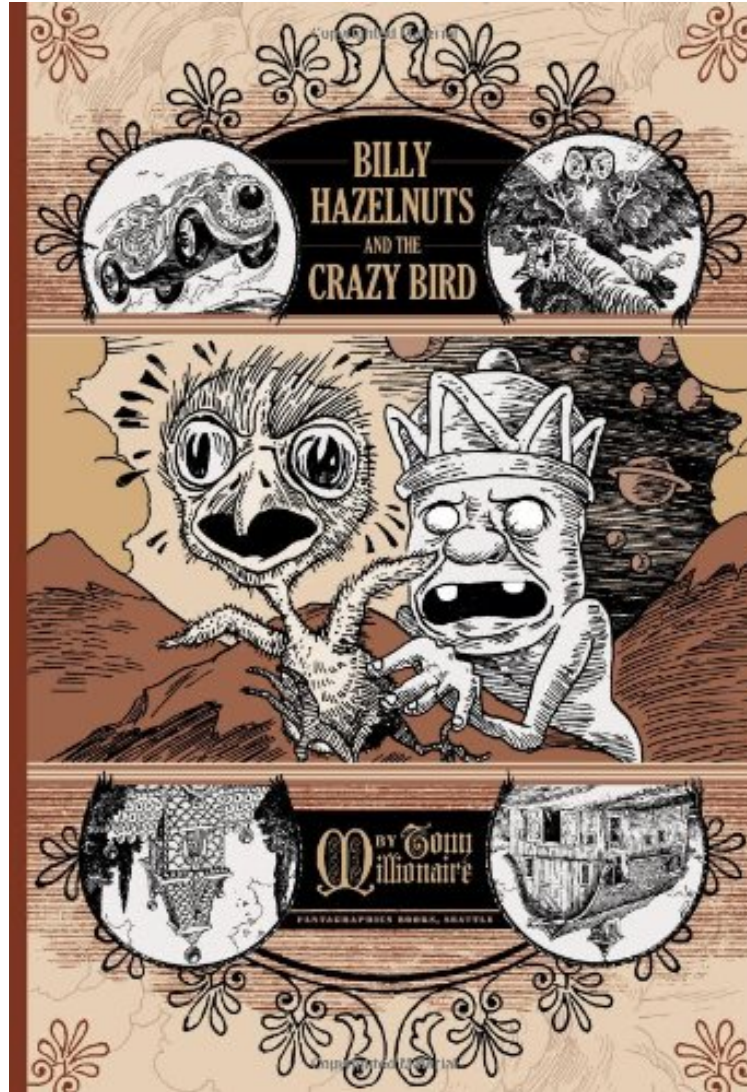


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Billy Hazelnuts and the Crazy Bird

Tony Millionaire

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Tony Millionaire : Billy Hazelnuts and the Crazy Bird before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Billy Hazelnuts and the Crazy Bird:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Pass me the Hazelnuts, please!By bortlyIt's great to see Billy Hazelnuts back! This is a fantastic graphic novel, the draftsmanship is excellent, as usual, and the characters are really funny. And the story is good for all ages, honest. It's another winner from Tony Millionaire!0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Ok but Sock Monkey series has better stories and drawingsBy SometimesReviewerI like his work but this one wasn't as good as some of his other work such as Sock Monkey.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Bones and brains! It is alive!By J. B. ShoupFairy tales, even in their modern sanitized forms, have

