



The Chelyabinsk Superbolide: we didn't see that one coming

C. Marcos, R. Marcos

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Yes, we didn't see that one coming! But... we learn from our mistakes!

What a neighborhood! Don't you hate bad neighbors? Our planet has plenty of those. We met one over central Russia at 9:20 local time on the morning of Friday, February 15, 2013. *The Chelyabinsk Superbolide* has now become a template to understand, manage and mitigate future impacts.

In six engaging chapters, the authors present an easy to read and updated introduction to the topic of asteroid impacts. Starting with a tour of the neighborhood, two case studies follow: the 2002 EM₇ incident and the Almahata Sitta event. Then, the largest impact on Earth in the 21st century, the Chelyabinsk event. But the sky is not falling and the next chapter shows that the current impact risk is not higher now than it was 25, 100 or 500 years ago. The final chapter focuses on the expected contribution of the Gaia mission to improve readiness against impacts.

The authors, who published one of the first solutions for the orbit of the parent body of the Chelyabinsk Superbolide, adopt a neutral point of view avoiding unrealistic alarmism and paying particular attention to what is being done to deal with this problem. Chelyabinsk-like events have happened in the past and they will repeat in the future. There is little doubt about that. **Humanity has coexisted with impacts for as long as we (or our records) can remember**. The risk has always been there but our ability to evaluate and face that risk is far better now and it will improve in the near future.



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