a flat turn about the hangars."

Again, the visitor turned, this time with more room than he needed. He shut off his motor and glided in toward the air-drome. Apparently seeing that he could not make it, he nosed up.

"He's going to stall her!" gasped Denby.

"Oh-h-h!" Wilson slowly let his breath escape as he saw the pilot open his throttle and spurt forward in a burst of speed.

"Bet it's that new recruit for us," cried Denby disgustedly. "That's the stuff they'll give us now that Conrad's gone. Look at that!"

He snorted with disgust as the newcomer shut off his gas, put down his

nose, and plunged with startling speed toward the earth. Then he pulled up, and the trim little machine dipped and rose and dipped again in a series of hops that varied from three to five feet above the ground. The machine at last lost flying power and landed with a bump upon its wheels; and then it came to rest in a series of bounces and jolts that quickly changed to the lumbering pace at which its pilot taxied it toward the tarmac.

When the pilot alighted from his beautiful but abused little aircraft, he found himself surrounded by the grinning members of Squadron Sixty-six, who regarded him with sardonic, but not unfriendly, curiosity. To their surprise, he was not a mere kid at all. Instead, he was a young man whose countenance possessed that singular dignity which marked the faces of most men who had seen a great deal of the war. He was taller than common, and fair, having brows and lashes that, catching the sunlight, glittered yellow.

The officers of Sixty-six hesitated in their greeting, for they had been prepared to tease good-naturedly an untried kid. Instead, they found themselves confronting a veteran. Intuitively they sensed that at once. An appalling thought occurred to Denby, and the newcomer immediately verified it by his first words addressed to the men of Sixty-six.

"My name is Gordon. I have come to take Phil Conrad's place on the squadron. I shall be your commander, too, for the time being, until Major Macready returns."

That was the afternoon when Carruthers, in the parlance of the Flying Corps, "killed himself." With Denby, he went up to lead a wild game of follow-the-leader about the hangars, trees, and buildings that surrounded the airdrome, and, while turning over for a second loop in his flight, the wings snapped off and the plane fell to the earth a heap of smoking, death-dealing wreckage.

Major Gordon saw the death of Carruthers through the windows of the orderly house and gazed upon the scene with a thoughtful and melancholy gaze.

Before evening there was posted in squadrons' orders a command that there would be no stunting at the airdrome except by order.

"It's training school all over again!" exclaimed Stevens indignantly as he entered the mess hall. "This guy isn't a fighting man—he's a kindergarten teacher!"

"He probably thinks a man is more useful before than after stunting," drawled Wilson.

"How are we going to fight if we can't stunt?" cried Denby thickly. "You'd better talk down, Wilson. If you hadn't horned in, we'd have got a good man instead of this——," he paused for an adequate word—"this ground hog!"

"Give him a chance," said Wilson. "We haven't seen him in action yet."

"And never will, I'll bet!" sneered Denby.

He reminded Wilson of that later the next morning—as a matter of fact, while they waited for dinner. They had come back from their first patrol with Gordon. "Defensive patrol," the orders had read.

Gordon had been the last man to get into his machine that morning. The rest of the squadron were out tuning up their engines before he came out of the orderly room and strode over to his bright new plane. He examined the plane very carefully before he climbed into the cockpit, while Denby, in the plane beside him, with that high tension with which he faced every perilous action, watched him.

"Aw climb in—it won't bite you!" Denby murmured under his breath; and he noticed with narrow eyes all those indications of hesitation and reluc-

tance that he had seen before in cadets who had failed to gain their wings.

"The man's yellow," he repeated to himself bitterly. "Yellow! Yellow! Yellow!" Denby kept repeating while his hand trembled on the stick and he longed to get off the ground and into action. "What luck!"

Then they were off. Up and over the lines they went, to sweep about in curves that Gordon, oddly enough, made more neatly and sharply as he maneuvered into higher altitudes.

It was a defensive patrol, a flight to patrol the lines to see that no enemy machines crossed over or operated to military advantage above the lines, not one to invade enemy territory and destroy enemy planes. However, defensive or offensive, that meant nothing to **Denby, Morton and Company**. To them, every flight over the lines meant searching for trouble—hunting out the enemy and bringing down as many German planes as they could. So, when Denby saw far to the eastward a formation of German scouts, he expected Gordon to fly upon the enemy.

Gordon did nothing of the sort.

"He saw them all right," Denby afterwards declared vehemently.

"That's why he turned. He got cold feet! I tell you, he's yellow clean through!"

The evidence bore him out, and Wilson could say nothing to defend this new temporary commander. To be sure, Gordon had kept on his way, until the sun was in his face and the wind gave him a slight drift toward the enemy, and then he turned his squadron directly at the German formation.

The enemy had fled. Faced by superior numbers, which they believed were led by the deadly Conrad and Macready, the Germans turned homeward. Denby put the question hotly to his fellows. Had Gordon followed? No! Assured of his own safety, as Denby insinuated, he had led his squadron back to its patrol of the lines.

Then, they had flown back to the airdrome. Here, Gordon, attempting to land, turned too sharply and pancaked. Denby, on his own initiative, led the squadron again around the 'drome and landed in good form.

Gordon's face was exceedingly white and his eyes were grave as he climbed from the wreckage of his plane, which was heaped in the center of the green. He wandered over to the tarmac where Denby was climbing out of his plane.

"Thanks, Denby," he said quietly. "We'd have lost some machines, I'm afraid, if they'd followed me down." Then as Denby turned away. "By the way, Denby—, never leave a formation on an impulse." Denby had started in pursuit of the Germans during the patrol. "When wings orders call for defensive patrol, you must remember that they're counting on you to be there."

Denby had stared at him for a moment in dumb indignation. Then he hurried off to give vent to his rage in the privacy of his quarters.

