

## ACTRON: THE END

#20

by Stanley Lieber

Back at his desk, Thomas took off his visor and rubbed his ruined eyes. Everything was in its place: the framed picture of his family, the lucite block containing a laser etching of a Lockheed Martin F-35A, the news clippings and magazines photos he had pinned to the wall. He sipped his coffee and pressed the button to call his secretary.

"Eva, could you come in here please."

Chrysler Building Classic systems were on the fritz. Several minutes elapsed, and Thomas wasn't sure if she had got the message. Just as he was about to try again, the speaker squawked to life.

"I'm not your secretary," she finally said. It was true. She was his wife. "What do you want?"

"Have the comics been delivered yet?" he asked.

She had no idea. Why was he asking her?

"Oh. Well, okay. Sorry to bother you."

He sunk back in his chair. Was he really going to have to walk all the way down to the comic shop by himself?

Enter Piro, the pirate.

"Why don't you just download it?" he said.

"Down*what*?" Thomas asked, forever perplexed.

Piro couldn't answer because he wasn't really there. In fact he'd been dead for years. But his comment had set Thomas on a path that would culminate in a relapse into once again spending a significant amount of time reading super-hero comic books.

What else were brothers for?