MONSTEROSSO!
THE MOST
FEARFUL
CREATURE
OF ALL TIME!

THIS IS THE COMING OF
"MONSTEROSSO"
AND ON THESE PAGES
YOU WILL BE THERE
to see it all!

LOOK! HE'S CLIMBING HIGHER AND HIGHER!

HE'S TRYING TO DESTROY THE UNITED NATIONS BUILDING!

NOTHING CAN STOP MONSTEROSSO!
WE'RE ALL DOOMED!
THE ESCAPE OF...

MONSTEROSO!

LOOK! HE’S CLIMBING HIGHER AND HIGHER!

HE’S TRYING TO DESTROY THE UNITED NATIONS BUILDING!

NOTHING CAN STOP MONSTEROSO! WE’RE ALL DOOMED!
I OWN A CIRCUS! I ALSO OWN A WIFE WHO NAGS, NAOS, NAGS ALL THE TIME! YOU ASK WHAT THESE TWO FACTS HAVE TO DO WITH THE MOST FANTASTIC TALE OF OUR AGE? WELL, READ ON AND SEE FOR YOURSELF...

GREAT FOR AN AMATEUR HOUR? MAYBE! BUT FOR A PROFESSIONAL CIRCUS ACT, THEY'RE NOTHING!

OUR BILLS ARE TOO HIGH, PHIL. YOU'VE GOT TO CUT DOWN EXPENSES!

AWRIGHT! WE'LL DISCUSS IT LATER! I'M LISTENING TO THE NEWS!

THE AUTHORITIES CLAIM THE "SPACESHIP" IS PROBABLY ONE OF OUR GUIDED MISSILES WHICH WENT ASTRAY! I PERSONALLY THINK THE NATIVES HAVE BEEN READING TOO MANY COMIC BOOKS-- OR RATHER LOOKING AT THE PICTURES! HA! HA! HA!

YES? WELL, HE CAN JOKE IF HE WANTS TO-- BUT MAYBE THE NATIVES ARE RIGHT! MAYBE AN ALIEN SPACESHIP DID CRASH IN THE JUNGLE!

OH, PHIL, DON'T BE FOOLISH! THERE IS NO SPACESHIP IN THE JUNGLE! IT'S JUST THE SILLY BABBLING OF SOME SUPERSTITIONS NATIVES!

SURE! SURE! AND IF I SAID RED WAS RED, YOU'D SAY IT'S GREEN! I'M GOING... AND THAT'S THAT!

OKAY, MR. KNOW-IT-ALL, IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF, GO RIGHT AHEAD!

AND "GO AHEAD" IS JUST WHAT I DID!! THE VERY NEXT DAY...

IMAGINE MY CIRCUS... THE ONLY ONE IN THE WORLD TO FEATURE CREATURES FROM OUTER SPACE! WHAT A DRAW THEY'LL BE!
UPON MY ARRIVAL IN AFRICA, I BEGAN MAKING INQUIRIES.

THE NATIVES WHO REPORTED SEEING THE SPACESHIP WERE OF THE KAWA TRIBE.

THEY LIVE DEEP IN THE JUNGLE.

Many hot, damp, insect-bitten hours later, I reached the Kawa village!

We see great ship fall from sky! But we no take you to ship! Ship have evil spirit!

Okay! Okay! Then just tell me where it is, and I'll go there myself!

Our people no go to ship—it taboo!

Ship behind hill on other side of river!

Then, that's where I'm going!

NO GO, BWANA!

SHIP TABOO!

MUCH EVIL!

Sorry, boys! I don't buy that stuff! Not when there's a few bucks to be made!

I crossed the river and climbed to the other side of the hill!

There it is! Wow! It's enormous! And it looks kinda spooky all burned out that way! No wonder the natives thought it contained evil spirits!

I sure hope there's someone alive inside!

And then I found the ship's sole occupant! He must have been thrown from the ship when it crashed!

I—i've never seen a creature so large! He must have stood forty feet tall!
I Climbed onto the colossal alien's chest, and put my ear to his heart...

There's no heartbeat! He's dead!

