

# MARVEL

## STORIES

ALL STORIES BRAND NEW WRITTEN ESPECIALLY FOR THIS MAGAZINE

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☆☆ CONTENTS ☆☆

April, 1941

★ ★ THRILLING BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL ★ ★

### THE LAST SECRET WEAPON

Page

by Polton Cross

8

The simplest and yet the most brilliant invention of all time, the secret weapon to end all secret weapons—this was the diabolic device that Val Turner knew foreign dictators would finally use to wipe out his beloved America, this was the fiendish instrument that only a new super-science could smash!

★ ★ 2 UNUSUAL NOVELETTES ★ ★

**Girl from Venus**.....by D. D. Sharp 53

The girl from Venus was the only girl in the world for me, and atomic disintegration and argonite would give us health, wealth and complete happiness—until that inevitable day, alas, when Leatha must no longer be distinguishable from any other girl on the planet!

**The Iron God**.....by Jack Williamson 70

A dive-bomber weighing sixty tons, ten of them the highest explosives known, hurtling four hundred miles an hour at the giant's head! . . . Lundoon knew that if this attack did not stop the 2,000-foot-tall mad colossus, nothing ever would!

★ ★ 2 GRIPPING SHORT STORIES ★ ★

**The Thought Machine**.....by Ray Cummings 46

To Dr. Jenks the Thought-Machine was the transmutation of human body atoms into matter with the same vibration-rate—to Butch and Red and Willie it was a way to make a million-bucks!

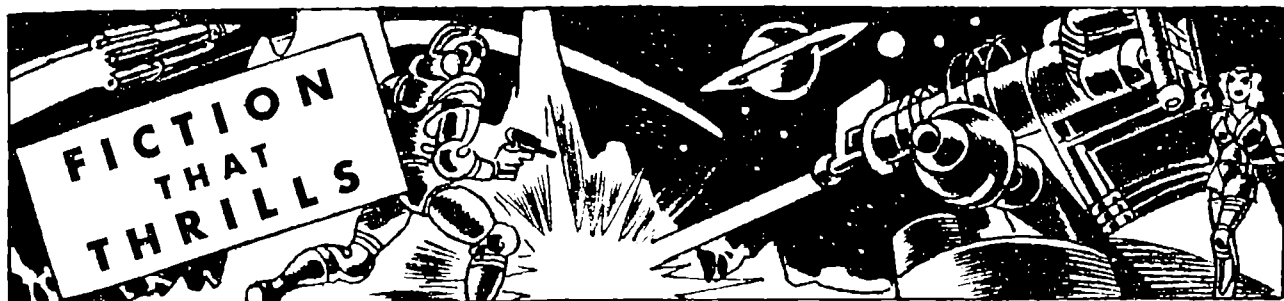
**We—The Other People**.....by Bruce Manchester 96

You remember how those creatures looked, and the way they acted, the crew of the first spaceship to reach the Earth, and how you called them the Other-People . . . I wonder, though, if you guessed then that they'd turn out as they have. . . .

★ ★ MARVEL'S SPECIAL FEATURE ★ ★

**The World of Tomorrow**.....by Ray Cummings 106

Proof that the basic ultimate substance is—**nothing!** . . . Mechanical invisibility is coming. . . . Have you tried to kill yourself recently? . . . Do you see things as they really are?



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# THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

MARVEL'S NEW SENSATIONAL SCIENCE-FICTION DEPARTMENT

by RAY CUMMINGS

*Proof that the basic ultimate substance is—nothing! . . . Mechanical invisibility is coming! . . . Have you tried to kill yourself recently? . . . Do you see things as they really are?*

