

*New Reading*

*Skill Builder*

**循序渐进美国英语**

BOOK SIX, PART THREE

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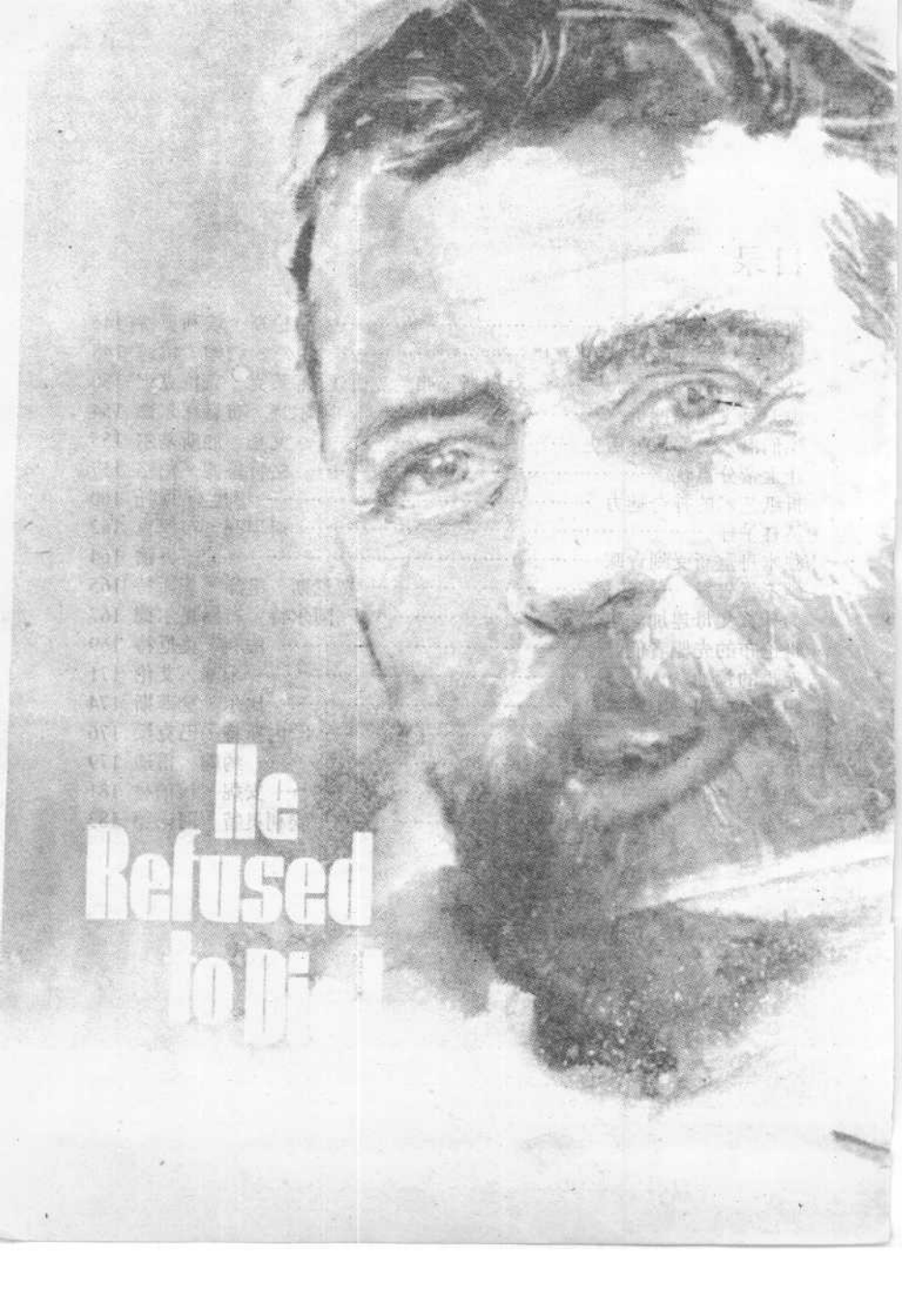
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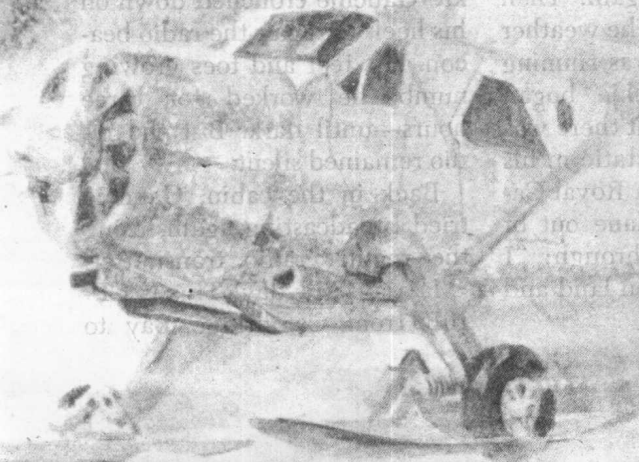


