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Sommario/riassunto	Nano denotes a billionth; a nanometer is a billionth of a meter. New instrumentation and techniques have for the first time made possible

materials research and engineering at this level, the scale of individual molecules and atoms. Extraordinary visions of material abundance, unprecedented materials, and powerful engineering capabilities have marked the arrival of nanotechnology, as well as dystopian scenarios of self-replicating devices running amok and causing global catastrophe. Largely a future possibility rather than present actuality, nanotechnology has become a potent cultural signifier