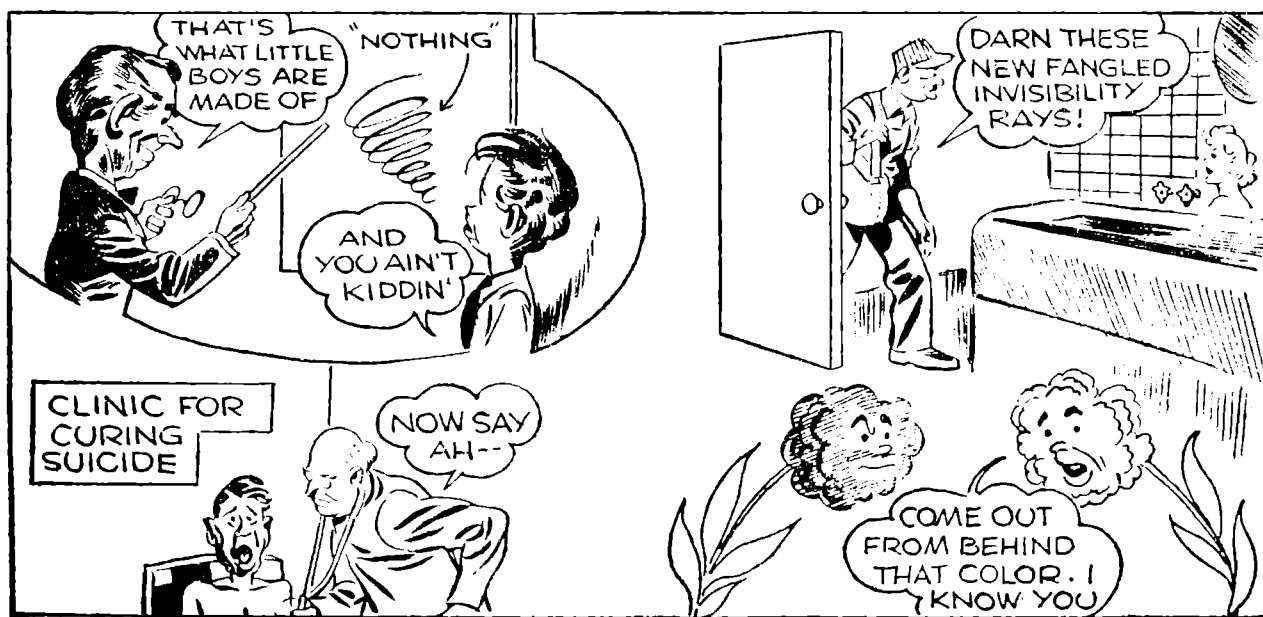
## The Man Who Discovered Nothing

YOU are privileged to meet one of the greatest physicists of the age. He has recently discovered the Ultimate Substance—the basic “Thing” out of which all the Universe is created.

more powerful microscopes, and they discovered other things still smaller. On the platform now is this newest instrument, which delves visually, down into the very Infinity of Smallness.

The physicist says, “I am taking a single tiny grain of gold; I will show you of what it is made.”

The tubelights are extinguished. In



The newscasters call him “The Discoverer of Nothing.” In one sense, that is literally true. But in the other, his feat is monumental.

He stands now on the little platform, addressing a group of his fellow scientists. He says, “Our discovery was made by pure deductive theory. But today, with this electro-ultramicroscope, we are enabled to show you the actual smallest Entity in the Universe.”

When your father was a boy, they called the smallest thing of all—the Atom. But then they constructed other,

the darkness, from the sterile glass slide of the gigantic electro-microscope, a tiny beam of white light threads its way through the prisms, lenses and magnifying vacuum-tubes and ends in a ten-foot white circle of light on the silver screen behind and above the platform. A giant, blurred yellow image is there. The image clarifies into a great shaggy golden mountain. . . . Then, with greater magnification, you seem to be peering into a single golden grotto of that giant honeycombed mountain. There is a steady magnification now.

The grotto rapidly expands to a vast abyss with giant vague yellow globes pushing and surging one against the other throughout all the illimitable black-gold distance.

The molecules of gold. . . . Then only one of them is here. It grows gigantic until you see its apparant solidity expand into a yellow-sheen of emptiness; filled with darting yellow globules. The golden atoms! The smallest thing which still is gold. They flash in aimless bustling paths—colliding, caroming from one collision to another. . . .

Then the image clings to one flashing atom. And again, as the atom visually expands, you see its solidity opening into an abyss of emptiness, with tiny distant glowing things like whirling points of light. Protons, electrons—many names have been given them. Particles of disembodied electricity—that too, never meant very much.