**He  
Refused  
to Die!**

Lawrence Elliott

**E**VERYTHING that pilot Bob Gauchie depended on had failed! His compass, his radio, his *emergency* radio—everything. He had only himself, his plane and a few supplies. Yet he survived in the violent winter of northern Canada—for 58 days. He simply refused to die!

At 10 a.m. on February 2, 1967, Gauchie took off alone in his single-engine Beaver. He had piloted a group of people to Cambridge Bay, just inside the Arctic Circle. Now he was headed for home with Yellowknife as a stopover.





Shortly after noon, Gauchie ran into a driving snowstorm and decided to set an instrument course. Then he found that two of the navigation aids were not working. Quickly he dropped 200 feet and flew by sight over the windswept lands. Finally, he spotted a stretch of blue ice. He clattered down to wait out the storm, the skis of his plane rattling on the rough lake ice.

Arctic blasts of 50 below zero shook the aircraft. In the icy metal cabin, Gauchie climbed into a sleeping bag and pulled three others over him. Still he shivered through the long afternoon and night.

The sun rose on a clear and frosty morning. Gauchie was soon flying south again. Then his compass failed. The weather got worse, and he was running low on fuel. Gauchie began radioing for help. But there was only the crackle of static in his earphones. Finally, a Royal Canadian Air Force plane out of Yellowknife came through: "I read you. Suggest you land and use your SARAH."

SARAH is a Search And Rescue radio transmitter with its own battery. It has led rescue planes to many a lost pilot.

"We'll have you out in a couple of hours," the Air Force plane radioed.

That was the last human voice Bob Gauchie would hear for 58 days.

### *Voicelisse SARAH*

Gauchie found a narrow lake and put the plane down. For a moment he sat, listening to the whipping rush of the wind. Then he pushed the switch on the SARAH. Nothing happened. Shocked, he pushed it again and again. Nothing.

Bracing himself for the cold, he climbed outside with his tool kit. Gauchie crouched down on his heels to repair the radio beacon. His feet and toes growing numb, he worked for three hours—until dark. But the radio remained silent.

Back in the cabin, Gauchie tried broadcasting again, using the regular radio transmitter. "Mayday! Mayday! This is CF-10B from Cambridge Bay to

Yellowknife. Do you read?" There was no reply. Gauchie couldn't believe it: everything he depended on—instruments for navigation and radio equipment—had failed.

He checked through the survival kit. There were a few packages of dried food, a pound of cube sugar, chocolate—enough to last 10 or 12 days if he was careful. He had bought 80 pounds of arctic char for his wife on one of his stops, but the fish were raw and frozen stiff. He found flares, a rifle, five packs of matches and an ax.

Gauchie crawled into the sleeping bags. Toward morning he fell asleep.

### *SOS in the Snow*

Next morning, the temperature was 54 below zero. Clouds of loose snow blew across the lonely lake.

Gauchie drained some of the remaining gasoline into a can. He placed it under the battery of the SARAH and lighted a fire. Then he tried the radios again. "Mayday! Mayday! . . ." There was no reply.

The next two days were hardly more hopeful. Gauchie used the rest of his gasoline trying to keep the battery alive. (He melted ice to make soup at the same time.) By the third day, even the hum from the radio had faded.

Once, when the wind went down, he walked out on the lake and tramped out an SOS in the snow. Each letter was 150 feet long. But in half an hour the surface had drifted smooth.