"The rotten slacker had the nerve to bawl me out for leading off after those Germans!" he snorted. He said nothing of Gordon's explanation, for he sensed that he might spoil the point he would make against Wilson. "He can't fly, and he won't fight! He's so yellow that he botches his landings like a kid on a solo flight. He's rank clear through!"

Others agreed with him, but Wilson merely frowned at the ragged carpet.

"I don't know," he drawled. "There's something about this Gordon that does not stock up with the appraisal you're making."

"The only thing about him that I can see," rejoined Stevens, "is that he looks like a man, but he can't deliver the goods."

There was a silence, and Wilson could not fill it.

"Don't stick up for him just because you feel responsible for his coming here," remarked Denby.

Wilson walked off across the airdrome with the phrase ringing in his ears. He was thinking that Denby might have spoken more truly than he had intended. He had heard a great deal about the pleasant, cautious gentlemen who gained their wings and commissions without ever learning to fly—the "armchair" fliers who seldom got to the front—and Gordon, it seemed, lived up to all the specifications.

He saw the bright orange and green fuselage of his own dainty plane standing outside the hangars and strolled over to see why it should be out on the tarmac. He found Gordon standing beside it.

"Just the man I want," said Gordon, smiling his greeting. "Hale has just gone over to ask you if I may use your bus."

Wilson's honest face fell. He was very fond of his first active service machine. Gordon noted his hesitation, and nodded.

"I know," he said, "and the fact is, I can't promise not to pile her up the same way I did mine." He leaned on the leading edge of a lower wing and gazed off across the airdrome.

"It almost seems as if I'm through." Wilson started. Gordon's voice had a quality that touched Wilson deeply. Gordon looked up at him, smiling a grave, thoughtful smile. "It happens to most of us if we keep this up long enough," he explained. "You either get killed, or you lose your nerve. I've lost mine—my flying nerve, you know—can't judge my landings any more—feel as if I'm on the ground when I'm a hundred feet up."

Suddenly, he stood erect, grinning broadly.

"But I want to get over that, and the only way that I know of getting over it is to fly. I've got to take up a machine and practice hedge-hopping until I know my ground work again. I've got to use one of the squadron busses,—well—I thought you were the fellow who might understand most readily what it's all about. See?"

Wilson stared at him. Then he became conscious that Gordon was waiting for an answer. He gulped and turned red.

"Why sure, Major. It's all right with me." Then impulsively, "Say, but isn't it sort of—sort of dangerous?"

Gordon tossed back his head, giving his smile the quality of a laugh.

"Yes. That's the drawback to this whole war."

He turned to the brilliant orange and green plane. Wilson watched him, and continued to do so until he saw the orange and green beauty disappear over the trees that filled the valley. Then he turned back to the chateau with a strange feeling of uneasiness. He was reproaching himself for having allowed Gordon to ascend!

The men were assembling for lunch an hour later, when the first bomb fell. The anti-aircraft guns gave them the warning, but it was a customary sound, and they ignored it until it gave way to a droning in the air above the chateau, and a deafening detonation that set the old building rocking. In a rush they made for the doors and streamed out onto the airdrome in time to see the orderly hut go up in an eruption of earth and debris. A hail of shrapnel and splinters filled the air. Dust blinded them. The din of thundering bombs and anti-aircraft guns was deafening. Wilson saw Collins, of C Flight, slump to the ground as he emerged from the chateau doorway. Bombs burst on every side, and then, suddenly, panic seized the men. They scattered in all directions seeking cover. Wilson, about to follow them, glanced into the air. Immediately, oblivious of the bombs and shrapnel that

fell about him, he stood transfixed, staring upward.

He saw the nearing forms of the German bombers dropping their death potions from a height of nine or ten thousand feet—but off to the eastward, he saw something else that moved in the sky—a tiny plane that caught the rays of the sun with the color of flame. His own plane, with Gordon at the controls, speeding toward the doomed airdrome as a pigeon speeds home!

Wilson's heart took a queer turn to think of Gordon's so returning—returning to certain destruction or to death. Only a master flier could land in that chaos, and he would need good luck for his landing.

But Gordon did not land. Wilson saw him veer to the south as he came in clear sight of the airdrome; and then, pulling up his nose, he dived straight at the high noon sun.

Wilson realized Gordon's purpose. He would dash into the sun until he had climbed to a height above the bombers, and then, with the sun at his back, he would plunge upon the enemy out of that dazzling light, and trust to the gods of war that they might be too preoccupied with their bombing to perceive him.

Wilson, oblivious to the entreaties of his fellows to seek cover, watched it turn into the sun and streak down, straight as a die, toward the bombers. There was a moment when silence reigned as the bombs stopped dropping. Wilson prayed that the Germans were not through, for if they were, they could deal with Gordon with one volley of fire.

But they were not. Their object was to destroy the chateau, and, having so far missed it, they dipped and came shooting down the air. The bombs started dropping again.

Wilson hardly heard them, for his eyes were glued on the little plane that had also dipped. It was droning in a mad burst of speed, and still the Germans hadn't seen it. Wilson saw the little orange plane pull up its nose as it seemed bound to pass beneath the bow of the leading German bomber. Then it bounced into the air and changed direction as the leading bomber veered from its course, spun into a dive, and dropped like a stone to the earth.

But Wilson didn't see it fall. The first burst of Gordon's gun fire came to him as the second burst was fired. He saw the bombers scatter, and then, as Gordon's little machine plunged through the very center of the formation and swooped upward under it in a fine, curving zoom, another German plane dropped flaming in his wake. The bombers were scattered now, and Gordon swooped about among them like a flame-colored hawk among geese.

"He's takin' 'em all! All of 'em! It's a suicide, but, oh, but it's a fight!"

