

IRON MAN

MARVEL COMICS GROUP™

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THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN™



THE BIRTH OF THE
POWER!

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FROM _____
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THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN™

YOUR NAME IS ANTHONY STARK, AND YOU LIVE TWO LIVES: ONE, AS THE MILLIONAIRE INVENTOR AND MUNITIONS-MAKER WHO IS THE ENVY OF MEN, THE SOUGHT-AFTER PRIZE OF WOMEN...THE OTHER, AS THE GRIM ARMOR-CLAD AVENGER WHO STREAKS THIS BLEAK MARCH MORNING THRU SAD AND RAIN-SWEPT SKIES.

BUT THAT IS MERELY THE BAREST BEGINNINGS OF THE REASON WHY, IF ANY HAD EARS TO HEAR, THEY WOULD HEAR YOU CRY--ALOUD AND IN ANGUISH--

WHY MUST THERE BE AN IRON MAN?

BUT THE GRIEF-STRICKEN MOURNERS IN THE LONG ISLAND CEMETERY BELOW DO NOT LISTEN... DO NOT HEAR....!

AND SO, YOU'RE LEFT ALONE IN YOUR TORTURED SORROW...

...MORE ALONE, PERHAPS, THAN ANY MAN HAS EVER BEEN...!

STAN LEE * ROY THOMAS * BARRY SMITH
EDITOR WRITER ARTIST

JIM MOONEY ARTIE SIMEK
INKER LETTERER

BASED IN PART ON A STORY BY STAN LEE AND LARRY LIEBER FOR TALES OF SUSPENSE#33.

IRON MAN is published by MAGAZINE MANAGEMENT CO., INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 625 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Published monthly. Copyright © 1972 by Magazine Management Co., Inc., Marvel Comics Group, all rights reserved 625 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Vol. 1, No. 47, June, 1972 issue. Price 20¢ per copy. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead persons or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A. by World Color Press, Inc., Sparta, Illinois 62286. Subscription rate \$3.00 for 13 issues including King Size Special. Canada \$3.50. Foreign \$4.75.



NOW, YOU STRIDE LIKE A GREAT, INSENSATE ROBOT THRU THE HUMAN THROG THAT RINGS KEVIN O'BRIEN'S GRAVE...

AND YOU WISH, IN SILENCE, THAT YOU WERE, INDEED, A THING OF UN- FEELING METAL...

...INSTEAD OF ONLY A VERY VULNERABLE MAN, INSIDE AN ARMORED SHELL.



MR. GILBERT -- I'M SORRY I COULDN'T MAKE IT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE THIS WAY...

BUT... WHO'S THAT MAN BY KEVIN'S GRAVE?

THAT'S... KEVIN'S FATHER.

HE FLEW IN THIS MORNING... FOR THE FUNERAL.



GO TELL HIM YOU'RE SORRY YOU'RE IRON MAN-- AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT...



...TELL HIM YOU'RE SORRY YOU KILLED HIS SON!

GILBERT! IN HEAVEN'S NAME, STOP IT, MAN!

AS YOUR FELLOW BOARD MEMBERS, WE'RE IN THIS THING JUST AS DEEP AS YOU ARE.

BUT, IN THE NAME OF HUMAN DECENTCY-- SHUT UP!



IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER, DOES IT, AVENGER? FOR, YOU ARE OBLIVIOUS TO ALL SAVE THE FALLING RAIN...THE TOO-FAMILIAR DRONE OF THE MINISTER'S WORDS...

"ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST..."



...AND SUDDENLY, INTERRUPTING YOUR SOMBER BROODING, THE VOICE OF MARIANNE...THE VOICE OF THE GIRL YOU LOVE...

THE GIRL WITH POWERS OF EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION...!

TONY...I... I WARNED YOU NOT TO COME.

THERE IS DANGER FOR YOU HERE, I CAN...FEEL IT.



MUST YOU TWO MUMBLE AT EACH OTHER?

BAD ENOUGH, STARK HAD THE POOR TASTE TO SEND YOU AS HIS PROXY, INSTEAD OF COMING HIMSELF!

LOOK, GILBERT-- YOU KNOW HOW UPSET HE--

GENTLEMEN, PLEASE-- THIS IS NO TIME FOR THE AIRING OF PRIVATE QUARRELS.



SORRY, REVEREND. YOU'RE RIGHT. I'LL WAIT UNTIL--

UH OH! THERE'S TROUBLE!



ALL RIGHT, IRON MAN-- HOP IN WITH US!

THEY WANT YOU FOR QUESTIONING, IN CONNECTION WITH O'BRIEN'S DEATH.

CAN'T IT WAIT, OFFICER?



NEGATIVE! NOW DO YOU COME QUIETLY, OR--

YEEOW!

--OR NOT AT ALL! ISN'T THAT MY SECOND CHOICE?

STAY BACK, JOE! THOSE REPULSOR RAYS OF HIS COULD TEAR US APART!

KZAP!



SURRENDER, IRON MAN! THE AUTHORITIES COULD MAKE BETTER USE OF STARK'S PRECIOUS ARMOR THAN YOU EVER DID!

ALL YOU EVER DID WITH IT-- WAS-- DESTROY!

WHY MUST THERE BE AN IRON MAN? WHY??

MAYBE GILBERT'S RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING, AVENGER.

YOU TOO, MARIANNE!?



AND YET-- MAYBE YOU'RE BOTH RIGHT.

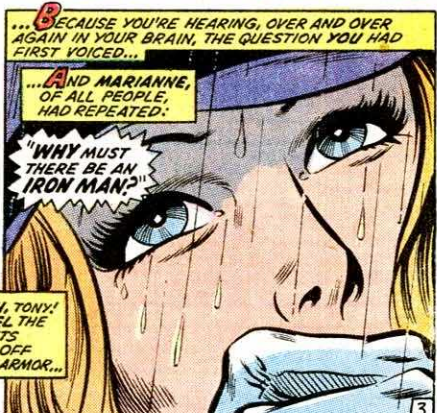
IT WAS ARMOR LIKE MINE THAT DROVE KEVIN MAD-- AND CAUSED HIS DEATH!

AND NOW-- I'VE EVEN MADE A FARCE OF HIS FUNERAL.

STOP HIM! SHOOT TO WOUND HIM, SAM!

HOW? HE SHRUGS OFF BULLETS LIKE THEY WERE CHICKLETS!