A dead giant isn't much use to a circus, but I'll bet a museum would pay plenty for him!

When I returned to the Kawa village, I convinced the natives that the spacecraft was not inhabited by evil spirits. Then I hired them to carry the alien giant to the nearest Big City.

Anything that big oughtta have a special name! I'll call him Monsteroso!

As soon as I could, I had the lifeless Leviathan's body loaded aboard a States-bound freighter.

Cautious—If the giant falls, he'll crash right through the pier!!

Three weeks later, Monsteroso was on exhibit in New York's Museum of Natural History.

H—He's fantastic! So huge, and frightening-looking!

He must have been a terror when he was alive!

Well, at least the museum paid enough for Monsteroso to cover the expense of your trip and give us a nice profit!

Sure! Everything turned out okay after all!

Hey! Did you see that??!

No!—It can't be! The museum couldn't have made such a mistake!!

It's impossible! Impossible!!

And then suddenly, it happened!
But it wasn't impossible! It was true!!
Unbelievably, breath-takingly true!
The monster is moving! He's rising!

Monsteroso is...alive!!

Run!

Let me out of here!

Drawing himself to his full height, the Titanic Monsteroso stretched his arms and shattered the walls!

You--this is all your fault! If only you had left Monsteroso in the jungle--

But I didn't know--I thought he was dead! There was no heartbeat, no pulse! How could I guess he was only unconscious, that in time he'd come to again??!

In a universe of a billion different creatures, I should have thought there must be some living things who don't have heartbeats!! I shouldn't have been so quick to assume Monsteroso was dead!

Great day in the morning--what is that??!

SCREECH!

Run for your life!
Stepping across the avenue, the Night-Marish monster lumbered into Central Park... and there he met his first opposition!

Keep firing, men!

His hide's too thick--too strong! Bullets bounce off him!

It'll take more than bullets to stop him!

The shells couldn't halt Monsterozo, but they did sting him! So, to end the insect-like bites, the towering Titan lunged into the Central Park lake!

Look out!

Head for shore, Charlie! Quick!

Beneath the surface, Monsterozo started to bore his way underground!

He hasn't come to the surface! Maybe--maybe he drowned!

Let's hope so!

But a few moments later in the Central Park zoo...

Mommy! The ground's shaking!

Oh, Billy, stop fooling!

Hey, the kid's right! The ground is shaking!

Look--the cement's cracking!

It's rising!! There's something under us!!
A MONSTER--FROM UNDER THE EARTH!

HE'S THE SIZE OF A HOUSE! HE'LL SLAY US ALL!

RUN! RUN!!
As monsteroso burst out of the ground, Ethel and I came running onto the scene!

Oh, Phil, what have you done?? The creature's an evil, menacing thing that must be stopped!

Maybe monsteroso's not evil! Maybe he's frightened himself, and just acting in panic! Or maybe he doesn't realize that the property he's destroying is valuable!

Look-- he's trying to grab the animals!

He's seized them! He's going to kill them!

No! He's just examining them!

See? He put them back down! He didn't want to harm them... he was just curious about them!

Alright, so this time he was just curious! But next time he may not be! Next time he may destroy the thing he touches.

I didn't share Ethel's fear of monsteroso, but others did... and they acted accordingly!

Bullets couldn't stop him, but maybe tear gas will!

ARGG... cough... cough... cough... ugg...

The gas is affecting him! He can hardly breathe!

Fire more grenades! Don't let up!
Choking and almost blinded from the tear gas, Monsteroso staggered across town...

"It's Monsteroso! He's even more terrifying than they said he was!"

Look! Even the gas isn't stopping him!

The police were relentless in their harassment of the alien giant! They kept up the barrage of tear gas and added to it—machine gun fire!

"Aggiiii... cough... lujjmm..."

How much—how much more can he stand?

Even Monsteroso can't take this indefinitely! Sooner or later he has to collapse!

The police are trying to destroy the poor, dumb brute, and it's wrong! I've got to make them understand!

Phil! Don't be a fool! The police know what they're doing! The monster's a dangerous menace! He must be stopped!

