

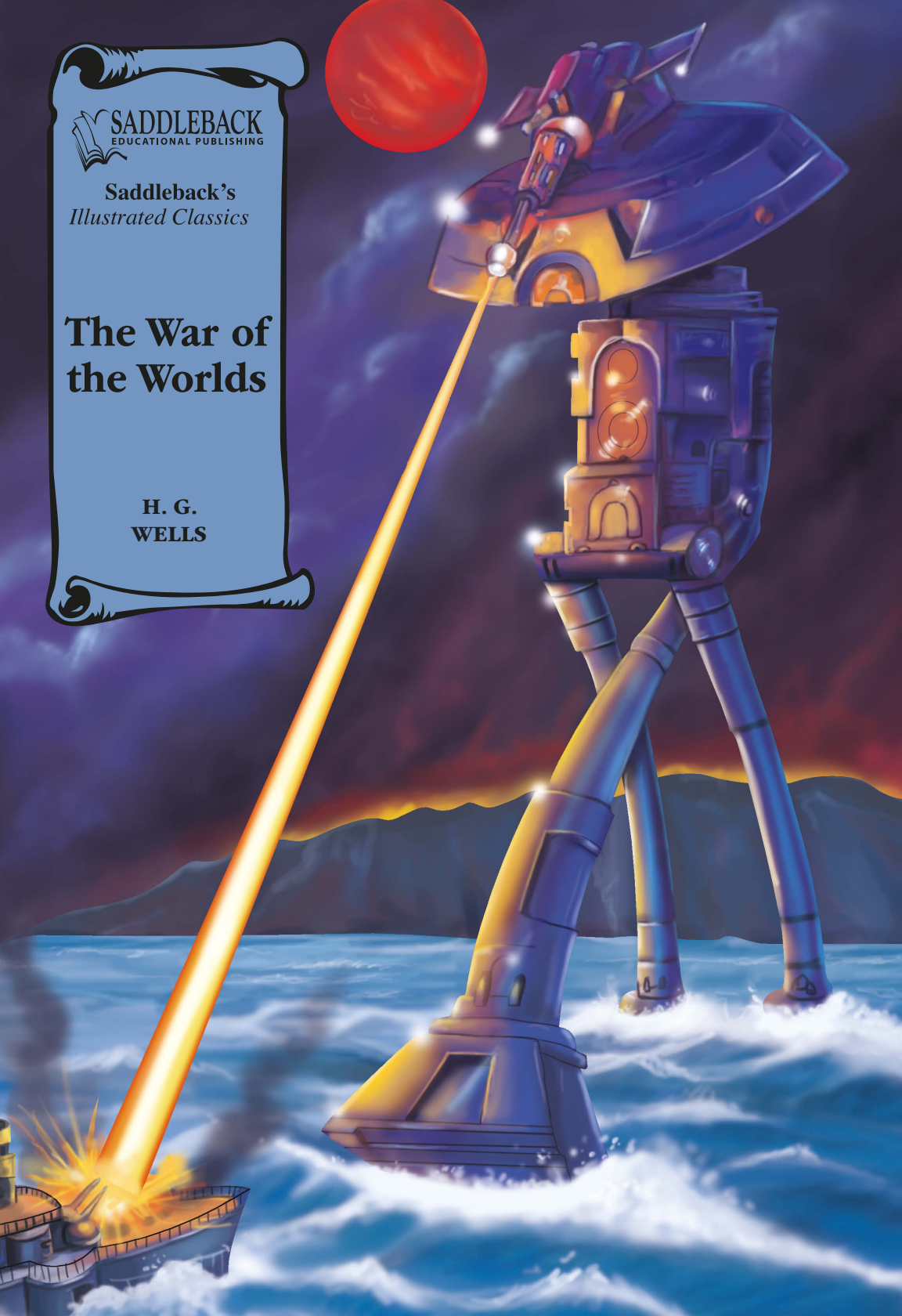


**SADDLEBACK**  
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*Illustrated Classics*

# The War of the Worlds

**H. G.  
WELLS**





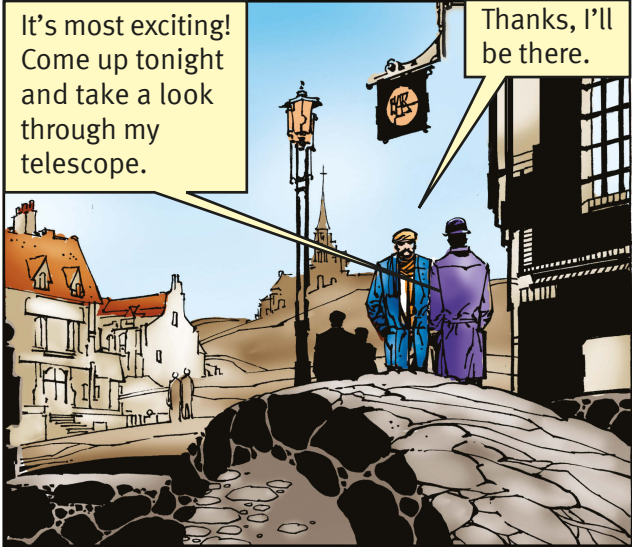
No one believed in the late 1800s that this world was being watched by creatures smarter than man. Yet far off in space, such creatures did watch this earth and made plans to attack us.

In the late 1800s, astronomers of the world were excited by a report of a large explosion upon the planet Mars. A great ball of fire was speeding toward the earth. Besides a few small notices in the newspapers, no one seemed to worry about the danger coming toward us.

I heard of it only by a chance meeting with Ogilvy, an astronomer friend.