Wilson was yelling himself hoarse without knowing it, and his fellow officers, believing the raid over, came forth and joined him. They stood in groups and stared.

Gordon was playing his old effective game. With eyes for all about him, seeming to see above, below, behind, and about all at the same time, he kept himself always with a bomber at his back. It demanded skilled flying, for always he must be close, too close for safety, to the enemies about him, and he moved at a hundred and twenty miles an hour. To the officers of his squadron gazing up spellbound at that high fight against appalling odds, he was little more than a flame-colored flash.

As they stared, half stunned, they saw two of the bombers fall out of that seething group and hurtle earthward. Then it was that Wilson suddenly came to and swept them all into action.

"Come on, you ground hogs!" he yelled. "We ought to go up! We ought to have been up before!"

And as he shrieked, he ran madly for the hangars. The others followed, leaping and stumbling across the battered surface of the airdrome. They were running out the machines with almost incredible speed, when Wilson, whose frantic gaze had once again swept the sky, saw another bomber come hurtling down—and almost at the same instant he saw Gordon's little plane turn into a spinning, whirling, scarlet-colored toy, writhing its way toward the earth.

"They've got him!" shrieked Wilson, with anguish in his voice. "They've got him!"

Every stricken face turned skyward, and then, suddenly, Denby cried hysterically, "Got him, nothing! Look! Look! Look!"

They all looked, and looked, breathlessly.

Plainly, then, they could see that that spinning plane was under control. Gordon lived!

But two bombers were following him, spiraling down in a long glide. In this fashion they were able to keep up with his spin. When he came out of it, they would bring him down.

"Get into those machines!" screamed Wilson. "He hasn't a show against both of them!"

Somehow, anyhow, three pilots got into the air, three out of the seven who tried to take off: Denby, Morton and Wilson. They turned into the wind and got their direction just as Gordon, at three thousand feet, came out of his spin. Immediately, the bombers fired. They missed, and Gordon spun once more. He was down to seven hundred feet before Wilson led his men into action. For some reason, Wilson had no desire to bring down those two planes. He was content to see them scurry away, striving for altitude as they flew. Then he turned to look for Gordon, and Denby and Morton did likewise.

The airdrome was a mass of bomb craters now, and a man does not land his best after a six thousand feet spin. They watched, and followed Gordon down as they watched him. He made his familiar skidding turn at the end of the 'drome, wavering between the craters that had torn the turf, tried for a line of green, overshot it, and landed five feet above a gaping hole. Wilson saw the little orange-colored plane crumple into the mud, and, catching his breath, he twitched his own stick sideways. Without control, he sideslipped away from his chosen landing. He saw the ground sweep up toward him from the right, and threw up his arm to protect his face. He crashed, and clambered from the wreckage to find the wreckage of his plane at his side.

Gordon was standing quietly beside his wreck. They rushed up to him, all the men of his squadron, but he did not seem to hear their excited chorus of glee and admiration. He was gazing ruefully at Wilson.

"No use," he said. "It doesn't look as though I'll ever make a good landing again."

Denby was madly pumping Gordon's hand.

"Oh gosh, Major!" he said. "Heavens above! Oh Lord!" That was all he could say.

Two days later Wilson received a letter from Macready telling him all about Gordon and explaining how he happened to send Gordon to command in his stead. He read it aloud to the boys of Sixty-six.

Hollyhocks

Lela Merry

Prize Poem

Hollyhock, serene and stately,
You are my beloved queen;
You are the beauty of my pictures;
You are the glory of my gardens;
You are necessary;
Else beauty would be incomplete.

When happy little girls play house
Beside the old stone wall,
You agree with them entirely;
You sing when they sing,
And talk when they talk,
And when they deem it time for rest,
You close your bright eyes
Reverently and sleep.

When women talk together
In sunny sewing-rooms,
You peer in through the window and
Affirm the spoken truths.
You nod and smile, and wonder with them,
And they bless you unaware.

Hollyhock, standing silent
By the corner of the church house,
You hear with open ears
While the Sermon on the
Mount is being re-discussed.
While the closing hymn is sung,
You wait patiently and satisfy
Your sweet compassionate heart.

Hollyhock, in the corner
Of the graveyard,
You are sad when earthly man
Lies down to prolonged slumber,
And you raise your tearful eyes
For a last and precious look
As the one that's gone ahead
Is being lowered in the earth.
Then, when the cars are
All gone home,
And the dead is neatly covered
In his grave,
You lowly bow your head,
And when fervent prayers are said,
You are happy, for your heart feels unafraid.

A Test of Courage

Lonel Wagers

Second Prize

FOR the first time since he had come to Walsh Flying Field, Bill Brady was up against something that scared him. Billy was standing on the lower wing of the Hisso Standard airplane, which we had taken up together. When we had reached twenty-three feet altitude, I signalled Billy. He carefully climbed out on the wing for the parachute jump. Now he was there. His hands were clenched tightly on the flying wires. The wind from the propellor pulled at his body. His whole body was poised expectantly. However, he could not bring himself to make that little step backward into space.

I had first noticed Billy's fear when I watched his face as he peered below. He had lost that devil-may-care look, which we all knew so well, and his face had a fear-stricken expression. His smile was gone, and his lips were compressed into a straight line.

I waited for his next move. I turned the plane around in great circles, hoping that he would brace up and make the jump. He never did. When I caught his attention, I signaled for him to jump. He slumped down with an arm hooked around the wires and I knew he had fainted.

I turned and made a long glide to the field. My heart-pounded as I thought of what awaited Billy below. Bill was the best cadet on Walsh Field. He was a likable chap who seemed to be a natural born pilot, but he couldn't get enough courage to make a parachute jump. I knew Benny Brown would be disgusted. Benny was the manager of Walsh Field. We often chatted about the students and whenever we spoke of Billy Brady it made Benny's eyes light up.

