



Mountains of the Mind: Adventures in Reaching the Summit

Robert Macfarlane

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Combining accounts of legendary mountain ascents with vivid descriptions of his own forays into wild, high landscapes, Robert McFarlane reveals how the mystery of the world's highest places has come to grip the Western imagination—and perennially draws legions of adventurers up the most perilous slopes.

His story begins three centuries ago, when mountains were feared as the forbidding abodes of dragons and other mysterious beasts. In the mid-1700s the attentions of both science and poetry sparked a passion for mountains; Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Lord Byron extolled the sublime experiences to be had on high; and by 1924 the death on Mt Everest of an Englishman named George Mallory came to symbolize the heroic ideals of his day. Macfarlane also reflects on fear, risk, and the shattering beauty of ice and snow, the competition and contemplation of the climb, and the strange alternate reality of high altitude, magically enveloping us in the allure of mountains at every level.

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