Ignoring Ethel's plea, I raced over to the officers...

"Listen to me! We're not sure Monsteroso is evil! He may not mean us any harm!"

Yeah, he's just a great big, lovable pet!

G'wan, Mac! Beat it! We got our hands full!

But it's wrong to judge him so quickly! We don't know what he is... where he's from...

Look, pal, scram! We got no time to argue!

It's no use! They won't listen to reason!

Well, I hope you're satisfied, now that you've had your say! Thank heaven the police were smart enough to ignore you!
AND SO, THE GRIM PURSUIT OF THE MONSTROUS ALIEN CREATURE CONTINUED UNTIL...

MONSTeroso's heading toward the United Nations building.

HE'S GRABBING AT THE BUILDING! WHAT'S HE Gonna DO?

CAN'T TELL YET! KEEP FIRING AT HIM, MEN!

LOOK--HE'S CLIMBING UP THE U.N.!!

HE WANTS TO GET ABOVE THE TEAR GAS... BEYOND THE RANGE OF OUR GUNS!

FURTHER AND FURTHER UP THE GREAT INTERNATIONAL STRUCTURE Climbed the mighty monsteroso...

The monster's so huge and heavy, he's liable to smash the building!

And if we try to destroy monsteroso now, we're liable to wreck the building!

And if we try to destroy monsteroso now, we're liable to wreck the building!

We must defeat him some way! But how??

At length, the answer was found in a laboratory on a nearby army base!

This special harpoon contains a syringe! We fill the syringe with a sedative and fire it at monsteroso!

That way we defeat the creature without blowing up half the U.N. building!
AN HOUR LATER, MONSTEROSSO WAS SITTING ATOP THE TOWERING STRUCTURE. HE WAS BREATHING FRESH AIR AND THERE WERE NO MORE BULLETS STINGING HIM... BUT HIS TROUBLES WERE NOT OVER YET!

THEY ARE HERE! STEADY, NOW...

MONSTEROSSO WATCHED THE HELICOPTER APPROACH! AS IT CAME NEAR HIM, HE REACHED OUT TOWARD THE STRANGE FLYING OBJECT!

HURRY! BEFORE HE GRABS US--FIRE THE HARPOON!

NOW!!

THE SHAFT STUCK THE GIANT CREATURE WITH ENOUGH FORCE TO PENETRATE HIS HIDE!

YOU GOT HIM!

WITHIN SECONDS, THE SEDATIVE FLUID FROM THE SYRINGE ENTERED THE BLOOD STREAM OF THE FANTASTIC MONSTER, CAUSING HIM TO GROW SLEEPY... TOO SLEEPY TO MAIN- TAIN HIS BALANCE...

HE'S FALLING!
Uninjured, but too sleepy to move, the huge form of Monsteroso lay silently in the East River!

"We did it! We defeated Monsteroso!"

"If our military could lick a giant like him, they could lick any enemy, no matter how powerful he is!"

But at the very moment the humans were congratulating themselves on their victory, out over the Atlantic Ocean an ironic twist of fate was about to occur...

"Hey, flying there in the sky--it looks like a spaceship!!"

At first the size of the spaceship couldn't be determined, but as it came closer, as it descended toward earth, the sailors saw it was of a size beyond belief!

"It's impossible! We must be dreaming! It's the size of a small city!!"

"The spaceship's coming down! It's going to land in the ocean!"

"If it hits hard, it'll cause a tidal wave from here to the north pole!"

But immense as it was, the great alien ship landed softly, hardly stirring the sea beneath its fantastically huge hulk!

"It must have the most powerful and precise engine in the universe to land like that!"

"Never mind the engine, who--or what--are the creatures piloting the ship!?"

"We'll soon find out! The door's starting to open!"

"By the beard of Davy Jones--they're the size of mountains!!"

"They're so big, they don't even notice us!"

"To them, we must be no more than insects!"
After a moment's pause to get their bearings, the two titanic creatures headed west until they sighted Monsteroso.

See? Over there! At last we've found him!

He sleeps! He is unharmed!

I see it but I don't believe it! If I live to be a thousand, I'll never believe what I'm seeing now!

