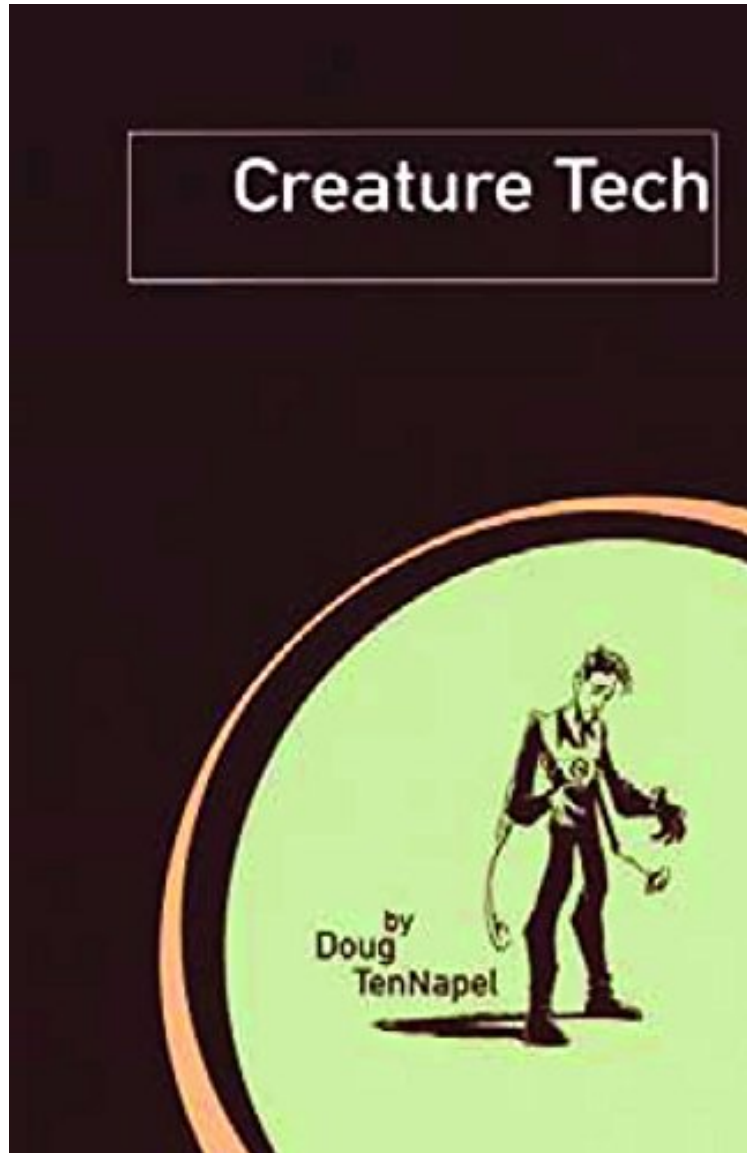


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## Creature Tech

*Doug Tennapel*

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**Doug Tennapel : Creature Tech** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Creature Tech:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. maybe my most favorite from a stack of TenNapel favoritesBy H. BalaDoug TenNapel. It's not fair. Even his name is whimsical. Have you heard of him? Among other things, he's an awesome graphic novelist. The guy's flights of fancy are off the chain and kick other folks' flights of fancy to the curb.

