**DEATH FROM THE SKIES**

**BY PHIL PLAIT**

**Astronomer Phil Plait has compiled a list of the dangers that threaten the Earth from outer space. As Plait deals with each threat, he explains in detail, the science involved, in an easy-to-understand style designed for the non-scientist. Knowing that his subject is very “dark” he tries to mix in humor to avoid a “funeral” atmosphere. Fortunately for the readers, Plait is a very funny guy.**

**He begins by discussing threats that are actually within the technological abilities of modern humans to prevent, such as incoming asteroids and comets. Finally, humans now have options for dealing with them. This chapter definitely left me feeling upbeat about our chances of survival. If upbeat is what you are looking for - then stop here and go buy another book: because we can do almost nothing about the threats that he talks about next.**

**Starting with chapter 3, Plait gets down to business: Supernovae. These incredible explosions are responsible for “seeding” the cosmos. But for anything that's too close – the news is not good.**

**Everybody’s favorite hot topic is discussed in chapter 5 - Black Holes. Unlike the threats in the first 2 chapters, we do not have the technology to defend ourselves against these monsters.**

**And yes, Plait did not forget about “Aliens.” If aliens do exist, he doesn’t necessarily see them as benign.**

**The next phase of the book deals with the “Inevitable.” Plait starts with a very detailed explanation of the phases that the Sun will go through, including swelling into a “Red Giant,” before it finally shrinks into a white dwarf (it is not massive enough to go nova). The final chapter deals with the end of the universe itself.**

**I found one error in the book: Plait forgot to take into account the expansion of the universe when giving its size (nobody’s perfect).**

**GRADE A**

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