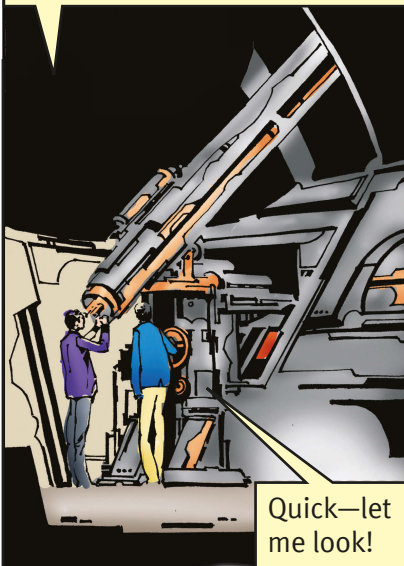
It's most exciting!  
Come up tonight  
and take a look  
through my  
telescope.

Thanks, I'll  
be there.

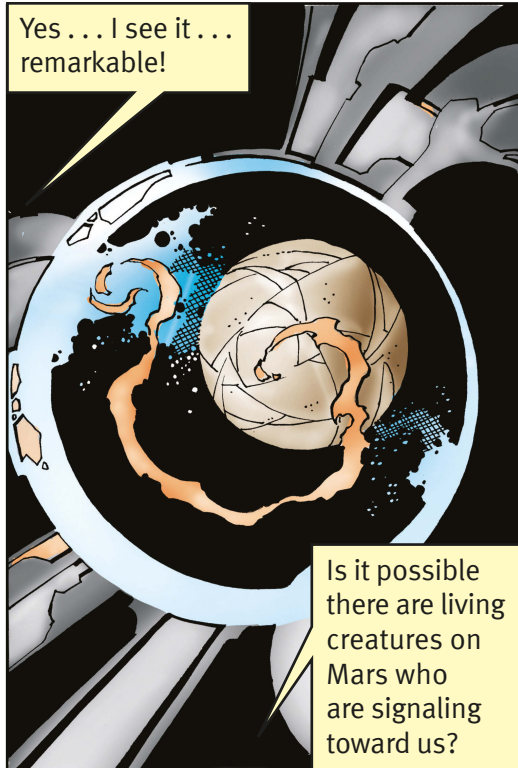


That night I saw another explosion of gas, just at midnight.

There's a reddish flash—a sort of streamer coming toward us.



Yes . . . I see it . . .  
remarkable!



Is it possible  
there are living  
creatures on  
Mars who  
are signaling  
toward us?



Nonsense! The chances of anything man-like on Mars are a million to one. It's probably a heavy shower of meteorites or a volcanic explosion.



And so, the Martian ships rushed earthward, nearer day by day.

Then came the night of the first falling star. Many people saw it, including Ogilvy.

A meteorite!  
And nearby!