When I landed, we took the limp figure from the wing and laid him on his bunk. I waited until he became conscious. He opened his eyes with a bewildered look, until he turned and saw me. Instantly he remembered and whispered sorrowfully, "I'm sorry, sir. I guess I'm yellow and a quitter." That was all he said. He turned his face to the wall and sobbed.

Benny Brown and I talked over wild plans and ruses by which the "kid" might be able to jump. I was nearly sure that nothing in the world would overcome the fear which paralyzed the kid's nerves when he got ready to jump.

Billy Brady had one life-long friend at Walsh Field. She was Betty Taylor, our office girl. The two spent many happy hours sitting in front of the hangar talking over their love for the air. Betty was flying most of the time that she was not needed in the office and she was a good pilot. Sometimes they went up together, but often they took up separate ships and each tried to out-do the other in some stunt.

One afternoon Billy and I were up in the Hisso Standard just for a short spin. I was looking down and saw Betty's Travelair airplane being warmed up. I tapped Billy on the shoulder and pointed down. He saw and looked back at me with a smile. Betty was probably going to show him some new tricks today.

Billy was in high spirits. We had not mentioned parachute jumps for a long time, although Bill wore his chute as a matter of course. It was one of the rules of Walsh Field that no student could go up without his parachute.

Betty made a pretty take-off and headed into the sky. Billy looked back at me, a questioning look in his eyes. I knew what he wanted and so I gave him the O. K. I was not busy and would be glad to witness a little sky-play.

Billy settled the controls and shouted back, "Got your straps on, Bib?" I signaled that I was all right and then the fun began. Those two looped through the air until it made me dizzy to watch them. One time the landing gear of Betty's plane skimmed our top wing. Even my own heart missed a couple of beats.

Betty went into a cloud and Bill looped over it. Then it happened. As we were coming out of our loop, Betty's plane shot out of the cloud. There was a crashing sound and a tearing of fabric and wood. The landing gear of our plane had ripped into the top wing of Betty's plane. Her plane started gliding down out of control.

Betty stayed with it as the ship began its long glide to the earth. Then suddenly a thought struck me. Betty had no parachute!

I grabbed the controls and headed for the falling plane. Through the screaming wind I shouted the dreadful news, "She has no parachute, Bill!"

He stared back wildly and for a while a look of terror spread over his face. He stood up in his seat and shouted, "Head for the place above Betty's plane." I guessed he had some wild plan.

I headed the Standard for a place over the Travelair. Bill was standing on the wing. When I was a few feet above the plane, he dropped. I was afraid to look below. Bill's figure was seen and he was grasping the fuselage of the falling plane. I saw Bill drag a limp figure from the cockpit and jump.

There was a double burden on the parachute, but I knew that it would carry them to safety. The Travelair crashed to the ground, a mass of broken parts.

Gently the parachute touched the ground. I made a quick landing. I reached them soon after Benny and the boys got there. Betty was laughing hysterically and Bill was off to one side crying. I started toward him and he looked up.

He managed to whisper as his eyes shone with a happy light, "I jumped, sir! And I can do it again any time of the day, sir."



THUNDER

The sky was a mixture of blue and black
The water had a graylike hue;
From afar off over the mountains,
A crash of thunder grew;
It rumbled for many a moment
With echoes tumultuously loud,
'Til finally a torrent of rain burst forth,
From out a big, black cloud.

Fledglings

Cecil Mumbert

Honorable Mention

OLD BALDY was a pelican. He was also the mascot of the sixty-odd rookies stationed at Crissy Field. Now Old Baldy was a peculiar old bird, both physically and intellectually. He had a rather straggly coat of dirty feathers of an indescribable hue, while the top of his head was pure white. This fact gave him the appearance of being bald-headed; hence the name imposed upon him by the rookies. Last but by no means least, he possessed an unusually large pair of feet and an enormous bill. However, Baldy was not liberally endowed in all parts of his being. Alas, he possessed a very small and feeble brain, a fact which made him very slow-witted and slow-acting, and, according to the instructors of Crissy Field, an ideal mascot for a company of rookies.

Baldy was a first class aviator. He had been rescued from a bucket of tar, into which he had fallen, at the tender age of five weeks and had been promptly adopted by the boys and officers of the camp. He had received his ground instruction—instruction in the art of manipulating those enormous feet—along with the other rookies of the field and had really progressed much farther than they, in spite of his diminutive brain, for Baldy had made his first solo flight long before the fond dreams of the rookies had been allowed to materialize.

On this particular June morning Baldy awoke with the first notes of reveille and leisurely flapped his way to the top of the beacon tower, his favorite perch, and, after settling himself comfortably, proceeded to take stock of his surroundings. As Baldy surveyed the numerous tents beneath him, he detected faint indistinguishable sounds issuing from tent seventeen on street A. Presently two young men of eighteen or nineteen years of age burst through the entrance in a frenzy of delight. They proceeded to pommel one another and occasionally to let forth savage yells of delight until they were told to "pipe down" by a sleepy voice issuing from the tent next door.

Now it was impossible for a brain the size of Baldy's to grasp the full significance of the important event in the lives of these two husky young rookies which was to take place that day. Baldy perceived that something unusual was afoot, but how could he know that Jack Davis and Jim O'Connor, his "bunkie," were to make their first solo flights on this memorable June day. Baldy did not know, and he was perfectly content to remain in his present state of ignorance on the top of the beacon tower and bask in the sun. Presently Baldy's head began to nod, and he was soon fast asleep.

Baldy awakened to find the sun high over head. An unusual amount of activity was centered upon the landing field. Near the hangars, at one end of the field, a number of mechanics were warming up the motors of a couple of bi-planes and making last-minute adjustments on the ships.