If I were to point out some work of his to start you off, I wouldn't be sure where exactly to start. Earthboy Jacobus? Power Up? Iron West? Ghostopolis? Tommysaurus Rex? But, probably, I'll start you off with Creature Tech. It might be my favorite of all the things he's done. Creature Tech is a grand mishmash - a crazy blend of mad science, foulest demonology, giant space eels, alien symbiotes, genius rednecks, regular rednecks, ghosts, and the Christian faith. It's a virtuoso juggling act of potentially clashing genres and tonal divergences that TenNapel handles with inclusive grace. One of the things I love best about the man's graphic novels is his matter-of-fact treatment of the outrageous elements he introduces. In Creature Tech, the inhabitants of Turlock, CA are exposed to outlandish stuff that they just shrug off like it's old hat. A government-trained security mantid? Why not? The friggin' Shroud of Turin? Sure. An MIB-type research facility in their small-town midst. Meh. Cats morphing into marauding demons? Old hat. Boiled down, it's about a would-be-pastor-turned-scientist-rebel (he'd lost his faith) who goes up against a resurrected mad scientist who intends to rain terror on the town of Turlock with giant eels and demon cats. Man, am I fond of nutty big bads, and Dr. Jameson is as certifiable as they come. He tends to go into these awesome rhetorics: "My peers claimed that the giant space eel did not exist! They said I was crazy! Now that I have spent my fortune on a laboratory in the wilderness, swapped hands with a demon, and called a giant space eel to Earth, PERHAPS they wont think I am so crazy after all!!!" Heh. What makes Creature Tech so ridiculously entertaining is not just that TenNapel is consistently a wellspring of creativity, or that he presents this macabre sense of humor, or that he's an artist with distinct flair. What puts a bow on his little masterpieces is his knack for making you feel there's a depth and a richness to his characters. You cannot dismiss his ink-brushed visuals as mere cartoony images because he marries in years of well-honed craftsmanship and deft storytelling that tap into your emotional core. TenNapel tells a story that is bold in imagination yet profoundly sweet. Even the most hard of hardcases may melt just a wee bit at Dr. Ong's gentle courtship of Katie, the girl with the atrophied hand and the amblyopic left eye that he bullied when they were kids, or you may pause to savor a rejected mantis' startling discovery of his place in the world. TenNapel doesn't shy away from bits of theological discussions. A subplot concerns Dr. Ong's estrangement from his father stemming from his championing science over faith. But maybe TenNapel's most effective theological flourish takes up the span of six pages as he treats us to a vision of a celestial hereafter for arthropods. It's a sequence with scarcely any dialogue but it is so incredibly moving. And maybe what I appreciate the most is that TenNapel's take on faith comes off sincere and not preachy or smug. He even finds space for an uncommon side excursion that chronicles the sweet and fleeting life of a meat creature brought to supernatural life in a butcher shop. It's a memorable two-paged sequence that didn't have to be in the book, but I was so glad it was there. 763 crates packed with unexplained phenomena that Dr. Ong and his staff must crack open and study and catalogue in his Turlock branch of the R.T.I. (Research Technical institute) - or as the locals call the R.T.I. - Creature Tech. Too bad TenNapel tends to not revisit his published works. I would've loved further examination of this corner of the man's very strange and wonderful and fecund imagination. It's not fair. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Hilarious, good artwork, spiritual elements: Excellent Graphic Novel By MirThe title--CREATURE TECH--refers to the nickname given by a small town to the specialty scientific research underground facility (Research Technical Institute) that's located in their midst. If you remember the ending to RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, with that notion of this bureaucratic warehouse for assorted, mysterious objects (like the ark), that applies to CREATURE TECH. This facility studies these crated up objects or creatures or apparati that no one knows what they are exactly, but they're something weird. So, the graphic novel starts with this really wacky science guy way back when with an eel fetish, who has made a deal with a demon (who assists him in the lab/observatory) as he's luring a very odd thing to earth: some kind of giant space eel. It's quite funny. It doesn't end well for mad scientist dude and his demon hand. Long time later (think a century plus) and our genius scientist atheist hero, who's dad is a preacher, is sent to work at CREATURE TECH, which is located in his old hometown. He doesn't wanna go back there, to that lab, since it's where his dad worked before going on to his ministerial duties. AND NOW, the wacky, weird fun gets going. You meet the odd, but oddly endearing, townfolk, who don't like the standoffish protagonist much. There's the handicapped girl who tugs at the hero's heart. His father the preacher, who loves his son and wants him to know Jesus. The kindly rednecks unfazed by the giant mutant bug they end up adopting. And the dead mad scientist, who comes back with the help of the Shroud of Turin (an object in one of the crates at CTI.) Our hero has to battle near death, a symbiote who isn't as simplistic as one might first think, an effete English vampire dude, hellcats--and in the process learn about his dad, love, neighborliness, and God. This is a seriously cool graphic novel. It's got a solid Christian heart and an off-kilter sense of humor. (If you don't laugh snot out of your nose at what happens to the butcher's meat when the Shroud comes into play, well...your humor meter need calibrating.) I've since acquired a couple more TenNapel works. The guy is whack, in a very good way. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. For the abandoned generation By T. Weller If you are like any child in the new generation, chances are, you are not interested in 'reading'. I got this book for my nephews, with the hopes that at the most, they will implement the idea of either reading or writing or artistic interpretation in their own life, and at the least, that they would read it and get a few more words in while holding some interest. Doug seems to be able to capture his audience and hold them well through unique story lines and stylized artistry. Thanks Mr. Tennapel.

