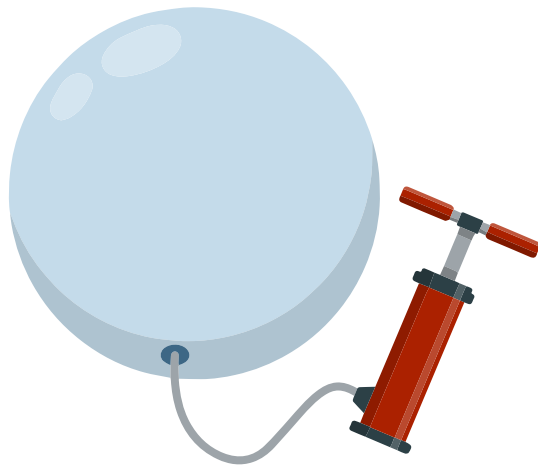
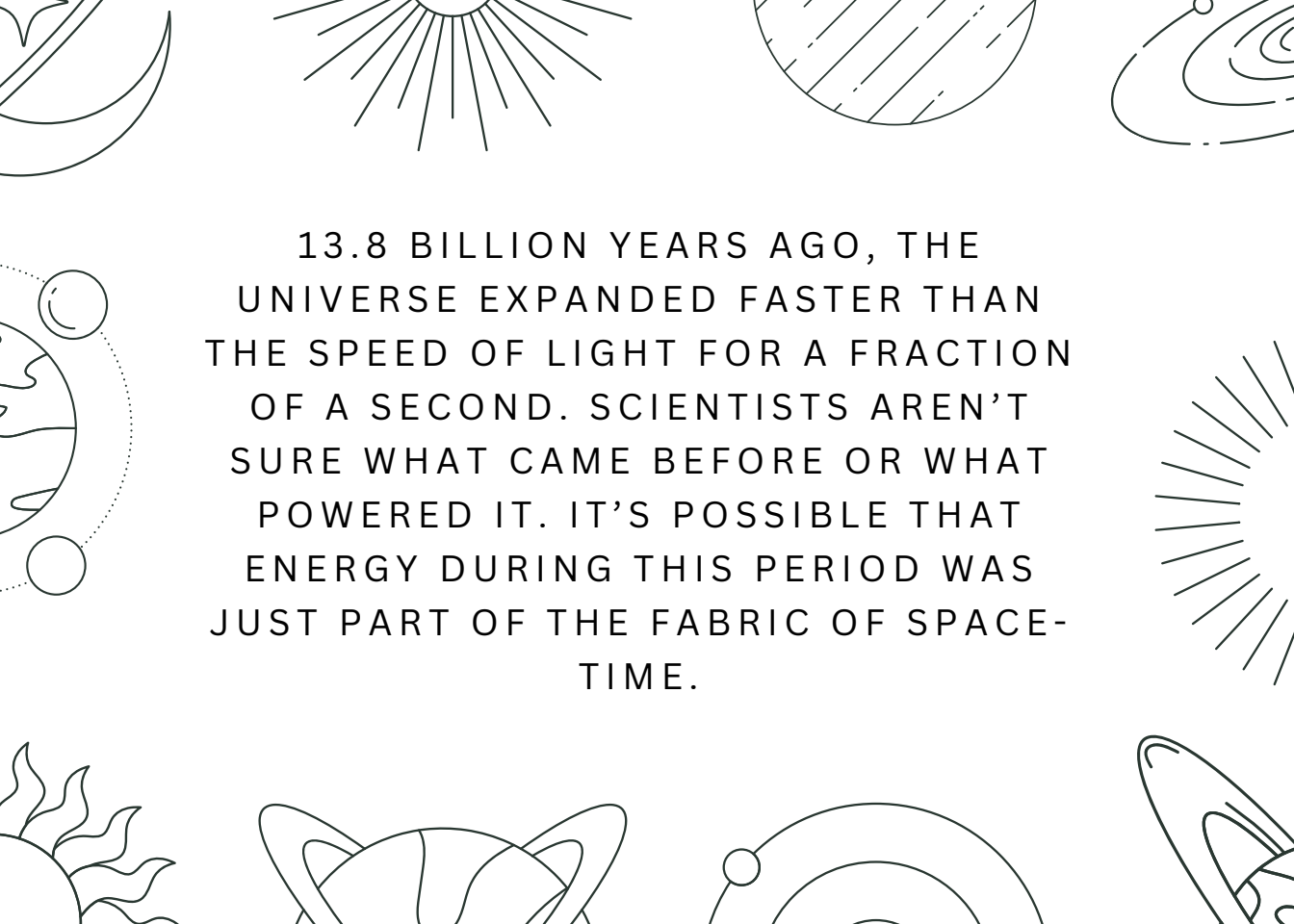


