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Much madness is divinest sense," wrote Emily Dickinson, "And much sense the starkest madness." The idea that poetry and madness are deeply intertwined, and that madness sometimes leads to the most divine poetry, has been with us since antiquity. In his critical and clinical introduction to this splendid anthology--the first of its kind--psychiatrist and poet Mark S. Bauer considers mental disorders from multiple perspectives and challenges us to broaden our outlook. He has selected more than 200 poems from across seven centuries that reflect a wide range mental states--from despondency and despair to melancholy, mania, and complete submersion into a world of heightened, original perception. Featuring such poets as George Herbert, John Clare, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Berryman, Sylvia Plath, Ann Sexton, Weldon Kees, Lucille Clifton, Jane Kenyon, and many others, A Mind Apart has much to offer those who suffer from mental illness, those who work to understand it, and all those who value the poetry that has come to us from the heights and depths of human experience.