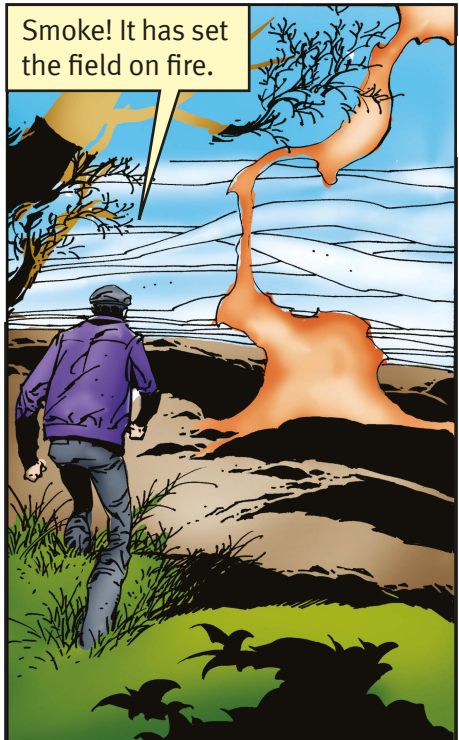


Very early in the morning he started in search of it.

I am sure it lies this way . . . somewhere on the common.

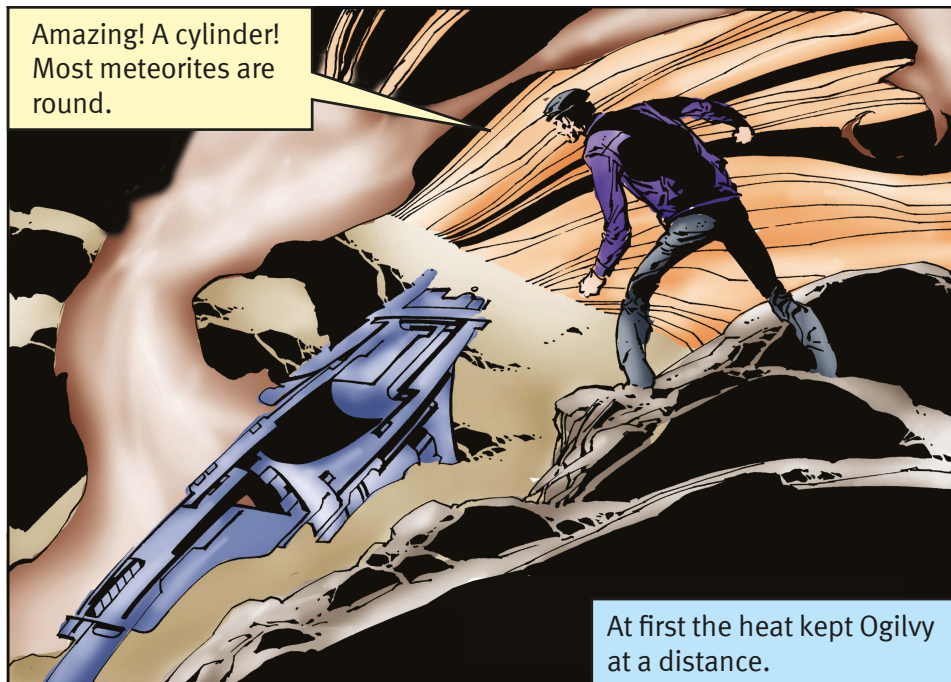


Smoke! It has set the field on fire.





Amazing! A cylinder!  
Most meteorites are  
round.



At first the heat kept Ogilvy  
at a distance.

A clicking noise!  
I suppose it's the  
metal cooling . . .



The top—it is  
unscrewing!



In a flash it came to him—the cylinder was hollow! There was something inside!

Good heavens! I bet there's a man in it—half roasted—trying to escape!



I must help him!



In a moment, he knew this thing had something to do with the flash on Mars.

No—too hot!



Climbing out of the pit, he ran toward the town of Woking to get help. The first person he saw was Henderson, a reporter for a London newspaper, who was tending his garden.

You saw that shooting star last night?

Yes?



It's out on Horsell Common now!

What? A fallen meteorite.



As the two men hurried back to the common, Ogilvy told Henderson what he had seen.

It's in the same place but the top is nearly out!

