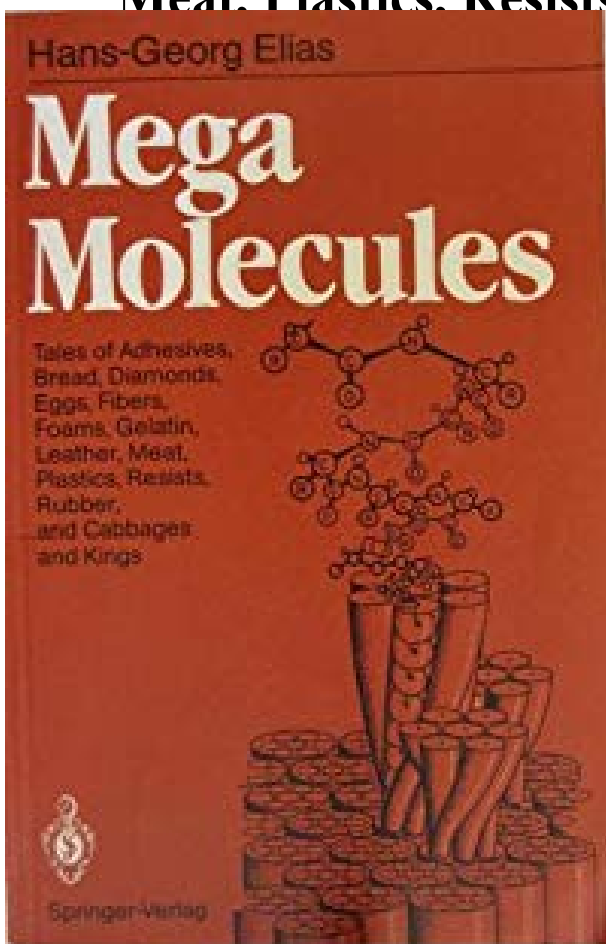


# Mega Molecules: Tales Of Adhesives, Bread, Diamonds, Eggs, Fibers, Foams, Gelatin, Leather, Meat, Plastics, Resists, Rubber,... And Cabbages And Kings



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All life is based on big molecules, scientifically called "macromolecules." Humans, animals, and plants cease to exist without these structural, reserve, and transport molecules. No life can be propagated without macromolecular DNA and RNA. Without macromolecules, we would only dine on water, sugars, fats, vitamins and salts but had to relinquish meat, eggs, cereals, vegetables, and fruits. We would not live in houses since wood and many stones consist of macromolecules.

Without macromolecules, no clothes since all fibers are made from macromolecules. No present-day car could run: All tires are based on macromolecules. Without macromolecules no photographic films, no electronics ... If macromolecules are so important then why is commonly so little known about their roles and why are they so little mentioned in school, if at all? As often in human history, tradition is important and science makes no exception. Chemistry was established as the chemistry of low molecular weight compounds

since these were most easy to investigate, characterize, and convert. A beautiful tower of thought was erected by the chemical sciences long before the idea of giant molecules, macromolecules, took hold. There was no space for newcomers in this tower. Even today one can learn about chemistry without hearing a word about macromolecules."