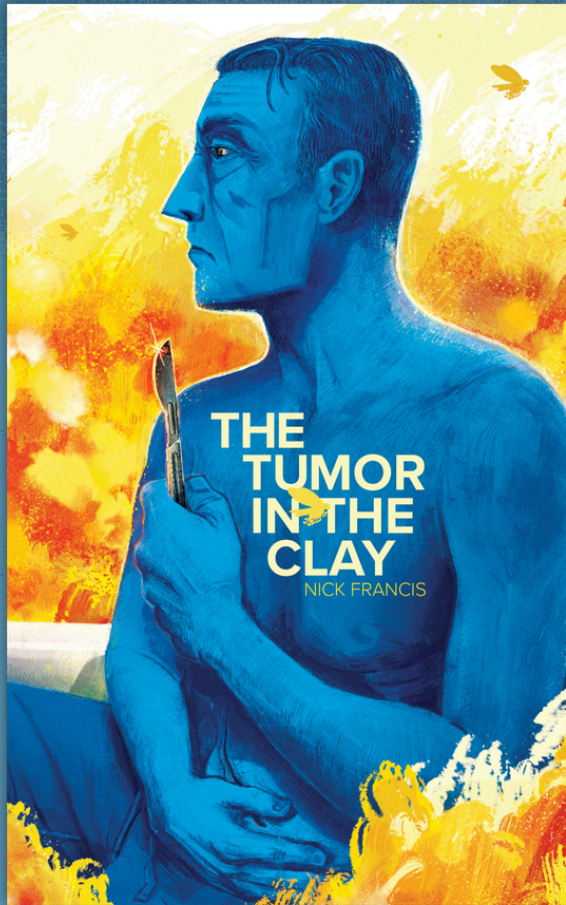


**THE
TUMOR
IN THE
CLAY**

NICK FRANCIS
PRESS KIT



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NICK FRANCIS' **THE TUMOR IN THE CLAY**

plunges into surreal depths as a regarded surgeon turns his scalpel on himself in a journey of self-redemption.

RELEASE DATE: 09.29.26

PUBLISHER: *Driftwood Press*

ISBN: 978-1-949065-44-2

FORMAT: Paperback

PRICE: \$29.99 USD

GENRE: Graphic Novel

PAGE COUNT: 232

CONTACT: editor@driftwoodpress.net

DISTRIBUTOR: Ingram & Asterism

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nick Francis was born in San Francisco in 1994 and now lives in Oakland, California, with his partner & their three cats: Kiki, Noodle & Blue. Working as a disabled illustrator and storyteller for: Fantastic Negrito's Grammy Award Winning Album "The Last Days of Oakland", and PBS & ITVS' animated documentary "BROTHER", and for The NYU College of Nursing & The Monterey Jazz Festival.



FOR ORDERS, EMAIL US AT EDITOR@DRIFTWOODPRESS.NET

PAGE ONE

ADVANCED PRAISE

"The Tumor in the Clay is an astonishingly immersive experience. My heartbeat quickened, my palms grew damp, and I could not stop turning the pages. I forgot every distraction of the real world and found myself completely drawn into the story.

The narrative begins with the figure of an elderly surgeon, sunk in quiet despair. The depiction is exquisitely detailed, yet what makes this work truly exceptional is that it relies in no way on dialogue or explanation. There are no words—only a sequence of images unfolding before the reader. In this work, the 'panels' are not merely a technique for conveying the story efficiently within a limited number of pages. Rather, they function as a mechanism that allows the reader to physically experience the agonizing passage of time itself. The reader is no mere observer but becomes a character compelled to live within the story. Breathing, tension, sweat trickling down—and even pain itself—are all conveyed with unmistakable clarity. This bold approach, which entrusts interpretation to the reader, is built upon a profound faith in comics as an art form.

The fact that this is a debut work makes it all the more astonishing. Nick Francis is an artist one shouldn't take their eyes off in the years to come."