That night, Gauchie felt a tingling numbness in his feet. He took off his mukluks and socks—and sagged back in horror. Three toes on his left foot and two on the right were dead black. Frostbite! He remembered instantly the hours he'd spent crouched down working on the radio beacon. All that time he had been cutting the circulation to his feet. He knew that if infection started up from the frostbitten toes, it could kill him.

### *The Search*

The Royal Canadian Air Force began its search for Rob-

ert Gauchie just a few hours after he was overdue at Yellowknife. And many private planes joined in the search.

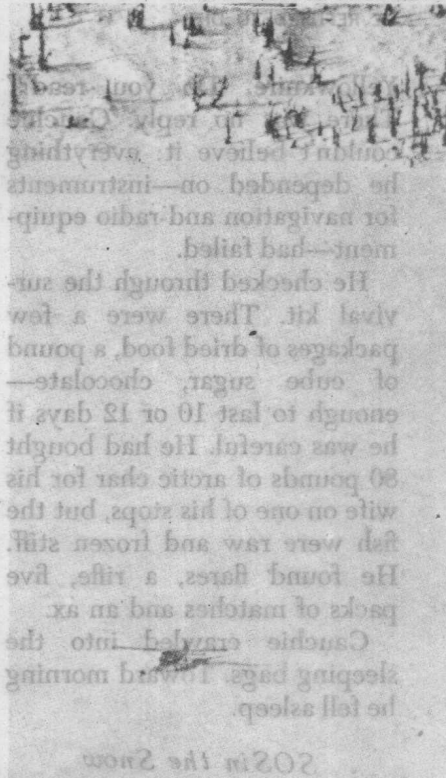
After 12 days, the RCAF was ready to give up. In that huge and empty land, the searchers had carefully swept 292,000 square miles.

Temperatures had dropped to a record 60 below, and there had been fierce storms. Everyone agreed that no one could survive for long in this harshest of winters. Still, when Gauchie's wife pleaded for a few more days, the search continued.

The official search was called off on February 17. But the people of the Northwest Territories refused to give up. They collected money to hire a few pilots to continue the search. The little planes logged another 100 hours. But by March 1, when Gauchie had gone unreported 26 days, any hope of finding him alive was abandoned.

### Frozen Ink

Bob Gauchie knew, almost to the day, when the main rescue effort would end. He knew be-



ABOVE: Gauchie's plane on lake  
RIGHT: Part of plane's cockpit

cause he had flown many such sad missions himself.

His frostbitten toes hurt, and he knew that the pain would increase when they started thawing. Still, they had not gotten any worse.



Though Gauchie ate only an ounce or two of his emergency food each day, his supply was half gone by the eighth day. It was almost completely gone by February 16. He tried to eat some of the frozen char, but his stomach just couldn't take it.

Everything that happened seemed to be telling him to give up. Why struggle? But he did struggle, angrily unwilling to give up to the enemy, the vast frozen land.

Somewhere he found a ball-point pen. He tore a page from his logbook to begin a diary. At first the pen refused to work. But on the 15th day, when the weather warmed, the pen made a line on the paper. Writing with mitts on, Gauchie began his diary.

At one point he commented on the quiet surrounding him:

*No sound, no birds, wolves, foxes or anything. Just me and the wind.*

### *Loneliness*

The weather stayed mild for several days, but Gauchie knew that the cold was not over. His

toes had become a horrible sight. And the pain grew worse and worse.

He had to keep up his strength. Every day or so, he forced himself to eat a bit of the frozen char.

On the afternoon of February 28, hope flared. Just past 4:30, in the red twilight, the sound of the wind slowly turned into the steady hum of an airplane engine. Gauchie listened for an instant—then jumped out of the sleeping bags. He snatched up the flare gun and tumbled into the snow. Less than 2000 feet above him was a red Beaver. Trembling, Gauchie fired a flare straight up. The Beaver continued on its course. He fired a second flare, but it was already too late. The burst went off well behind the little aircraft. Gauchie stood there as it disappeared.

He didn't sleep all that night. Next day, he gathered his strength and forced himself out on the lake. Once again, he tramped out SOS and HELP signals. And once again the wind erased them.

*Another Month*

On March 5 his toes thawed. The pain almost drove him out of his mind.

On March 12, toward evening, two planes flew over the lake within an hour of each other. Neither noticed Gauchie's flares. He hoped that with the longer days there would be more planes. And there were—but none saw him. He kept the flare gun handy. That was all he could do.

