

Sponsored by:

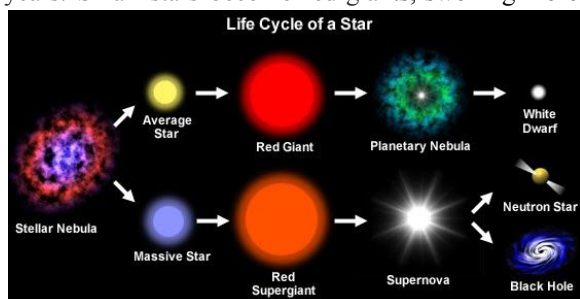


## The Strange Times

### Strange Theories and Odd Thoughts

#### *The Latest in Astronomy*

Stars form in planetary nebulae, large clouds of matter. As Kelly Easton said, "The larger a star the shorter its life, but all the more fascinating its death. As it collapses within its body, the infalling material can no longer be compressed; the star is blown to pieces; its shattered mass releases outward at the speed of light." Small stars, of which there are a lot of, as Stephen Hawking stated; "If a star were a grain of salt, you could fit all the stars visible to the naked eye on a teaspoon, but all the stars in the universe would fill a ball more than eight miles wide." Small stars can live up to a hundred billion years, while big stars can burn up their energy in only ten billion years. Small stars become red giants, swelling more

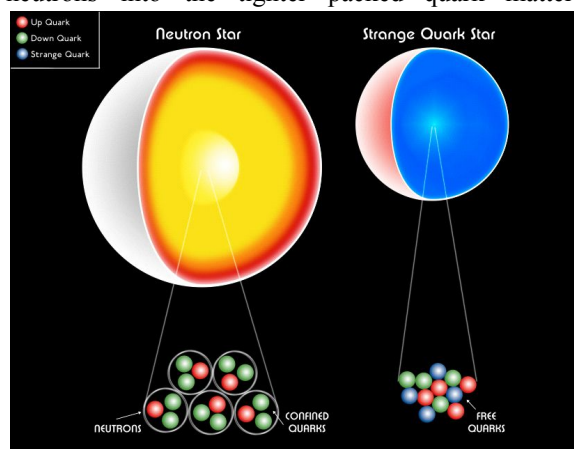


than twice their size, then dissolve in layers, leaving a white dwarf, a bright dense fiery iron ball, then cool down and become black dwarfs, burnt cinders. The death of a huge star is slightly more... big. Large stars become red supergiants slightly big infernos. They then explode in a supernova, leaving a neutron star, a black hole, or a quark star. As Blake Crouch rightly said; "I've always known, on a purely intellectual level, that our separateness and isolation are an illusion. We're all made of the same thing - the blown-out pieces of matter formed in the fires of dead stars." A quick fact about space: "In space, no one can hear you scream; and in a black hole, no one can see you disappear." — Stephen Hawking

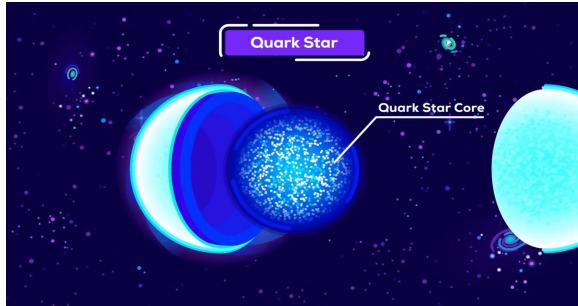
There are a few possibilities after the red supergiant phase. The black holes will fade, and the neutron star

will to-unless it meets another neutron star. The intense mass of the larger one will drag the smaller one in, merging, creating a black hole due to the overwhelming mass.

A quark star happens when a huge star has just the right amount of mass, more than a neutron star and just a bit less than needed to make a black hole. A quark star is made out of quark matter, a compact complicated material only made in theory. It would be formed because of the intense pressure in the too-large neutron star, which would smash the neutrons into the tighter packed quark matter.

