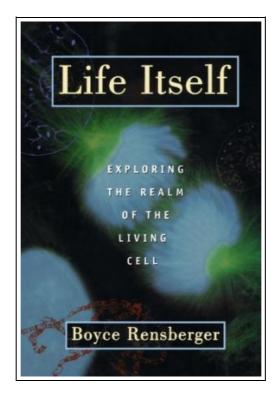
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LIFE ITSELF: EXPLORING THE REALM OF THE LIVING CELL



Oxford University Press. Paperback. Condition: New. 304 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.1in. x 0.9in.Hidden in a nondescript red-brick building in Rockville, Maryland, is the most unusual warehouse in the world, a bank of living cells called the American Type Culture Collection. Here, at 321 degrees below zero—a temperature at which life abandons its vital dance and enters limbo, but without dying—are some 30, 000 vials holding 60 billion living forms in suspended animation, including mouse kidney cells, turkey blood cells, armadillo spleen cells, and some 40 billion human cells. These cultured cells are essential to modern biological research—in fact, cells today are the most intimately studied life forms in all of science, for both practical and philosophical reasons. For one, all disease—from cancer and the common cold, to arthritis and AIDS—stems from cells gone awry. And cell research not only promises a cure for a wide variety of disease—it also holds the key to the mystery of life itself. In Life Itself, Boyce Rensberger, science writer for The Washington Post, takes readers to the frontlines of cell research with some of the brightest investigators in molecular, cellular, and developmental biology. Virtually all the hottest topics in biomedical research are covered here, such as how do cells and their minute components move How do the bodys cells heal wounds What is cancer Why do cells die And what is the nature of life Readers discover that—contrary to what we may have concluded from pictures in our high school textbooks—cells teem with activity and that, inside, they are more crowded with components than the inside of a computer. We learn that scientists now know of at least ten molecular motors that move things about inside the cell—in most cells, this motion is short because the cell is tiny, but in the single-celled...



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