TRUE ENOUGH, TONY! YOU HARDLY FEEL THE STEEL PELLETS RICOCCHETING OFF YOUR SKINTIGHT ARMOR...

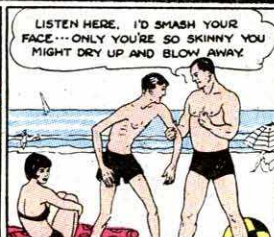


... BECAUSE YOU'RE HEARING, OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN YOUR BRAIN, THE QUESTION YOU HAD FIRST VOICED...

... AND MARIANNE, OF ALL PEOPLE, HAD REPEATED:

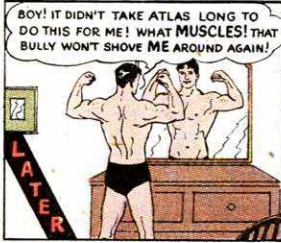
"WHY MUST THERE BE AN IRON MAN?"

THE INSULT THAT MADE A MAN OUT OF "MAC"



Charles Atlas

Awarded the title of "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man."



Let Me PROVE I Can Make YOU A NEW MAN!

ARE you "fed up" with seeing the huskies walk off with the best of everything? Sick and tired of being soft, frail, skinny or flabby — only HALF ALIVE? I know just how you feel. Because I myself was once a puny 97-pound "runt!" And I was so ashamed of my scrawny frame that I dreaded being seen in a swim suit.

The Secret of How I Got My Build

Then I discovered a wonderful way to develop my body fast. It worked wonders for me — changed me from the scrawny "runt!" I was at 17, into "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man." And I can build up YOUR body the very same natural way — without weights, springs or pulleys. Only 15 minutes a day of pleasant practice — in the privacy of your room.

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quick time. Let it help YOU. Not next month or next year — but RIGHT NOW!

"Dynamic-Tension" Builds Muscles FAST!

If you're like I was, you want a powerful, muscular, well-proportioned build you can be proud of any time, anywhere. You want the "Greek-God" type of physique that women rave about at the beach — the kind that makes other fellows green with envy.

Mail Coupon Now for My 32-Page Illustrated Book

Mailing the coupon can be the turning point in your life. I'll send you a copy of my 32-page illustrated book, "How Dynamic-Tension Makes You a NEW MAN." Tells how and why my method works; shows many pictures proving what it has done for others. Don't delay! Mail coupon NOW. CHARLES ATLAS, Dept. 60D 115 E. 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10010.

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115 East 23rd St., New York, N. Y. 10010

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- (Check as many as you like)
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broader Chest and Shoulders | <input type="checkbox"/> More Energy and Stamina |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ironhard Stomach Muscles | <input type="checkbox"/> More Magnetic Personality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Firm Legs | <input type="checkbox"/> More Weight—Solid—in the Right Places |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slimmer Waist and Legs | |

I enclose 1 lb. Please send me a copy of your famous book showing how "Dynamic-Tension" can make me a new man. 32 Pages, crammed with photographs, answers to vital health questions, and valuable advice. This does not obligate me in any way.

Print Name.....Age.....

Address.....

City & State.....Zip.....Code.....

In England: Charles Atlas, 21 Poland St., London, W.1

LIKE SOME BRUTAL, BLUDGEONING TRIPHAMMER, THE QUESTION POUNDS WITHIN YOUR SKULL...SO THAT YOU SCARCELY NOTE THE RISING NORTHERN WIND, THE DRIVING RAIN WHICH BELTS YOUR RUSTPROOF ARMOR...

MY ARMOR! MAYBE SIMON GILBERT IS RIGHT! MAYBE I SHOULD SURRENDER IT AND MYSELF TO THE AUTHORITIES--TELL THEM WHO I REALLY AM--

--LET THEM TRY IRON MAN--AND TONY STARK--FOR MURDER.

WHAT GILBERT DOESN'T KNOW IS KEVIN O'BRIEN WASN'T THE FIRST MAN TO DIE BECAUSE OF THIS METAL SHELL THAT KEEPS ME ALIVE.

BUT YOU KNOW WHO WAS FIRST, DON'T YOU, AVENGER?

YOU KNOW ALL TOO WELL...!

SLOWLY, ONE BY ONE, THE WALLS YOU'VE BUILT AROUND YOUR MIND BEGIN TO CRUMBLE--AND YOU RE-LIVE IT STILL AGAIN...

WHAT YOU CLAIM FOR THAT CRAZY GADGET OF YOURS IS IMPOSSIBLE.

THINK SO, GENERAL? THEN WATCH.

WE'RE ALL EYES, FELLA.

OH, COME NOW, MR. STARK...

YOU HAD SO MANY LABORATORIES, TONY STARK. AT WHICH ONE DID THE FATEFUL DEMONSTRATION TAKE PLACE? CAN YOU TEAR DOWN THAT FINAL WALL AND REMEMBER? AND DOES IT TRULY MATTER...?

THERE! I'VE SWITCHED IT ON.

NOW, IT'S ENER-GIZING THIS COMMON, GARDEN-VARIETY MAGNET...!

THE DOOR OF THAT LOCKED VAULT--IT'S STARTING TO BUDGE--!

NATURALLY! MY TINY TRANSISTORS ARE SO POWERFUL--

--THEY CAN INCREASE THE FORCE OF ANY DEVICE--A THOUSANDFOLD!

LOOK OUT, GENERAL! THERE SHE BLOWS!

NOW DO YOU BELIEVE MY "CRAZY GADGETS" CAN BRING AN EARLY END TO THE BLOODSHED IN VIETNAM?

STARK, AFTER WHAT I'VE JUST SEEN...

...I'LL BELIEVE ANYTHING!

AND THERE WAS STILL **ANOTHER** SIDE TO YOU THEN, WASN'T THERE, STARK? YOU WERE A SOPHISTICATE AS WELL AS A SCIENTIST... A MILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY AS WELL AS A PHENOMENALLY GIFTED INVENTOR... AS MUCH AT HOME IN HIGH SOCIETY AS IN A CLUTTERED LABORATORY...

WHAT DID YOU KNOW THEN OF-- WONG-CHU?!



HAA! ANOTHER VILLAGE BROUGHT TO ITS **KNEES!**

STILL, I SHALL BE GENEROUS! IF ANY PRISONER CAN DEFEAT ME IN FAIR COMBAT...