Good battles evil, and the world hangs in the balance! Resurrected by the Shroud of Turin, the zombified Dr. Jameson intends to finish what he started 150 years ago destroying the earth with a giant space eel! Standing in his way is Dr. Ong, a would-be pastor-turned-scientist who now works in a government research facility infamously known as 'Creature Tech.' Aided by an unlikely cast of rednecks, symbiotic aliens, and a CIA-trained mantid, Dr. Ong embarks on a journey of faith, love, and self-discovery. All in a day's work at Creature Tech! From Doug TenNapel, the creator of Earthworm Jim, Monster Zoo, and Ghostopolis comes this new edition of Creature Tech presented for the first time by Image Comics! Features 16 additional pages of TenNapel's rough development sketches and pin-ups from Rob Scrab and C.S. Morse.

From Publishers Weekly Set in Turlock, Calif., a town TenNapel grew up near, this book is a farcical, sci-fi good-versus-evil yarn that manages to explore theology, alienation and social acceptance in a small community. It's the story of the battle between the abrasive good-guy scientist Dr. Ong and the resurrected Dr. Jameson, a malevolent 19th-century occultist/mad scientist who sought to rule the world. Ong (a child science prodigy and Turlock native) returns to his hometown after being appointed to direct a research facility locals call Creature Tech. There, he opens a crate housing the Shroud of Turin. Things get complicated when the ghost of Jameson (he was killed during a fiendish experiment) steals the shroud, resurrects his own body and resumes trying to take over the world with the help of an army of conjured hellcats and a gigantic space eel. Ong pursues Jameson while simultaneously acquiring a symbiotic alien parasite (it's alive and acts like a kind of leech sidekick), falling in love with gloomy Katie and galvanizing a town of rednecks to fight Jameson's horde of demon hellcats. TenNapel's creativity and attention to detail fill this book with pleasant surprises and entertaining twists. His bw drawings are dynamic, comic and often startlingly touching. The images of Katie, Ong's sweetie, emerging from her comic but awkward shell are powerful, and TenNapel deftly surveys the complexities of social alienation in a format primarily intended to be nonsensical. This work is slapstick funny, strangely sensitive and well worth reading. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Out in Turlock, California, all hell breaks loose when a mad scientist's spirit opens one of the crates of top-secret stuff at the Research Technical Institute, aka Creature Tech because of rumors, essentially correct, about what sort of things go on there. Dr. Michael Ong, teenage Nobel laureate and the institute's chief, grapples with the slugbeast the spirit releases--successfully, thanks to a salt cellar--but the symbiont that powers the thing latches onto him. Now he has two insectoid arms and lots of extra oomph, which come in handy fighting the cat monsters the spirit throws at him while scheming to use the shroud of Turin to revive the humongous space eel buried under Turlock's terrain. If this sounds like some overactive big-critter horror movie a la The Blob --hey, those flicks should ever be this good! Graphic novelist TenNapel has already won an Eisner award (the comics equivalent of sf's Hugo and mystery's Edgar), and his goofy, kinetic style (quite reminiscent of Will Eisner's) makes a winner out of this crazed romp. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved From the Publisher Doug TenNapel is the Eisner award-winning maniac who created the award winning video game, toy line, and TV show "Earthworm Jim". Doug is currently working on a magic book with David Blaine and a mini-series with Ben Affleck.