



Perfect Symmetry: The Accidental Discovery of Buckminsterfullerene

Jim Baggott

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This book tells the fascinating story of the discovery of buckminsterfullerene, a perfectly symmetrical soccer-ball shaped molecule composed of 60 carbon atoms. This new molecule, one of a large family of carbon cage molecules called "fullerenes"--represents a new form of carbon, complementing such well-known materials as diamond and graphite. Its discovery has revolutionized our understanding of carbon, once the most familiar elements. It has heralded a new chemistry, a new range of high-temperature superconductors and some marvelous new concepts in the architecture of large carbon structures. In this account, prize-winning science writer Jim Baggott tells the compelling story of buckminsterfullerene, from its natural occurrence in the cold chemistry of interstellar clouds to its accidental, stunning creation in a modern chemistry laboratory, and the subsequent development of one of today's fastest-growing scientific fields. By combining a lucid and entertaining style with scientific accuracy, the author has written a book that will appeal to general readers and chemists alike.

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