You can hear air entering or escaping!



They tapped on the metal with a stick but got no answer.

I say in there, hold tight! We'll go for more help.

Poor fellows, they're probably out cold.



Unable to do anything themselves, they returned to town for more help.

We must get workmen with shovels.

I must telegraph my paper!



The news spread swiftly. I heard it when I went to get my daily newspaper.

Men from Mars, they say . . . out on the common!

What? Impossible!





Startled, I hurried to see for myself. A small crowd had gathered to watch.

The top of the cylinder—it's being unscrewed from inside!

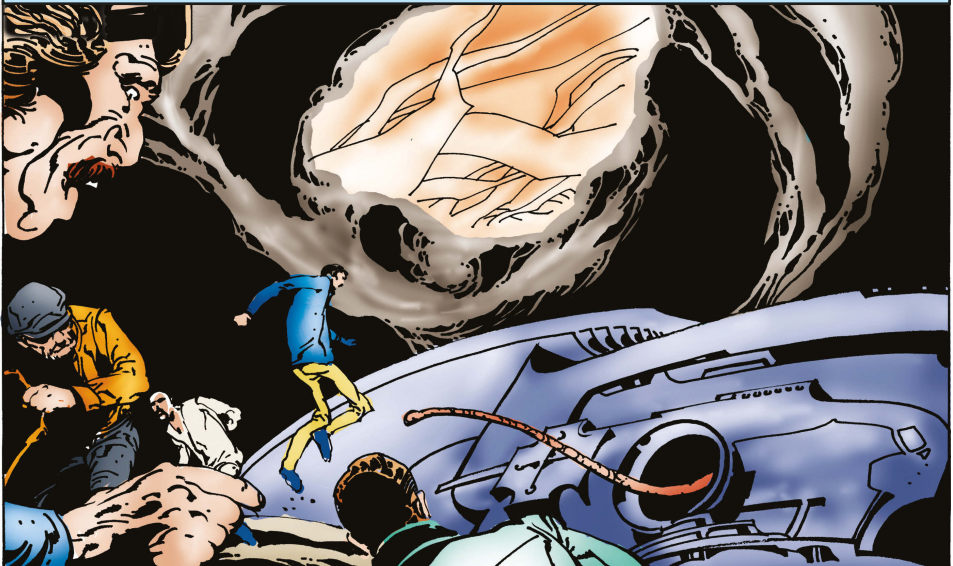


It's out!

Keep back, everyone! We don't know what's in there!



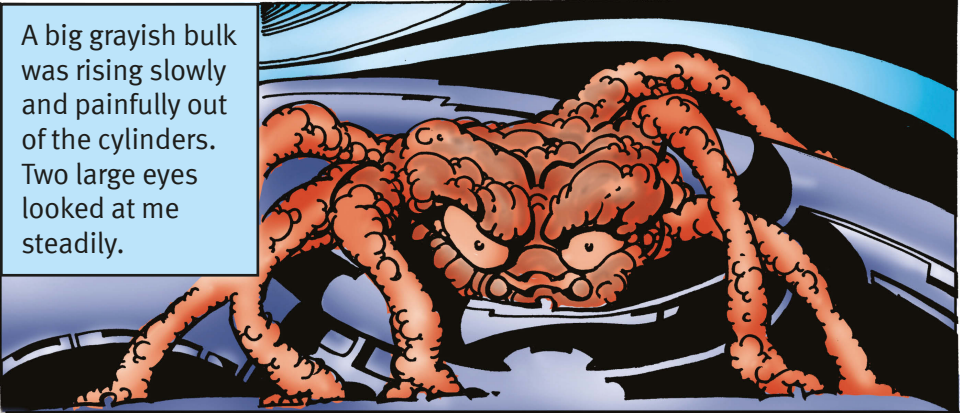
I think everyone expected to see a man come out—I know I did. But what I saw in the shadow were two glowing circles, like eyes. Then something like a gray snake coiled up and wriggled in the air toward me.



