



The Immune

Doc Lucky Meisenheimer

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A genetically engineered, reproductive monster is the perfect catalyst for global mayhem—a time-tested story that rarely disappoints readers. *The Immune* is yet another spin on “run for your life before it eats you.” Readers who think the *War of the Worlds* radio show was executed with finesse will likely have a high opinion of Doc Lucky Meisenheimer’s nauseating “airwars” and his attention-grabbing style.

For the uninitiated, an airwar is a large creature with stinging tentacles that hovers over land and water, assaulting its animal and human victims before consuming them. Those fortunate enough to escape its poisonous clutches usually die in agony from the toxin. Only a small number of remarkably immune individuals can endure the onslaught of an attack, making them saviors of humanity—that is, until this elite group of fighters discovers a deadly agenda.

At the head of this high-profile army is John Long, an emergency physician. Intelligent, outspoken, and funny, his viewpoint takes the reader on an enjoyable escapade. The book’s sole weakness is an unrelenting onslaught of battle scenes with only short breathers between them. Typical of visual writing and of action films, this breakneck pace succeeds in sustaining the story until the very end, but it sacrifices character development.

This skilled author makes up for the lack of detail by showing his hero’s attributes, rather than merely talking about Long’s sterling qualities. Meisenheimer’s background as a screenwriter is apparent in his vivid, special-effects descriptions: “Below John, tentacles were writhing like a pit of snakes that had hot grease poured on them. The bellows pumped so furiously, small tears at the base of the hydrogen sac formed. He could hear a steady hissing.”

Few will resist the urge to keep reading. These fascinating yet repulsive scenes appear throughout the novel, propelling the plot with deceptive simplicity and a sense of urgency. Phrases such as “his lower leg was on fire from the digestive juices,” and “the carcass slammed his thigh from its forceful regurgitation” appeal to the ghoulish tastes of commercial sci-fi connoisseurs. This carefully edited book deserves credit for presenting entertainment fiction with the meticulous care seen in more weighty literary works.

Doc Lucky Meisenheimer is a dermatologist and Mohs surgeon living in Orlando, Florida. Meisenheimer is an accomplished screenwriter and film director. *The Immune* is his debut novel.

The ultimate experience in “watching” a story unfold, this professionally packaged book ensnares the reader in millions of wriggling, grasping tentacles—and is best enjoyed on an empty stomach.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (August 30, 2012)

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