— SHINICHI SAKAMOTO,
AUTHOR OF *THE CLIMBER & INNOCENCE*
(TRANSLATION BY AKIRA DENG)

ADVANCED PRAISE

"*The Tumor in the Clay* is a stunning achievement in visual storytelling. Nick Francis' Kafkaesque phantasmagoria of shifting visual language tells a story of affliction and healing, suffering and liberation, life and death, and ultimately the will to survive and thrive. Although we see shades of Otomo, Murakami, Kon, Mignola, and even Cronenberg, Francis is a true original, crafting one of the most beautiful and audacious graphic novels in recent memory—both deeply personal and painfully universal."

— CHRIS KOEHLER,
ILLUSTRATOR

"A haunting portrait of the insidious nature of pain, *The Tumor in the Clay* offers a radical, unflinching glimpse into the madness, the isolation, the desperation of chronic pain, and it catapults the reader into the stark and claustrophobic world of addiction and grief. Nick Francis has created a cerebral fever dream of a story, and this graphic novel will stay with the reader long after the final pages are finished."

— REBECCA DIMYAN,
AUTHOR OF *CHRONIC: A MEMOIR*

"*The Tumor in the Clay* by Nick Francis is a headlong, visually gripping plunge into the depths of an addicted, unravelling mind. It hurtles in turn through horror, revelation, transcendence, and the sublime—pushed along by enthrallingly sweaty, swarming art. This book grabs you, and does not let you go."

— ANDY WARNER,
AUTHOR OF *SPRING RAIN: A GRAPHIC MEMOIR
OF LOVE, MADNESS, AND REVOLUTIONS*

"*The Tumor in the Clay* is a raw and real look into the experience of grief, shame, and regret. The combination of beautifully striking visuals and a deeply vulnerable story takes you on a journey of pain and healing that held me until the end. This novel will stick with me forever, it had me holding my breath with every page."

— MARIE LUM,
STORYBOARD ARTIST IN LA

"*The Tumor in the Clay* is a thoughtful story about grief and healing, brought to life with powerful, poignant drawings. Each panel, line, and mark carries with it an emotional weight, seamlessly flowing from tension to calm. Nick's ability to capture the deep anguish of living with invisible wounds, while also revealing the unexpected beauty that comes from the struggle toward acceptance is deeply moving. This surreal, emotional, haunting, and poetic debut graphic novel will quietly find a place in your heart."

— DIANA NGUYỄN,
AUTHOR OF *BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE: YOU FORGOT IT IN PEOPLE*

LETTER TO THE READER

DEAR READER,

Thank you for finding your way to *The Tumor in The Clay*. By hook or by crook, I am glad. I spent about five years working on this book in its various states; the fact that it has made its way at long last to your hands is by itself a miracle.

In the Summer of the 2019 Covid Pandemic, grief began striking. First once, then again. Again. Again. Lightning strikes in an open, dry plain, one after another. Losing friends and family to Dementia, Covid, Ehler Danlos' Syndrome, Cancer, Drug Addiction. Grief bursting into little fires, growing and growing under the rain.

I was on assignment as the storyboard artist for an animated documentary about heroin addiction. Each week was spent writing & rewriting sequences meant to depict lonely suffering and the inner turmoil of a man clawing for recovery. It seemed natural at the time to try to use that moment to express the grief I was feeling internally. But it was inappropriate—too abstracted. All together a different story.

I needed a scalpel to delicately tell this new story, specific to this feeling of loss, and the deep frustration of illness. A new set of pages were needed.

Pages of grief.

Pages of desperation.

Pages of a human as an injured animal, trapped in a cage, flailing about, driven by the rush to do something—anything—to end the loss, no matter how irrational or harmful. This story, my first as a graphic novelist, brings us together with a surgeon who has lost his way in illness and loss, who will follow any drastic measure or risks just for something to change. Together we see firsthand the world he mistakenly falls into.

I humbly hope you enjoy it.

NICK FRANCIS

