



The True Meaning of Smekday

By Adam Rex



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It all starts with a school essay.

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When twelve-year-old Gratuity ("Tip") Tucci is assigned to write five pages on "The True Meaning of Smekday" for the National Time Capsule contest, she's not sure where to begin. When her mom started telling everyone about the messages aliens were sending through a mole on the back of her neck? Maybe on Christmas Eve, when huge, bizarre spaceships descended on the Earth and the aliens-called Boov-abducted her mother? Or when the Boov declared Earth a colony, renamed it "Smekland" (in honor of glorious Captain Smek), and forced all Americans to relocate to Florida via rocketpod?

In any case, Gratuity's story is much, much bigger than the assignment. It involves her unlikely friendship with a renegade Boov mechanic named J.Lo.; a futile journey south to find Gratuity's mother at the Happy Mouse Kingdom; a cross-country road trip in a hovercar called Slushious; and an outrageous plan to save the Earth from yet another alien invasion.

Fully illustrated with "photos," drawings, newspaper clippings, and comics sequences, this is a hilarious, perceptive, genre-bending novel from best-selling author Adam Rex.



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Editorial Review

Review

Who knew the end of the world could be so hilarious? With a misfit cast of characters led by a precocious 11-year-old narrator named Gratuity "Tip" Tucci and a bumbling alien named J.Lo who has an appetite for dental floss and air fresheners, Rex's high-octane fantasy could fairly be called an apocalyptic comedy. After the Boov (technologically advanced aliens) conquer Earth (or Smekland, as they call it, after its discoverer), they decide that humans must live on preserves; all Americans must move to Florida. Tip, driving her mother's car with her cat Pig for a passenger, meets the unexpectedly helpful Boov J.Lo, who, she later discovers, has bungled a mission and is on the lam. Parallels between the Boov and European settlers and their treatment of Native Americans deepen the impact of the story, but the author goes well beyond delivering a single political message. Incorporating dozens of his weird and wonderful illustrations and fruitfully manipulating the narrative structure, Rex skewers any number of subjects, from Disney World to various fleeting fads. Some of the best jokes come from throwaways and from J.Lo's and Tip's attempts to understand each other (when Tip asks if his society has boys and girls, he says, "Of course. Do not to be ridiculous," and calmly lists the "seven magnificent genders" of the Boov). Picture book aficionados will already know Rex from *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich* and *Pssst!* (reviewed Sept. 10); now another audience can savor his wit. Ages 8-up. (Oct.) PW"

About the Author

Adam Rex is the *New York Times* best-selling author and illustrator of *Frankenstein Makes A Sandwich*. His other books include *Pssst!*, *Moonday*, *The True Meaning of Smekday*, *Fat Vampire*, and *Cold Cereal*. He also illustrated the Brixton Brothers series, *Billy Twitters and his Blue Whale Problem*, and *Chloe and the Lion*, all by Mac Barnett and *Chu's Day* by Neil Gaiman. He lives in Tucson, Arizona. Visit him at adamrex.com or follow him on Twitter @MrAdamRex.

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