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Reviews

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REACHING DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE: EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEYS INTO THE HUMAN BRAIN (PAPERBACK)

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ATLANTIC BOOKS, United Kingdom, 2016. Paperback. Condition: New. Export/Airside. Language: English . Brand New Book. What is it like to try to heal the body when the mind is under attack? In this gripping and illuminating book, Dr Allan Ropper reveals the extraordinary stories behind some of the life-altering afflictions that he and his staff are confronted with at the Neurology Unit of Harvard s Brigham and Women s Hospital. Neurologists diagnose and treat serious illnesses of the brain by combining the hard science of medical knowledge with the art of intuitive reasoning. The unique challenge they face is that their primary sources of information - the patients brains - are quite often altered, sometimes bizarrely, as a result of disease. Like Alice in Wonderland, Dr Ropper inhabits a place where absurdities abound: a sportsman who starts spouting gibberish; an undergraduate who suddenly becomes psychotic; a salesman who drives around and around a roundabout, unable to get off; a child molester who, after falling on the ice, is left with a brain that is very much dead inside a body that is very much alive; a figure skater whose body has become a ticking time-bomb; a mother who has to decide whether a life locked inside her own head is worth living. How does one begin to treat such cases, to counsel people whose lives may be changed forever? How does one train the next generation of clinicians to deal with the moral and medical aspects of brain disease? Dr Ropper answers these questions by taking the reader into a world where lives and minds hang in the balance.

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