...THE WHOLE VILLAGE GOES FREE!

THE VILLAGERS WERE ALWAYS AS DESPERATE AS THEY WERE HUNGRY AND WAR-WEARY...



AND SO, THERE WAS ALWAYS SOMEONE TO ACCEPT THE GUERRILLA TYRANT'S CHALLENGE...

...**SOMEONE** WHO INVARIABLY, INEVITABLY **FELL!**



I AM **STRONGEST** OF ALL! NEXT TO WONG-CHU...

...ALL OTHER MEN ARE **FLEAS!**



IS **ENOUGH** SPORT, GREAT ONE?

YES, NOW, LET US **PLUNDER** THE TOWN.

FOR **NONE** CAN STOP THE VICTORIOUS WONG-CHU!

WHO WOULD HAVE DREAMED THEN, TONY STARK, THAT BEFORE LONG YOU AND THAT **MURDEROUS** MADMAN WERE FATED TO MEET...

...**I**N THE STEAMING JUNGLES OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA?

OUR HEAVY **ARTILLERY** COULD CLEAN OUT THE ENEMY, MR. STARK.

BUT WE CAN'T TAKE **TANKS** AND **CANNON** THROUGH THIS FOLIAGE.



THAT'S WHERE MY MIDGET DEVICES COME IN, EH?

RIGHT! THANKS TO YOUR **TRANSISTORS**, OUR MORTARS ARE NOW NO LARGER THAN **FLASHLIGHTS**.

UH OH, **MOVEMENT** AHEAD! HERE'S WHERE YOU SEE YOUR GUNS IN ACTION.

THAT'S WHAT I'M **HERE** FOR-- TO SEE IF THERE ARE ANY **BUGS**.



BUT THERE WEREN'T ANY **BUGS**, WERE THERE, **AVENGER?**



LAND, PUT INTO MASS PRODUCTION, YOUR WEAPONS MIGHT HAVE **SHORTENED** THE WAR...

BUT, THE JUNGLE HELD A THOUSAND PERILS... SOME OF THEM **MAN-MADE**.



STARK-- **WATCH** IT!

HUH--?

A **STRING--!** **BOOBY-TRAP!!**



CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

**I put 2 full inches on my arms—
3 inches on my chest and trimmed
4 inches off my waist
in just 7 weeks...**

thanks to the Joe Weider
Musclebuilding Course!"

WHY NOT YOU?

SAYS MOVIE AND T.V. STAR,
ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER,
"Mr. Universe" winner. He
believes you, too, can easily
duplicate his musclebuilding
success with the Weider Course.

Why only the Joe Weider "MR. AMERICA"
muscle-building course can MUSCLE YOU UP —
SHAPE YOU UP—TOUGHEN YOU UP—FAST in just
7 short weeks—and in the privacy of your own home.

It makes no difference whether you're fat, skinny, scraggy or flabby, young
or not-so-young—whether you're an office worker, laborer, executive or school-
boy—the WEIDER SYSTEM will pack 4 inches on your chest, 3 inches on each
arm—give you football-player shoulders, masculinize your waistline, sock your
legs with strength and speed—and "powerize" your entire body—IN JUST 7
SHORT WEEKS—OR LESS!

Only the WEIDER SYSTEM can do this for you because it is based on scientific
principles—and proven by the hundreds of thousands of Champions it has
developed since 1938. Practically every Mr. America, Mr. Universe and other
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studied bodies.

**NO OTHER MUSCLE-BUILDING SYSTEM ON EARTH CAN MATCH THIS
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IS ENTIRELY WITHIN YOUR REACH!**

Just rush in free coupon and I will send you proof that you too can own a
new "Wildcat Take-Charge" body in just 7 short weeks—It's free, while the
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BUILDING
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MAIL THIS COUPON TO ME TO-
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loaded with photos, tips, suggestions
that will help make your fondest mus-
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I did for Arnold Schwarzenegger and
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He has trained almost
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Universe", "Mr. Canada",
perfect man title winner
since 1938—and over
2,000,000 successful
pupils the world over!
No other instructor in history can come
close to this fantastic record!



HERE'S LIVING PROOF HOW FAST MY COURSE WORKS!

IN ONLY 14 DAYS



HE GAINS 15 POUNDS

BEFORE: Walter Leno, Jr. was
weak and "under-nourished"
looking—ashamed to be seen
anywhere in public.
AFTER: Walter used Weider
methods and in just 14 days
put on 15 pounds, 2 1/2" on his
arms and 2 1/2" on his chest!

**IT CAN HAPPEN
TO YOU, TOO!**

IN ONLY 30 DAYS



HE GAINS 25 LBS.

BEFORE: Paul Carmody weighed
a skinny 135 lbs. with
"toothpick" arms and a shallow
chest. He longed to be big
and strong.
AFTER: Paul put himself under
Weider methods and gained 25
muscular lbs. in 30 days,
adding 1 1/2" to his arms,
5" to his chest!

WHY NOT YOU?

MAIL THIS COUPON FOR FREE BOOK

JOE WEIDER

Dept. 83-42 A
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Dear Joe: Okay, sock it to me! Rush me
your free musclebuilding information and
Free "Muscle Up" book that I can use
right away to build a handsome new "Take-
Charge" body—in just 7 short weeks—in
the privacy of my own home. I'm enclosing
25¢ to cover mailing and handling costs.
I'm under no further obligation.

NAME (please print clearly) AGE _____
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**YOU'RE UNDER NO OBLIGATION
— NOTHING TO BUY!**

THE STRONGEST, MOST VIRILE AND ADMIRABLE MEN ARE BUILT BY THE WEIDER SYSTEM—FAST!

BAROOOM!



THEN, ON THE SECOND DAY OF YOUR RACE AGAINST TIME...

WONG-CHU! I TOLD YOU I MUST BE LEFT ALONE...!

THIS OLD ONE IS PROFESSOR YINSEN--ONCE GREAT SCIENTIST, NOW LOWLY MAN-SERVANT OF WONG-CHU.

HE WILL HELP YOU BUILD WEAPON.



NO! I WILL NEVER HELP YOU-- NEVER!!

PROFESSOR YINSEN? BUT-- I KNOW YOUR WORK, YOU'RE THE GREATEST PHYSICIST OF ALL!

STILL-- EVERYONE IN THE WEST THINKS YOU DEAD!