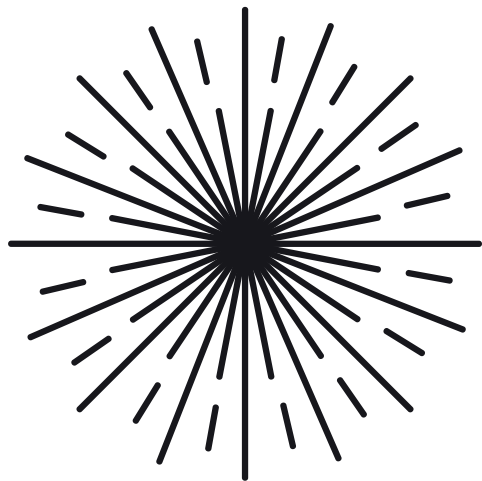
# COSMIC INFLATION

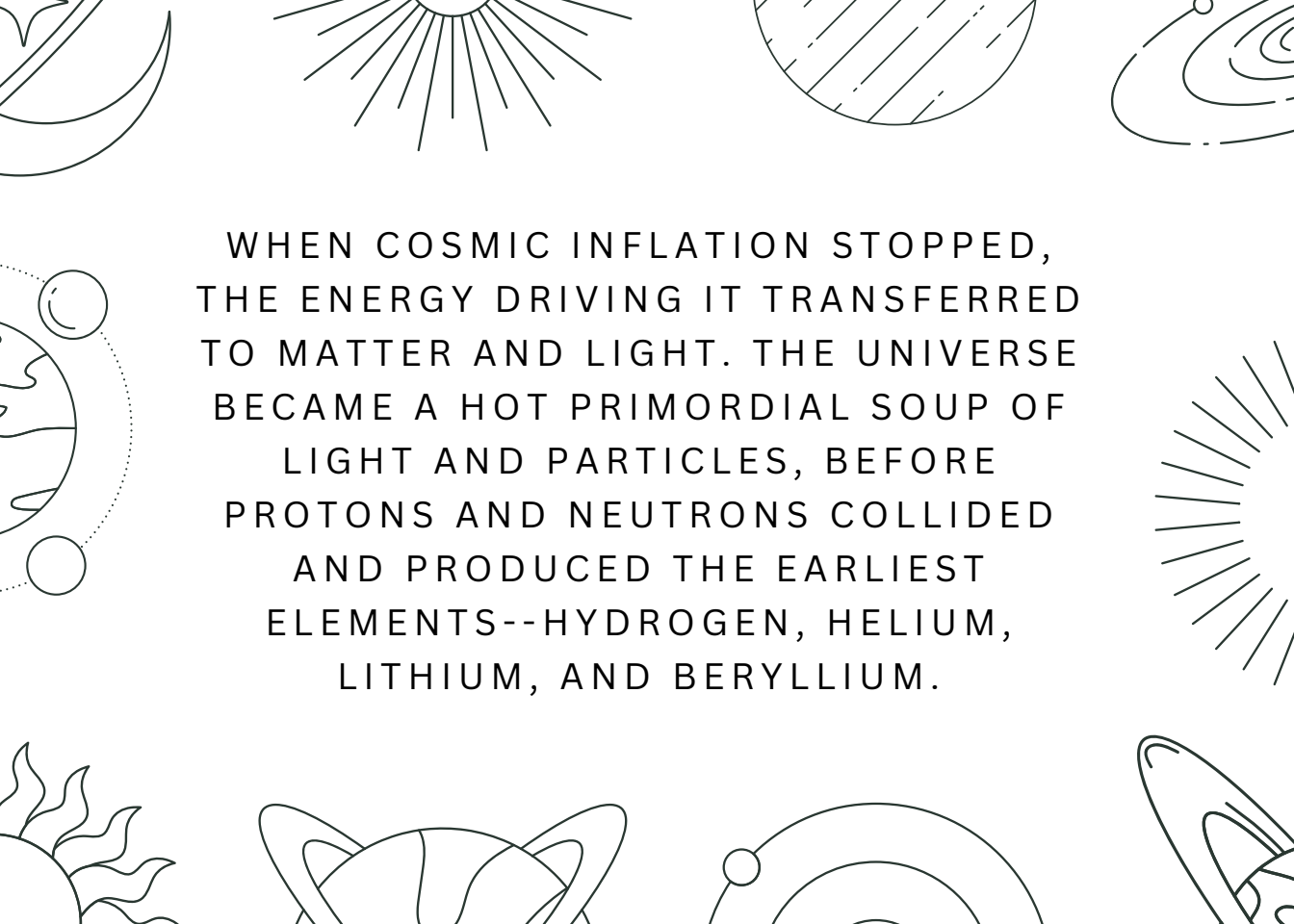


The page is decorated with various line-art illustrations of celestial objects. At the top left is a crescent moon. At the top center is a sun with radiating lines. At the top right is a planet with diagonal hatching. On the far right is a spiral galaxy. On the left side is a large planet with a dotted line around it and two smaller circles. At the bottom left is a sun with wavy lines. At the bottom center is a planet with a ring system. At the bottom right is a planet with a small moon. In the middle right is a partial sun with radiating lines.

13.8 BILLION YEARS AGO, THE  
UNIVERSE EXPANDED FASTER THAN  
THE SPEED OF LIGHT FOR A FRACTION  
OF A SECOND. SCIENTISTS AREN'T  
SURE WHAT CAME BEFORE OR WHAT  
POWERED IT. IT'S POSSIBLE THAT  
ENERGY DURING THIS PERIOD WAS  
JUST PART OF THE FABRIC OF SPACE-  
TIME.

