

Danged Black Thing

Eugen Bacon

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Eugen Bacon's speculative short story collection *Danged Black Thing* ignites the dreadful reverberations of sacrifice and the unflinching trajectory of choices set in motion.

By embedding horror into the realm of possibilities, Bacon disarms modern comfort, twisting the mundane into towers of inevitable consequence. Given that what is taken for granted today may have devastating costs to come, the stories illuminate how renewable resources must have their respective time to recover. They weave together culture, variance in vernacular, and lavish settings, drawing a multitude of perspectives with an air of warning about them.

The juxtaposition of being dependent on the earth while also attempting to be timeless and durable recurs throughout the work. This ongoing conflict procures a perturbed, sinking feeling, reminding one of the troubles of modern life. In stories like "Rain Doesn't Fall on One Roof," "The Water Runner," and "When the Water Stops," pings, posters, and propaganda maintain control over the transformation of limited communal energy, so that it appears that humanity can sustain their dysfunctions. From elemental motifs to epistolary framings, the stories bring up the question of urgency to address where sustainability is directed, and who is exploited as a resource.

There is an innate solace and challenge in these stories, which are devastating and introspective about their abundant positions, collaborations, and mordant senses of subsequent bargaining. The insistent loss of time has a devastating smack and repercussions. Collaborative opportunities, like "Messier 94" with Andrew Hook and "The Falling Name" with Seb Doubinsky, as well as the solo "Unlimited Data," have eerie undercurrents, from the texture of opening with simple fruit to the flashback of love disintegrating.

The stories within *Danged Black Thing* build worlds that can transmute to provocative dystopias in a matter of a sentence.

ATTORIOUS RENEE AUGUSTIN (November / December 2021)

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