BETTER I HAD DIED-- THAN THIS.

BUT, WHO ARE YOU--?



WHAT WAS THE TURNING POINT? YOU BARED YOUR GREATEST SECRET TO THAT FRAIL OLD SCHOLAR-- THE ONLY HUMAN YOU DARED TRUST!

AN-- IRON MAN!? FANTASTIC! A MIGHTY ELECTRONIC BODY, TO KEEP YOUR HEART BEATING AFTER THE SHRAPNEL REACHES IT.

IF WE SUCCEED, WHAT A CREATURE WE WILL HAVE CREATED--WHAT WONDERS HE SHALL PERFORM.



THEN--YOU'LL HELP ME? EXCELLENT!

THUS, THE DESPERATE RACE AGAINST TIME CONTINUED...

NICE OF WONG-CHU TO GIVE US ALL THE MATERIALS WE NEED.

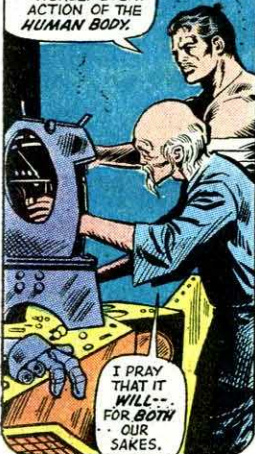
HE DOES NOT DREAM WE SHALL USE THEM AGAINST HIM!



HOURS PASSED INTO DAYS, AS THE SHRAPNEL MOVED EVER CLOSER TO YOUR THROBBING HEART...

MY TRANSISTORS WILL OPERATE THE MACHINE ELECTRONICALLY--MOVE COUNTLESS GEARS AND CONTROL-LEVERS--

THE IRON FRAME MUST DUPLICATE VIRTUALLY EVERY ACTION OF THE HUMAN BODY.



I PRAY THAT IT WILL-- FOR BOTH OUR SAKES.

UHHH! I CAN FEEL-- THE PRESSURE IN MY CHEST!

TIME--RUNNING OUT! WE'VE GOT TO WORK FASTER--!

JUST A LITTLE LONGER.



YOU MUST HAVE COURAGE, MY SON.

AND COURAGE YOU HAD, DIDN'T YOU, AVENGER?--THOUGH NO MORE THAN THE MAN WHO WORKED TIRELESSLY BY YOUR SIDE!

THEN, WHEN YOUR CONDITION BECAME CRITICAL-- WHEN YOU COULD BEAR THE PAIN NO LONGER--

THE LIFE-GIVING HEART OF YOUR IRON BODY IS READY!

I SHALL CLAMP IT AROUND YOUR CHEST.



HURRY, PROFESSOR--HURRY!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

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IT IS DONE.

WHEN I ACTIVATE THE MACHINE, YOUR OWN AMAZING TRANSISTORS WILL FURNISH THE POWER TO KEEP YOUR HEART BEATING.



YOU SHOULD LIVE--JUST AS LONG AS THE IRON BODY OPERATES!

AND NO LONGER!



THE GENERATOR WILL SOON BUILD UP ENOUGH ENERGY TO FURNISH ALL THE POWER YOU'LL NEED TO MOVE AGAIN. THEN--

THE WARNING LIGHT WE INSTALLED! SOMEONE APPROACHES!

IT CAN ONLY BE--WONG-CHU!



IF HE ENTERS NOW--ALL OUR WORK WILL HAVE BEEN IN VAIN.

HE MUST BE KEPT AWAY--UNTIL THE MIGHTY ELECTRONIC BODY GIVES YOU POWER TO WALK--TO STRIKE!

AND THUS--FAREWELL, TO YOU STARK!



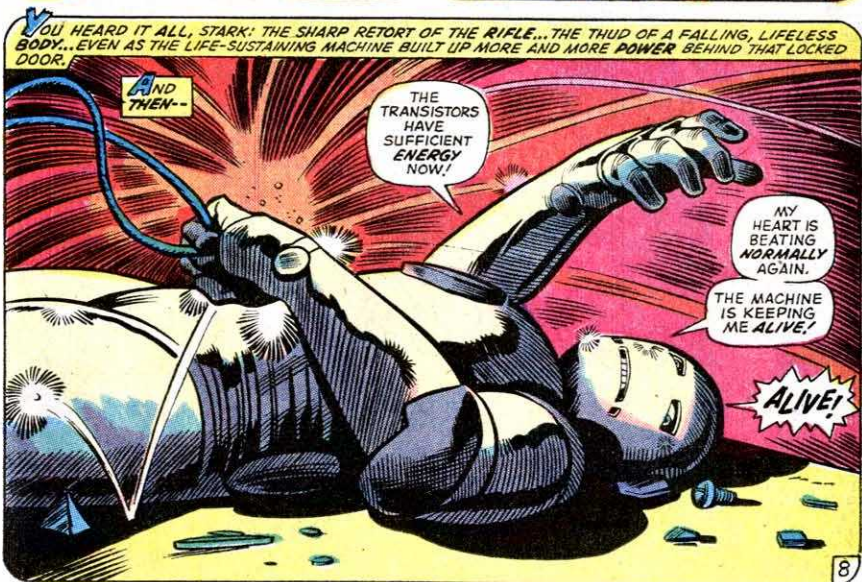
THEN, BEFORE YOU COULD GASP AN ANSWER--BEFORE YOU EVEN REALIZED WHAT WAS HAPPENING--

SLAM!

DEATH TO WONG-CHU! DEATH TO THE EVIL TYRANT!

THE OLD ONE HAS GONE MAD! HE IS OF NO FURTHER USE TO ME.

END HIS MISERABLE LIFE--NOW!



YOU HEARD IT ALL, STARK: THE SHARP RETORT OF THE RIFLE...THE THUD OF A FALLING, LIFELESS BODY...EVEN AS THE LIFE-SUSTAINING MACHINE BUILT UP MORE AND MORE POWER BEHIND THAT LOCKED DOOR.

AND THEN--

THE TRANSISTORS HAVE SUFFICIENT ENERGY NOW!

MY HEART IS BEATING NORMALLY AGAIN.

THE MACHINE IS KEEPING ME ALIVE!

ALIVE!

PROFESSOR
YINSEN--
YOU CAN
NO LONGER
HEAR ME--

BUT YOU
WILL *NOT*
HAVE DIED
IN *VAIN*,
OLD
FRIEND!

