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Autore	Califano Salvatore
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Sommario/riassunto	Quantum mechanics has constituted a great scientific and cultural revolution that has profoundly changed our approach to the study of the microscopic and subatomic world. The birth and evolution of the theories of quantum mechanics are relived through the personal and scientific history of the protagonists, their attempts and their working hypotheses, discoveries, doubts, discussions. The substantially counterintuitive concepts of the new mechanics have redesigned the meaning of our knowledge of the world of atoms; particular attention is then paid to the impact that this new vision of the microscopic world has had on chemistry and on our knowledge of the structure and reactivity of atoms and molecules.