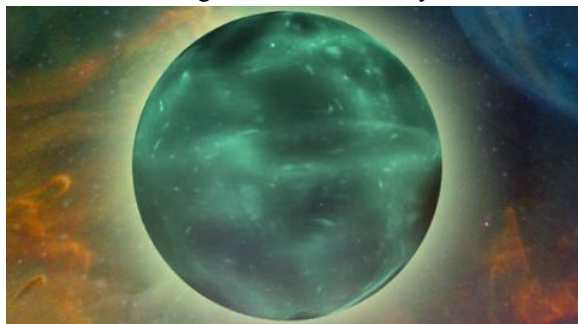


If the quark star was large enough it would compress it even further into a tiny star, so dense that if it does exist it would be the most stable material in the universe, able to last forever, at least until the big squeeze. This theoretical star would be so dense one gram would be heavier than mount Everest. It would be a strange quark star, with a strange matter core. Strange matter is a superfluid, which can flow without losing velocity. This theoretical star would be less than one hundred kilometers in circumference. This theory is so *out in space* it disproves George Alec Effinger who said; "Your people talk a lot about going to the stars, but you just keep putting your money into other projects, like war and popular music and international athletic events and



resurrecting the fashions of previous decades. If you wanted to go into space, you would have.” But it also proves that some scientists have way too much time.

As Stephen Hawking said;  
“Life would be tragic if it weren’t funny.”



### **Pluto and the Dwarf Planets** ***What Kind of Heartless Scientist Would Demote a Poor Planet Like Pluto?***

Pluto, once the ninth planet, as many know, has been demoted to the newfangled dwarf planet status.



Regardless of the official definition, Pluto will always be considered a planet by its many fans.  
Courtesy of NASA

“Even though most people know that Pluto should be a planet,” says Hamza Nasher, “And the fact that proof has been found that Pluto was unfairly sentenced, and the other fact that Pluto is awesome,

some stubborn scientist won’t reinstate Pluto.” I, personally, coincidentally, happen to agree with him. According to Alan Stern, planetary scientist; “Just because Pluto or comets aren’t as big as Jupiter doesn’t mean they are not scientifically important - indeed, just the reverse is often true. Sometimes, great things come in small packages.” “I refuse to accept Pluto’s resignation as a planet.” says Amy Lee, a possibly reliable slightly questionable source. Jared Leto, a random unknown musician possibly an evil dark lord planning Sauron’s revenge said quite correctly; “I’ve always liked Saturn. But I also have some sympathy for Pluto because I heard it’s been downgraded from a planet, and I think it should remain a planet. Once you’ve given something planetary status it’s kind of mean to take it away.” It has been proven that the knowledge upon which dwarf planets were made is outdated, dating back to the Galilaian times when knowledge was a bit off the modern mark. They believed that there were too many small planet sized trans-neptunian objects(TNOs) for them to all be called planets. Sinece 2006 they have not found *a single other dwarf planet*. Dwarf planets were conceived in 2006 by the IAU. They say Pluto was the misfit. But as Alan Stern said, “It used to be said that Pluto was the misfit. But now we know Earth is the misfit. This is the most populous class of planet in our solar system and we have never sent a mission to this class.” Just because Pluto is far away doesn’t mean it doesn’t qualify. The only known dwarf planets were considered large asteroids until 2006. They are Eris, Pluto, Makemake, Ceres, and Haumea. Pluto has five moons, Charon, Styx, Kerberos, Nix, and Nydra. Pluto is not the only dwarf planet to have moons. The old excuse that there are too many planets out in space is no longer effective. The rules they made for dwarf planets are these: They must orbit the sun independently, They must have enough mass to pull them into a rough circle shape, should not be a satellite, and should not clear its orbit path. If it clears its orbit path it qualifies as a real planet. All the scientists are like oooh, there are too many TNOs and Plutonios and SSSBs-we must make another classification area... they still haven’t found a single other measly large space rock.

Whatever happens, some people will always be there to stand up for Pluto.