Tiny things? Why, what you are seeing now seems a giant vista of Interstellar Space — distant nebulae, suns, planets—a myriad separate universes, with illimitable empty distance between them.

Again the microscopic image magnifies. Just one of these glowing worlds now expands to fill all the big silver screen.

The physicist is saying, "And this is the Ultimate Entity—the basic thing out of which you and I, our bodies, our houses, our Earth and all the Stars, are built."

You stare at the magnified image of that Basic Thing. A gigantic whirling, rotating cyclone? A dim blur of something gigantic, rotating upon itself with infinite speed?

And the physicist is saying, "This thing is creating its visibility, its ponderability—its very existence is created solely by its movement. It is, in actuality, a vortex of Nothingness!"

I am *not* fantastic!

Our own bodies, our houses, our Earth and all the stars are built of stuff no more substantial than Nothingness in rapid motion! Shakespeare said, "We are such stuff as dreams are made of—" And physicists now are coming to agree with him. The most recent discoveries of the electrical composition of matter indicate that the basic, Ultimate Substance actually is only a vortex of Nothingness!

### "I Am Invisible!"

**Y**OU sit close to the little platform, tensely watching this demonstration of the new mechanical invisibility, recently perfected by Dr. Charles Martel. The great scientist himself is here; and he says now to the small audience of fellow scientists:

"Conjurers always used to use a handsome young woman for their demonstrations, so I think I shall do the same." He is smiling. He says, "But I do assure you that I am no conjurer."

The girl stands on a small dais. She is dressed in a blue-white tunic cloak. It drapes from the top of her head to the ground. It is long-sleeved and gloved. Close behind her is a background screen of black and white checkerboard.

The physicist has two intricate pieces of electrical mechanism here to one side of the platform. From one of them he connects a tiny wire to the girl's blue drape. He says:

"A color is 'red' because it absorbs from the light-rays of the Sun all the other colors of the spectrum and leaves only red to be reflected from it to the eye. 'Black' is the absorption of all colors. And color is dependent upon vibratory motion. It can be likened to a range of radio wave-lengths."

He gestures from his apparatus to the

girl. "Her cloak is a metal woven fabric. I am going to de-electronize it—exhaust from it, its normal electric content. The cloak now will absorb all light-rays. You see that it becomes black."

Black indeed. A queerly true black—a real absence of light-ray reflection—a "nothingness to see." In effect, the cloak is invisible. But the girl is not invisible. She is merely garbed in a black cloak.

The scientist says, "That checkerboard background is obscured by her solidity, and so your eye constructs her outlines. But now I will throw a magnetic field around her—" He contacts a switch of his ray-projector, and its invisible magnetic current envelops the girl.

Amazing illusion! You see the entire checkerboard background now, as though the girl were not standing in front of it! All of her has vanished; there is only her voice coming out of empty air, saying, "I am invisible!"

To my knowledge, mechanical invisibility such as this, has not yet been accomplished, now in 1941. But color absorption can be achieved. And how, you ask, can one possibly see around a solid object which is obscured behind it? Well, nature does that herself, if you build a certain type of magnetic field. Light-rays, passing through a magnetic field, bend around a solid object, so that you can see what is behind it. Albert Einstein was the first to announce this natural law, and upon its truth or falsity, the whole fabric of the Einstein Theory of Relativity was woven. And not many years ago, an eclipse of the Sun showed Stars which actually were behind the Sun.

Mechanical invisibility is coming. You and I have a fairly good chance of witnessing an invisible man stalking a city street in broad daylight. You'll

only know he is there when he bumps into you!

### The Suicide Disease

THE young man is sullen, resentful and obviously frightened as he sits staring at the Director of Public Health. You draw back into the recess where your friend the Director has placed you. A shaft of sunlight comes through the big glassite windows of the Director's office. It strikes a shimmering pattern on the soft blue floor rug; it lights the kindly face of the grey-haired physician as he stands sympathetically regarding this very sick young man whom he has ordered here.