always been a place for children to safely explore a dangerous world. Comic art was once a perfect medium for that same exploration, whether via walking beds in Slumberland, caped marvels smashing robots, or Popeye exploring some new desert isle. Somewhere along the way, comics abandoned young readers. Great work was and is produced, of course, whether in Alan Moore's Cold War commentary (*Watchmen*), Art Spiegelman's disarming anthropomorphic Holocaust account (*The Complete Maus: A Survivor's Tale (No 1)*), Marjane Satrapi's haunting memoir (*The Complete Persepolis*), or Ryan North's post-post-modern philosophical gas (the best of *Dinosaur Comics: 2003-2005 A.D.*). Comics are no longer merely "funny books," instead touching on areas as diverse as Lovecraftian horror and punk rock tour journals. Yet save for a few mindlessly-simplified TV spin-off comics or toyetic anime-inspired productions, young readers continue to be left behind until they grow cynical enough for the art form in its best-selling forms. Tony Millionaire, of course, is no stranger to the adult side of comics, though he remains an outsider. His whimsically obscene and obtuse "Maakies" is a stand-out of modern strips and he has dabbled in dark tales with his "Sock Monkey." Millionaire is an organic creator who probably would be very uncomfortable talking shop at Comic-Con. His influences draw from the Golden Age of newspaper strips and the first explosion of underground comix, but I doubt he's picked up anything from the aforementioned Alan Moore or could name any Batman villains that didn't appear on the Adam West show. He doesn't seem given to Scott McCloud's celebratory introspection nor Chris Ware's endless layouts. Millionaire lives and dreams in his own world, and thus there's always been a purity to his work (this of course was why "The Drinky Crow Show" didn't last on [adult swim], as it was others trying to wield Tony's magic). With *Billy Hazelnuts*, however, he's turned his attention to young readers without neglecting his loyal fanbase. The closest comparison is perhaps the universally-acclaimed work by Jeff Smith (*Bone: The Complete Cartoon Epic in One Volume (Vol 1)*). When first we met Billy, he was an edible garbage golem on a rampage, thrust into madcap adventures with a hotheaded child scientist named Becky. "Billy Hazelnuts" was a triumph of rich art and wild characters that seemed fit for all ages without needless winks to an adult audience. In "Billy Hazelnuts and the Crazy Bird," Millionaire revisits Rimperton Farm but sets Billy on a solo adventure. This, my friends, is a fairy tale. Like all good fairy tales, it gently exposes its readers to grim things with sparkling glitter. "I'd rather be slop in a pig than be forced to witness this grotesque parade," Billy howls, "...wasp larvae eating the living guts of caterpillars! Abominable cheeses and repugnant sausages! Pasty-faced mushrooms thriving on the rotten flesh of decaying stumps!! It is a loathsome system of eating and being eaten!" This, of course, is a sidelong glance at theodicy. The world Billy has come to know since we last saw him is our gruesome world of decay and death. Just as Hansel and Gretel explored the horrors of being abandoned and unloved, and just as the Boy Who Cried Wolf learned that life doesn't always have a safety net, so Billy Hazelnuts gives his readers a honest glance at a cruel world, as quirky as his particular universe may be. But the story of course doesn't wallow in the macabre. It's a perfect bedtime tale for imaginative youngsters. Scrapping with a cat and an owl, Billy finds himself chasing the mother bird away from a newly-hatched chick (who looks more and more like a plucked Drinky Crow than an owl with each panel) that is hungry for the delicious baked hero. Faced with the unfortunate in a harsh world, Billy Hazelnuts responds with a gruff kindness, heading off on a quest to reunite the infant with its mother. Losing limbs to the starving chick, dropping into a subterranean lake (those made of sugar shouldn't swim), and having to deal with a candy-housed inventor don't sway Billy from his course. Billy is let loose in yet another captivating Millionaire landscape full of realistic owls brooding on branches, talking cats laying out why one must hate what one eats, and baked banisters supporting a mouth-watering mansion straight out of 1940's cartoon Heaven. The cave sequence is perfectly claustrophobic and the forest scenes are as beautiful as they are haunting. Every panel of "The Crazy Bird" bristles with energy, begging to be revisited again and again for the rapturous detail. There's a timelessness to the art, and the same goes for the wordplay. Millionaire is the king of twisted phrases ("It is all 'confectionery' to me!" the inventor Rupert cries about a candy car). This is a book that begs to be read aloud in various voices, the pages turned to the cooing audience. Pages 74 through 94, where Billy races into a cave to save his avian charge from a hungry cat, is some of Millionaire's best cartooning. The expressions, the sound effects, the shading -- if comics scholarship wasn't relegated simply to a subculture trying to encourage itself, these pages would be taught in college courses on sequential art. Millionaire is A.A. Milne, E. C. Segar, and Winsor McCay all rolled into one. The only disappointment, and a minor one at that, is that the intrepid Becky from the first book is relegated only to brief appearances at the beginning and end. She was such a source of delight in "The Crazy Bird"'s predecessor, and such a driver of that plot, that her absence from the main adventure is striking. That said, "The Crazy Bird" is a much less epic story than "Billy Hazelnuts," though comfortably so. The first book laid out the basic dreamlike logic of Billy's world, and this second book explores it with a simple tale of misguided nobility. Again, Millionaire produces a book that can be recommended without hesitation to all ages. One only hopes that the Muse Millionaire shares the aforementioned Milne, Segar, and McCay will begin visiting him more often so that we can have another Billy Hazelnuts romp quite soon.

