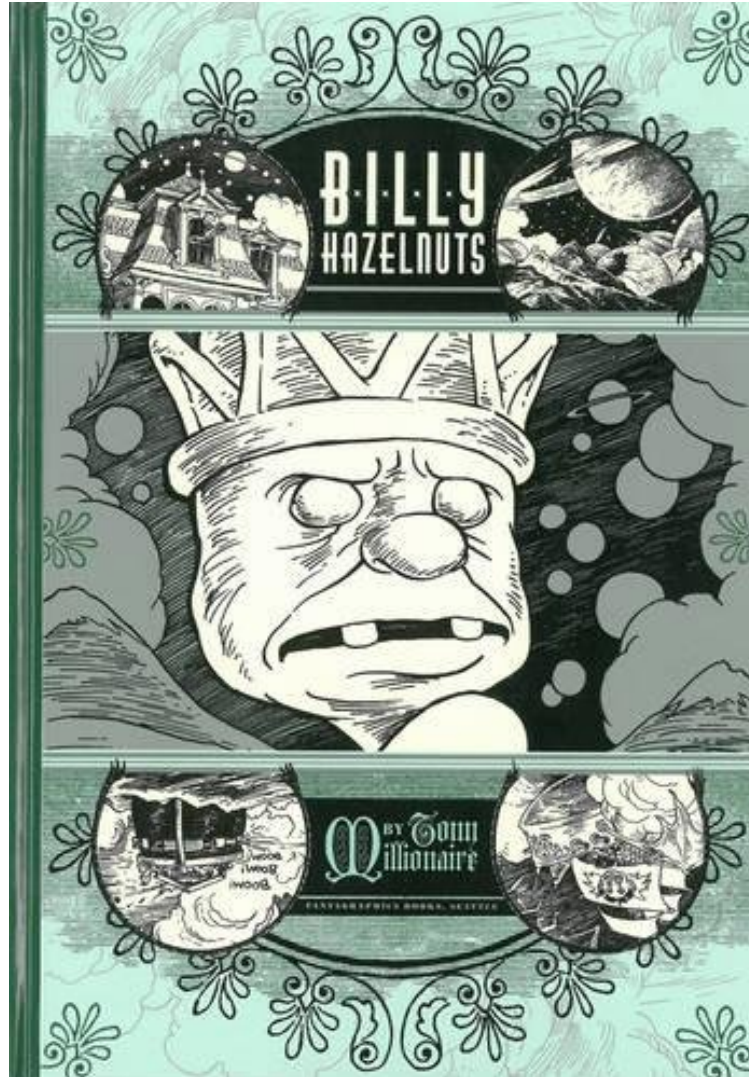


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Billy Hazelnuts

Tony Millionaire

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

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. BILLY HOUSEFLIES!By CustomerBilly Hazelnuts is a very weird sort of children's fable. Then again Tony Millionaire is a weird fellow. He balances wondrous adventure with a kind of adult cynicism. Vulgarity is easy (and Tony Millionaire can do that--see "Maakies" or "The Drinky Crow Show"), but Billy Hazelnuts is walking a much finer line. It's weird and stylized, yet still endearing. Besides that, the art is nothing short of gorgeous.Billy Hazelnuts is like if Gollum were a golem. He was made by rats living in an old house. The rats wanted an enforcer to protect themselves from the old lady of the house and her cat. Thus "Billy Houseflies" was born,

with a body molded from gooey garbage and a ton of captured living flies for a brain. Billy is naturally rambunctious and bestial (you know, like a real kid), yet has a sense of innocence about him. He soon meets Becky, the girl living in the old house who fancies herself a scientist. After noticing that the moon has disappeared, Billy leads them on a quest into the wilderness to find it. Most of all there's a sense of imagination and adventure to this book. This world has an old-timey regularity, and is filled with characters that are just odd enough. But there is adventure to be had, and their wild exploits are approached with a classic dime novel "Hurrah!" We see a junkyard of broken planets, mechanical crocodile pirates, and a fierce battle-at-sea between a pirate ship and Noah's Ark. It'd be easy to say that this is comparable to stuff like Tim Burton or the Brothers Grimm, but honestly, I think it's a whole lot better. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Unaffected whimsy

