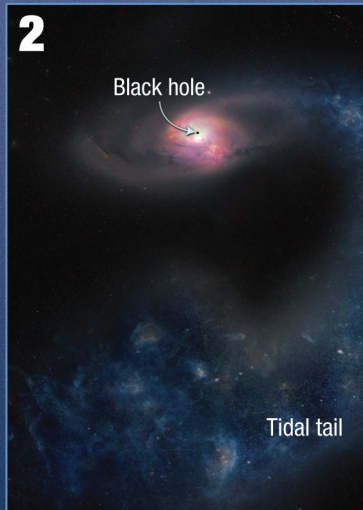


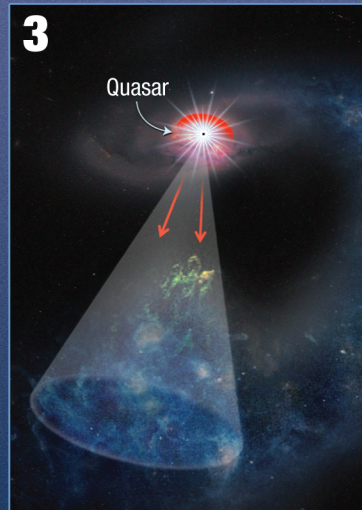
Hanny's Voorwerp* — A Space Oddity



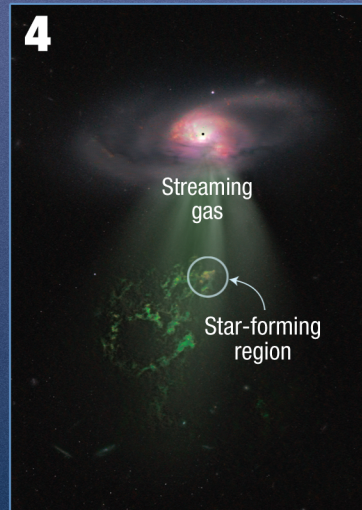
Spiral galaxy IC 2497 gravitationally interacts with a bypassing galaxy.



A large tidal tail of gas is pulled out of the spiral galaxy.



Engorged with gas, a black hole at the center of IC 2497 "turns on" as a quasar and emits a powerful cone of light, which ionizes a portion of the tidal tail, creating Hanny's Voorwerp.



Gas streaming out from the galaxy's center impacts the tidal tail and triggers star formation.