

Commander Tom and the Alien

by RV Staff Writer J. C.

The missiles whizzed past the American jet fighter. The brave pilot inside it aimed his guns and targeted the closest enemy weapon with his radar. Once it was centered, he squeezed the trigger and with a satisfying boom it exploded right in front of him.

Yes! He pumped his fist into the air. One down, one to go. Commander Tom was an experienced flyer; nothing was going to scare him. With expert skill, he got his plane turned around and set his sights on the second weapon, coming in hot from the starboard side.

It took all his effort to swing into position fast enough. He aimed and fired, once again hitting his target perfectly. Commander Tom was the best pilot in his squadron. Now it was time to head back to base. Everyone would cheer and congratulate him.

But what was this?

Out of the corner of his eye, he spotted something strange. Very strange. An alien vessel! It was headed his way. It was shiny and the old pilot had never seen anything like it before. It didn't move in a straight line. It zigged. It zagged. The pilot took evasive action. The jet fighter fell into a dangerous barrel roll, turning upside down in a wild attempt to ditch the other aircraft.

But the U.F.O. continued to follow. As the ship got closer, the pilot could see the figure at the helm. It was a two-headed, green alien with short antennae. It gave Commander Tom an evil grin as it engaged its time warp engines. The commander knew this was going to hurt.

"Andy! Time for lunch!" called the boy's mother from the other room.

"Coming, Mom!" Andy quickly dropped his toy plane and flying saucer on the carpet. The action figures fell out of their aircrafts. They lay, lifeless, with their arms and legs and antennae pointing in awkward directions; abandoned in favor of a warm bowl of macaroni and cheese.

Questions

1. What surprised Commander Tom after he shot down the missiles?
2. What is actually happening in this story?
3. Who is imagining the story of the pilot and the alien?
4. What does evasive action mean in the sentence, "The pilot took evasive action"?

Vocabulary List

Each of the vocabulary words below are used in the reading passage. As you read the passage, pay attention to context clues that suggest the word's meaning.

1. Brave
2. Squadron
3. Cheer
4. Strange
5. Vessel
6. Evasive
7. Evil
8. Awkward

Context Clues

Using context clues from the sentences in the passage, underline the correct meaning of the word in boldface.

1) “The **brave** pilot inside it aimed his guns and targeted the closest enemy weapon with his radar.”

- a. talented b. curious c. lonely d. courageous

2) “Commander Tom was the best pilot in his **squadron**.”

- a. airplane b. school c. unit of troops d. army

3) “Now it was time to head back to base. Everyone would **cheer** and congratulate him.”

- a. applaud b. sleep c. buy presents d. eat

4) “Out of the corner of his eye, he spotted something **strange**. Very strange.”

- a. ugly b. unusual c. normal d. spotted

5) “An alien **vessel**! It was headed his way.”

- a. water vehicle b. air vehicle c. land vehicle d. space vehicle

6) “The pilot took **evasive** action.”

- a. fast b. fighting c. escaping d. skillful

7) “It gave Commander Tom an **evil** grin as it engaged its time warp engines.”

- a. mean b. jealous c. happy d. confusing

8) “They lay, lifeless, with their arms and legs and antennae pointing in **awkward** directions...”

- a. different b. left and right c. clumsy d. straight up