

MARVEL

英文原版
电影同名小说

IRON MAN

钢铁侠

(赠英文音频与单词随身查APP)

美国漫威公司 © 著



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地址: 上海市梅陇路 130 号, 200237

电话: 021-64250306

网址: www.ecustpress.cn

邮箱: zongbianban@ecustpress.cn

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Chapter 01



In a packed auditorium, Lieutenant Colonel James Rhodes, Tony Stark's best friend, stood at the podium and narrated as a film about Tony's life played on a huge screen behind him.

“Tony Stark. Visionary. Genius. American patriot. Even from an early age,

the son of legendary weapons developer Howard Stark quickly stole the spotlight with his brilliant and unique mind.

“At age four, he built his first circuit board.

“At age six, his first engine.

“And at seventeen, he graduated summa cum laude from MIT.”

A picture of a smiling young Tony dissolved into a funeral portrait of his father, Howard. Rhodey went on, his tone somber. “Then, the passing of a titan. Howard Stark’s lifelong friend and ally, Obadiah Stane, steps in to help fill the gap left by the legendary founder, until, at age twenty-one, the prodigal son returns and is anointed the new CEO of Stark Industries.”

Another series of pictures showed Tony’s

incredible successes at Stark Industries. “With the keys to the kingdom,” Rhodey went on, “Tony ushers in a new era for his father’s legacy, creating smarter weapons, advanced robotics, satellite targeting. Today, Tony Stark has changed the face of the weapons industry by ensuring freedom and protecting America and her interests around the globe.”

Rhodey paused as the slide show ended. “As liaison to Stark Industries,” he said, “I’ve had the unique privilege of serving with a real patriot. He is my friend and he is my great mentor. Ladies and gentlemen,” Rhodey finished, pointing off to one side, “this year’s Apogee Award winner . . . Mr. Tony Stark.”

The crowd broke into thunderous applause. A spotlight moved across the stage and landed on . . . an empty chair.

The applause quickly faded into surprised murmurings.

Rhodey gritted his teeth as Obadiah Stane, Stark Industries's second-in-command, strode out onto the stage and took the podium. The spotlight shone on his shaven head.

"Thank you, Colonel," he said, accepting the award statuette.

"Thanks for the save," Rhodey said, away from the microphone so the crowd wouldn't hear.

Stane nodded and stepped to the podium. "This is beautiful. Thank you," he said. "Thank you all very much. This is wonderful."

He looked at the statuette for a long moment and then said, "Well, I'm not Tony Stark. But if I were, I'd tell you how

honored I am and . . . what a joy it is to receive this award.” He took a deep breath and forced a grin. “The best thing about Tony is also the worst thing—he’s always working.”



Tony was not working. Rhodey found that out right away. In a nearby Las Vegas casino, Tony sat at a gaming table, betting enormous amounts of money. He paused and threw the dice, turning up another winner. The crowd around the table cheered.

Tony spotted Rhodey across the casino floor striding toward him. “You are unbelievable,” Rhodey said when he reached the table.

“Oh no!” Tony exclaimed. “Did they

rope you into this awards thing?”

Rhodey scowled at him. “Nobody roped me into anything. But they said you’d be deeply honored if I presented the award.”

“Of course I’d be deeply honored,” Tony said. “And it’s you. That’s great. So when do we do it?”

Rhodey plopped the Apogee Award down on the gaming table. “Here you go.”

Tony stared at it, surprised. “There it is,” he said. “That was easy.” When he saw that Rhodey was still irritated, he got a little more serious. “I’m so sorry.”

Rhodey waved the apology away. “Yeah, it’s okay.”

Tony held up his dice to one of the beautiful women next to him at the table. “Give me a hand, will you?” he asked. “Give me a little something-something.”

She smiled and blew on the dice for good luck.

Tony held the dice out to Rhodey then. “Okay, you too.”

“I don’t blow on a man’s dice,” Rhodey said.

But Tony talked him into making the roll instead. He picked up the dice, shook them, and rolled—but they came up losers. The crowd around the table sighed and glared at Rhodey. Tony didn’t seem bothered, though. He collected a huge stack of chips from the table and headed for the door with Rhodey. People gawked and took pictures of him with their cell phones.

“A lot of people would kill to have their name on that award,” Rhodey said angrily. “What’s wrong with you?”

“Hold that thought,” Tony said, and strode toward the restroom. Once inside, he splashed water on his face.

“A thousand people came here tonight to honor you, and you didn’t even show up,” Rhodey said, following him. “Now you’re going into a war zone tomorrow just for an equipment demo. We should be doing that here in Nevada.”

Tony sighed. “This system has to be demonstrated under true field conditions.”

Just then, the door to the restroom swung open and an attractive redhead in her late twenties walked in. Rhodey recognized Virginia “Pepper” Potts, Tony’s executive assistant. She wasn’t the kind of person who let a MEN’S ROOM sign get in the way of doing her job.

“Tony, you’re leaving the country for

a week,” she said, following him as he dropped the Apogee Award in the tip basket and went back onto the casino floor. “I just need five minutes of your time.”

Before Tony could answer, an attractive young woman holding a digital voice recorder pushed her way through the crowd. “Mr. Stark!” she called. “Christine Everhart, journalist. Can I ask you a few questions?”

“Can I ask you a few back?” Tony replied, slowing down to talk.

“You’ve been described as the da Vinci of our times,” Ms. Everhart said. “What do you say to that?”

“Ridiculous,” Tony said. “I don’t paint.”

“And what do you have to say about your other nickname: the Merchant of Death?”

Tony shrugged. “That’s not bad.” He sized her up, figuring from her appearance and accent that she was one of those do-gooder journalists who came from a privileged background and had never spent a day in the real world. “Let me guess,” he said. “Berkeley?”

“Brown, actually,” she said.

“Well,” he said, “it’s an imperfect world, but it’s the only one we’ve got. The day that weapons are no longer needed to keep the peace, I’ll start manufacturing bricks and beams to make hospitals.”

“Rehearse that much, Mr. Stark?” Ms. Everhart asked.

“Every night in front of the mirror. But call me Tony.”

She frowned. “All I want is a serious answer.”

“Okay, here’s serious,” he said. “My old man had a philosophy: Peace means having a bigger stick than the other guy.”

“That’s a great line, coming from the guy selling the sticks,” she shot back.

Not Tony was starting to lose his patience. “My father helped defeat the Nazis. He worked on the Manhattan Project. A lot of people, including your professors at Brown, would call that being a hero.”

She didn’t bat an eyelash. “And a lot of people would also call that war profiteering.”

“When do you plan to report on the millions of people we’ve saved by advancing medical technology? Or the millions more we’ve kept from starving with our intellicrops? All those

breakthroughs came from military funding, honey.”

“Did you ever lose an hour of sleep in your whole life?” she asked him. Now her temper was up, too.

Tony winked. It was time to defuse the situation. “I’d be prepared to lose a few with you,” he said.

Chapter 02



Tony Stark's home was a sprawling, ultramodern mansion atop a tall bluff on the edge of the Pacific Ocean, with a commanding view of the surf far below. Tony wasn't admiring the view, though. As usual, he was working