

MARVEL

OR FLIGHT

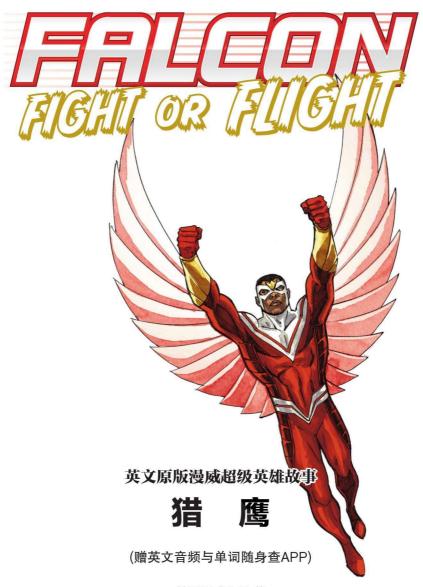


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There came a day unlike any other, when Earth's Mightiest Heroes were united against a common threat^①. On that day, the Avengers were born, and **SAM WILSON** was their biggest fan. While still in school, Sam followed every one of the Avengers' battles by watching them on TV and reading about them online.



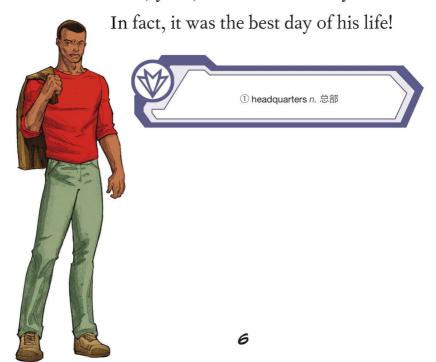
Sam dreamed that one day he, too, could be an Avenger. . . . But how could he? He wasn't a great hero, and he didn't have super powers. However, Sam was extremely smart, and he knew how to work hard. He excelled at^② his studies, and he spent all his spare time inventing new machines.

While still just a teenager, Sam Wilson found himself trapped with Captain America on a tropical island run by the villainous **REP SKULL*. After a long battle, the two escaped, but barely. Cap was so impressed with Sam's skills, he suggested Sam train with him. Sam was accepted to the **S.H.I.E.L.D.* training program, and the two trained together and soon became best friends.

During his time at **S.H.I.E.L.D.**, Sam created an amazing invention—a personal wing-suit that gave him the power of flight at high speed. Wearing that suit on dangerous missions earned Sam the code name **FRICTON**.

One day, after an adventure as Falcon, Sam came back to headquarters^① to find **TONY STARK**, the Avenger known as **IRON MAN**, waiting for him. Tony explained that the were adding a few new members to their team. . . . Would Sam be interested in joining?

Join the team that he'd loved since he was a boy? Become an Avenger, one of Earth's Mightiest Heroes? Oh, yeah, Sam was definitely interested.

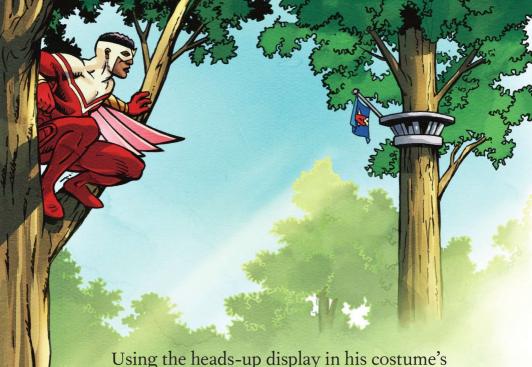






gentle breeze rippled through the forest of tall, majestic¹ redwoods. From where he sat positioned in the crook² of a thick branch at the top of one of the trees, **Sam Wilson**, the Avenger known as **Falcon**, could see the forest all around him. It was a fantastic view, but he wasn't really enjoying it, because there was only one thing he was interested in. . . .





Using the heads-up display in his costume's visor^①, Sam zoomed his vision in on something in one of the other trees. Someone just casually walking through the forest would never have spotted it, it was so well camouflaged^②—but Sam could see it.

It was a small wooden platform, built into the tree limbs, behind some branches. On that platform was the one thing that Falcon most



wanted in the world right then...a small Blue flag.

Falcon scanned the area. There was no sign of his opponent³. No sound, either. He smiled to himself. Finally, after all this time, success was going to be his.

Sam whispered into the Avengers

"comm," or communications unit,
in his ear, signaling two

S.H.I.E.L.D. agents who

were assigned to his team.

"Okay," said Falcon.

"It's go time.

Converge $^{\textcircled{4}}$ on the

target in three ...

two...one...

NOW!"







S.H.I.E.L.D. agents leapt from their hiding places on the ground. All three figures moved quickly, but fastest of all was Falcon. Hours and hours of practice with the wing-suit gave him surprising speed and maneuverability².

Within seconds, Falcon could see the flag almost in front of him. All he had to do was reach out and . . .





breath out of him! Someone had jumped out of a hiding place and tackled^① him in midair.

But it wasn't just "someone." It was none other than **Captain America**! Falcon tried to push Cap off him, but Cap held firm! With all the added weight, Falcon dropped out of the sky! He and Cap were still grappling when they landed in a barrel roll on the ground.

"Fancy running into you here,"

joked Cap as he sprang back to his feet and hurled his famous shield. Cap's shield bounced



around the forest, ricocheting² off of some trees, before first taking down one **S.H.I.E.L.D.** agent, then the other. Falcon barely had time to rise to his feet before Cap had him covered again. Cap's shield landed effortlessly³ back in his hands.



