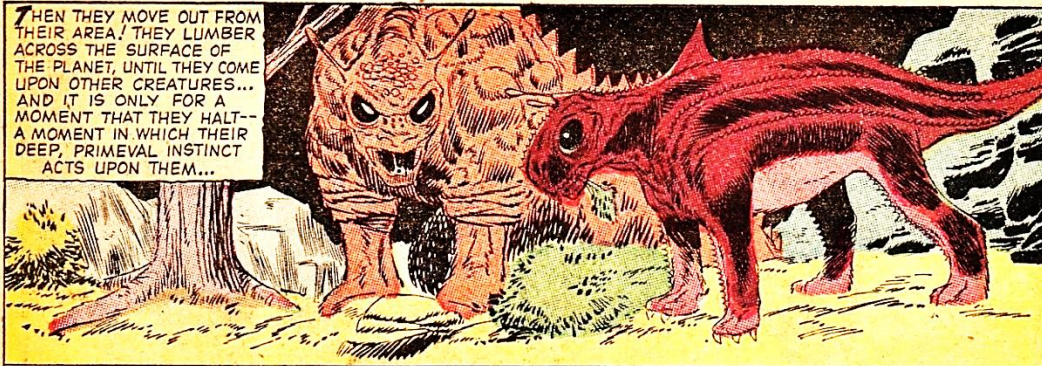


"The Serpent," continued

**T**HEN THEY MOVE OUT FROM THEIR AREA! THEY LUMBER ACROSS THE SURFACE OF THE PLANET, UNTIL THEY COME UPON OTHER CREATURES... AND IT IS ONLY FOR A MOMENT THAT THEY HALT-- A MOMENT IN WHICH THEIR DEEP, PRIMEVAL INSTINCT ACTS UPON THEM...



**T**HEN WITH A BLIND, MEANINGLESS CERTAINTY THAT LIVED A MILLION YEARS BEFORE REASON, THEY KNOW! THEY KNOW THAT THEY HAVE TO **ATTACK AND DESTROY** CREATURES OTHER THAN THEIR OWN KIND!



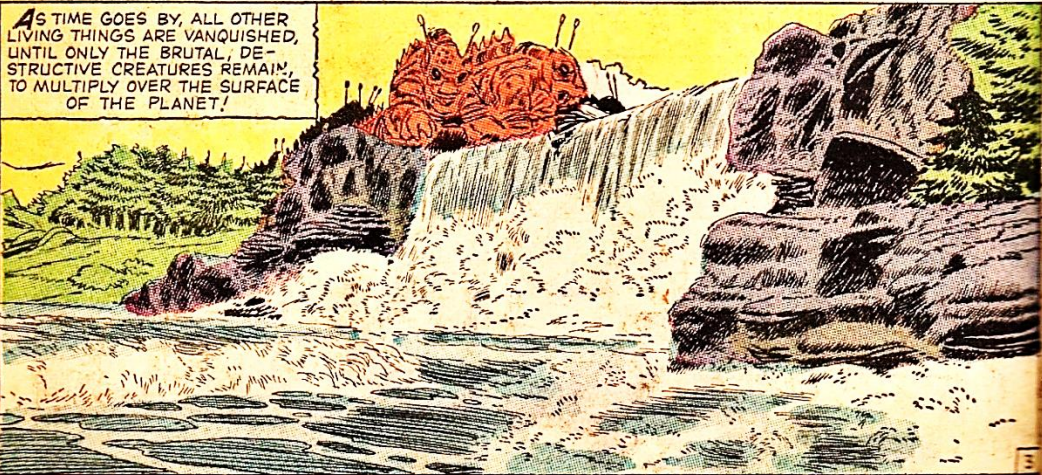
**W**ITH ALMOST DEMONIC FIERCENESS, THEY LUNGE AT EVERYTHING THAT MOVES! THEIR STRENGTH IS INCREDIBLE AND THEIR HELPLESS VICTIMS CANNOT WITHSTAND THE SAVAGE ATTACK...



**T**HE BATTLE CAN END IN ONLY ONE WAY--VICTORY FOR THE MOST POWERFUL!



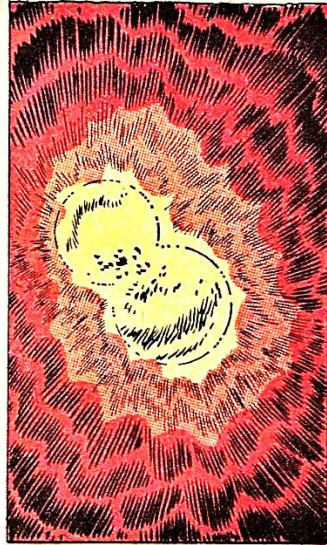
**A**S TIME GOES BY, ALL OTHER LIVING THINGS ARE VANQUISHED, UNTIL ONLY THE BRUTAL, DESTRUCTIVE CREATURES REMAIN, TO MULTIPLY OVER THE SURFACE OF THE PLANET!



