

# The Iron Man

So Hogarth's father again got back into his car. But as he turned the car in the yard, he saw a strange thing in the headlamps. Half a tractor lay there, just half, chopped clean off, the other half missing. He got out of his car and the other farmer came to look too. The tractor had been bitten off – there were big teeth-marks in the steel. No explanation! The two men looked at each other. They were puzzled and afraid. What could have bitten the tractor in two? There, in the yard, in the rain, in the night, while they had been talking inside the house.

The farmer ran in and bolted his door.

Hogarth's father jumped into his car and drove off into the night and the rain as fast as he could, homeward.

The rain poured down. Hogarth's father drove hard. The headlights lit up the road and bushes.

Suddenly – two headlamps in a tall treetop at the roadside ahead. Headlamps in a treetop? How?

Hogarth's father slowed, peering up to see what the lights might be, up there in the treetop.

As he slowed, a giant foot came down in the middle of the road, a foot as big as a single bed. And the headlamps came down closer. And a giant hand reached down towards the windshield.

The Iron Man!

Hogarth's father put on speed, he aimed his car at the foot.

Crash! He knocked the foot out of the way.

He drove on, faster and faster. And behind him, on the road, a clanging clattering boom went up, as if an iron skyscraper had collapsed. The iron giant, with his foot knocked from under him, had toppled over.

And so Hogarth's father got home safely.

BUT

Next morning all the farmers were shouting with anger. Where were their tractors? Their earth-diggers? Their ploughs? Their harrows? From every farm in the region, all the steel and iron farm machinery had gone. Where to? Who had stolen it all?

*The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes

## Questions

1) Which of these words does **not** have a similar meaning to '*peering*'?

looking      gazing      scanning      hiding [1 mark]

2) Find and copy a phrase that tells you what time of day the story takes place. [1 mark]

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3) Decide whether each statement about the extract is true or false. [1 mark]

	True	False
The Iron Man chased the farmer into his house.		
The Iron Man crushed Hogarth's father's car.		
Hogarth's father slowed down to look at the headlamps in the treetops.		
The Iron Man fell over because Hogarth's father hit him with his car.		

4) '*The farmer ran in and bolted his door.*'

What does this quotation suggest about the farmer? [1 mark]

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5) What do you think has happened to the tractors, earth-diggers, ploughs, harrows and other farm machinery? Find and copy a phrase from the extract that makes you think this. [2 marks]

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6) Why do you think the author described the Iron Man's foot as being '*as big as a single bed*'? [2 marks]

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**7)** *'... a clanging clattering boom'*

Why do you think the author used these words to describe the Iron Man's fall? [1 mark]

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**8)** *'Suddenly – two headlamps in a tall treetop at the roadside ahead. Headlamps in a treetop? How?'*

What do you think the headlamps are? [1 mark]

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**9)** Hogarth's father *'put on speed'* and *'drove on, faster and faster'*. What does this tell you about how he was feeling? [1 mark]

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**10)** The story takes place in the countryside. Give **two** ways the author shows this. [1 mark]

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