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Sommario/riassunto	This revised edition places a unique emphasis on all the new results from ground-based, satellites and space missions - detection of molecule H ₂ and prompt emission lines of OH for the first time; discovery of X-rays in comets; observed diversity in chemical composition among comets; the puzzle of the constancy of spin temperature; the well-established mineralogy of cometary dust; extensive theoretical modeling carried out for understanding the observed effects; and, the similarity in the mineralogy of dust in circumstellar shell of stars, comets, meteorites, asteroids and IDPs, thus indicatin