**BUT** IN THE EVER-MOVING, EVER-CHANGING UNIVERSE, THERE ARE FORCES STRONGER THAN ANY ONE FORM OF LIFE... AND IT COMES TO PASS THAT A GIANT STAR MOVES RELENTLESSLY IN A PATH TOWARD THE PLANET WHICH THE MONSTERS INHABIT...



**WHEN** THE GREAT COSMIC BODIES COLLIDE, THE PLANET IS DESTROYED! ALL THE MATURE CREATURES ARE KILLED, BUT THE SPORES OF THAT MONSTROUS SPECIES-- THOSE TINY LARVAE-- ARE HURLED OUT INTO SPACE!



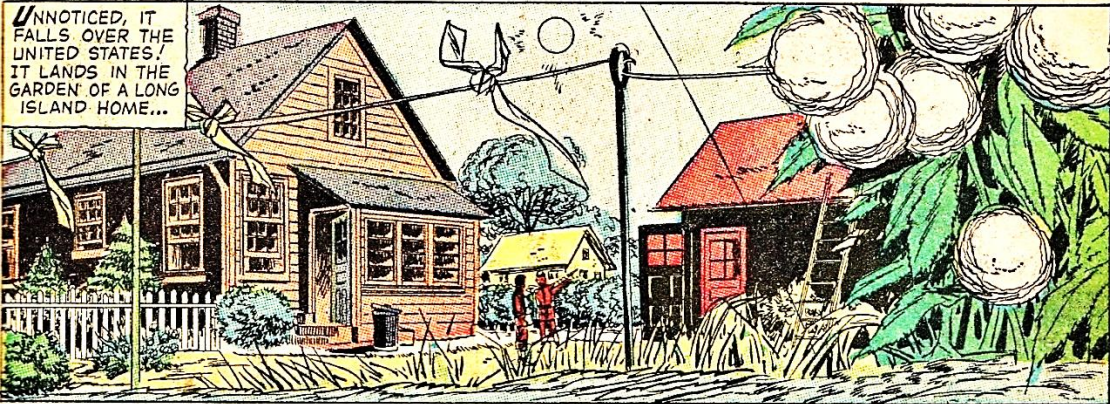
**THESE** STRANGE SLEEPING SPORES TRAVEL FAR INTO THE DARK AND EMPTY REACHES OF OUTER SPACE...



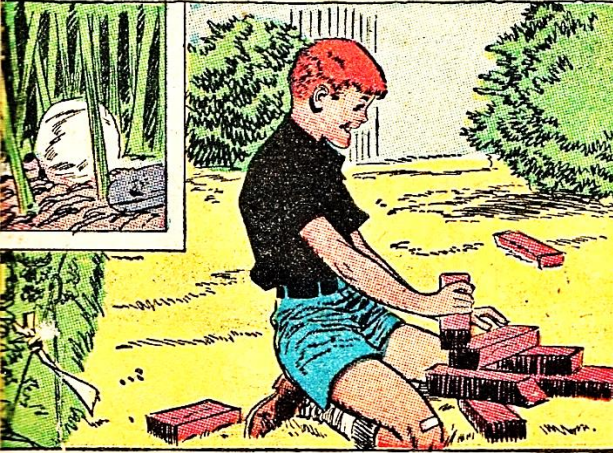
**AND** BY THE TIME A MILLION YEARS HAS PASSED, ONE OF THESE LARVAE COMES WITHIN THE GRAVITATIONAL FIELD THAT SURROUNDS OUR PLANET-- **EARTH!**



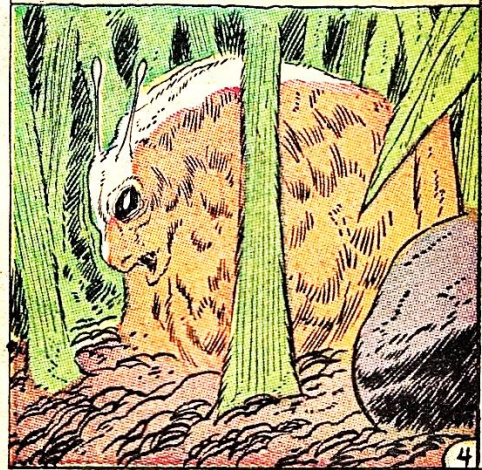
**UNNOTICED,** IT FALLS OVER THE UNITED STATES! IT LANDS IN THE GARDEN OF A LONG ISLAND HOME...



