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The Book Of Human Insects



Synopsis

Toshiko Tomura is a genius; the darling of the intelligentsia. A modern-day Michelangelo, this twenty year-old is already an established international stage actress, an up-and-coming architect, and the next recipient of the prestigious Akutagawa Prize as Japan's best new writer. Her actions make headlines in the papers, and inspire radio and television programming. And like many great talents, her troubled past is what motivates her to greatness. She has the amazing ability to emulate the talents of others. Toshiko is also the mastermind behind a series of murders. The ultimate mimic, she has plagiarized, blackmailed, stolen and replicated the works of scores of talents. And now as her star is rising within the world of the elites and powerful she has amassed a long list of enemies frustrated by the fact that she has built critical and financial acclaim for nothing more than copying others' work. Neglected as a child, she is challenging the concepts of gender inequality while unleashing her loneliness upon the world as she climbs the social ladder one body at a time. One of Osamu Tezuka's most wicked tales, *The Book of Human Insects* renders the 70's as a brutal and often polarizing bug-eat-bug world, where only those willing to sell their soul to the masses and become something less than human are capable of achieving their wildest dreams

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Brilliant. Just once, I’d like to read a work by Tezuka that wasn’t either at least nearly or totally perfectly crafted. A typical complaint nowadays is that the usual comic

costs about \$4 and takes about 10 minutes (or less) to read. But with Tezuka's work, you're invited to linger over a page for a minute, just taking everything in. One of Tezuka's (many) skills is his deftness with background details, with an emphasis on lived-in spaces that seem to have texture that you could just grip. "I suppose just reading a story like that could be repugnant to some people, but I found it weirdly enjoyable. It's not like Tezuka sugarcoats his lead's fundamental awfulness, or blatantly asks that we enjoy it as she destroys people—even in that 'hate the player/love the game' way that you saw all over pop culture in the early 1970s. It's most fascinating to me as a big ol' hate letter to the emerging Japanese post-war generation, although Tezuka includes a vile war-era criminal in the book as well." "The Comics Reporter" Epic Tezuka is back! As always, Tezuka builds long, winding plotlines and then brilliantly connects them to each other, creating a massive but memorable network of characters. This journey through the worlds of art, entertainment, crime, politics, and business also presents a deeper message about the dead ends and pitfalls of modern society. Tezuka's ambitions can also be seen in the art, where wild metaphors and images jump off the page" -Anime News Network

Osamu Tezuka was born on November 3, 1928, in Osaka. He grew up in an open-minded family exposed to comics and Walt Disney. As a boy he also had a love for insects, which he would later as a grown-up incorporate into pen name. Having developed an intense understanding of the preciousness of life from his wartime experience, Osamu Tezuka aimed to become a physician and later earned his degree in medicine, but ultimately chose the profession he loved best: manga artist and animated film writer. Tezuka's manga and animated films had a tremendous impact on the shaping of the psychology of Japan's postwar youth. His work changed the concept of Japanese comics, transforming it into an art form and incorporating a variety of new styles in creating the "story cartoon." Osamu Tezuka lived out his entire life tirelessly pursuing his efforts, passing away at the age of 60 on February 8, 1989. In all, Tezuka produced more than 150,000 pages of graphic storytelling before his death. Posthumously Tezuka's work have won a number of awards in the U.S., including the 2009 Eisner Award given to his series Dororo.

Another reviewer gave this a low rating because he found it "dark

Osamu Tezuka is a name that should not only be known among anime fans, but also among those

with even an inkling of passion in the visual arts. To his credit is the creation of narrative manga as we know it today, and the founding of several manga conventions that have since ascended into the collected conscience of the medium. After starting his career with such family-friendly classics as "Astro Boy" and "Kimba the White Lion", Tezuka began to focus on more adult-oriented work in the mid-to-late sixties. This kicked off the period which arguably showed the most of his capability as both an artist and a thinker, and it is in this period that he created "The Book of Human Insects." "The Book of Human Insects" follows a reporter who becomes ensnared in the world of a young woman who has reached the top of both the academic and artistic world. Through painting, acting, and writing, among other things, she has gotten to a place where no other person has before. There's only one problem: the work she does is never her own. The woman is a master of mimicry, and becomes close to anybody who she finds talented in order to steal their secrets. But what happens to the original creators is more insidious than anybody could imagine, guaranteeing that the victims of plagiarism never say a peep about the woman. Saying anymore would spoil this excellent story, and rest assured, it IS excellent. As one would expect from any Tezuka story, this is a book devoid of flaws in the way of visuals and storytelling. Many visuals here, though, feel a bit more experimental than future mature works from the artist. It's clear that "The Book of Human Insects" falls into the same vein as "Swallowing The Earth", in the sense that it shows a more transitional approach to his work as opposed to the polish that we'd later see from, say, "Buddha." This approach exudes a certain confusion as to what Tezuka was trying to do when drawing this work up, attempting to be mature but struggling to get out of the cartoon-y box he'd built around himself. This, however, isn't detrimental to the work at all. It actually makes it a good bit more interesting to read, albeit a little disorienting at times. While it's definitely more structurally solid than "Swallowing the Earth", it still gives us a glimpse into the mind of Tezuka when he was trying to carve out a slot for himself in the pantheon of contemporary *gekiga* manga-ka. What he came up with may not be completely deadpan in tone, but perhaps that's for the better. Where Sampei Shirato and Kazuo Koike failed by being much too grim, Tezuka succeeded by experimenting with disturbing (and disturbed) plotlines while maintaining the schoolboy-like zeal that eventually would cement his place as the definitive God of Manga. And it's precisely that stark juxtaposition of comedy and thriller that makes "The Book of Human Insects" so engaging. Story: B+ Art: B+ Overall: B+

Simply amazing. A story of love, hate, murder and morals. At the end of the book I was left wanting more and will definitely be purchasing more story's by Tezuka.

He does it again. The book keeps you guessing until the end. The art is spectacular. Typical Tezuka. Shut up and take my money.

I bought this book because it was by Osamu Tezuka and it was worth the price. Great story that is pretty complex and mature and worth every penny. Recommend to anyone who loves Osamu Tezuka and anyone who is mature enough to read it.

Overall, I liked the manga and I'd give it a 8/10. Spoiler!!! I was upset that she doesn't die at the end, though :/

Imagine a world rife with corruption, sex, deceit, violence, and dominated by men. What's a lonely woman with no family and not friends to do? Such is the main premise of Osamu Tezuka's "The book of human insects". And while the themes of imitation are compelling within the book. I also find it to be a book about nihilism and how nothing seems to satisfy humanity's desires for love companionship and meaning. The book itself however was very satisfying. I must say, if you like a little horror, political intrigue, and thinking about the deep questions of life, "The Book of Human Insects" is a mandatory read. Buy it. Now.

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