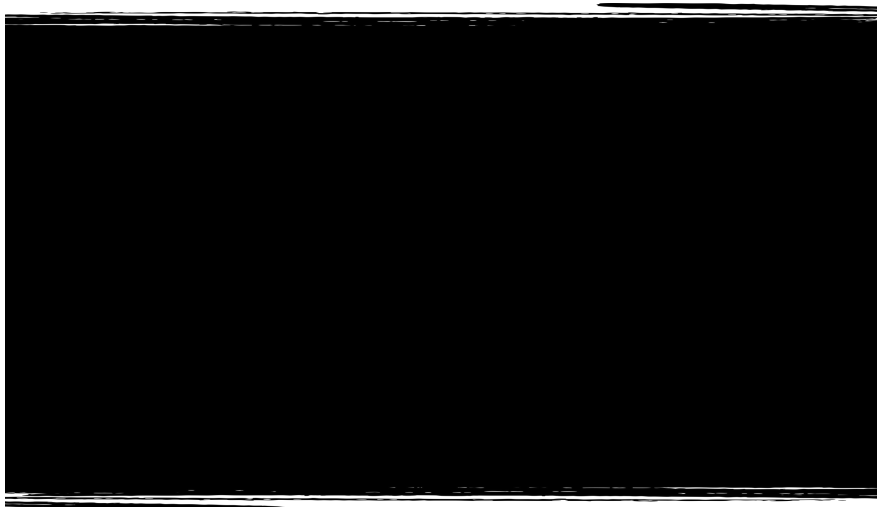
# THE BIG BANG

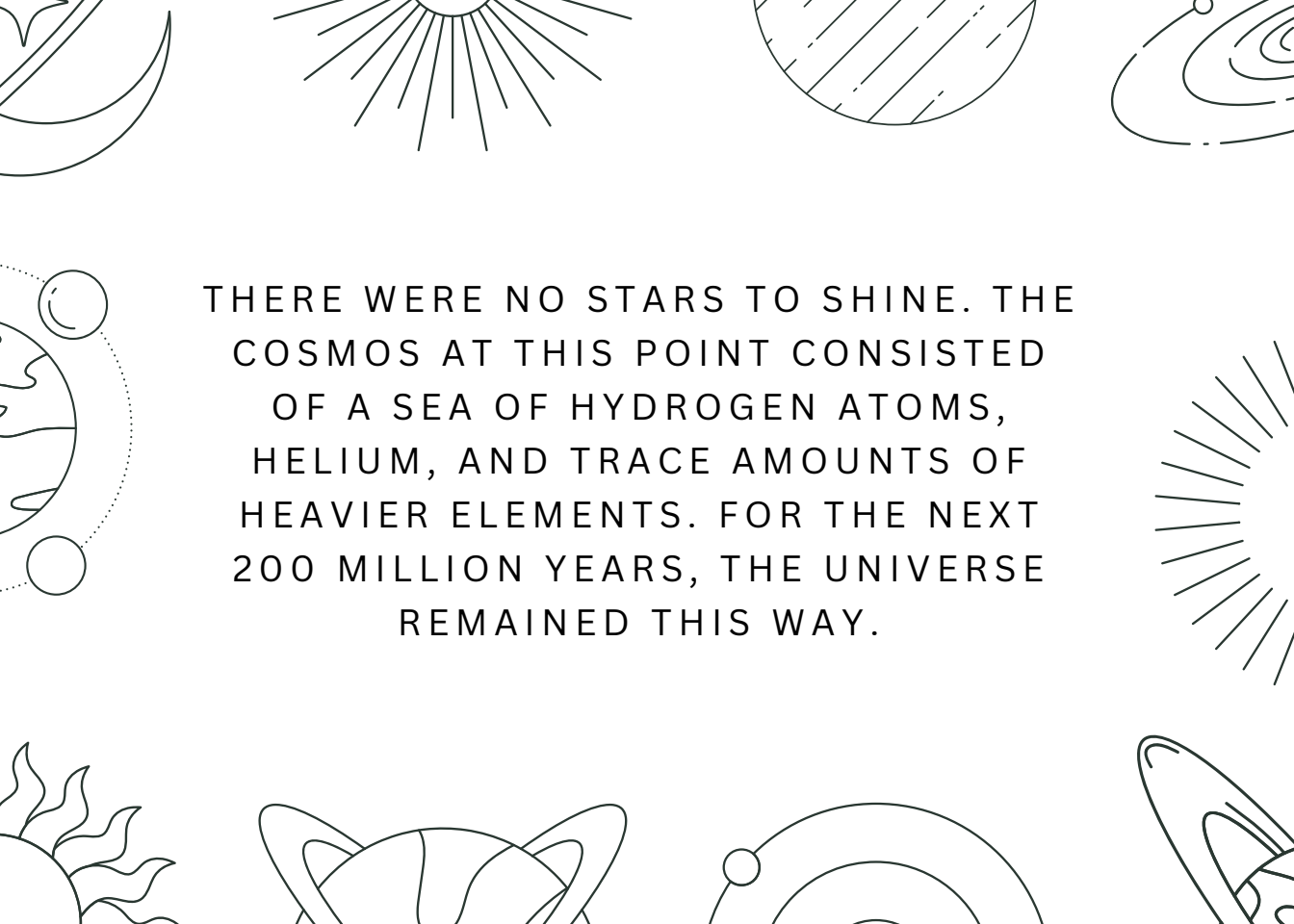


The page is decorated with various line-art illustrations of celestial objects. At the top left is a crescent moon. At the top center is a sun with radiating lines. At the top right is a planet with diagonal hatching. On the far right is a spiral galaxy. On the left side is a large celestial body with a crater and two smaller circles nearby. On the right side is a partial sun with radiating lines. At the bottom left is a sun with wavy rays. At the bottom center is a planet with a ring system. At the bottom right is a planet with a small moon and concentric circles. 

WHEN COSMIC INFLATION STOPPED,  
THE ENERGY DRIVING IT TRANSFERRED  
TO MATTER AND LIGHT. THE UNIVERSE  
BECAME A HOT PRIMORDIAL SOUP OF  
LIGHT AND PARTICLES, BEFORE  
PROTONS AND NEUTRONS COLLIDED  
AND PRODUCED THE EARLIEST  
ELEMENTS--HYDROGEN, HELIUM,  
LITHIUM, AND BERYLLIUM.