On March 16 he wrote:

*For my meal today I licked the inside of an onion-soup bag. That's living, isn't it!*

On March 28th he wrote:

*I know now I must be found within a week if I am to survive. I forced myself to eat some fish so I may have some strength return.*

On April 1, at a little past 6 p.m., Gauchie was crawling into the sleeping bags when the hopeful sound came again—the murmur of an airplane engine.

He threw back the covers and fumbled with the door latch. The plane—a red Beaver

—was right overhead. He fired the flare gun. The Beaver flew straight on. Gauchie felt the will drain out of him, but then he looked up again and saw that the angle of the Beaver had changed. It was growing larger. It was turning back!

*Man with a Suitcase*

Pilot Ronald Sheardown and co-pilot Glen Stevens had left Yellowknife at about 4:00 that afternoon. So it was that, near sunset, they were over Samandré Lake. And so it was that Stevens happened to catch a reflection of the sinking sun on something that might have been glass. It was only the briefest flash, and it disappeared even as he stared at it.

"Did you see anything?" he asked Sheardown.

Sheardown hadn't, and for another minute he held the Beaver on course. Then something—he will never know what—made him put the plane into a steep turn and drop to 2000 feet. And in the next moment both men saw a dark figure moving out from an aircraft



*With his wife and daughters, Gauchie reads about his rescue.*

barely visible in the snow.

"That's Bob Gauchie!" Stevens cried out. "He's alive!"

It was the purest chance. The sun was, at 6:10 p.m., at exactly the right angle. It flashed off the windshield of Gauchie's plane just as Sheardown and Stevens flew by. Had they left Yellowknife ten minutes sooner, they would have seen nothing.

The red plane circled the lake and landed. Then it taxied to-

ward the ghostly figure. Sheardown said later, "He stood there with that blue suitcase, like a man waiting for a bus."

Now, in the moment of rescue, Bob Gauchie drew himself tall and began limping toward the rescue plane. He was a weary creature with shaggy hair, a thin face and one foot wrapped in dirty canvas.

With a grin, Gauchie spoke. "Hello," he said. "Do you have room for a passenger?"

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NUMBER OF WORDS: 1745 ÷ ..... MINUTES READING TIME = RATE: .....

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### I. DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. What do you think was the greatest hardship Gauchie had to face? Give evidence to support your answer.
2. What does Bob Gauchie's story tell you about Canada's North-west Territories and the people who live there?
3. Does a man have a choice—can he “refuse to die”? Explain.

### II. SEARCH FOR ANSWERS

*Underline the best choice to answer each question below.*

1. What did Gauchie find almost unbelievable about the situation he was in?
  - A. The RCAF plane did not come to his rescue.
  - B. Everything he depended on—instruments for navigation and radio equipment—had failed.
  - C. He found a lake where he could put the plane down.
2. Why were the SOS signals that Gauchie tramped out in the snow a failure?
  - A. The wind quickly erased them.
  - B. The letters he made were too small.
  - C. The sun kept melting the letters.
3. How did Gauchie know when the main rescue effort would end?
  - A. He heard the news on his radio.
  - B. He knew the time limit set by the law.
  - C. He had flown many such missions himself.



4. What was so lucky about Gauchie's rescue?
- The plane was overhead at just the right time to catch the reflection of the sun on Gauchie's windshield.
  - Gauchie had just finished the last bit of food aboard the plane.
  - The flare that Gauchie sent up was the last one in his survival kit.

10 points for each correct answer

My score: . . . . .

### III. FIND THE RIGHT TITLES

*Two sections of the article do not deal with Gauchie's story as told from his point of view. Find those sections and write their titles below.*

.....  
 .....

10 points for each correct answer

My score: . . . . .

### IV. IDENTIFY CAUSES AND RESULTS

*In each pair of sentences below, one sentence gives a cause; the other sentence gives the result of that cause. Write C before the sentence that tells the cause. Write R before the sentence that tells the result.*

- . . . Gauchie dropped 200 feet and flew by sight over wind-swept lands.  
 . . . Gauchie found that two of the navigation aids were not working.
- . . . Gauchie's compass failed, the weather got worse and he was running low on fuel.  
 . . . Gauchie began radioing for help.