

200
25

AVENGERS



RE-ASSEMBLE

by John Pierce

To most of you, I suppose the word "Avengers" brings to mind a number of costumed characters who gather around Captain America, to aid the star-spangled superman in the fight for the preservation of Truth, Justice, and Irving Forbush.

If so, then I can only say that you are unenlightendd, and that it is my duty to enlighten you--about another group of heroes called the Avengers, that is, and a group which many of us find quite superior to Stan Lee's collection of super-powered hotheads.

These Avengers come to us from the same country which gave us the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and (horror of horrors!) Twiggy. After all that, it was about time they sent us something good. Instead, they sent us something great!

The Avengers ~~relates~~ is a television show, which has been running in Britain ~~for~~ since 1961. It appeared her from March until September of 1966, and from January through May (with re-runs continuing until September) of 1967. ←

The Avengers ~~RELATES~~ relates the adventures of two British agents, John Steed, "top professional," and his Partner, Emma Peel, "talented amateur." These two puchh, jab, karate, gung fu, and joke their way through one hour of exciting, suspenseful, and often-times humorous spy-adventure in England.

To be sure, the Avengers is a satire; but it is a well-done sztire, played so stylishly that it can easily pass for a genuine spy-thriller (It had me fooled, believe me!). This is no surprise since it comes from the English, the master of satire. As I said, it is a well-done satire; as contrasted to some of our satire (viz., Batman) which is only half-baked.

Steed, played to perfection by David Niven's Cousin, Patrick Macnee, is an elegantly-dressed chap, never without his bowler and broolly (derby and umbrella, for those of you who don't understand English). His cover seems to be that of a man-about-town. He is a connoisseur of fine wines with an abundance of Old World charm and courtesy. No slacker in a fight is he, though, for he handles his umbrella quite skillfully.

Macnee originally played Steed in another British television series. There Steed was a villain; but he proved so popular that Steed and Macnee were given a series of their own, The Avengers, which began in 1962 quite legitimately and seriously as the search of a brreaved husband for his wife's slayers. It was mainly through the attitude and approach of Macnee that The Avengers has evolved from serious into semi-satirical.

The other half of the Avengers (who are never called that during the course of the show) consists of Mrs. Emma Peel. She, the widow of a test pilot, assists Steed in his endeavors. She is well-equipped, too, for in addition to being a very beautiful

female, she is also versed in karate, jui-jitsu, and gung fu.

Originally played by Honor Blackman, she has been seen in this country only in the person of one Diana Rigg, a Tall, auburn-haired Yorkshire lass, whom I have dubbed the Most Beautiful Person on the Earth. With her stylish wardrobe, and especially her jumpsuits (which come in a variety of colors, unfortunatately unseen by those of us, myself included, who are still television color-blind), her tremendous acting ability (she was a Shakespearen actress and has recently returned to that field), and her unmatched beauty, she is for many people the real star of the series.

As has been noted by writers far more vociferous than I, The Avengers is conspicuous for what it does not say. It does not say, FOR INSTANCE, JUST WHAT ORGANIZATION EMPLOYS STEED? Nor does it say why Emma Peel joins him in his work.

Jim
↙

(as) Some of these answers have been provided in the Avengers paper-back series (a sure sign of popularity) which began appearing earlier this year. Issued by Berkeley Medallion, and written by John Garforth these stories have not been too good (my opinion); however, they have filled in some holes. Whether this information is taken originally from previous episodes not seen here, or has been invented by the writer, I am powerless to say.

Nevertheless, Steed's employers are designated as M.I. 5 (Military Intelligence 5). Mrs. Peel's father was a shipping magnate and a friend of Steed's. He died, leaving all his fortune to his daughter, so she does not have to work. Presumably, she joins Steed solely for the adventure.

Their physical relations are minimal. She refers to him as "Steed," he to her as "Mrs. Peel." Apparently they are only good friends.

Be that as it may, both are highly trusted agents, as one TV episode, "Who's Who?" clearly demonstrated. A number of the opponents know about both Steed and Mrs. Peel; to others they are total strangers when the adventure begins.

