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# Bloom County Episode XI: A New Hope



## **Synopsis**

OPUS AWAKENS! In 2015, Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Berkeley Breathed began (without warning!) producing ALL-NEW Bloom County strips "for the first time in more than 25 years! Breathed released the new Bloom County strips exclusively through his Facebook page, to the cheers of devoted and delighted fans everywhere. These brand new strips have NEVER before been available in print "until now! All the wit, charm and biting satire that are trademarks of Bloom County and Berkeley Breathed are clearly on display and evident in this handsome new volume. Featuring all your favorite characters: Opus, Milo, Bill the Cat, Steve Dallas, Cutter John, and many more. Bloom County has come home and it's about time!

## **Book Information**

Series: Bloom County

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: IDW Publishing (September 27, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 163140699X

ISBN-13: 978-1631406997

Product Dimensions: 9.7 x 0.4 x 11.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 152 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #47,255 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #106 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Comic Strips #400 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Satire #5573 in Books > Teens

## **Customer Reviews**

"Bloom County is both an escape from and a mirror to our complicated modern world."

"Publisher's Weekly (starred review)"Cracking open Episode XI took me back a couple of decades, where I could lay on my bed and laugh at the naivety of Opus, the chauvinism of Steve Dallas, and the unblinking devotion to science of Oliver Wendell Jones. And that's worth every cent." "Ars Technica

Berkeley Breathed lives and works in Santa Barbara, California and is the proud owner of a gentle pit bull named Ridley, a deaf dachshund named Milly, and a refugee mutt from the Puerto Rican streets named Pilar--splendidly flawed dogs, every one.

This book brought a smile to my face. I cannot believe how much I missed Bloom County and Opus since I started reading the new adventures of Milo, Opus, Steve Dallas and the others. The Christmas subplot of Steve Dallas spending time with a young boy struggling with chemo was perhaps the most moving story that Mr. Breathed has ever done. After Bloom County was "retired" years ago, I tried to find a replacement with Dilbert and other strips, but somehow it just didn't have the same heart as Opus and company. Thank goodness, Breathed did a partial comeback with "Outland," and "Opus." And just to be a pain, I would argue with the first sequence where Opus wakes up from his "twenty five year nap." He did wake up again in the above mentioned segments. So our favorite penguin hasn't been oblivious to what's been going on in the past three decades. Being picky like that is what makes a fan, a fan. Mr. Breathed can be both heartfelt and yet very, very snarky. I don't know if I could say or do anything to upset the balance of how and what he writes, but he's the best at what he does. Anyway, Opus is back. Steve Dallas is back. and IMHO the return of Bloom County is one of the best draws in the past year.--JThreecarolyn3@midco.net

Yeah, I am an old fart that read Bloom County way back when. While my interest waned with that ugly orange cat and wherever Berkeley's mind went, I still was a fan of Opus and crew. Mr. Breathed captured my sentiments for a few short years. And now so many years later, he again draws many of the things the way I see them. And, "Gasp!", he is now trying to introduce WOMEN to Bloom County! Gasp! Let me admit it, he is funny with a sharp point. He introduces the perfect jab against this past terrible political year, "Two spaces after a period." He is not a proponent of either Liberals or Conservatives but skewers them both. This collection may not be to everybody's taste. That orange cat is still there. But, Milo and Brinkley still speak for so many of the few "elites" that remain. To think that intelligence is now an insult. Well, maybe Bill is right. Bleccchhhh.

What can be said about Bloom County? Nothing. I can't explain the attraction of the bizarre, surreal world of Bloom County in which an anthropomorphized Penguin, two children who never age, a divorced father and sundry others live in a boarding house, surrounded by an entourage of excellent characters like Cutter John, the paraplegic in a wheelchair that doubles as a Starship to all aboard, Steve Dallas - older but no wiser than he ever was when it comes to wine, women and song and ... well, you really need to take a look yourself. I started with Bloom County with the episode in which Cutter John and Opus has tied balloons to his "shuttle chair" but had been lost, presumed crashed into the sea. What caught me was Milo's headline in The Bloom Picayune (his having sworn on his

Rupert Murdoch oath of truth to treat the story with sensitivity) "Shuttle Chair Piles Into The Atlantic" - a picture of Opus with the caption "Squid Bait?". That was it, I was hooked on a habit that only left me when Berkley Breathed stopped drawing them. I tried to like Outland, the strip BB drew after Bloom County, but it didn't have the same punch for me. I don't "do" Facebook, so it was with great pleasure that I was able to buy this collection mumblety years down the line. The book starts with BB in Nimoy "I am not Spock, wait, yes I am" mode, just a bit too much for me but I took it as an honest expression of hope that he could still reach those fans he left behind as well as the newer ones his Facebookings had attracted. Then come the drawings, and one thing has become abundantly clear from examining them; Breathed has discovered that when one produces in the digital world, one does not have to face the Cartoonists Bugbear - space shrinkage. Every single cartoonist I ever followed with the possible exception of Larson (or maybe not, the old brain isn't what it was and it never was my friend) complained bitterly about the space they had in which to work. Well, judging by the level of detail in these strips Breathed is taking full advantage of The Infinite Drawing Tablet. This is a character-driven strip, so a new reader may find the first few samples slipping the clutch. Once you have traction I think you'll love it. I woke the house late one night laughing out loud at the results of the botched "explosive hairball" test, and I'd had very little to laugh about that day. I also recommend any of the earlier books you can find. There was the one with the Steve Burns Off His Chest Hair While Taking Part In A Tess Turbo Video episode, the Deahtung/Billy and the Boingers fiasco (I have the tour shirt somewhere) and who could forget the horrors of Penguin Lust? Not to mention the Shuttle Chair Affair or the discovery that tear gas explodes on flushing it down the pan or ...

Thank you Mr. Breathed, I needed a good laugh and SO HAPPY that Opus was only playing Rip Van Winkle. Especially now we need hope that there is a reason to laugh and Opus supplies the soul so totally lacking in the USA today. It is displayed on a bookcase surrounded by Opus and Bill. I am not sure I ever understood "Outland", and am not sure you really understood "Opus". But this, I grok. Thanks again, I look forward to the next installment which, like this, I will purchase pre-published and sight unseen. I am guaranteed it will not disappoint. Keep the faith, keep your head down and your powder dry. We need you and your creations in this Universe. And to anyone reading this, buy every "Bloom County" book if you do not already own them for they are timeless and as relative today as they were over 30 years ago. By the way, any chance of a "Billy and the Boingers" reunion album featuring Opus on tuba?

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