**WHERE,** FOR WEEKS, IT REMAINS UNSUSPECTED AND UNDISTURBED-- AND SLOWLY **BEING NURTURED** BY THE LIFE-SUSTAINING RAYS OF THE SUN!



**THEN** IT HAPPENS--THE LARVA STARTS TO MOVE! IT STARTS TO **CHANGE ITS SHAPE!!!**



**B**UT WHILE IN THE PROCESS OF CHANGING, WHILE STILL SMALL AND HELPLESS, A SILENT, SERPENTINE FIGURE SLITHERS TOWARD IT!



**I**T'S THE FIGURE OF A **GARTER SNAKE**, AN **EARTH CREATURE** THAT AT THIS MOMENT IS SEARCHING FOR FOOD...

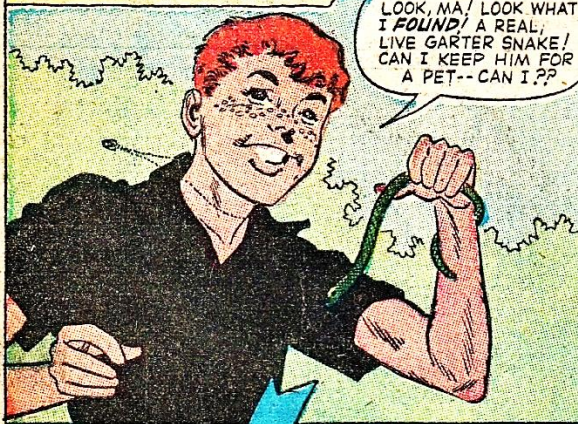


**A**ND AS THE SNAKE GRABS AND SWALLOWS THE LARVA, IT **ENDS** THE LIFE OF THE TINY ALIEN!



HEY-- A GARTER SNAKE!

**T**HE SNAKE IS THEN PICKED UP BY THE LITTLE BOY WHO RUNS WITH IT TO HIS MOTHER...

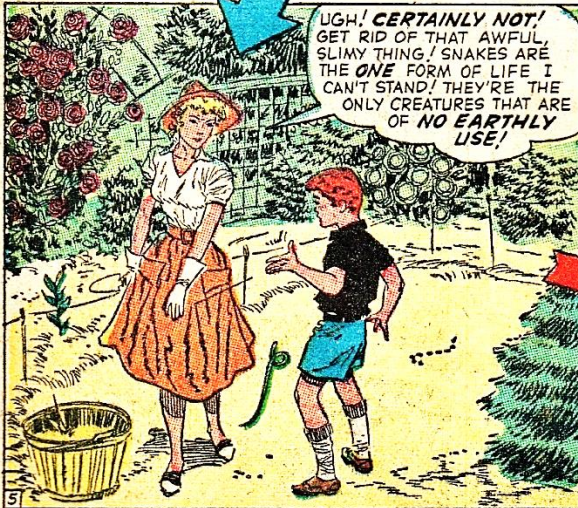


LOOK, MA! LOOK WHAT I **FOUND!** A REAL, LIVE GARTER SNAKE! CAN I KEEP HIM FOR A PET-- CAN I??

**I**T WAS MANY LONG YEARS AGO WHEN IT HAPPENED, AND, AS YOU MAY HAVE GUESSED, **I** WAS THAT BOY! SINCE THAT VERY DAY, THE DREAM HAS COME TO ME EACH YEAR AT THAT SAME TIME! PERHAPS THERE WAS NO SUCH PLANET-- NO SUCH CREATURE WHICH MIGHT HAVE GROWN HUGE ENOUGH TO MENACE MANKIND! BUT I KNOW SINCE THAT DAY, I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO HARM A SERPENT!



**U**GH! **CERTAINLY NOT!** GET RID OF THAT AWFUL, SLIMY THING! SNAKES ARE THE **ONE** FORM OF LIFE I CAN'T STAND! THEY'RE THE ONLY CREATURES THAT ARE OF **NO EARTHLY USE!**



MANY THINGS COME TO US IN DREAMS! SOME FANTASTIC, SOME BELIEVABLE! **YOU** BE THE JUDGE!

**THE END**