# THE DARK AGES

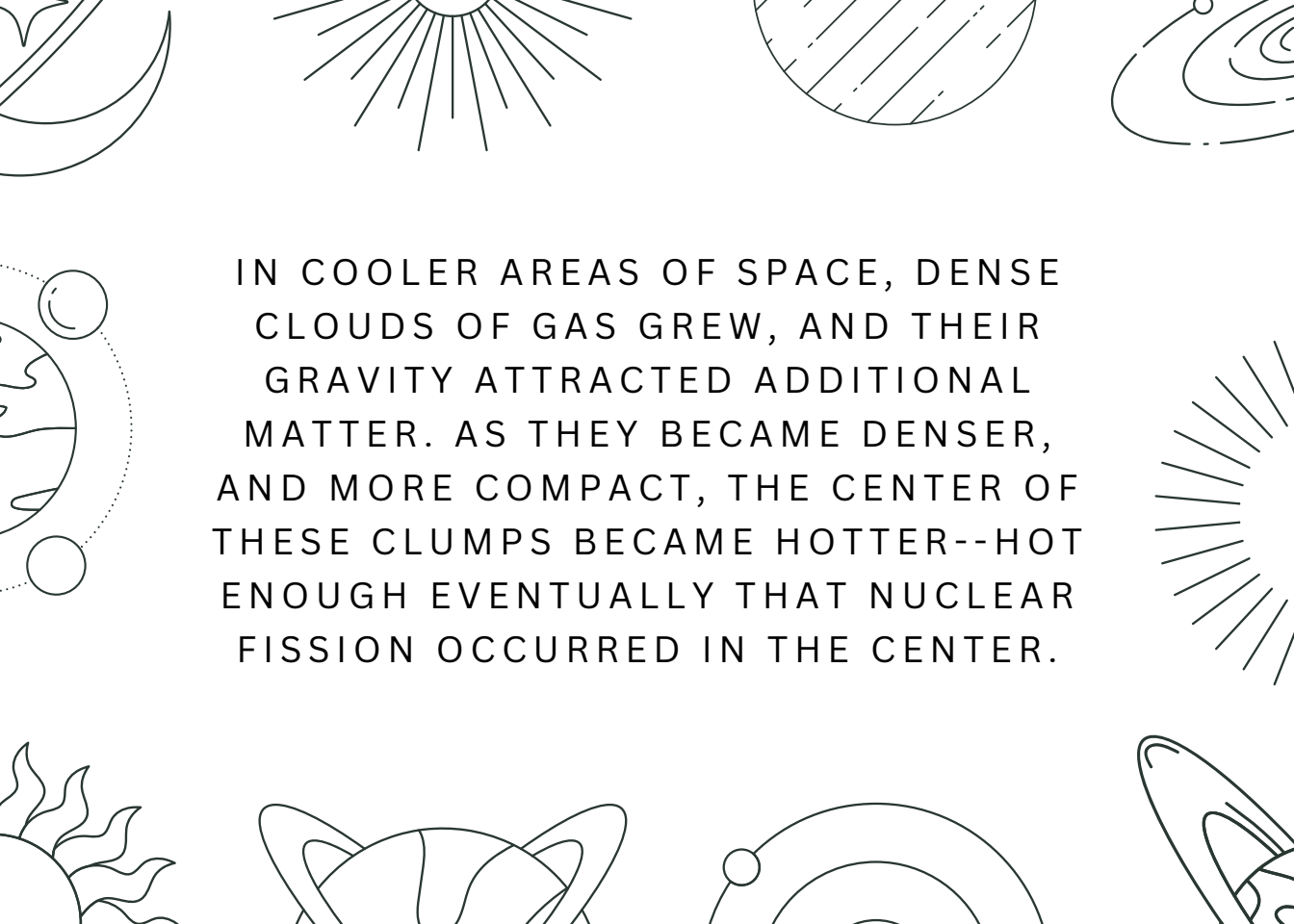


The page is decorated with various line-art celestial motifs. At the top left is a crescent moon. At the top center is a sun with radiating lines. At the top right is a circle with diagonal hatching. Further right is a spiral galaxy. On the left side is a large celestial body with a crater and two smaller circles orbiting it. On the right side is a partial sun with radiating lines. At the bottom left is a sun with wavy rays. At the bottom center is a planet with a ring system. At the bottom right is a planet with a ring system and a small moon. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

THERE WERE NO STARS TO SHINE. THE  
COSMOS AT THIS POINT CONSISTED  
OF A SEA OF HYDROGEN ATOMS,  
HELIUM, AND TRACE AMOUNTS OF  
HEAVIER ELEMENTS. FOR THE NEXT  
200 MILLION YEARS, THE UNIVERSE  
REMAINED THIS WAY.

