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Could a giant asteroid or comet Crash into the Earth and destroy life as we know it? Many astronomers who formerly discredited the risks are now convinced there is a grave danger.

Director of one of three global asteroid and comet search programs, Steel is one of the world's leading experts. He tells the intriguing story of the scientific detection work that pieced together mounting evidence to uncover a stunning history of impacts. A comet was almost surely responsible for the extinction of dinosaurs. Recent advances in telescope tracking technology show at least 2,000 objects now orbiting the Earth that are large enough to hit with the force of a nuclear weapon. Based on the best calculations, it is certain that the Earth will sooner or later find itself on a disastrous collision course once again.

In the event of a collision, evidence suggests outcomes such as three-mile-high ocean waves capable of obliterating coastal communities worldwide, a massive conflagration, and a cloud of dust and ash blocking all sunlight and making agriculture impossible. With consummate authority, Steel explains and evaluates these prospects and the plans researchers have proposed for the search and destruction of oncoming celestial bodies, including Edward Tellers's provocative call for a nuclear bomb.

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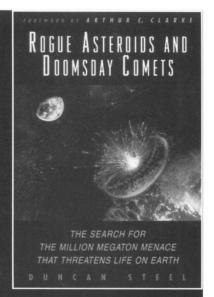
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