SO SWEARS--
THE
**IRON
MAN!**

ZZZZZZ

ZZZASZZASZZZZ

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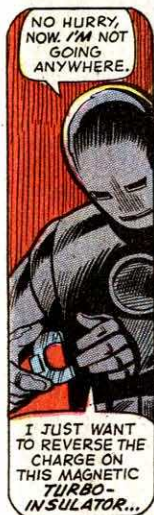
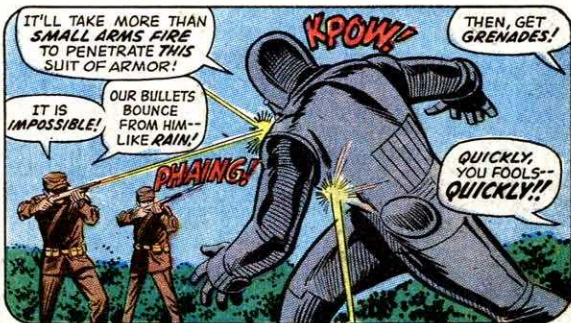
Papers sent only to boys in Continental U. S.

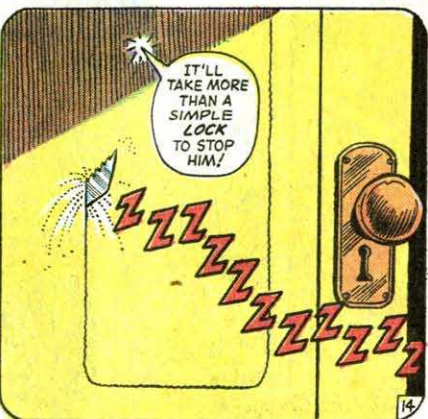
GRIT PUBLISHING CO.,		PLEASE PRINT												
Williamsport, Pa., 17701		Dept. MC 42												
Send my first bundle of papers, selling helps and prize offers.														
Name _____														
Are You a Boy? _____ Age _____ Date Born _____ Year _____														
In Care of _____														
Street and No. _____		R.F.D. _____												
Post Office _____		State _____												
Zip Code No. _____														
Print Your Last Name Plainly Here														
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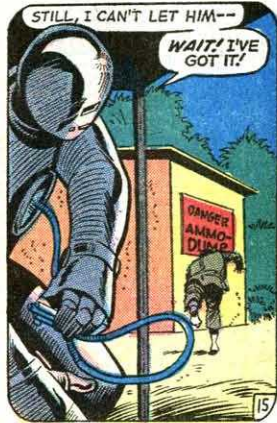
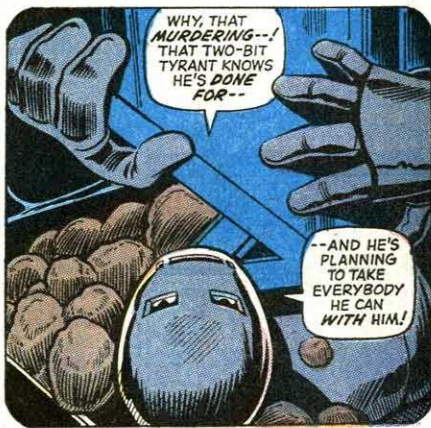












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YOU'D PLANNED YOUR ARMORED APPARATUS CAREFULLY, HADN'T YOU, STARK--?



--EVEN DOWN TO THE LUBRICATING APPARATUS WHICH NOW JETTED FORTH A THIN, STRONG STREAM OF OIL...!

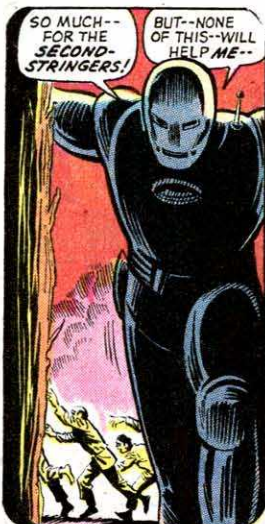
I ESTIMATED IT JUST RIGHT!

THE PRESSURE'S JUST GREAT ENOUGH FOR IT TO REACH THAT AMMO DUMP!



GUARDS! GUARDS! SLAY THE PRISONERS --NOW!





17
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

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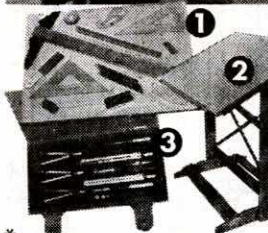
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AND YOU'RE STILL WAITING, AREN'T YOU, SHELLHEAD?

WAITING TO LEARN YOUR DESTINY, IF SUCH A THING REALLY EXISTS--



--ANYWHERE EXCEPT IN YOUR MIND.



IT WOULD BE SO EASY TO GIVE IT ALL UP, WOULDN'T IT?

ALL YOU'D HAVE TO DO IS LEAD THE POLICE-- OR THE ARMY--THRU THIS REINFORCED STEEL DOOR--



--HAND OVER THESE BLUE-PRINTS TO THEM, AND TAKE A WALK.

THEY SHOW HOW YOU WORKED, RE-WORKED, MODIFIED YOUR ARMOR, AGAIN AND AGAIN...

...TILL IT WAS THE NEARLY-HUMAN FIGHTING MACHINE IT IS TODAY.

THERE ARE A LOT OF LIVES BOUND UP IN THIS ARMOR... AND THIS ROLLED-UP SCRAP OF PAPER...



ENEMIES WHO TRIED TO KILL YOU TO POSSESS HIS POWER...

GIRLS WHOM TONY STARK DARED NOT EMBRACE, FOR FEAR THEY'D LEARN HIS SECRET...

EVEN A FRIEND OR TWO WHO DONNED THE ARMOR, TO HELP YOU OUT OF A JAM...

YES, A LOT OF LIVES, TIN MAN...

AND A FEW DEATHS, TOO.

THE GREAT PLANT IS CLOSED NOW... THAT VAST, SPRAWLING ORGANISM WHICH IS THE HUB OF THE NETWORK EMPIRE CALLED STARK INDUSTRIES...

...CLOSED IN MEMORY OF KEVIN O'BRIEN, WHO SHALL EVER BE RECALLED AS FRIEND, NOT FOE...

AND SOMEHOW, YOU FEEL LIKE A GRIM GOLDEN GHOST, WALKING...

