

RW3 UNIT 10

Lien N.T.H. (Viet Nam)

stare

✓ look at with fixed eyes

*B Along the way to growing up, I read Edgar Rice Burroughs and loved his Martian books, and followed the instructions of his Mars pioneer John Carter, who told me, when I was 12, that it was simple: If I wanted to follow the avenue of Lowell and go to the stars, I needed to go out on the summer night lawn, lift my arms, **stare** at the planet Mars, and say, "Take me home."*

afford

✓ have the financial means to do something or buy something

*I couldn't **afford** to buy all the Martian books I wanted, so I wrote the sequels myself.*

sequel

✓ something that follows something else

*I couldn't afford to buy all the Martian books I wanted, so I wrote the **sequels** myself.*

disguise

✓ any attire that conceals the wearer's identity

*D When I was 15, a Martian **disguised** as an American boy went to see the film *Things to Come*, by H. G. Wells, about a dark, war-torn future Earth.*

protagonist

✓ the principal character in a work of fiction

*In the final scene the **protagonist**, Cabal, and his friend Passworthy watch the first moon rocket disappear into the heavens carrying their two grown children toward a brighter destiny.*

cabal

✓ a clique that seeks power usually through intrigue

***Cabal** looks toward the dust at his feet then up at the stars, saying to Passworthy and to the audience, "Is it this or that? All the universe or nothing? Which shall it be? Which shall it be?"*

stagger

✓ walk with great difficulty

*E This Martian **staggered** out of the theater inspired to write more stories because I knew we were going to the stars.*

bundle

✓ a collection of things wrapped or boxed together

*I carried a **bundle** of manuscripts with me, and people would ask, "Is that a novel?"*

stunned

✓ filled with the emotional impact of overwhelming surprise

*I I was **stunned**.*

cosmos

✓ the universe considered as a whole

*P I like to think of the **cosmos** as a theater, yet a theater cannot exist without an audience, to witness and to celebrate.*

mighty

✓ having or showing great strength, force, or intensity

*Robot craft and **mighty** telescopes will continue to show us unimaginable wonders.*

dwindle

✓ become smaller or lose substance

*And this disease was called The Loneliness, because when you saw your home town **dwindle** to the size of your fist and then lemon-size and then pin-size and vanish in the fire-wake, you felt you had never been born, there was no town, you were nowhere, with space all around, nothing familiar, only other strange men.*

vanish

✓ become invisible or unnoticeable

*And this disease was called The Loneliness, because when you saw your home town dwindle to the size of your fist and then lemon-size and then pin-size and **vanish** in the fire-wake, you felt you had never been born, there was no town, you were nowhere, with space all around, nothing familiar, only other strange men.*

muddy

✓ soft and watery, of soil

*And when the state of Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, or Montana vanished into cloud seas, and, doubly, when the United States shrank to a misted island and the entire planet Earth became a **muddy** baseball tossed away, then you were alone, wandering in the meadows of space, on your way to a place you couldn't imagine.*

meadow

✓ a field where grass or alfalfa are grown to be made into hay

*And when the state of Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, or Montana vanished into cloud seas, and, doubly, when the United States shrank to a misted island and the entire planet Earth became a muddy baseball tossed away, then you were alone, wandering in the **meadows** of space, on your way to a place you couldn't imagine.*

shatter

✓ break into many pieces

FEBRUARY 2002 THE LOCUSTS

*The rockets set the bony meadows afire, turned rock to lava, turned wood to charcoal, transmitted water to steam, made sand and silica into green glass which lay like **shattered** mirrors reflecting the invasion, all about.*

bludgeon

✓ a club used as a weapon

*And from the rockets ran men with hammers in their hands to beat the strange world into a shape that was familiar to the eye, to **bludgeon** away all the strangeness, their mouths fringed with nails so they resembled steel-toothed carnivores, spitting them into their swift hands as they hammered up frame cottages and scuttled over roofs with shingles to blot out the eerie stars, and fit green shades to pull against the night.*

fringe

✓ an ornamental border of short lengths of hanging threads

*And from the rockets ran men with hammers in their hands to beat the strange world into a shape that was familiar to the eye, to bludgeon away all the strangeness, their mouths **fringed** with nails so they resembled steel-toothed carnivores, spitting them into their swift hands as they hammered up frame cottages and scuttled over roofs with shingles to blot out the eerie stars, and fit green shades to pull against the night.*

resemble

✓ be similar or bear a likeness to

*And from the rockets ran men with hammers in their hands to beat the strange world into a shape that was familiar to the eye, to bludgeon away all the strangeness, their mouths fringed with nails so they **resembled** steel-toothed carnivores, spitting them into their swift hands as they hammered up frame cottages and scuttled over roofs with shingles to blot out the eerie stars, and fit green shades to pull against the night.*

swift

✓ moving very fast

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scuttle

✓ an entrance equipped with a hatch

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shingle

✓ coarse beach gravel of small waterworn stones and pebbles

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blot

✓ a blemish made by dirt

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eerie

✓ inspiring a feeling of fear; strange and frightening

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clamor

✓ utter or proclaim insistently and noisily

*And when the carpenters had hurried on, the women came in with flowerpots and chintz and pans and set up a kitchen **clamor** to cover the silence that Mars made waiting outside the door and the shaded window.*

anesthetic

✓ a drug that causes temporary loss of bodily sensations

*Space was an **anesthetic**; seventy million miles of space numbed you, put memory to sleep, depopulated Earth, erased the past, and allowed these people here to go on with their work.*

numb

✓ lacking sensation

*Space was an anesthetic; seventy million miles of space **numbed** you, put memory to sleep, depopulated Earth, erased the past, and allowed these people here to go on with their work.*

flicker

✓ flash intermittently

*They could read the great Morse-code flashes which **flickered** like a distant firefly:*

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