Baldy realized from past experience that the ships were about to take off, but he did not know that the careers of these two young men depended upon their ability to make good on these, their first solo flights. He did notice that a very pretty girl in a bright red skirt and red sweater, with a mass of black hair flying madly about her head as she stood in the backwash of the "props," kissed each of the youthful aviators and smilingly wished him luck. He did not notice, however, that she lingered beside the cockpit of a red ship rather longer than was necessary and that there was an

exchange of words that was omitted when she had said farewell to the pilot of the big silver ship. Perhaps if Baldy had noticed he would not have understood the meaning of the bond that existed between Jack Davis and Joy Harmon.

Baldy watched Joy turn and run back to the shelter of the hangars and then heard the roar of the motors as the two planes, one in advance of the other began slowly to move down the field. Near the end of the field they rose from the earth and soared into the air, clearing the high voltage wires strung along the roadway at the end of the field by a safe margin of a hundred feet or more.

Upon gaining sufficient altitude, the two ships began to cruise about several thousand feet above the airdrome, responding obediently to the touch of their young masters who began to bank and zoom about in the sky, trying out their new wings and reveling in an ecstasy of joy over their skill and the seemingly perfect control of their machines.

The two pilots stayed up their allotted number of minutes and then proceeded to bring their ships into the wind in preparation for a landing.

About this time Baldy suddenly became interested in something which caught his eye at the other end of the field. Thereupon he flapped off his perch and proceeded to make his way through the air to the object that had attracted his attention. Baldy had just cleared the electric wires when he suddenly became conscious of a terrific roaring very near him, and then a large silvery object appeared directly in front of him, rushing, with wings outspread, to destroy him. Baldy made a desperate attempt to fly above the oncoming ship, and the pilot, sensing his endeavors, dipped toward the ground in a valiant attempt to spare the life of the pet. So occupied was Jim in trying to dodge Baldy that he did not notice how near to the wires he had come.

Suddenly, those on the field who were watching the drama being enacted in the air were blinded by a lightning-like flash as the silver ship plunged into the high voltage wires, hurtled to the earth below, and burst into flames.

Old Baldy, startled by the quick succession of events which had so rapidly transpired, completely forgot what he had formerly been so interested in, and, mindful of his narrow escape, flapped his way clumsily back to the beacon tower. There he gazed wonderingly down upon a blazing, silvery mass of wreckage, a silent group of sorrowful young men, and a grief-stricken girl in red, sobbing softly in the arms of a tight-lipped, grim-faced youth, who had just become an aviator.



The Price

Bonnie Bare
Honorable Mention

BARRY LATHROP frowned as he headed his plane straight into a fog bank, for he noted that his compass had ceased to function and apparently was seriously out of order. But the thought was only a passing one, and his mind quickly returned to the unsuccessful report he must carry back to headquarters. Briefly he outlined the important features of the case in his mind. Six months before Henry Keith Dawson, the eminent scientist, had made known to certain high officials that he had invented a most deadly and effective instrument of warfare. It was quickly recognized that this would prove of incalculable value.

On the day on which he was to have explained his plans to a group of foremost scientists, he mysteriously disappeared. For several days the nation was aroused in searching for him. Then a body, resembling his in stature and garb, was found in a nearby river. Because of the effect of the water, the face was unrecognizable. The small valise which he had carried, containing the plans, was missing. All authorities agreed that it was Dawson, and an extensive but vain search had been made for his murderer. A group of scientists had been trying for months to reconstruct the original apparatus, basing their attempts on the little explanation of its construction which Dawson had previously mentioned. At last they had given up, and Barry was on his way to headquarters with the sad report of failure.

Barry frowned again as he sped on. He noted that the sky was overcast, and the day was already drawing to a close. Owing to the fact that his compass was broken he wasn't quite sure of his location, but he thought he was going in the right direction. He glanced once more toward the broken compass, and as he did so the gasoline gauge caught his eye. He gave a smothered exclamation and leaned forward to examine it more closely. The gauge showed just a fraction of an inch above zero. With all possible speed he looked through the deepening dusk for a possible landing place, and at last discovered a shallow valley about a quarter of a mile off. He landed without mishap, and jumped out to examine the gasoline tank. To his utter dismay the gauge was right, and owing to a leak in the tank there remained barely a cupful of the liquid. He took out his tool kit and repaired the damage, for the leak was a small one and not difficult to mend. When he had finished he glanced around him. There seemed to be nothing to do but set out on foot in search of some town or dwelling where he could purchase a little gasoline. He had no desire to spend the night—and a wild stormy night it promised to be—alone in this deserted spot. Trusting to luck, Barry set out at random.

The country about him was of a character he had never seen before. On all sides of the little plain on which he stood rose hill after hill, covered with tall, dark pines. Swiftly he walked toward the first close, low hills, crossed them and descended into another valley. By the time he was nearly to the top of the second range he was becoming worried, for although he had walked not more than half an hour the country seemed to be growing more wild and desolate every minute.

At last he emerged on top of the second small hill, and looked down on the strangest scene he had ever beheld. There in the bottom of the valley before him lay an old castle, made entirely from huge blocks of hewn stones, nestled among sombre black pines which formed a fitting setting for its wild beauty. As Barry gazed, amazed, the last few rays of the setting sun touched the old castle with their golden light. Although the picture was exceedingly

beautiful, there was also something strange and sinister about the ancient castle, thus hidden away somewhere in the heart of a modern land, and Barry could not repress a shudder as he strode rapidly toward it.