They fight a wide variety of opponents, sometimes the identities of these opponents are kept from the viewer until the end, other times not. A few times even Steed and/or Mrs. Peel are aware of them. The plots touch lightly on science-fiction, with (to cite some examples) such things as a mind-switching device, anti-gravity boots, underground cities, and so on.

Let me cite a few of their adventures:

1. Someone disguised as a comic book character called the Winged Avenger kills a number of double-dealing businessmen.
2. Sightings of ghosts rising from graves lead Steed and Emma to an underground city.
3. Two Slavic agents pay a high price for a supposed invisibility formula.
4. A baby ball is coated with a drug which makes one return mentally to his childhoos.
5. Steed and six other adventurers are trapped on an island,

with a deadly killer in their midst.

6. Mrs. Peel is tricked by a former enemy into spending a night in a "haunted house".

7. Members of an astronomical society viewing the planet Venus are found dead, with their hair turned white.

And so on. These examples, by the way, are from this past season (January 1967-May 1967). There are many other notable samples from the previous season. The plots seem quite unique, although it has been charged that a number of basic plots have been used more than once on the show. However, over 100 Avengers episodes have been filmed, but we in America have seen less than a third of these.

Which brings me to my next point. The Avengers is not new showing here. ABC has contracted for 17 more episodes, but did not schedule them because of prior fall commitments. The show will return in January, 1968, if an hour of prime-time becomes available on ABC.

We, of course, cannot influence this a whole lot, since it is futile to tell the network to remove another show to make room for The Avengers. However, it would not hurt to write to ABC anyway, to remind the network officials that we are still interested.

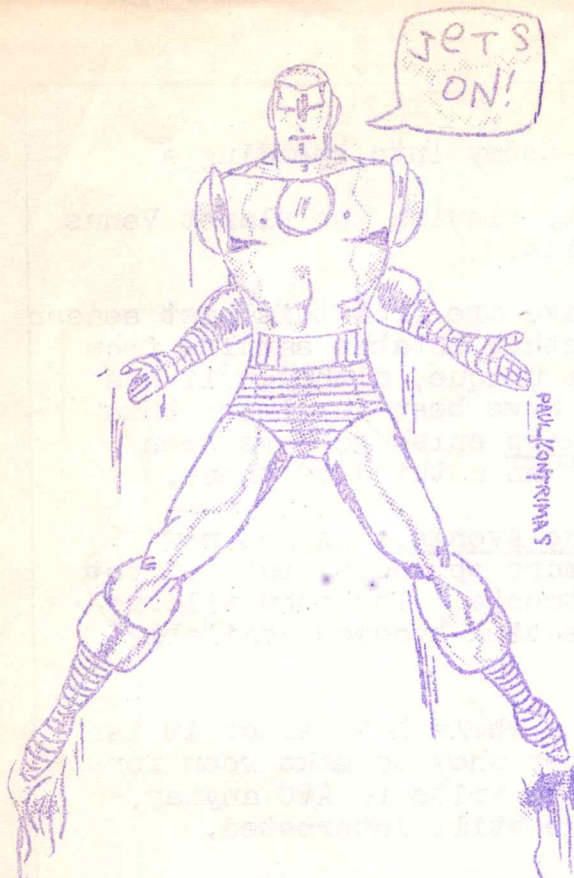
If you care, you might also make this following suggestion. A lot of us, I know, would line to see some of the earlier episodes. I daresay that even those of us who find Diana Rigg the most attractive element of the show would still like to see some of the earlier episodes featuring Miss Blackman. (Miss Rigg, as I mentioned previously, has left the series to do Shakespearean work. Watch for her in a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" over CBS sometime this season. Ostensibly, another girl has taken over her role in The Avengers.) Perhaps we could even bet to see the earliest episodes featuring Diana herself, as these may not have been shown in this country. (I am sorry to be so ignorant on these points I make one poor article writer, I realize.) At any rate, it would be a treat. Why not suggest it to the ABC executives?

The men to write to are Joseph Sch Schrier, manager of current programming at ABC; Thomas W. Moore, president of ABC-TV; and Leonard Goldberg, Vice-president in charge of programs. All these men are located at American Broadcasting Companies, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10019.

