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Nota di contenuto	Prologue: From Homo Prometheus to Terra Incognita -- Greenhouse gases and mass extinction of species -- The K-T impact-triggered hyperthermal event -- The Paleocene-Eocene boundary Thermal Maximum -- Cenozoic climates -- Human origins -- Fire and human intelligence -- The Gods and the death cult -- The war against the forests -- Fatal energies -- The Anthropocene hyperthermal Collapse of the Earth's life support systems -- The Fatal species -- An Epilogue.
Sommario/riassunto	With the advent of global warming and the nuclear arms race, humans are rapidly approaching a moment of truth. Technologically supreme, they manifest their dreams and nightmares in the real world through science, art, adventures and brutal wars, a paradox symbolized by a candle lighting the dark yet burning away to extinction, as discussed in this book. As these lines are being written, fires are burning on several continents, the Earth's ice sheets are melting and the oceans are rising, threatening to flood the planet's coastal zones and river valleys, where civilization arose and humans live and grow food. With the exception of birds like hawks, black kites and fire raptors, humans are the only life form utilizing fire, creating developments they can hardly control. For more than a million years, gathered around campfires during the long nights, mesmerized by the flickering life-like dance of the flames,

prehistoric humans acquired imagination, a yearning for omnipotence, premonitions of death, cravings for immortality and conceiving the supernatural. Humans live in realms of perceptions, dreams, myths and legends, in denial of critical facts, waking up for a brief moment to witness a world that is as beautiful as it is cruel. Existentialist philosophy offers a way of coping with the unthinkable. Looking into the future produces fear, an instinctive response that can obsess the human mind and create a conflict between the intuitive reptilian brain and the growing neocortex, with dire consequences. As contrasted with Stapledon's Last and first Man, where an advanced human species mourns the fate of the Earth, Homo sapiens continues to transfer every extractable molecule of carbon from the Earth to the atmosphere, the lungs of the biosphere, ensuring the demise of the planetary life support system.".

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