A few moments later he stood in front of a huge oaken door and lifted the massive knocker of bronze. It fell with a loud clang, and the echo seemed to reverberate eerily through empty rooms and passageways, fading at last to grim silence. Suddenly the huge door swung open in dead silence, mutely inviting Barry to enter. Resolutely he set his shoulders, and stepped in. The door swung shut as silently, and Barry stood alone in a long, dim passageway, lighted only by seven candles, smouldering in a candelabra near him. He stepped forward noiselessly, his feet sinking deep in a luxurious carpet. Slowly he proceeded down the passage, wondering why the person who had effected the opening of the door did not appear. Then all at once Barry was aware of a presence behind him.

A wave of fear swept over him, and before he could turn, he heard a voice low and lilting, but with a haunting quality he had never before heard, utter the single word, "Stop!" He turned and beheld the loveliest girl he had ever seen. Her long wavy black hair was unbound and floating about her bare shoulders. In the contour and shape of her beautiful face as well as in her beautiful dark eyes, fringed with heavy black lashes, there was something of the oriental, but her skin was snowy white, and the soft coloring of her face, that of the fairest blood. She wore a delicately tinted garment of floating material, belted in at the waist with a curious metal girdle, clearly a garment of the East.

Open-mouthed, Barry stared at her until a delicate rose suffused her cheeks. Then she spoke once more, asking him who he was and why he had come. At the mention of his name it seemed as though she started and turned pale, but Barry was too absorbed in her wonderful beauty to notice anything. When he finished speaking she seized his hand in one of hers. "You must come with me," she said. For the first time Barry was conscious of the odd accent with which she spoke. A thrill went through him at the touch of her hand and he would gladly have followed her to Hades.

Swiftly and unerringly she led him through endless doors, along dark passageways, across huge rooms, all covered with the same soft, deep carpet, and in the same soft, half darkness. At last she stopped before a closed door, and knocked three times. After a short pause she signed for him to enter, and vanished from his sight. Barry hesitated for a second, then opened the door, entered, and closed it behind him.

The sight that met his eyes caused his head to swim for a moment. The room in which he was standing was very long, and its extremely low ceiling lent it a queer, oriental atmosphere. It was entirely in black. The walls were hung with thick black velvet curtains, and the floor was deep carpeted with a thick oriental rug, of the same gloomy hue as the curtains. The door by which he had entered was the only opening in the room visible to Barry. The only light came from a blazing white lamp suspended in mid-air by an extremely fine wire. To one side of this lamp stood a huge teakwood altar on which were life sized ebony statues of Isis and her husband, Osiris. The only other article of furniture in the room was a huge ebony desk directly beneath the lamp, covered with books, papers, chemicals, and chemical apparatus of all kinds. At the table directly facing Barry, sat Henry Keith Dawson. He was thin and emaciated, and his face showed signs of a great strain.

Barry opened his mouth to speak, but a sign from the other caused him to remain silent.

"She told me a young man was here. Are you alone?" Dawson asked.

At Barry's reply all the hope and life the former's entrance had caused

seemed to die out of the older man's face.

"How did you get here? Where are you going?"

Barry answered as briefly as possible. "And now," he said, "if I may be so bold as to ask, can you tell me what this means, what **you** are doing here?"

Dawson said, "I was not killed that day I disappeared. I was slugged and brought here with my plans. What it is or who it is that brought me here I dare not tell. God knows you would think me mad if I were to try. Suffice it to say that I was carried here by the most fiendishly clever individual in the world, whose marvelous brain could have wrought wonders had it been turned in the right direction—an individual at the head of an organization which threatens the existence of the entire civilized world. I was brought here to serve his own diabolical ends. If you had come ten minutes later it would have been too late. In ten minutes **he** comes for the plans."

Dawson broke off abruptly. A faint and very warm perfume seemed to be stealing into the room. In the far end Barry saw a faint glimmer of greenish light inclosed in a floating mist. The perfume grew stronger and more oppressive, and at the same time the mist grew larger. Barry's head throbbled and he felt dizzy, so cloying was the odor. He could not take his eyes from the mist, yet he felt a terrible aversion for it, as for some unclean, evil thing.

Faintly Dawson's voice tense and strained came to his ears. "Go with Lahala. She is an innocent tool, too. Save her, my boy. She has the plans. Go—quickly!"

Barry felt Lahala who had entered unobserved by him pull him to a secret door and push him through. His last active memory was of the mist, grown large and very thin now, showing plainly in its midst two green eyes awful in their evil and malignant expression of hatred mixed with cunning.

How he got out of the castle Barry never knew. When his mind began to clear and function once more he found himself, with the girl, Lahala, standing in front of the castle. She was pointing to something on the ground and urging him to hurry. She had thrown a light cloak around her filmy attire and under her arm she held a small valise. Barry looked on the ground and saw a large can of gasoline. Grasping her meaning he seized it, and together they started off, half running, half walking. Even the air outside the castle was hot and oppressive and in the distance they heard the rumble of the coming storm. In a scant half-hour they stopped beside the plane, tired and breathless.

"Hurry, hurry, Barry! You **must**. Pour the gasoline in and let us go," she begged.

Barry, still slightly dazed, did as she bade him, and while he filled the tank she climbed into the seat, clutching tight the previous valise. Barry started his plane. The familiar feel of the motor vibrating before him cleared his mind quickly. Suddenly above the roar of the engine a high pitched eerie scream was heard. An instant later it rose again, and this time there was no mistaking the agony it held. Lahala shrank down in the seat beside him, trembling. Barry instinctively pulled the stick, the plane started, and a minute later left the ground.

For five long hours they flew, stopping only once in a small town for gasoline, until Barry saw the lights of his destination twinkling beneath him. The plane circled twice, and then slowly settled down on to the landing field. A taxi was not far distant and, weary, they climbed into it. Lahala nestled close to Barry and, leaning over, he kissed her sweep lips. "I love you, Lahala," he said.

"And I love you, Barry," she answered. From that instant Barry forgot

that he was tired and weary, forgot the horrors and mystery of the night, forgot that he had known her only a few hours, forgot everything but the fact that he and Lahala loved each other.