Believe it or not, it's true! Monsteroso dwarfed us... and these creatures, they dwarf Monsteroso!

This is our infant son! He was with us in our spaceship until he accidentally pushed the lifeboat button and fell away from us!

We have searched the entire solar system for him! It is good that we found him safe!

We trust our infant son has not harmed any of you puny creatures!

And it is fortunate that he is unharmed... fortunate for you!!

Now we depart! Farewell, tiny beings!

Monsteroso was an infant! When he ran amok, it wasn't because he was evil, or wanted to harm us -- he was just behaving like any infant would seem to behave without its parent's guidance!

It took all our effort to defeat an alien infant! If we had had to fight Monsteroso's parents, we wouldn't have stood a chance!

What luck that we didn't kill Monsteroso! What fantastically good luck!!

Oh, Phil, you were right! I -- and all the others -- we were wrong to jump to conclusions about Monsteroso. Forgive me, Darly! I'll never argue with you again!

It almost took a planetary disaster to get Ethel to say that, but to me, brother, it was all well worth it!
THE doctor had put the stethoscope to Bob’s chest, took his blood pressure, examined his eyes. But Bob felt that for this examination, he himself, Bob Dixon, did not exist.

Acting like something out of a wax museum that had powers of motion and speech, the doctor remarked while looking at the paper the nurse had filled in, “You’re a TV repairman?”

Bob felt deep-seated resentment. This had happened before. Even after positive complaints had brought him to a doctor’s office, there had been the routine checks, medicine prescribed, and then off. Going away he felt somewhat better, but not happier.

When it happened that a doctor took a personal interest, asked him about himself, his work, what his ambitions were . . . the things that made Bob more than organs, bones, muscles etcetera . . . he had gone on his way feeling good.

Back at the shop later that day, his boss said, "Bob, here’s a call for tonight. Go over to this address and fix their TV set. You’ll get your regular overtime rate.”

Repairing TV sets was Bob’s job, and so that evening he found himself in a living room searching for picture failure.

It should have been a routine call, but this wasn’t turning out that way at all. The set here was acting in a manner that he could not understand. Whatever the trouble was eluded him. But that wasn’t what disturbed him. Looking into the familiar innards of the TV set, he had difficulty concentrating on the maze of tubes and wires, because of the people he saw moving about there. There was no picture, and he was staring into the back of the set, _but he saw people._

This had never happened to him before. And Bob was a veteran of a thousand TV sets. The sound was fine, but the picture stubbornly refused to come alive for normal viewing. Instead, the figures, whose voices came through clearly, appeared before him as he worked almost feverishly to locate the set fault.

"It’s a frame of mind,” he told himself, and asked “Why?” He wondered if other mechanics ever had similar experiences.

The set that was behaving this way was a top TV brand twenty-one inch job. Bob had come with his kit, and his supply of tubes for what should have been as routine a repair job as fixing a TV set can be where any one of a zillion things can be wrong. But Bob had never gone away from a call without leaving contented customers behind. Never however had he met characters coming alive in back of the set and _outside_ of the picture tube.

The couple who owned the set were sitting there, hoping it would be fixed soon. They wanted to catch a quiz show, a popular one that asked common knowledge questions, making listeners feel very superior because they know many of the answers. But all Bob could get was a thin vertical light that showed on the screen and died.

Bob tried familiar devices. He moved the ion trap this way and that, forward and back on the neck of the picture tube. He checked the high voltage box, fuses, tubes, but nothing helped now.

"Why?” they wanted to know, suspecting possibly that Bob, a top man in his field, might be incompetent. And Bob couldn’t give up and go tell his boss that he had failed. That man would send him back with the threat, "That’s what I hired you for!”

Bob tried to stall. He said, “I may have to take the set out to the shop.” But he knew that shouldn’t be necessary. Why didn’t the performers act their parts in the lighted tube facing front, instead of doing their bits back of where they belonged?

“Well,” the man said, “keep the sound on, and after the quiz show you can try again. Here,
They were there... He felt their eyes on him as he received the award for the outstanding scientific achievement of the year... He even knew their reason for being there.

