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Leading experts explain our planet in an illustrated companion to the acclaimed American Museum of Natural History's Hall of Planet Earth. Earth is a stunning exploration of how our planet works, of the research into the diverse environments that support life on Earth, and of the possibility of life beyond it, with essays by experts, profiles of historically significant scientists, and case studies from present-day researchers. Published to accompany the American Museum of Natural History's David S. and Ruth L. Gottesman Hall of Planet Earth, called "spectacular.... A fun way of learning about our planet" (New York Daily News), the book takes us on a journey to the center of the earth and beyond, examining the workings of the core and mantle, plate tectonics and earthquakes, volcanoes, the oceans and climate, and how all of these processes intersect in one giant system called Earth. Written for the general reader, Earth answers five basic questions: How has Earth evolved? Why are there ocean basins, continents, and mountains? How do we read the rocks? What causes climate and climate change? Why is Earth habitable? Essays by and about leading scientists at MIT, Princeton, Harvard, and Columbia, in addition to government organizations such as NASA, Los Alamos National Laboratories, and the United States Geological Survey, let the general reader in on many of Earth's newly revealed secrets. Black-and-white photographs and illustrations throughout.