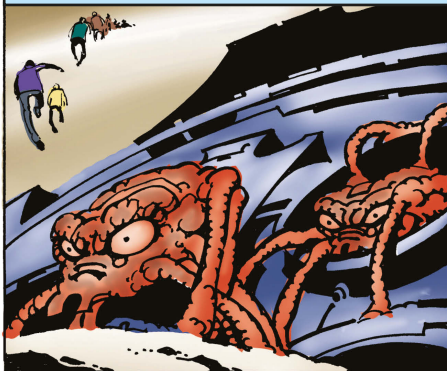
A woman screamed. I felt the crowd behind me moving back. I stood frozen as more of the tentacles came out.



A big grayish bulk was rising slowly and painfully out of the cylinders. Two large eyes looked at me steadily.



Suddenly the monster fell over the rim into the pit, with a thud and an odd cry; and another of the creatures appeared in the opening.



I ran madly for a group of trees, stumbling for I could not stop watching.



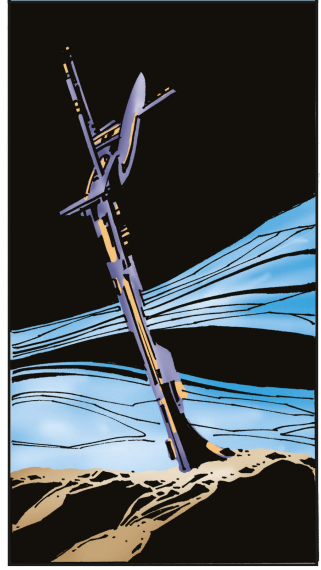
There among the trees  
I stood and watched,  
fearful but interested.



Thin black whips,  
like the arms of an  
octopus, flashed  
across the sunset.



Then a thin rod rose  
up, joint by joint, with  
a round plate spinning  
at the top.



I saw a small group of men  
moving toward the pit. The leader  
was waving a white flag.



They decided to try to talk with  
the Martians. The flag waved to  
the right ... to the left ...





There was a flash of light. Green smoke rose from the pit in three puffs, straight into the air.



Slowly a shape rose out of the pit and a beam of light shot out from it . . .



A blinding jet of light! As it hit each man he fell and lay still; pine trees and the dry grass burst into flames.



I could not move. If that beam of light had gone a little bit further, I too would be dead.



But it missed me and passed, and left the night about me dark and unfriendly.



Suddenly I was afraid. I turned and began a stumbling run through the field.



Behind, nearly forty bodies lay under the starlight about the pit, among them Ogilvy and Henderson.



I remember nothing of my flight except my fear. Finally I staggered and fell by the side of the road.



As last I rose and walked shakily away, my everyday self again. The silent common and my flight were like a dream.



Over the Mayberry bridge a train went flying south. I heard voices from a nearby yard. It was all so familiar—but what of that flaming death behind me!

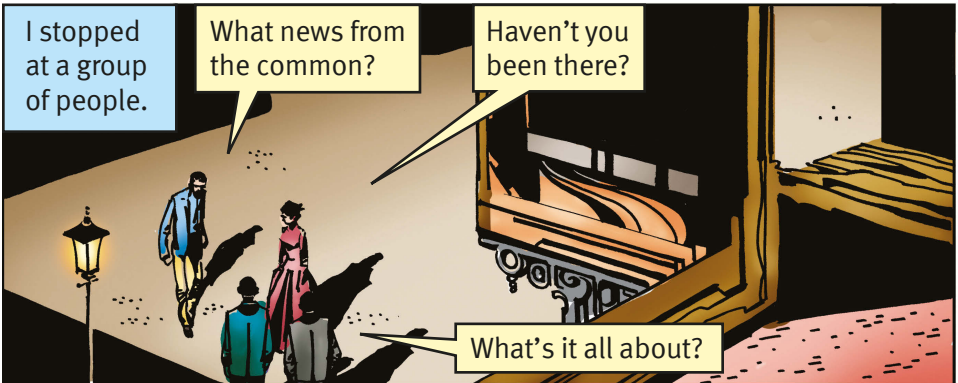


I stopped at a group of people.

What news from the common?

Haven't you been there?

What's it all about?





# The War of the Worlds

Do UFO's really exist? Could creatures from another planet visit Earth? In *The War of the Worlds* they do exist and visitors from the planet Mars come to Earth with not so friendly intentions—to destroy our civilization!

Can Humans stop these monstrous invaders before they destroy everything and everyone on Earth?



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