

The Science Project

"It really is amazing, son," the father said proudly. The son nodded in satisfaction, as he and his father gazed at the six-inch long, black, elliptical cloud the teenage boy had created. It was suspended in mid-air by magnetic energy, and hung motionless within the glass aquarium on the son's desk. The cloud was opaque, yet did not appear to have a defined surface, and it reflected no light.

"All from simple gasses and a little energy," the son added. "Remember when I first started? It was no more than a speck. But the continuous stream of energy has kept it growing all this time."

"I remember," the father replied. "It would have done well in the contest."

"Yeah, it's a shame the science fair was cancelled. I feel like I did all this work for nothing."

"You did a good job, son," the father quickly praised him. "You really hung in there this time. I'm proud of you."

"Thanks," the boy said with a smile.

"What are you going to do with it?" the father asked.

"I've already turned off the energy. Just let it die out, I guess. It will shrink away to nothing in time."

The father sighed and said, "It's a shame." He then stood up and patted his son on the back. "Well, better get downstairs to supper. Your mother called us over five minutes ago."

"Alright." The boy rose but gazed one last time at his creation. "You know, it looks smaller. I think it started collapsing already."

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On Earth the authorities were deluged by calls from hysterical citizens. Riots, looting, and lawlessness were spreading. The newsmedia was frantic, trying to cover the biggest story in the history of mankind:

"Scientists Stunned; Universe Collapsing"