...WALKING SOFTLY, AS THOUGH NOT TO AWAKEN STILL OTHER GHOSTS...!

RIGHT HERE, IT HAPPENED RIGHT HERE...

IN THIS VERY BUILDING, THE TEST MODELS FOR MY FIRST ARMOR WERE CAST AND RE-CAST,

THE FINISHED PRODUCT MIGHT HAVE BEEN PIECED TOGETHER HALF A WORLD AWAY-- BUT IT ALL STARTED HERE.

MY ARMOR-- AND DOZENS OF OTHER WEAPONS-- FOR THE ARMY, FOR SHIELD--

--WEAPONS I'VE SOMETIMES BEEN SORRY I DESIGNED--

--WEAPONS THAT CAN BE USED TO KILL ONE PEOPLE-- TO SAVE ANOTHER.

SOMETIMES I'M OUT IN A CROWD, AND I HEAR SOMEBODY'S SCORNFUL WHISPER:

"MUNITIONS-MAKER!"

AND I FIND MYSELF PONDERING EVERY ACTION I EVER MADE.

BUT MAYBE THAT'S ALL TO THE GOOD.

WHEN A MAN STOPS PONDERING HIS ACTIONS -- CEASES TO WEIGH AND JUDGE HIS EVERY MOTIVE--

MAYBE THAT'S WHEN HE'S REALLY IN TROUBLE.

ALL OF WHICH DOESN'T QUITE ANSWER MY CURRENT DILEMMA-- THE QUESTION I KEEP ASKING MYSELF--

"MUST THERE BE AN IRON MAN? AND WHY?"

STRANGE I SHOULD WIND UP ASKING IT-- HERE.

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Just imagine how scared your friends will be when you flip out the light and they start hearing creepy sounds like a creaking door, chains rattling, and then a man's voice telling them that the house is haunted and they are to die one by one. They'll be scared stiff when they hear footsteps coming across the floor, the sound of people fighting, glass breaking, hideous laughter, terrible shrieks and screams, eerie moaning and then more footsteps, more screams . . . Each person in the room will think that he is going to be the next victim.

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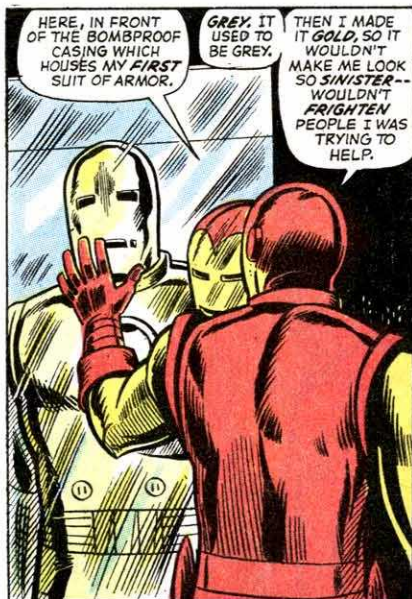
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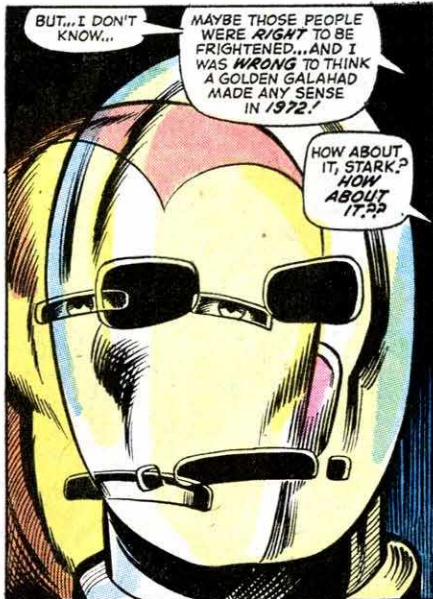
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HERE, IN FRONT OF THE BOMBPROOF CASING WHICH HOUSES MY FIRST SUIT OF ARMOR.

GREY. IT USED TO BE GREY.

THEN I MADE IT GOLD, SO IT WOULDN'T MAKE ME LOOK SO SINISTER-- WOULDN'T FRIGHEN PEOPLE I WAS TRYING TO HELP.



BUT... I DON'T KNOW...

MAYBE THOSE PEOPLE WERE *RIGHT* TO BE FRIGHTENED... AND I WAS *WRONG* TO THINK A GOLDEN GALAHAD MADE ANY SENSE IN 1972.

HOW ABOUT IT, STARK? HOW ABOUT IT??



NO! YOU'VE BEEN FOOLING YOURSELF, TONY-- TRYING TO TAKE THE SIMPLE WAY OUT.

IT'D BE EASY-- TOO EASY-- TO GIVE IN TO THE GILBERTS OF THE WORLD.

BECAUSE FOR EVERY PERSON KILLED BECAUSE HE ENCOUNTERED IRON MAN-- A HUNDRED MORE HAVE LIVED!

YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING AT IT ALL WRONG, STARK.

YOU'RE NOT A CIVILIAN. YOU'RE A SOLDIER-- ALBEIT A RELUCTANT ONE...



...A SOLDIER IN THE BATTLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS... HUMAN DIGNITY!

THAT'S A WAR THAT'S BEING FOUGHT EVERY PLACE, EVERY DAY...



...A WAR THAT'S GOT TO BE WON, SOME DAY, SOMEHOW...

AND ONE MAN WHO'S GOT TO HELP WIN IT...



--IS
**IRON
MAN!**

THE RAIN IS
ENDED,
THE SUN IS
COMING OUT.

BLIND
PERHAPS,
AVENGER,
BENEATH
ITS
GLEAMING
GOLDEN
EYE,
YOU'LL
FIND AT
LAST THE
VICTORY
YOU'VE
BEEN
SEARCHING
FOR...

...YOU, AND THE WORLD!

BOB DYLAN LIKES TO
SING ABOUT
"NEW MORNINGS."

THIS IS
ONE OF
THEM.

BUT FIRST--
THE
**FIRE-
BRAND!**
NEXT
ISSUE!

