

LO: Shared reading

End of chapter 3

So they did not see the great iron head, square like a bedroom, with red glaring headlamp eyes, and with the tablecloth, still with the chicken and the cheese, draped across the top of it, rising out of the top of the hillock, as the Iron Man freed himself from the pit.

When the farmers realized that the Iron Man had freed himself they groaned. What could they do now? They decided to call the Army, who could pound him to bits with anti-tank guns. But Hogarth had another idea. At first, the farmers would not hear of it, least of all his own father. But at last they agreed. Yes, they would give Hogarth's idea a trial. And if it failed, they would call in the Army.

After spending a night and a day eating all the barbed wire for miles around, as well as hinges he tore off gates and the tin cans he found in ditches, and three new tractors and two cars and a lorry, the Iron Man was resting in a clump of elm trees. There he stood, leaning among the huge branches, almost hidden by the dense leaves, his eyes glowing a soft blue.

The farmers came near, along a lane, in cars so that they could make a quick getaway in things went wrong. They stopped fifty yards from the clump of elm trees. He really was a monster. This was the first time most of them had had a good look at him. His chest was as big as a cattle truck. His arms were like cranes, and he was getting rusty, probably from eating all the old barbed wire.

Now Hogarth walked up towards the Iron Man.

"Hello," he shouted, and stopped. "Hello, Mr Iron Man."

The Iron Man made no move. His eyes did not change.

Then Hogarth picked up a rusty old horseshoe, and knocked it against a stone: Clonk, Clonk, Clonk!

At once, the Iron Man's eyes turned darker blue. Then purple. Then red. And finally, white, like a car headlamps. It was the only sign he gave of having heard.

"Mr Iron Man," shouted Hogarth. "We've got all the iron you want, all the food you want, and you can have it for nothing, if only you'll stop eating up the farms."

The Iron Man stood up strait. Slowly he turned, till he was looking directly at Hogarth.

"We're sorry we trapped you and buried you," shouted the little boy. "We promise we'll not deceive you again. Follow us and you can have all the metal you want. Brass too. Aluminium too. And lots of old chrome. Follow us."

The Iron Man pushed aside the boughs and came into the lane. Hogarth joined the farmers. Slowly they drove back down the lane, and slowly, with all his cogs humming, the Iron Man stepped after them.

They led through the villages. Half the people came out to stare, half ran to shut themselves inside bedrooms and kitchens. Nobody could believe their eyes when they saw the Iron Man marching behind the farmers.

At last they came to the town, and there was a great scrap-metal yard. Everything was there, old cars by the hundred, old trucks, old railway engines, old stoves, old refrigerators, old springs,

bedsteads, bicycles, girders, gates, pans – all the scrap iron of the region was piled up there, rusting away.

“There,” cried Hogarth. “Eat all you can.”

The Iron Man gazed, and his eyes turned red. He knelt down in the yard, he stretched out on one elbow. He picked up a greasy black stove and chewed it like a toffee. There were delicious crumbs of chrome on it. He followed that with a double-decker bedstead and the brass knobs made his eyes crackle with joy. Never before had the Iron Man eaten such delicacies. As he lay there, a big truck turned into the yard and unloaded a pile of rusty chain. The Iron Man lifted a handful and let it dangle into his mouth – better than any spaghetti.

So there they left him. It was an Iron Man’s heaven. The farmers went back to their farms. Hogarth visited the Iron Man every few days. Now the Iron Man’s eyes were constantly a happy blue. He was no longer rusty. His body gleamed blue, like a new gun barrel. And he ate, ate, ate, ate – endlessly.

Questions

Retrieval

1. What would the farmers do if Hogarth’s idea failed?
2. What did the Iron Man chew like a toffee?

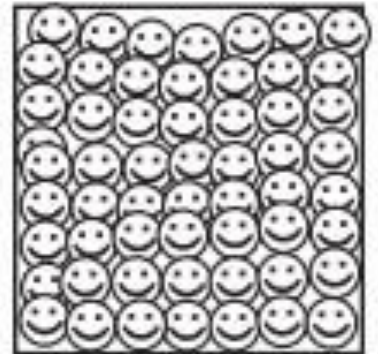
Words in context

3. The Iron Man was hidden by the dense leaves. Use the sentence to suggest the meaning of dense.
4. At the end of chapter 3 the Iron Man ate, ate, ate, ate – endlessly. Suggest an improvement for the word ate that describes how the Iron Man was eating.

Inference

5. Upon realising that the Iron Man was happy with being at the scrap yard. How might Hogarth be feeling and why?
6. ‘He was no longer rusty. His body gleamed blue – like a new gun barrel. How has the Iron Mans feelings changed from the moment he escaped from the pit?

Dense



LESS DENSE



MORE DENSE

having parts very close together with little space between.