# FIRST STARS

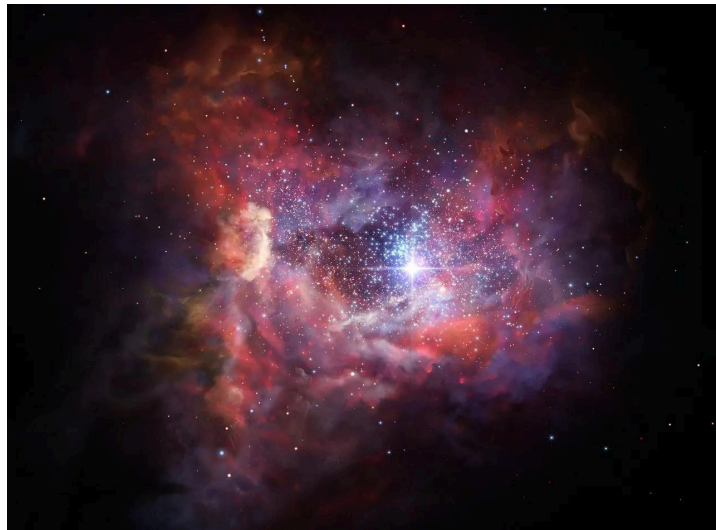


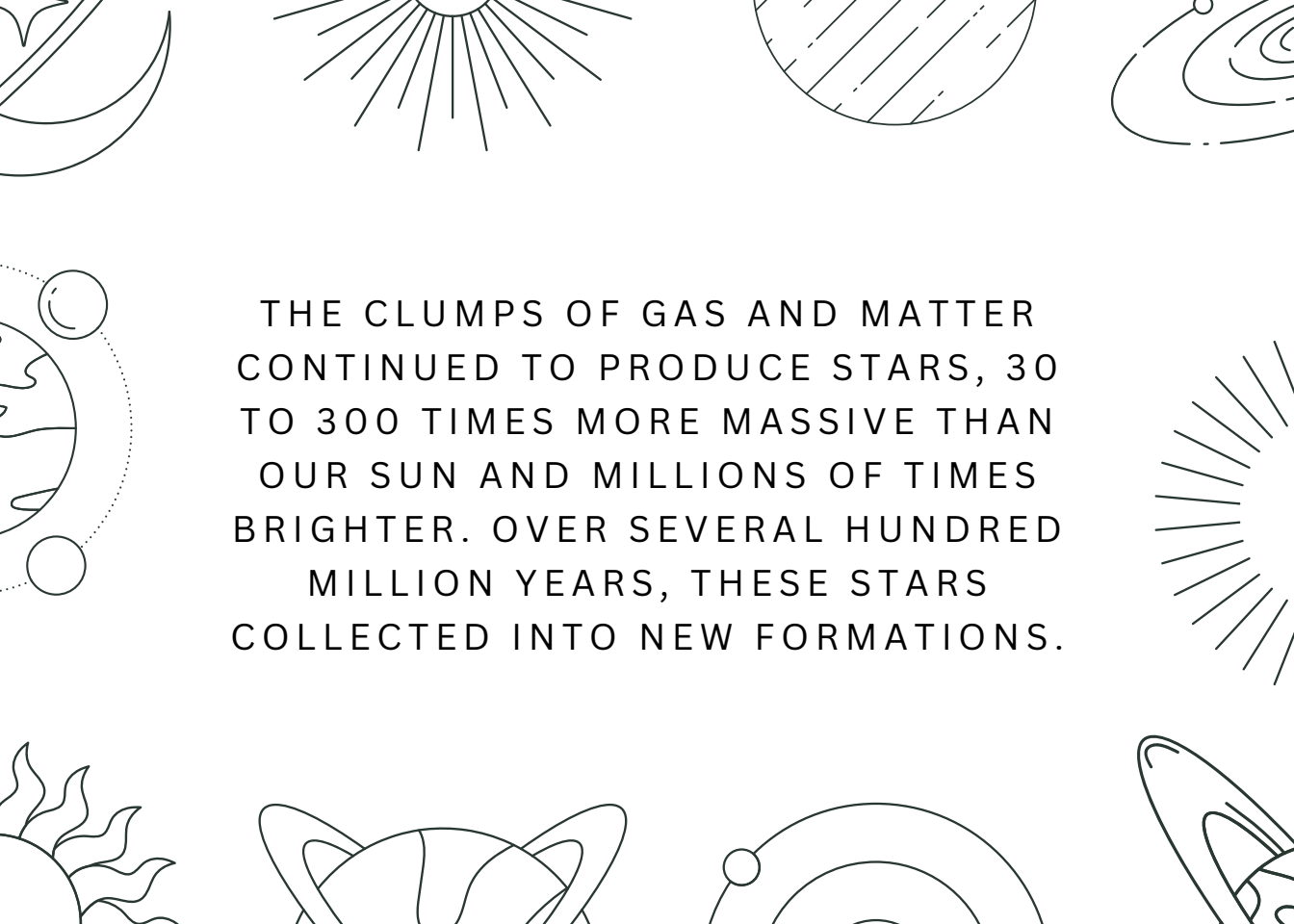
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IN COOLER AREAS OF SPACE, DENSE  
CLOUDS OF GAS GREW, AND THEIR  
GRAVITY ATTRACTED ADDITIONAL  
MATTER. AS THEY BECAME DENSER,  
AND MORE COMPACT, THE CENTER OF  
THESE CLUMPS BECAME HOTTER--HOT  
ENOUGH EVENTUALLY THAT NUCLEAR  
FISSION OCCURRED IN THE CENTER.