GLAD TO SEE YOU GET THE AWARD, FLETCH! YOU DESERVED IT MORE THAN ANY OF US!

YOUR ANTI-MATTER FORMULAS ARE A BOON TO THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD!

Yes, Henry Fletcher had the respect and admiration of his fellow colleagues! But Henry had something more... he had a secret!

Much as they think of me, I Daren't tell them about my newest theory! It's too fantastic! If the other scientists heard it, they'd think I was mad!
FEARFUL THAT OTHERS WOULD SCOFF AT HIM, HENRY SPOKE OF HIS THEORY ONLY TO THE MOST HUMBLE PERSON HE COULD FIND, OLD TOM SMITH, THE JANITOR WHO CLEANED UP THE LAB!

YOU KNOW, TOM, MAYBE WE HUMANS DON'T DO THINGS ENTIRELY ON OUR OWN!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, PROFESSOR??

I MEAN THAT MAYBE FATE, OR DESTINY, OR EVEN SUPERIOR BEINGS FROM A MORE INTELLIGENT WORLD, ARE WATCHING OUR CIVILIZATION-- AND GUIDING IT!

LOOK, PROFESSOR, I'M JUST AN OLD JANITOR! THIS SCIENTIFIC STUFF IS MILES OVER MY HEAD!

I KNOW, TOM--I KNOW-- BUT I'VE JUST GOT TO TALK ABOUT IT TO SOMEONE!

I SUPPOSE, TOM, THERE WERE A RACE OF MORE INTELLIGENT BEINGS LIVING IN OUR MIDST... UNSEEN BY US, UNKNOWN TO US!

STOP RIGHT THERE, PROFESSOR! AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, I ONLY BELIEVE IN WHAT I CAN SEE! IF I CAN'T SEE SOMETHIN', IT JUST AIN'T THERE!

BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE! LOTS OF THINGS EXIST THAT WE CAN'T SEE!... SUCH AS INFRA-RED AND ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT RAYS!

WHAT IF SUPERIOR BEINGS DO EXIST ON EARTH! MAYBE THEY HELP MANKIND BY PLANTING NEW IDEAS IN OUR MINDS! THEY MIGHT'VE EVEN PROVIDED ME WITH THE INSPIRATION FOR MY ANTI-MATTER FORMULAS AND ALL MY OTHER WORK!
JUST THINK, TOM, PERHAPS THESE SUPER-INTELLIGENT BEINGS HAVE LIVED AMONG US, UNSEEN, FOR AGES... AND HAVE HELPED MANKIND TO PROGRESS SINCE THE DAWN OF CIVILIZATION!

MAYBE THEY INSPIRED ONE OF THE PREHISTORIC CAVE MEN TO STRIKE TWO STONES TOGETHER AND THUS CREATE FIRE!

PERHAPS THESE UNSEEN CREATURES INDUCED BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO EXPERIMENT WITH ELECTRICITY...

AND THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE INFLUENCE BEHIND ORVILLE AND WILBUR WRIGHT ON THAT MOMENTOUS DAY AT KITTY HAWK IN THE YEAR 1903!

PERHAPS THE WORLD WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD THE PHONOGRAPH, THE INCANDESCENT LAMP, OR THE MOTION PICTURE CAMERA, IF SOMEONE HADN'T IMPLANTED THOSE IDEAS IN THE MIND OF THOMAS ALVA EDISON!
"AND WE MIGHT NEVER HAVE REAPED THE BENEFITS OF ATOMIC ENERGY, IF SOMEONE HADN'T INSPIRED ALBERT EINSTEIN!"

WELL, TOM, WHAT DO YOU THINK? DON'T YOU FEEL THERE COULD BE SUPERIOR BEINGS FROM ANOTHER WORLD SECRETLY LIVING HERE ON EARTH AMONG US?? GUIDING US--HELPING US?

PROFESSOR, I'M JUST AN OLD, UNEDUCATED MAN, BUT IF IT AIN'T TALKIN' OUTTA TURN, I'LL TELL YOU...

