



When the Universe Knocks at Your Door: How Planets, Stars and Other Cosmic Objects Affect Our Daily Lives

Irina Mullins

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Our Universe is the place where the hostile environment of interplanetary and interstellar space exists along with livable planets. It is the place where massive stars end their lives in powerful destructive explosions, giving away building material for new stars, planets and any life forms that might emerge on those planets.

When we ponder about the ways the Universe can affect our lives, we usually think of such cataclysmic events as blasts from supernovae or asteroid impacts. However, the Universe “touches” our planet in less dramatic ways on a daily basis. Written for the general public, this book answers questions about some interesting celestial objects and cosmic events that affect our lives and our planet on a regular and not-so-regular basis:

Part I. Comets and Asteroids

- 1.1. How do shooting stars change our planet?
- 1.2. How do meteorites make our planet more “precious?”
- 1.3. Can another “Chelyabinsk” meteorite strike your city or town?
- 1.4. Where does our water come from?
- 1.5. Can comets and meteorites make life contagious?

Part II. The Moon

- 2.1. Is the Moon stretching your body every day?
- 2.2. Can the Moon make life on the Earth more complex?

Part III. Planets

- 3.1. Can the positions of planets in the sky determine our fate?
- 3.2. Can Mars and the Moon throw rocks at our planet?
- 3.3. Is Jupiter guarding our planet?
- 3.4. What happens when planets refuse to go in circles?
- 3.5. Rogue planets: why are they not welcome in our Solar System?

Part IV. The Sun

- 4.1. Can we travel to the past without a time machine?
- 4.2. Can the Sun fill our sky with clouds and send lightning to our planet?
- 4.3. Should we worry when the Sun turns the Northern and Southern lights on?
- 4.4. How does the Sun turn off GPS systems and cause blackouts on our planet?
- 4.5. How does the Sun flood the city of Venice?
- 4.6. Can a solar grand minimum cause another ice age on our planet?
- 4.7. What does the Faint Young Sun Paradox tell us about Earth climate theories?

Part V. Stars

- 5.1. Can a supernova explosion destroy our Solar System?
- 5.2. Exploding stars: are they good or bad for us?

Part VI. Our Galaxy

- 6.1. Can our galaxy cause havoc on the Earth?

Part VII. The Universe

- 7.1. What can dark matter and dark energy do to us?

Part VIII. Life beyond the Earth

- 8.1. Can aliens from other planets knock at your door?

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Catherine Gates:

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