Barry took her straight to the home of his married sister, Nancy Weston. Nancy adored her young brother, so she received without comment the strange young visitor in the fanciful garb of an Eastern dancing-girl.

Barry drove straight to the home of his chief and there, behind locked doors, delivered the precious valise. The surprise and joy of the important official were boundless, for the valise contained untouched the original plans of Henry Keith Dawson. His chief listened carefully to Barry's story of his discovery of the plans, and praised him highly for his actions. Particularly was he interested in the girl, Lahala. "For there," he said, "lies our best chance of clearing up this mystery and finding Dawson. But now you must go to your apartment and try to get a little sleep, for you must be very tired after this trying experience. Call for me at seven-thirty in the morning, and together we will go to your sister's home and question your—ah—fiancee before we attempt to discover the old castle of which you speak. In the meantime I will arrange for a squadron to be ready to accompany you in your search."

"And from now on, Captain Lathrop, I think you may call yourself Colonel Lathrop, as a token of the government's appreciation of the invaluable service you have rendered your nation in the discovery and return of these plans."

Without further discussion, Barry taxied to his apartment, and deeply fatigued, quickly fell asleep.

After a few hours' rest, Barry, himself again, called for his chief, and the two set out for the home of his sister, to whom he had already telephoned, asking her to inform Lahala of their early arrival, that no time might be lost.

They were met at the door by a frantic Nancy. Her face was white and terrified, and she was trembling from head to foot.

"Barry!" she cried. "At last you've come—I didn't know what to do—"

"Nancy!" gasped Barry. "What is it? Not Lahala—"

Dumbly Nancy nodded, and forgetful of his superior officer, Barry pushed the two from his path and dashed upstairs to Lahala's room, a nameless dread tearing at his heart. Lahala lay in bed as though she were asleep, her hair streaming over the pillow and her face more beautiful than ever, if possible, though it was white with an almost translucent pallor. A dagger pierced her breast directly over her heart. But for the crimson stain on her night-gown and her deathly pallor she might have been sleeping. There were no signs of a struggle, and her beautiful white face smiled as in sleep. After a long time Barry quietly turned and went out, descending the stairs with slow and heavy tread.

That afternoon seven government planes, led by Colonel Barry Lathrop, set out in search of an ancient castle not more than five hours away. Here, Barry knew, he could find the answer to it all, and find the one who had murdered Lahala. Oh to find that one—to kill him with his own bare hands! For two weeks they searched, those seven planes, leaving not one square inch of the country within miles around uninspected. At the end of that time they had to admit failure. Some of the men even questioned the existence of the old castle. To such, the chief grimly pointed out the return of the plans, the murdered girl, and, most conclusive of all, the deep lines of suffering and sorrow in Barry's face, formerly so smooth and unlined. In later years people often wondered why the handsome and distinguished Colonel Lathrop had never married, and noted that he had the mien of one who had suffered much and deeply.

The Ace of Trumps

Gerald Strobbridge
Honorable Mention

CARL GREY, an American who had enlisted with France at the outbreak of the World War, was to test Francois Henry's new speedy "Star," for which great things were predicted. Her inventor claimed that her engine would revolutionize flying.

Carl's partner on this flight was a stranger to him. He was a heavy set, black headed man. He was introduced to Carl simply as Mr. Brown. Each man put on a leather coat and helmet. The machine, built after a new model, had a single cockpit. The motor began purring. The "Star" taxied across the field, then rose, birdlike, and the passengers were soon circling over the city.

Brown shouted to Carl to point the plane east. They headed due east toward Mewly, and presently they were gliding above green fields and groves. Brown's eyes were devouring the "Star." His staring made Carl nervous and somewhat uncomfortable.

"How many kilometers can she go?" inquired Brown sharply.

"Five hundred," answered Carl.

Brown was silent for a time. He was giving his attention to the steering gear, which was quite complicated. Carl noticed that Brown's hair though black had a yellowish tint at the base, but he did not attach any importance to the fact. It was the fellow's own business if he wanted to use hair dye.

It was now seven o'clock, and was beginning to get dark.

"We must return," Carl said, but Brown said to stay aloft fifteen minutes more.

By the time the fifteen minutes were up the sun had set and the stars were already starting to come out. Below, the smoke from the chimneys of the cottages could be seen through a mist.

Carl turned to his companion and said, "We turn now."

"No," said Brown.

His arm swung up, and something hard, round, and cold pressed against Carl's left ear.

"East," laughed Brown gleefully.

Carl was bewildered. Brown must be insane!

Brown continued, "I have eight bullets. If you don't follow my instructions, all eight will scatter your brains as fast as I can pull the trigger. After this I handle the engine."

Carl, steering mechanically, changed his mind about resisting. This fellow was no lunatic, but a criminal fleeing from justice.

Brown spoke, "We have speed enough for 500 kilometers?"

"Yes," answered Carl sullenly.

Then a queer thing happened. Brown pulled his blue glasses off and tossed them over the side. He rubbed his free hand over his face, and his beard came off and was thrown away. He turned toward Carl, his eyes cold.

"Little boy, we are going to Stubbleburgh."

The word went thru Carl's head and everything became clear now. This fellow was neither coward nor lunatic, but a spy.

"Let us look at this square, you and I," began Brown.

"If I understood this French steering better, I would shoot you now. It might be safer." The pistol felt harder as he pondered over it. "But no. It is more convenient to have you along to steer for me. If you do well, you can go back to France in a few weeks, after the war is over."

Carl was motionless. This man had valuable information that would hurt France, and he, Carl, was taking it to the enemy. Then there was the

"Star." Her engine alone was worth millions. Once the enemy got hold of the inventor's idea, there would be a thousand "Stars" flying from their lines. He could do nothing. If it wasn't for the pistol he would tackle the fellow hand to hand, but he didn't care to try suicide. Brown directed the flight by prodding Carl's ear with the weapon, and Carl had no difficulty in understanding his commands.

