



Heaven's Touch: From Killer Stars to the Seeds of Life, How We Are Connected to the Universe

James B. Kaler

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Did you know that as you read these words showers of high-speed particles from exploding stars are raining down on you? As you gaze into the starry sky, you might feel isolated from the Universe around you--but you're not. This book reveals the startling ways life on Earth is touched by our cosmic environment, and demonstrates why without such contact, life itself wouldn't be possible.

Heaven's Touch embarks on an unforgettable journey across the cosmos, beginning in near space with a look at the gentle ebb and flow of lunar and solar tides. Acclaimed astronomer James Kaler describes their subtle effects on our world and also explores the Sun's more potent influences, such as solar storms that cause auroras, give comets their tails, and knock out power grids on Earth. He ventures across the Solar System to consider how the planets can act to produce climate change, even global disaster. Kaler shows how Jupiter's gravity can throw asteroids toward potentially devastating collision with Earth, and how even our whole Galaxy might hurl comet storms at us. He then takes us into deepest space to describe the cosmic rays launched at us from exploding stars, and considers not just how these exploders might harm us, but how they also join together in the creation of stars and how they serve to populate the Universe with the very building blocks of life.

Informative and entertaining, *Heaven's Touch* reveals how intimately connected we really are with the dynamic Universe in which we live.



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