Take a trip into the deep, deep woods with this original all-ages graphic novel. Billy Hazelnuts is back for the first time since his acclaimed 2006 Eisner Award-winning debut. Life has settled back to normal in the old house. Becky and her mom are getting used to having Billy around, as he performs various household chores, utilizing his amazing

strength. Nothing could be better, aside from a jumpy relationship with the cat. until one day Billy hears screeching in the back yard and runs out to find a very large owl attacking his housemate. I hate that cat, but its our cat! yells Billy, and chases the owl off. Billy soon discovers that the owl he has just scared off has left an egg in his nest. When the egg hatches, its up to Billy to reunite the baby owl with his mother, and the two head off into the deep, deep woods in search of her. The resulting adventure is a crazy potion of all-ages fun, humor, thrills and chills like only Tony Millionaire is capable of. 104 pages of black-and-white comics

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Millionaire's backyard golem returns in this winning follow-up to 2006's Billy Hazelnuts. With a piecrust body, hazelnut eyes, and titanic strength, the title character struggles with the vicissitudes of human--and animal--society. This all-ages-friendly tale opens with a comical but sincere note of existential angst, but Billy ultimately discovers his orientation in the world through his relationships with others. Rescuing the family cat from an attacking owl, Billy finds he has caused the abandonment of a newly hatched chick. This foundling attempts to hungrily devour Billy even as he quests forth to find the "crazy bird"'s mother. The book is drawn in a loosened version of Millionaire's ornate pen and ink style, evoking the vital, calligraphed fantasies of turn-of-the-20th-century cartoonists and children's book illustrators. The loose hatching matches the book's propulsive narrative pace, but pauses at intervals for a potent accumulation of detail or an expressive character moment. The tale itself frequently veers toward the lunatic, but if it skirts the surreal it does so precisely by taking the kinds of unfettered narrative turns that characterize the best children's literature. And like those books, Millionaire's creates a safe space for exploration that remains grounded throughout in a humane sensibility that quietly makes itself known by showing, not telling. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist In this follow-up to Billy Hazelnuts (2006), Millionaire carries on the sublime childlike flair that is a far cry from the sweet sense of innocence often ascribed to wee ones. Billy (a manikin made of garbage) is wont to run off maniacally at a moments notice to punch an owl in the face, but he also embarks on a determined (if crazy) quest to reunite baby owl with Momma, even as the little bird chomps away at him, leaving nothing but his two hazelnut eyes behind. No one rides the edge between charming and demented quite like Maakies cartoonist Millionaire, and hes in hilariously fine form here. --Ian Chipman In this follow-up to Billy Hazelnuts, Millionaire carries on the sublime childlike flair that is a far cry from the sweet sense of innocence often ascribed to wee ones. ... No one rides the edge between charming and demented quite like Maakies cartoonist Millionaire, and hes in hilariously fine form here. - Booklist The first Billy was about his origins; Billy Hazelnuts and the Crazy Bird is about the responsibilities of parenthood, and how they dont necessarily sync up with maturity. - The Onion A.V. Club Millionaire really does channel the cartoonists of the early 20th century, while still giving the work a quality thats somewhat reminiscent of 70s underground comics and its kid-friendly to boot! Good fun with good energy. - John Seven, Worcester Magazine The release of a new Tony Millionaire stand-alone book is an overall world good. - Tom Spurgeon, The Comics Reporter The mind of Tony Millionaire is a funny, wacky and kinda disturbing place, but man do I love it! ... Billy Hazelnuts and the Crazy Bird is an incredible book for all ages. There is nothing else like it being published today and I think that is why its so special! - Secret Identity