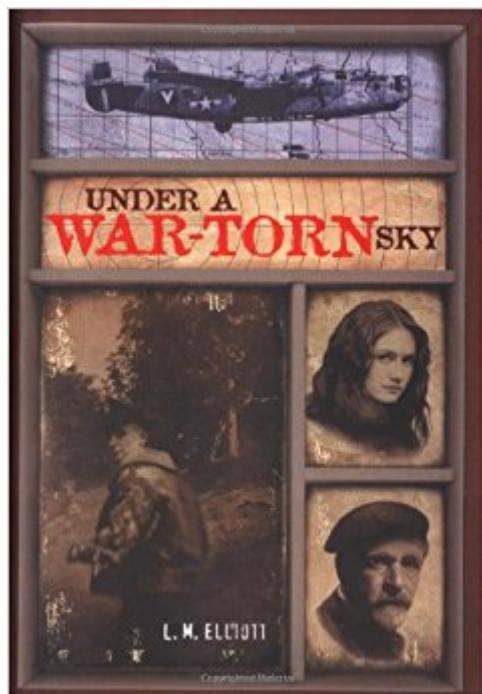


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# Under A War-Torn Sky



## **Synopsis**

When Henry Forester is shot down during a bombing run over France, the World War II pilot finds himself trapped behind enemy lines. In constant danger of discovery by German soldiers, Henry begins a remarkable journey to freedom. Relying on the kindness of strangers, Henry moves from town to town--traveling by moonlight, never asking questions, or even the names of the people who help him along the way. Through his journey, Henry gains an understanding of the French and their struggle; and of his own place in a war that will change the face of Europe forever.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Gr 7 Up-In 1944, 19-year-old Hank is an American pilot flying his 15th bombing mission when his plane is shot down over Alsace, near the Swiss border. Locals assist him in getting to neutral territory. There, a Red Cross doctor advises him to attempt an escape from Europe across France with the help of the French Resistance. Hank's many adventures as he makes his way toward home and freedom comprise the rest of the story. This is a gritty, unblinking look at the horrors that the Nazis visited upon France during the occupation. Hank is a smart, strong, and courageous character who survives under the worst of conditions. He becomes closely acquainted with death as he sees men killed and learns that he, too, must kill in order to survive. As likable as he is, Hank is almost too good to be true. But the real heroes of the story are the French civilians who help Hank and many Allied soldiers like him to escape from the Nazis. There is a fair amount of French mixed into the telling of these stories. While this does lend authenticity, it may prove daunting to readers unfamiliar with the language. The ending seems rather romanticized, but the author's afterword

explains that the story is based on some of her own father's experiences. Readers with an interest in warfare and adventure will find a sure winner here. Pair this novel with Don Wulffson's *Soldier X* (Viking, 2001) for a comparison with life as a young German soldier. Bruce Anne Shook, Mendenhall Middle School, Greensboro, NC  
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Gr. 6-9. It's packed with action, intrigue, and suspense, but this novel celebrates acts of kindness and heroism without glorifying war. American Henry Forester, a young flier with the RAF during World War II, is a complex mix of insecurities, unresolved feelings about his punitive father, and heroic aspiration. On his thirteenth bombing mission, he is shot down, having no idea where he has landed. His journey back through Nazi-occupied Europe and his involvement with members of the French resistance are depicted with chilling realism. Small details (bike wheels in France were made of wood because the Germans had confiscated all the rubber) add both credibility and appeal to this gripping adventure, inspired by stories told to the author by her father. An afterword concerns the resistance movement. Connie Fletcher  
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Fast-paced and exciting read! Great for reluctant readers. I used this book as a Book Club choice in my classroom and was so surprised at how my students who "hate reading" devoured this book and were so excited to discuss it in class each day!

My son, who does not like to read at all, had to read this as a summer reading assignment and thoroughly enjoyed the book. He actually said he was glad he had to read it.

Written in a simple, but not inelegant style, featuring a multi-dimensional main character, an engaging plot, and historical detail sufficient for the casual historical fiction fan.

As a student, soon to be teacher, this was an awesome book to read. I found a unit on Courage and I will use that as my introductory book. I would read the book aloud and show the courage this man had and what he endured to get home. This was the best book I have read in a long time. I found the first 2 chapters a little dry but after that I couldn't put the book down!

Great novel to understand the life of a fighter pilot in WW2 and the challenges after being shot down. Using this as part of a novel collection for eighth graders to read during a study of WW2.

My son is 13, he loved this book. He is a huge history buff and could not put the book down.

Great read!

Amazing book... Very Interesting... LOVE IT

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