

PLANETARY TALES

There are no *boundaries* in space. In this vast Universe, our closest relatives are the objects *within* the Solar System. We share the same origin and the same destiny...

Our Solar System was formed about four and a half billion years ago from a *huge gas cloud*. Ironically, it could have been the deadly force of a *thermonuclear blast* from an exploding star in the vicinity that triggered our creation...

The devastating force of the blast may have disturbed the precarious equilibrium of the original gas cloud, causing some of the matter to *collapse* inwards, towards the centre, creating a new star, our Sun, and a minute percentage of the collapsing matter became the multifaceted assembly of planets that we have around us today. We are, in other words, just the *leftovers* of our Sun's birth.

The planets were born in the *rotating disk* of dust and gas behind as our mother star was formed. The *rocky planets* formed in the *inner solar system* while the enigmatic *gas giants* were formed further out. And then, when a fierce wind of smashed atoms began to blow from the Sun, or perhaps from hot nearby stars or a nearby supernova only sizable planets could maintain their gaseous surroundings, and the last wisps of the tenuous cloud between the planets was whipped away. So in our *solar system's zoo* of *celestial bodies* there are rocky worlds and *giant gaseous planets*.