If you care to write to Macnee and Miss Rigg, they can be reached via this address: ABC-TV, 4151 Prospect, Los Angeles, California. It takes mail a while to arrive here from England, though, so don't expect an immediate reply.

Even if you don't care for the idea of seeing earlier Avengers episodes, but do want to see the series continued on American television, please write to the above-mentioned gentlemen and tell them so.

Now for a personal note: I'd like to advertise. (Tony has allotted me ad space, so don't think that I am trying to cheat.) I ~~was~~ am interested in collecting virtually anything RELATING TO THE AVENGERS or its stars, especially Diana Rigg. I particularly want photographs of Miss Rigg. I am willing to buy, or perhaps



trade for , the items I want. If you have some ,and care to make a trade or sell them please contact me. The address is 1404 1/2 S.Ohio Ave,Columbus Ohio 43206. Also contact me if you know where I might find a British flag. Lastly, could anyone supply me a list of all the episode episodes, by way of title and a brief description of the plot? I 'm especially interested in those that appeared in American in early 1966.

But above all---AVENGERS REASSEMBLE.

BOMBSHELLS by Bombshell Editor T.E. Rutherford.

Most of this col this time has been devoted to John Pierce and AVENGERS. Now, I'm going to just touch on a few topics.

- *If you haven't been watching abc's daytime soap opera do so. It features such things as ghosts,vampires,mystery, and the like. 3:30 ET. Also,write ABC telling them how much you like it.
- *GHOSTBREAKER seems to have been a good show and it should be brought back. If you'd like to see GHOSTBREAKER brought back write to NBC about it. Savvy?

Next, a subject dear to my heart old radio. I wish it could be brought back some of those shows from the past as LONE RANGER, INNER SANCTUM, etc but they are, I guess, gone forever. Anyway, radio collectors do have several different shows available and so do I. If you'd like to hear a few contact me. Also, anyone with radio tapes for sale/trade should contact me. Radio, I think, does have a chance to return if tv keeps going down hill as it is doing now. TV is either movies or western and many people will soon turn back to radio and maybe initiate a new Golden Age of Radio.

* Super-heroes are on their way out. At least for the minor companies. In the past months discontinuations have been announced by ACG, Tower, Mighty, Charlton. All we have left is Gold Key, Marvel & D.C. Even these companies seem a little shy to introduce new heroes, but maybe its only my imagination. Anyway, SPECTRE & DEADMAN seem to be going good at DC. Marvel is intoring Capt. Marvel so maybe things aren't really that bad.??

Bombshell #9-12 are on sale (or will be by November). Entire set is 1.35. 3 issues 1.05; 2 ishs. -75¢. 1 ish 40¢. All 48 ppg. Two upcoming events: "Dark Shadows/" based on ABC series and "AGENT V-5 of W.O.R.L.D." (adventures in WWII) by Rutherford & Schaberow. #9 Ed Lahmann and Hutchinson covers; #10: Dick Giordano cover; #11 Bob Cardozo; #12-Validar Wyndhelm. #9: Cat of Egypt Jeff Jones; Doc Defiant by Martin RUSSELL; Red Revenger by Benton&Sabo; Kelch's Korner by D.Kelch and more. #10: Fighters of Evil and Sonar "To Join the Ranks" by Benton, Harrer & Povlin; Immortal Corpse by Dave Harrer; Secret of Tiger Shark by Ed Matthews; #11; Isle of Terror by Dopp& McCaughan; Beneath the Mask; Totem Chief by Perrin; #12: "Revival Anyone" with contribs from Herndon, Frederick, Wolfman, Foss, Miller, & Johnson. Plus---A-1, Cat of Egypt, Blind Man's Bluff by Jadro, etc. Contributors include Potter, Robinson II, Eddings, Klein, etc.

Comments on a few #10 stories: S.of Tiger Shark: "Excellent story and Potter illos something I can't stop looking at "; Dead World: "Terrific. I Almost flipped.

Thrilling Publications, (T.Rutherford), 1046 Jackson Ave, Huntington W.Va. 25704

BOMBSHELLS #1 FOR MAKING WITH COUNCILUM - - Syndicated COL-TEK