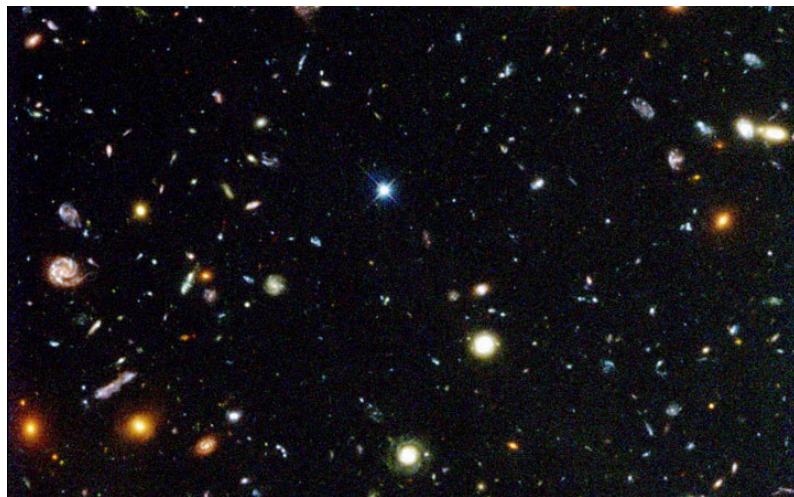
# GALAXIES

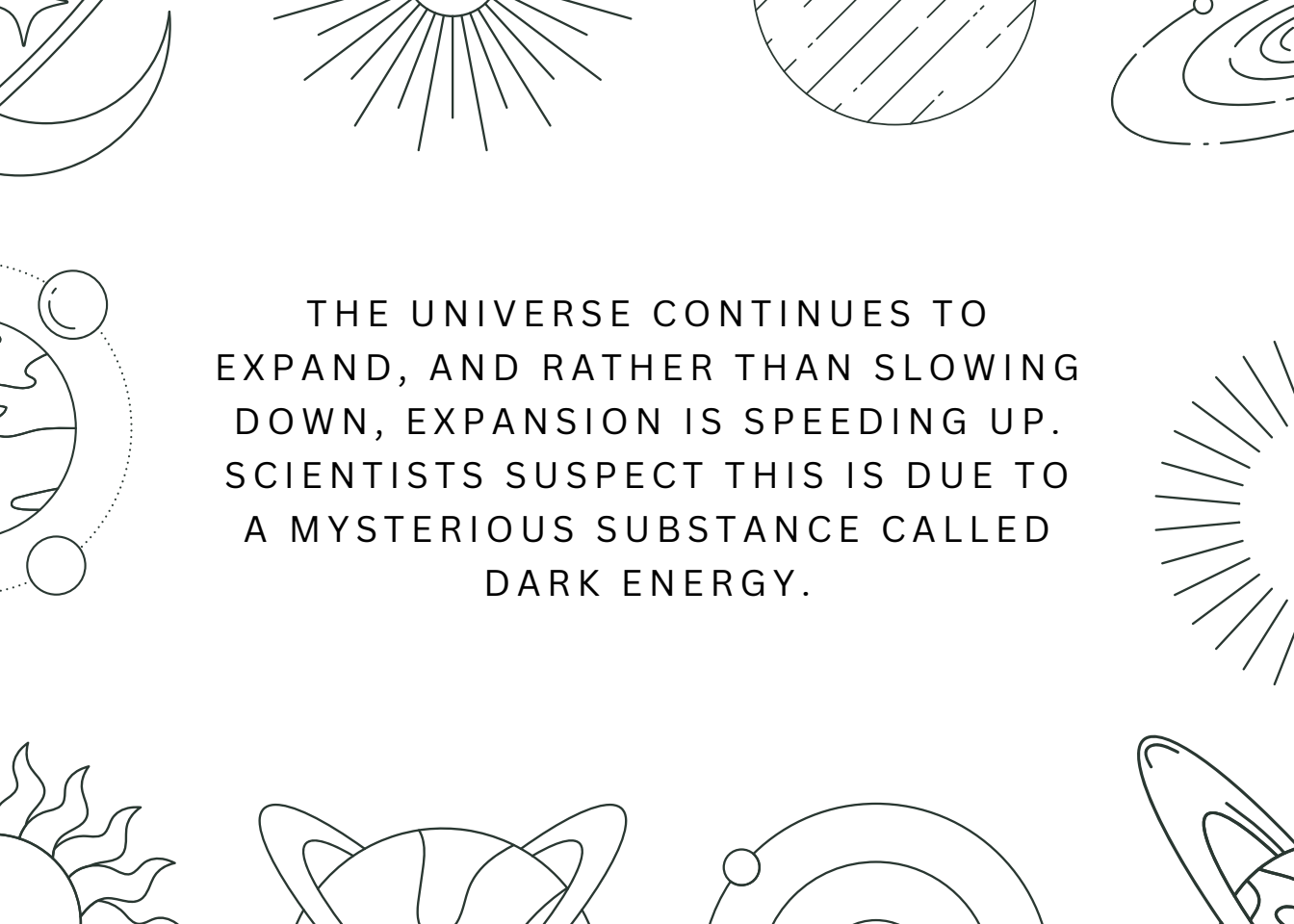


The page is decorated with various line-art illustrations of celestial objects. At the top left is a crescent moon. At the top center is a sun with radiating lines. At the top right is a planet with diagonal hatching. Further right is a spiral galaxy. On the left side, there is a partial view of a planet with a dotted line and two small circles. On the right side, there is a partial view of a sun with radiating lines. At the bottom left is a sun with wavy lines. At the bottom center is a planet with a ring system. At the bottom right is a planet with a small moon. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

THE CLUMPS OF GAS AND MATTER  
CONTINUED TO PRODUCE STARS, 30  
TO 300 TIMES MORE MASSIVE THAN  
OUR SUN AND MILLIONS OF TIMES  
BRIGHTER. OVER SEVERAL HUNDRED  
MILLION YEARS, THESE STARS  
COLLECTED INTO NEW FORMATIONS.

# PRESENT DAY/FUTURE



The background of the page is decorated with various celestial motifs. At the top left is a crescent moon. At the top center is a sun with radiating lines. At the top right is a circular object with diagonal hatching. Further right is a spiral galaxy. On the left side is a partial view of a planet with craters and a dotted orbital path. On the right side is a partial view of a sun with radiating lines. At the bottom left is a sun with wavy rays. At the bottom center is a planet with rings. At the bottom right is a partial view of a planet with a ring and a small satellite.

THE UNIVERSE CONTINUES TO  
EXPAND, AND RATHER THAN SLOWING  
DOWN, EXPANSION IS SPEEDING UP.  
SCIENTISTS SUSPECT THIS IS DUE TO  
A MYSTERIOUS SUBSTANCE CALLED  
DARK ENERGY.