

That evening in the mess, we studied the newspapers.

I SEE THAT PICKS AND SHOVELS FELL OUT OF THE SKY OVER SWANSEA YESTERDAY!

THEY MUST HAVE BEEN DRAWN UP BY THE VACUUM, FROM ROUND HERE, WHEN THE SPACE SHIP FROM VENUS TOOK OFF ON ITS RETURN JOURNEY YESTERDAY.

During the night I was wakened by a bright light in the sky—

WHAT HAS HAPPENED NOW? IS IT SOMETHING ELSE ARRIVING FROM SPACE?

I joined Colonel Brownlow, the Zone commander.

LOOK! THERE IS A STRANGE SUBSTANCE FALLING FROM WHERE THE BRIGHT LIGHT WAS!

IT'S LIKE A SPONGY MASS BUT IT'S SPREADING! WE'RE IN DANGER OF BEING ENGULFED! TURN THE HOSES ON IT. TRY TO WASH IT AWAY!

IT'S SPREADING RAPIDLY, NOW! THE WATER IS HAVING NO EFFECT!

THE SPONGE IS ENCIRCLING HIM! YOU'D THINK IT KNEW WHAT IT WAS DOING! GIVE ME YOUR MEGAPHONE.

It was decided to try to halt the creeping mass with fire!

GOOD! IT'S TURNING BACK FROM THE FIRE! GET OUT THE FLAME THROWERS, MEN.

THEY'RE IN THE STORE ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE ZONE, SARGE!

Hunter, one of the technicians, ran towards his parked car!

COME BACK, HUNTER! WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT STUFF CAN DO TO US!

I'M NOT LEAVING MY CAR TO BE ENGULFED.

HUNTER! MAKE A DASH FOR IT! IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE!

LOOK! IT KNOWS HE'S TRYING TO ESCAPE! THE GAP IS CLOSING!

AAAGH! I'M CHOKING!

QUICK! BRING UP THE FLAME THROWERS. WE MUST CLEAR A WAY IN TO HELP HUNTER!

I wondered whether we could fight off the things that were constantly being pulled down on ourselves in Zone X! If we did not survive, the Earth would have no chance of escaping the menace of the onrushing Crimson Comet.

Can Hunter be saved from the sinister sponge? You can find out NEXT WEEK!