21



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ITEM: Here's the scoop of the year! This pungent paragraph is being penned a day before Xmas, 1971. But, by the time you read it, Jan. 5th, '72, will have come and gone. What's the big deal about Jan. 5th? Nothing much, except — that's the date that New York's world-famous Carnegie Hall presents "A MARVELOUS EVENING WITH STAN LEE!" Yep, it's for real! On Jan. 5th we're slated to bring the whole bluish' Bullpen before the footlights in a star-studded show paying homage to 'our Marvel-ous mixed-up menage of comic and their cavortin' creators! (It's spooky how we're writing about it in the future tense, but it'll be past history by the time you get to read this!) Anyway, by the time we write next issue's Bullpen Bulletin, our super-production at Carnegie Hall will be behind us, so we'll be able to tell you everything that happened — and, knowing us, you can be sure we will! — That is, if we're not busy rehearsing for a command performance at the Palladium by then!

ITEM! Speaking of things you flame-keepers are always asking us, this seems like as good a time as any to clue you in as to the exact personnel of Mighty Marvel's editorial staff. STAN'S the Editor and Art Director, natch — aided and abetted (whatever that means) by Rascally ROY THOMAS, who basks in the title of Associate Editor. 'What with all the new Marvel madness we've got planned, though, we've had to line up a handful of stalwarts to help Stan, Roy, and Production Manager JOHN VERPOORTEN keep things moving along, so we've now got a trio of awesome Assistant Editors as well. First, there's Sterling STEVE ENGLEHART, whom you read about last ish; next, there's Merry GERRY CONWAY, who helps out as needed; in addition to his 'scripting chores; and last but not least, there's the 'newest addition to our harrid' little staff, Melancholy MIKE FRIEDRICH. Mike's a recent college grad from Santa Clara, California, but don't worry about the Melancholy One being too 'young... nothing can age a guy like a stint in the batty Bullpen.

ITEM! Mike's first task for Marvel, by the way, was to pen a bunch of all-new western epics for our great OUTLAW KID mag. If you wanna see what might've happened to the ever-amazing Spider-Man if he'd been born about a century earlier — well, just pick up O.K. and see what we mean, huh? Artwork's by Darlin' DICK AYERS, who's also been laboring with GARY (No Relation) FRIEDRICH on the sizzling first issue of a new war-mag called COMBAT KELLY AND THE DEADLY DOZEN — now on sale, natch! All right, pilgrim — get everything straight now! Good — 'cause next month we'll add another new title or two to our lil'lin' lineup — and then we'll really start moving!

STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Hey, remember all the immodest expressions we bombarded you with in the early days when Marvel was just a 'borning? Our first and best-known phrase was, of course, "The Marvel Age of Comics," after which we slyly suggested that you always say "Make Mine Marvel!" when ordering anything from a comic-book to an aardvark. Then, before you had a chance to duck, we whumped you with "Marvel's On The Move Again!" A lot of you used to write to us, saying "Okay, okay, we know we're on the move again, but where in the name of Aunt Petunia are we going?" We'd answer that we have a zillion ideas for new mags and new heroes, but we never seemed to have enough time, or a large enough staff to grind 'em out. And we suspect a lot of you thought we were putting you on. But now it's a different ball game! We've been working like mad to corral some of the best new artists and writers to come down the pike — and we've finally swung it! That means we're about to take all those zingy ideas we've been keeping the lid on and bring them to life for you at last! So hang loose, heroes, and watch our smoke! Marvel's set to bust loose now, and that means the wondrous world of fantasy won't ever be the same!

Excelsior!



ITEM! Lots of special issues this time, people! Roy and Bashful BARRY SMITH really went all-out on AVENGERS #100, which features every Marvel hero who's ever been an Avenger — and that's a long, long list! • Here's a nostalgic note: Wild BILL EVERETT, who created the SUB-MARINER many moons ago, has both written and drawn the fabulous 50th issue of Namor's own mag, now on sale! • Even ol' Stan got into the act, writing most of the current 200th ish of THOR. Sure, we know the first 82 issues were named JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY and didn't really feature our awesome Thunder God — but an anniversary is an anniversary! • Speaking of which, we hear that Larrupin' LARRY LIEBER has something special planned for the now-on-sale 100th issue of our best-selling RAWHIDE KID mag — but he never got around to telling us what it is! Find out for yourself, troops!

ITEM! Due to a last-minute delay or two, our new bombshell LUKE CAGE, HERO FOR HIRE is on sale this time around instead of last month. Get it, hear?

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

Now on Sale!

FANTASTIC FOUR #123: Galactus! The Silver Surfer! The fabulous F.F.! All cavorting and clashing in perhaps the greatest battle-issue yet! A feast for the mind and eye!

SPIDER-MAN #109: Flash Thompson — about to be sacrificed by a secret Death-Cult! Spidey helpless to save him! And then — enter Doctor Strange!

THOR #200: The Day of Ragnarok — as you've never seen it before! What can even the gods do — when the end of the universe is at hand?

AVENGERS #100: The tale you thought you'd never see! The Avengers attack Olympus — and vice versa! With the biggest batch of superheroes ever!

HULK #152: Ol' Greenskin — captured and held for trial! And the lawyer's name is — Matt Murdock! Don't miss — "Who Will Judge the Hulk?"

CAPT. AMERICA AND THE FALCON #150: The Stranger strikes from space! But so does the monster known as — Jaka! And earth's caught in the middle!

DAREDEVIL #88: Killgrave, the Purple Man, is back — and DD may never be the same again — even if he lives! Plus — the Black Widow's secret past!

SUB-MARINER #50: The scourge of the seas returns to his abandoned Antarctic home — to find it deserted no longer! And then — Prince Byrrah!

IRON MAN #47: "Shall Iron Man Live?" That's the dreaded question the golden Avenger must ask himself — as he relives anew his awesome origin!

ASTONISHING TALES #12: "Terror in the Everglades!" Perhaps the greatest Ka-Zar saga of all, as the jungle lord comes face to face with — the Man-Thing!

MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #4: Our Werewolf By Night — on the Island of the Damned! And if you wanna know why it's damned, just ask the man called Blackgar!

HERO FOR HIRE #1: A get bit late — but well worth the wait! Get in on the ground floor on this one, pilgrim! It's gonna be big!

COMBAT KELLY AND THE DEADLY DOZEN #1: The wildest, woolliest gang of G.I.'s this side of the hard-hitting Howlers! To believe it — see it!

SGT. FURY #99: Nick Fury's heroes — trapped in the rugged hills of Greece! And for them to live — Europe's greatest patriot must die!