...IT'S MY GUESS THAT YOU'VE BEEN WORKIN' TOO HARD! I MEAN, YOU SPEND SO MANY HOURS HERE IN THE LABORATORY... AND YOU'RE NOT MARRIED, SO WHEN YOU DO GET HOME YOU'RE ALONE THERE! BEING ALONE AND THINKING ALL THE TIME-- IT'S GIVING YOU WILD IDEAS!

HAVING GIVEN HIS UNENCOURAGING OPINION, THE OLD MAN RETURNED TO HIS WORK!

PERHAPS TOM IS RIGHT! MAYBE MY THEORY IS JUST A WILD IDEA... OR PERHAPS JUST A CASE OF WISHFUL THINKING!

TOM, I'M GOING TO TAKE YOUR ADVICE! I'M GOING HOME AND GET SOME REST!

THAT'S THE TICKET, PROFESSOR! AND I HOPE THOSE UNSEEN CRITTERS OF YOURS DON'T KEEP YOU AWAKE TOO LONG! HEH HEH!
Moments later...

Good night, Tom!

'Night, professor!

SLAM!

Whew! Where does he get his ideas?

I wonder how he ever dreamed up that theory of his?

I never heard of anyone else believing in such a fantastic thing!

But we always knew that sooner or later someone would suspect the truth!

And so it is time for me to leave! My work is done! Professor Fletcher has now reached the stage where he can govern his own destiny!

There are other beings on other planets who now need my help! And so I leave my brothers... my unseen brothers who will remain on Earth, helping other humans until all their race comes of age!

This story was submitted to us as a work of pure fiction! But it made us stop and think... and wonder! How do we know who--or what those next to us really are? How?
have a sandwich and visit with us."

Bob agreed, "All right."

He sat there, and in spite of himself played along with the program. He had acquired the characteristics many repair men have; he could hear the voices without paying any attention to what they were saying, listening more for sound quality than for the contents of the program. And if the picture tube was functioning, he'd watch more for quality of picture than for what was actually happening.

Often at home his father would laugh while watching TV, he would laugh uproariously, and Bob, who had also been watching the set off and on while reading an electronics magazine, would say, "What happened?" And it wasn't that he didn't care about the players' performances; he was more concerned about the electronic performance.

This evening he sat in the home of these people and tried to imagine what he might have overlooked in the set, but all he could see was a blank picture screen, as blank as his ability to fix it.

After the half hour quiz program was over, the couple who owned the set sat back again, waiting for Bob to fix their picture. But he felt uneasy. He didn't want to begin again the fruitless search, and he asked himself, "Why can't I just quit this racket and take up something easy, like working out the 'bugs' in an electronic brain, or in guided missiles?"

Warily he took the back of the set off again. He poked around, checking to see if dust might have been causing faulty contact, he checked for wires that might have come loose, and again he saw those figures.

One little figure he recognized as a miniature of a famous actress asked, "Bob, are you all right?" Joan Talley, speaking to him! This was stupid.

"Yes," Bob said, hardly realizing he was talking out loud, "I'm all right."

"What's that?" the man of the house asked.

And Bob looked at him, and back at the beautiful figure in the rear of the set. He stared at the little thing that he was sure he only imagined seeing. He told himself he shouldn't stay up so late studying those technical books and periodicals. "Bob boy," he thought, "you're ready for a vacation!" But he knew that any vacation he would take would only be more of the same thing. He would spend his time away from his job cooped up in a library studying technical books or visiting some laboratory.

He poked around some more in the set and the little beautiful creature scolded him sharply, "Bob, you pushed me!" He turned and looked at the man and the woman waiting for their set to be repaired. But they showed no sign that they had heard.

"Turn to Channel Three, Bob," the figure said. Bob did so and the man exclaimed, "Oh, Joan Talley! We wanted to hear her tonight."

Bob turned pale. He hadn't seen a paper or TV program in two days. He couldn't have known Joan Talley would be on tonight.

A commercial was on, and the pert actress spoke to him, "Bob, remember today while in that doctor's office?"

Bob said, "Yes, I remember, of course?"