Now a storm broke out. The plane seemed to stand still while the hurricane rushed by. France was being left farther and farther behind. Familiar villages and towns were suddenly blotted out. Now and then the spy would say, "Faster, Bud, faster!" Carl put on more speed. The farther east, the more desperate he grew. A plan began to form. He would outwit Brown.

Brown and he were playing a game for big stakes—the "Star" engine and perhaps thousands of French lives. So far Carl had lost everything else, but the ace was worth more than the rest of the deck.

Automatic against high card! A beauty, that ace of trumps. A few moments were left to play it, neither too much nor too little. He would match brains with his foreign joker. He would save his ace as long as possible, but it would have to be played above good, hard, French ground.

The full moon showed now and then between the clouds and revealed their faces to each other. Carl became quite cheerful. He laughed. Brown grew suspicious.

"If I thought that you——"

The automatic pressed harder. Carl only laughed again. No, the spy did not dare to shoot him yet. He had thought Brown crazy, and now Brown thought him crazy. Turn about was fair play. This spy was also a patriot, doing his duty toward his country.

The plane rushed on through the sky. A dark cloud rose ahead of them. The lightning flashed close. They would have to pass through a thunderstorm before they reached the boundary. Just as it started to rain, Brown commanded, "Up." Carl understood. Brown wanted to get by all possible interference from planes patrolling the boundary. The plane soared up, the clouds grew nearer, and the lightning was brighter. Brown was nervous. He kept looking at the instruments on the board ahead of him. Carl was nervous, too. It would never do to cross the border in such a storm. The engine might fail. Still the plane went up. Great gusts of wind rocked the "Star." The rain whipped against her. They were up 1800 meters. The pressure of the gun on Carl's ear relaxed. It is hard to hold a gun to another's head for hours, but yet it is still harder for the owner of the head. The altimeter on the board ahead showed 2000 meters. The storm was shaking the "Star." It took all of Carl's skill to keep the plane steady.

"East! East!" Brown said.

To turn the machine meant death. Carl set his teeth, but he still smiled. Brown was evidently fearing their course might be changed in the storm. It was just midnight. He motioned to Carl that they were high enough.

Yes, they were quite high enough. Now was the time for that ace of trumps. He snapped the steering wheel forward with one fierce kick. The "Star" dived down. It went full speed, straight down sixteen hundred feet. Brown's hand, which still held the pistol, slid down to his side. Carl's fingers slid down the stick. The two men sat face to face. Who would recover first? Carl saw his chance, but he had to hurry. Brown was fighting to regain control of his muscles. Carl reached slowly for the automatic. His hand closed slowly around the pistol barrel that was gradually dropping from the spy's fingers. He pulled. Brown still held on to the weapon, but Carl pulled the weapon up slowly. Brown's finger moved. Bang! A scorching

streak flashed by the American's cheek. He wrenched the automatic from Brown's grasp. But this time the spy's strength had come back to him, too. With a cry of rage he clutched at Carl with both hands. There was no time to turn the weapon and fire. Carl, swinging the butt end of the pistol upward, crashed the spy squarely on the forehead. Brown crumpled and fell forward over the strap.

The machine shot out of the storm into the moonlight. Carl looked down. They had already crossed the boundary. Grasping the stick, he gained control of the "Star" and swung her around.

Ten minutes later the "Star" landed in French territory beside a guard house. It did not take long to explain to the captain in command.

Brown came to, shaking like a leaf. His face was white at the sight of the French uniforms. Plans destructive enough were found on him to send him before a firing squad.

The Minister of War was communicated with. Finally there came the order, "Return to Paris" with your prisoner. Your commission in the Flying Corps awaits you, Captain Carl Grey."

The biplane's tank was filled with fuel. Brown was tied and strapped into his seat. Carl climbed into the ship, and in the gray of the early dawn the "Star" rose aloft and started back to Paris.

Cloud-Faces

Lucile Glick

Honorable Mention

Did you ever see a smooth white cloud,
Floating in the clear blue sky,
And think you saw the form of a face,
As the cloud went drifting by?
And did you watch that soft cloud-face,
And see it change—then fade away,
Then think 'twas like real faces,
That come and fade each day?
Did you know that you see folks,
Each day, each month, and year,
Who soon will drift beyond your sight,
And go, you know not where?
Faces like that one in the cloud,
Which come before your sight,
Then fade away like empty dreams
And change through-out the night.
Perhaps you've never thought before,
That such a thing is true,
But just the same, some faces,
Will drift like clouds, from you!

Wings

Lucile Glick

Honorable Mention

Powerful fearless birds they are!
Traversing the sky with vibrant voices,
Humming songs in their throats,
Telling the world they have conquered
Great things and will win still,
Greater trophies with their strength.
Flying high and still higher they go.
Now drifting aimlessly like
Mighty birds of the azure sky,
Now flying swiftly and surely,
With a goal to be achieved,
Another triumph to be gained.
What is it to them that some have failed?
They have no fear of failure.
They see only victory where others
Have found crushing defeat!
They'll never hesitate!
Oh, powerful, fearless birds that they are!



The God of Light

Lucile Glick

Honorable Mention

The god of light's an elusive god.
He flashes through the universe
Like a golden salmon in its pool, startled
By some shadow falling o'er him.
He lingers for a few brief hours,
Then laughingly slips away
To other places far remote.
Held, he sometimes is,
By some puny device of twisted
Wires and fragile glass,
He stands ready to leave,
If the fancy takes him.
In truth he is a laughing companion,
And a merry deserter,
So quick to use his wings—
To soar away.