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THE BLOB WAS REAL

The movie *The Blob* came out in 1958. In it, alien goo falls from space. A blob lands on Earth and begins consuming everything in its path. This sounds like science fiction. But the idea actually came from real life.

It was September 26, 1950. Two police officers were on patrol in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Their names were Joe Keenan and John Collins. The night seemed pretty normal. Then the men saw something drop from the sky.

The officers wanted to find the object. They drove to where it had landed. What they found was not easily explained. It looked like purple jelly. There were sparkly crystals inside. Mist rose off the six-foot blob.

Collins and Keenan stared at the jelly. They called in for backup. Then Collins decided to

touch the blob. His hand came away covered in small bits of goo. These soon evaporated. Scum was left behind on his hand. It did not have a smell.

Backup finally arrived. They were just in time. The blob dissolved right before their eyes. Not a trace was left. Grass under the goo was not even bent. FBI agents were also called. But there was nothing for them to see.

Local media picked up the story the next day. With no evidence, it was not taken seriously. The FBI asked the Air Force for help. But the Air Force said no.

Mysterious purple jelly had fallen from the sky. What was it? Where had it come from?

Nobody can say for sure. But Hollywood loves a good story. This one inspired the movie *The Blob*. A sequel was made in 1972. The original 1958 film was remade 30 years later. In 2017, there were rumors that a third remake was in the works. Even without solid proof, the story of the blob still holds up in theaters.

THE STRANGE TRUTH

- ◆ The purple jelly was on Earth for about 25 minutes before it disappeared.
- ◆ According to Collins and Keenan, the blob appeared to be alive. They said it seemed to move and shake on its own.
- ◆ This was not the first—or the last—report of mysterious space goo. In 1846, people in Loweville, New York, claimed a large pile of smelly, glowing jelly fell from the sky. It evaporated within minutes.
- ◆ In 1969, scientists in Australia collected over 200 pounds of goo. The jelly-like substance appeared after a meteor shower in the area. Samples contained amino acids. These are the building blocks of living organisms.
- ◆ Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, was featured in parts of the original *The Blob*. Today, the small town holds an annual Blobfest to honor the movie.



JAPAN'S SUNKEN CITY

There are many stories about the island of Atlantis. The first was written over 2,300 years ago. Plato, a Greek thinker, told the tale. In his story, Atlantis was a great empire. But then disaster struck. Earthquakes hit the island. Floods did too. Atlantis sank below the waves. It has been lost ever since.

Stories of underwater cities might seem like legends. But there may be some truth to them.

Japan has a real underwater city. Huge sunken pyramids have been discovered near Yonaguni. This is a small Japanese island. A diver found the stone structures in 1986. At first, many believed they had been made by nature. New findings suggest otherwise.

Fifteen structures have been found in total. Ten are near Yonaguni. Five others were

discovered near Okinawa. This is Japan's main island. Parts of a castle have been identified. There are also five temples. Roads connect the structures. Holes in some stones may have once held wooden posts.

There are structures on the nearby coast. These look much like those found underwater. This is one reason people now think it was a man-made city. But more studies are needed to know for sure.

THE STRANGE TRUTH

- ◆ Japan's underwater structures are sometimes called the Yonguni Monument.
- ◆ Scientists are not sure when the structures were built. They may be up to 10,000 years old.
- ◆ One scientist thinks the city sank about 2,000 years ago after an earthquake hit Japan.
- ◆ Legends tell of a Pacific civilization called Mu that disappeared underwater long ago. Some think the Yonaguni structures may be what remains of their city.
- ◆ Rocks shaped like animals have been found among the structures. Faces have also been found carved into stones.