By The Literate Fanboy

Plenty of graphic novelists have attempted to capture the freewheeling spirit of the old adventure strips. Most sabotage themselves in their determination to demonstrate their cleverness and assure the audience that it's all a joke; they're too self-conscious to abandon themselves fully to the whimsy of the genre. In **BILLY HAZELNUTS**, Tony Millionaire not only abandons such self-consciousness but abandons sanity itself in pursuit of the weird and woolly. The totality of his devotion adds the strength of sincerity to the book. His few winks from beyond the Fourth Wall are subtle and impish and are integrated naturally into the plot. Indeed, natural plotting is one of the book's distinguishing qualities: Millionaire has a delicate grasp of visual pacing; he always seems to know exactly how many panels should cover a page and how much action and dialogue each panel should contain. Although these layouts are not ostentatiously experimental in format, their unfussy precision is compelling. The story, too, has an air of quiet, folkloric melancholy, with the titular gnome chasing the moon over the hills in fear that it has fallen from the sky. But the book does a good deal more than just capitalizing on the resonances of its genre tropes. **BILLY HAZELNUTS** is not a slavish imitation of the old comics, but the scale and strangeness of its innovation capture their atmosphere with unusual acuity. The frequent plot twists are unpredictable, constantly confronting the reader with escalating absurdity, yet each feels wholly organic. Its wonders have an amorphous, dreamlike continuity. Whether mice are constructing a golem out of suet or a girl genius is riding her rocking-horse across a celestial junkyard full of broken planets, there's never a whiff of contrivance about the proceedings. Even the deliberately stilted dialogue rolls nicely off the tongue. This easy and complete suspension of disbelief results from Millionaire's emphasis on the macabre over the cute. After all, our most enduring fairy tales are often the darkest in their underpinnings. The Brothers Grimm never pulled any punches, and nor does Tony Millionaire. **BILLY HAZELNUTS** contains all manner of death and destruction. The fact that most of the violence is comical - as when Billy chases a cat with a meat grinder or holds a cannon in each hand like a pistol - does not lessen its impact. But the book is tastefully illustrated with a minimum of visible gore. Millionaire's fine-lined, somewhat frenzied style perfectly fleshes out the warped atmosphere of the book -- its hulking Southern estates and teetering steampunk machinery. (I'm restraining myself from calling it "Burtonesque", because the analogy is too obvious but only superficially accurate. Tony Millionaire is Tony Millionaire-esque, and that's the end of the matter.) Despite the plastic appearance of his shapes, careful consideration is obvious in every composition. The designs for a crew of robot pirates are particularly striking. They're appropriate stage-dressing for a comic of such technically impeccable structure. **BILLY HAZELNUTS** may be silly, - masterfully silly, in fact - but it has serious literary merit both for its craftsmanship and for the unsentimental magic that illuminates its dark Gothic landscape. It is a childhood nightmare perfectly captured and a delicious alternative to the squeaky-clean assembly-line fantasies that populate most of the children's literature market. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Mad Millionaire Makes Mind Mulch, Grow Your Head

By S. C. JUMEL

This book is insane. However, unlike most of insanity, it lingers pleasantly upon the memory, probably due to the underlying sanity of the story structure. It WORKS, but why? What the HELL is going on? Aw hell, who cares, it is fabulous. Millionaire makes spun platinum out of his garbage golem in the wonderfully weird world the book lays out for your brain. One gets the feeling that the black and white is all you could deal with; if Millionaire colored it in the book, like Lovecraft's mythic *Necronomicon*, would send us over the cliff into the gibbering world of the utterly mad.

An original graphic novel from the creator of *Maakies* and *Sock Monkey*. Tony Millionaire, creator of *Sock Monkey* and one of America's most popular weekly comic strips, *Maakies*, delivers his first original graphic novel for Fantagraphics, *Billy Hazelnuts*. *Billy Hazelnuts* transmutes nursery rhymes and the golem myth into a storybook about Becky, girl scientist, her friend Billy Hazelnuts (who was created from cooking ingredients by tailless mice), and their journey to find the missing moon while battling an evil steam-driven alligator with a seeing-eye skunk. Millionaire fuses the darker spirit of older fairy tales with an absurdist adventure story, throws gender politics into the mix, and brings it to life with his dementedly charming and meticulous drawing style that is utterly transporting. *Billy Hazelnuts* features all-new characters, a first for Millionaire after building a tremendous following for his *Sock Monkey* and *Maakies* characters, which is sure to delight existing fans as well as introduce an entirely new audience to his breathtaking line and imagination. Black-white comics throughout

From Publishers Weekly Starred . When the mice infesting a woman's kitchen tire of her efforts to rout them, they

create a tough guy homunculus from foul-smelling garbage and turn him loose as their protector. Originally possessing a head full of houseflies, the garbage creature is discovered by Becky, a plucky kid scientist who swaps hazelnuts for the houseflies thus the sobriquet Billy Hazelnuts. Together, they embark on a dreamlike series of adventures. Bolstered by extraordinary artwork reminiscent of woodcuts crafted by a madman, this narrative evokes the anything-goes child-logic found in darker fairy tales and the Oz stories with a pinch of Lewis Carroll thrown in for the sheer bizarreness of it all. Millionaire sweeps the reader along with the protagonists through encounters with a seeing-eye skunk, a search for where the moon disappeared to and a blistering sea battle between a matter-expanded toy replica of Noah's Ark complete with two-by-two animals at the helm and a flying pirate ship crewed by robotic buccaneer alligators. Millionaire is known for his dark yet wistful comic strip Maakies with this irresistible cornucopia of unbridled imagination run rampant, he has created a book with the eerie familiarity of a classic children's tale and solidifies his reputation as one of contemporary comic's great visionaries. (Apr.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Famous for his bad-boy comic strip, Maakies, and his children's books starring benign versions of the strip's antiheroes, Millionaire here essays a third stream of his peculiar creativity in a graphic-novel marchen, or Germanic folktale-like narrative. The title character is a truculent little manikin made by mice out of garbage. At first he menaces a farm woman, but her budding-scientist daughter, Becky, befriends him after replacing his original eyes with hazelnuts. Enchanted by the moon, impulsive Billy runs after it to find where it sets, with Becky hotly pursuing to keep him from getting lost. As soon as she apprehends him, a flying, walking, sailing ship fashioned by Becky's would-be suitor, Eugene, accosts the pair. After more weird science, a sea battle, and a second breakaway and Peer Gynt-like homecoming by Billy, he, Becky, and Eugene reconcile. Drawing in his established manner, with blocky, medieval-woodcut-like figures in action against intricate, frequently gorgeous land-, sea-, and cloudscape, Millionaire fashions a tale as disquieting-comforting and psychologically ambiguous as anything the Grimms ever recorded. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "I think Tony Millionaire can do only important things."