Not to mention these winners:
RAWHIDE KID #100 — OUTLAW KID #10 — MONSTERS ON THE PROWL #17 — MARVEL TALES #35 — FEAR #8 — WESTERN KID #4 — MARVEL TRIPLE ACTION #3 — X-MEN #76 — HARVEY #3 — OUR LOVE STORY #17 — LI'L KIDS #6 — MILLIE THE MODEL #196.

SOCK IT TO SHELL-HEAD

©/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

Dear Gary,

Fear not! I write not to blast you but (for a change) to praise you. I write to you alone because you have single-handedly restored IRON MAN to my list of favorite magazines and Anthony Stark to his place in my heart. After the havoc wrought upon him in the last year or so, I had finally given him up in despair. It took a hasty note from a friend in Indiana to get me to read #45 — but oh! am I glad I did! After years of tortured self-doubt it is an immense relief to see Tony so serenely confident and determined to make his own happiness! And heaven knows he has earned it many times over! I beg you, do not spoil it! Let him have his Marianne! He has earned a little happiness!

Who is Marianne, by the way, and what does she do besides sit around looking pretty and getting clairvoyant "hunches"? Is she a poetess? An artist? A movie star? A stage actress? A singer? A dancer? A novelist? A musician? Or just a jet setter? Come now, she must be something special and creative, or else what would Tony see in her??

Must we repeat the weary old triangle? Kevin O'Brien is behaving like an ass about Marianne! He cannot have what is not freely given! Doesn't he know that? (Guess not). And whatever became of Kathy Ffoulkes, that he was courting so assiduously on his first appearance?

On the whole, though, I hope you will continue to do IRON MAN, at least for a while. You've begun to make a man of our hero again!!!

May you all have a Merry Christmas (or Happy Hanukkah) and a Happy and Successful New Year!

RFO QNS Bettina C. Helms, Box 203
New Fairfield, Conn. 06810

Thanks, girl — we did have a merry (or happy). Hope you did likewise.

We're also glad to hear that you picked up on the developments Iron Man's been going through these days. It was decided last year that perhaps the Golden Avenger was not putting enough thought into his adventuring — and as one of Marvel's most mature characters it seemed that he ought to. So he's been down for a while, as he took stock of himself and his life, but he's learned from it (as witnessed here and in the unlikely pages of THE BEAST — still on sale if you're lucky), so that this ish comes as a culmination and a reaffirmation of all that truly is Iron Man. Now see where we go from here!

Dear Stan,

I hate to say it, but IRON MAN sure has gone down hill lately. I get the distinct impression that it's on its last legs.

At one time I would have, and did, suggest to most everyone I knew that they should read IRON MAN if they liked a story with a good plot and lots of action, but now you'd almost have to pay me to say the same thing to my worst enemy.

The Mr. Klein bit you've been running just doesn't hold the attention like the older issues did, and this thing with Tony Stark always having hassles with Senators and/or Congressmen is just a bunch of balogna that's been used at least a hundred times too often.

Why don't you give the strip to Barry Smith so he

can try and salvage what's left of it? With his new ideas I'm sure he could do it. Don't get me wrong, Stan, sure your ideas are great, but how about giving someone else a chance to show off a little?

Well, 'till the Thing's Aunt Petunia marries Forbush Man, make mine MARVELous!!!

KOF QNS Bruce Roland, 27465 Berenda Way
Hayward, Calif. 94544

This month's mail (as you'll note in many of our other mags this go-round) seems to be directly hand-delivered from sorcerers and warlocks (how's that for a free plug?). Everybody's writing in with suggestions that we've already started work on. Has Marvel's readership got a pipeline to the dread Dormammu that nobody told us about? That's our long-winded way of saying that, of course, Barry Smith did take on the art chores of everybody's favorite Shellhead — albeit for only this month. Barry's moving all around the Marvel landscape these days — and Iron Man was one place he wanted to stop early on.

Ge, people, at this rate we may have to get Doc Strange to answer our mail.

Dear Stan, Gary, George, and Vince,

I have a suggestion for you — one which is sure to create some controversy. It amounts to killing off Iron Man, or rather Tony Stark. First of all, Stark is a leftover from the days when Marvel heroes all fought the commies. His occupation of weapons inventor was great then, but now turns off the majority of us fans. And you can't change his occupation either, since it is so central to Iron Man's origin and continued existence as well as being the main focal point in Stark's character and his relation to your other heroes and to SHIELD. Since he has been so close to death so many times it seems inevitable that sooner or later his heroism will kill him. If this were to happen sooner, then a whole new story line will open up. All you need is for Stark to name a successor as Iron Man, or for Nick Fury, while investigating Stark's death, to figure everything out and decide to appoint a successor. You may decide to discontinue Iron Man's comic and this would be a great way to do it. No one will ever forget that Marvel killed off one of its oldest most honored heroes. And for all those angry Iron Man fans, you could put Stark's successor permanently in the Avengers. At first the Avengers wouldn't know the difference but then would catch on — probably thinking the man in the iron armor is an imposter — and the new Iron Man would have a lot of trouble proving he was legitimate. This would make a terrific subplot continuing over several issues — especially if Iron Man's mag were to be discontinued before any announcements as to Tony's death were made.

RFO TTB KOF and Marvel Madman in
Honorary Perpetuity, David Copson
Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pa. 17837
P.S. All I need is a QNS and I'll have earned my PMM.

Well, Dave, it's an idea, all right — and not a bad one, except that we're all sort of fond on Tony around here. Still, we all liked the Lady Dorma and Captain Stacy. . . .
At any rate — consider yourself a PMM, friend.

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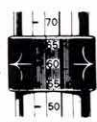
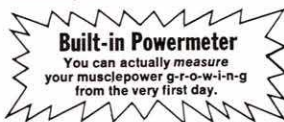
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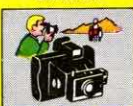
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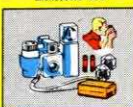
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Please send me your Big Prize Book and one order of 48 packs of American Seeds. I'll sell them at 25¢ a pack, send you the money and choose my prize. Send seeds checked.

All Flower Seeds Mixed Vegetable and Flower Seeds

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____ Code _____

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EXTRA!

\$3,000 AWARDED in our Promptness Contest in addition to the prizes and money you earn selling seeds.

Complete information is sent with your Big Prize Book and Seeds.



SAVE FOR COLLEGE or SPEND IT NOW!