"You didn't like it when he poked at you, and directed you like a mechanical robot? Well, pay attention mister! There's more to TV than has been meeting your electronic eye."

Strangest of all to Bob was the speed with which he repaired the set after that program on Channel Three.

As he showered before getting into bed that night, he resolved that hereafter he would not be like the doctor who paid no attention to the individual personality of the owner of the body he checked. He would pay more attention to what the set did, instead of only how it reproduced sound and picture.

He realized for the first time that TV wouldn't exist, or be watched, if the quality of the programs, the abilities of the performers weren't worth spending time watching and listening.

THE END J-213
Some people will laugh at anything! Now take our friend Horace, for example...
This grinning idiot is Horace... Public Menace Number One!!

Here comes a car! Now I'll hide the sign!

This road looks awfully muddy, dear!

Yes, but it can't be bad, or else there'd be a warning sign!

Can't be bad, eh? We're stuck!!

Some Lunkhead must have removed the sign!

Oh yes, Horace was a real card! Take the time he saw a friend waiting for a bus...

Didn't you know? The bus doesn't stop here any more! It stops around the corner!

Gee, thanks!

Don't (Ha ha) mention it, sucker!

Gosh! I've been waiting for over an hour! I'd better walk to Sally's house!

The buses must not be running!

You're over an hour late! Nobody keeps me waiting that long! We're thru!

B-but, honey...

Ah choo!

Cheer up, pal! Girls are a dime a dozen!

Say! That's a bad cold you've got there! Next time you shouldn't stay out in the rain!

Yes sir! Horace gets his kicks by playing practical jokes! But the only one who ever laughs at them is... Horace!

Why didn't Horace tell me that floor was waxed and slippery?!!
But one day the worms turned, as Horace's victims got together.

That lamebrain Horace is too dangerous to run around loose!

And how!

Listen, I know how to teach him a lesson... we'll give him the scare of his life!

Whatever it is, count us in!

Terrific!

A couple of us will dress up like Martians... and tell him we've come to take an earthling to Mars with us! He'll be the earthling!

But the conspirators didn't know that Horace himself heard the whole plan, outside the window!

The next night...

Fellas, what if the shock gives Horace a heart attack?

Yeah! This may be too big a scare, even for him!

Think we oughtta call it off?

Gee, I don't know! He sure does need a lesson!

Later, at Horace's...

Here they come! Boy! What cornball costumes!

Earthling, we want you!

Oh, happy day!
WE ARE FROM MARS! ARE YOU NOT AFRAID?

HECK NO! SOME OF MY FRIENDS HERE ON EARTH ARE EVEN SILLIER LOOKING THAN YOU!

HAH HAH! THEY SURE LOOK DISAPPOINTED!

WE MUST BLINDFOLD YOU, FOR WE ARE TAKING YOU TO MARS!

DON'T WANT ME TO SEE WHERE YOU PARKED YOUR SAUCER, EH? GOODY! HERE'S A HANDKERCHIEF YOU CAN USE.

THIS IS TERRIFIC! AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE THEY WENT TO IN ORDER TO FRIGHTEN ME, I'M NOT THE LEAST BIT SCARED! IT MUST BE KILLIN' EM!

AH HAH!

THIS IS THE GREATEST JOKE I EVER PULLED!

LET'S GO, PALs!

SAY, IS THIS A REGULAR FLYING SAUCER, OR ONE OF THE NEW COMPACT JOBS?

AH HAH!
I wonder how long they'll keep it up before they admit I get the last laugh.

Come on, guys! You can quit the act now! I know who you are! This is Horace, remember? I'm the expert on practical jokes!

You do not react the way we expected our first captive to behave!

Oh, I'm a captive, eh? And what... heh heh... are you gonna do with me?

We are bringing you to our zoo! You will be on permanent exhibit, as an example of a living earthman!

Huh?

After the blindfold is taken off, and Horace sees Earth disappear in the distance, he suddenly stops laughing! Which is a shame... because it's such a lovely jest which fate has played... ....on Horace!

All I got to say is... this is carrying a joke too far!!

The End