"I don't see why you pry into my private affairs," the young man says resentfully. "My health is all right—"

"But it isn't," the Director says gently. "You tried to kill yourself yesterday. You are suffering from a well-recognized disease. It is a disorder of your personality. You got it from psychologic disturbance and conflict—from social and environmental difficulties."

The Director is smiling. He sits beside the young man and puts a hand on his shoulder. "Social and environmental difficulties," he repeats. "You call them your personal troubles—"

"God knows I've got them," the young man murmurs.

"Of course you have. And they have given you a personality disorder. Here in this hospital, a lot of people have pneumonia—and some have diseases that are worse. Yours, you may thank God, is much more simple."

The young man stares. "My disease?"

"Of course." Then the Director adds abruptly, "You know that I have every resource of modern science here at my

command for the curing of disease?"

"Yes," the young man admits.

"Well, I can start curing your disease just as soon as you realize you've got it. Will you give me three months?"

In the silence you stare breathlessly from your sheltered recess. The young man, nervously shifting in his chair, has brought his face suddenly into the sunlight. Something that was in his eyes is gone. And something has come: the light of Hope. . . .

"God knows," he murmurs, "I want to be cured."

Does this seem to you only a futuristic inspirational picture? After an exhaustive study of the problem of suicide, Dr. Merrill Moore of Harvard declared that it is an important disease—a personality disorder—a disease that should be recognized and treated as such.

**See Things As They  
Really Are**

**Y**OUR fiance says, "The woods are beautiful tonight. Shall we take a walk? The trees are glowing more than usual. They look all excited—let's go out and watch them."

This girl you are going to marry is a realist. She likes to see things as they really are. It is a bright moonlight night; just an average summer night. Her little home is set at the bottom of a hill, in a wooded valley. She leads you through the garden gate, and along a path that runs back into the deep woods, beside a purling little stream.

The moonlight is gone now; it can hardly filter down through the thick interlocking leafy branches overhead. You find that she was right. The woods tonight are a fairyland of cerise red glow. Ghostly trees, shining with a red fluorescence. Every leaf is quivering with it. Crimson light, like blood.

It paints your companion's slim figure with a weird, ghostly sheen so that she seems a little phantom girl here beside you.

And the light from the trees stains the purling brook so that its babbling water is like glowing blood. That might make you shudder. Blood like crimson fire, babbling here among the stones.

Crimson, shining forest. Your fiance, so superbly realistic that she has no imagination at all, says enthusiastically.

"Isn't it beautiful? Look how the leaves seem afraid of us!"

She bends down over a little leafy bush. Its leaves, glowing with the blood-red sheen, flash with a new intensity. They seem to quiver with pulsating red light as she blows her breath upon them. Leaves that are frightened, alive with terror at the feel of her breath!

Ghostly little forest, stained with its own blood-light. You wander on; vaguely you shudder, and though you don't say so, you are glad when at last the woodland path has emerged, and again you are in normal earthly moonlight.

Would you say that was an imaginative trip into a forest on another planet? Not at all. It's here on earth. Any forest. Any night. You can try it tonight, if you like. How to do it, and what you would see was explained the other day by Dr. E. D. McAlister and Dr. Jack Myers, of the Smithsonian Institute, in Washington. Trees, so these scientists explained, are the largest organisms which capture and convert sunshine. They may seem quiescent, but there is intense chemical activity within them. And they give off radiation in the form of heat waves.

To see the weird, ghostly red glow which leaves radiate in the form of

heat waves, all you would need would be glasses to filter out the green light reflected from the surface of the leaves—a light much stronger than the radiation from within. And you would see, also, that changes in the chemical composition of the atmosphere would cause sudden bursts of intensity of the plants' weird radiation. Breathe upon a leaf. You would see it flash with a quivering, intensified redness. Eerie, pulsating crimson glow under your breath. Why? Because the carbon dioxide you exhale stimulates it into sudden intensified, chemical activity!

Amazing, this world in which we live! The truth is, with our limited senses, we see, hear, feel and smell only an infinitely tiny fraction of what really exists. And suppose, suddenly, that we could be made aware of everything at once? We would go mad in the chaos. There is no doubt of that.

The End