



# Shopocalypse

*David Gullen*

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## **Shopocalypse** David Gullen

Novik and Josie have a lot of catching up to do. Two years he's been in jail; two years she's been waiting. They never want to be apart again. A stress-filled encounter with some "Old-fashioned Boys" at a chain eatery turns their best of intentions upside-down; they're now on the run and in possession of a super-hot sentient muscle car and over 190 million dollars, covered with a potent psychoactive power. Welcome to the Shopocalypse.

## **Shopocalypse Details**

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Author : David Gullen

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Genre :

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# From Reader Review Shopocalypse for online ebook

## Kazimiera pendrey says

this book seemed to take a little while to get into but after the first few chapters the book wa just great the writing is just wonderful the plot is amazing the ending just so unexpected i would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a good story

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## Melissa says

I was given this book in exchange for an honest review.

Not sure what to write that a one star doesn't explain. No character is relatable, the writing is like a bunch of book ideas thrown in a hat stirred and then poured out and wrote how ever they came out. Not sure what the author was trying to accomplish but failure was the only thing reached. I have read many books over many genres but have never found a book I could not finish or felt was only a one star. This one made me feel like I wasted my time and deserved less than a one.

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## Jayne Charles says

This is a well written novel by an author with an ear for entertaining dialogue and a startlingly detailed vision of the future. The competence of the writing is badly needed to carry a plot which defies comprehension.

Set in the USA at a time in the future where consumerism has reached fever pitch and people routinely rent storage space for their mountains of pointless purchases, the story begins with the release of a political prisoner – an opponent of the whole economic culture – who with a hop step and jump heads off with his girlfriend in a talking car full of drugs and cash, which attaches itself to them in what can only be described as a Knight Rider moment. For a while the car hogs all the amusing lines (in my head it talks exactly like Metal Mickey...just saying).

More characters emerge, the mad the bad and the morbidly obese, and for a while it is unclear where the story is heading, before the plot strands unite themselves around a plot to eliminate a super-rich tycoon and his family. As the story edged towards its conclusion I found it hard to keep track of the many characters – they had mostly got themselves into pairs – and remember their motivations.

It felt as though too little personality time was allowed, or rather that it was spread too thinly across a wide cast. The wisps of back-story we were given felt too flimsy to form a proper picture of the individual characters and for the reader to make a proper connection with them. On the other hand, what we did get – and mighty impressive it was too – was layer upon layer of detail about the way this new world looks and works, a world of “Meeja” and “Pharma” and “family friendly porn”. The details keep coming, and while some of the inventions – such as the “Fire and Forget” guns felt like pure fantasy, there were sections which felt like a very chilling prediction of what is to come. To quote chapter 35: “They drove into an emptier landscape. Active billboards scanned the vehicle, passenger ID requests were rebuffed by the vehicle’s firewall and the hoardings fell back to default adverts”. I read that bit and immediately thought, yes, that sort

of thing is going to happen sooner than we think. I also thought the author was spot on with his choice of character names - reflecting the sort of internationalisation they are likely to undergo as we head into the future. I thought the name of the President of the European Union (yes it's happened) was particularly apt.

Much of the background detail comes across in little snippets (supposed extracts from newspaper articles, broadcasts, blogs etc) included between chapters, and my favourite of these came between chapters 9 and 10, a brief report of some environmental activism – what a great piece of writing, I laugh every time I read it.

Disapproval of unbridled capitalism comes out of this novel loud and clear from the start, and as the message was ramped up towards the end I was half expecting the Literary wing of the 'Occupy' movement to phone up and claim responsibility. I got the picture, even if the plot eluded me. This is a very inventive and frequently very humorous author and I certainly wouldn't rule out reading more of his work

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### **Martin Owton says**

This is a big book, with a barrellful of ideas and a dozen or so points of view within its pages. It is near-future first-contact political crime thriller satire love story road movie.

With that much going on inevitably some of the threads and characters are going to work better than others. Most work well enough, but you do have to pay attention to who is doing what or you'll easily lose track of the complicated plot. One may conjecture that an editor with a major publisher might well have demanded that the plot be compressed and the characters culled to deliver a more commercial book. I think it is greatly to the credit of the author and publisher that they haven't done this. This is an ambitious and sophisticated book and it succeeds in far more places than it fails.

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### **Jaine Fenn says**

I have to confess to a vested interest in this book, as I know Dave, and introduced him to his current publisher. If anything that made me cautious when I came to it, but as it turns out, I loved this. It's a mad romp with deep underpinnings. I've written a bit more about the how and why on my blog, which you can read here: <http://www.jainefenn.com/index.php?/a...>

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### **Kristin says**

I'm a little confused. It took quite a lot time to read this book and i'm not as pleased as i hoped to be. It was hard to read me that book, too. I'm not so good in English and there was so many unknown words so it just took more time than it should take.

Like i said, i'm confused. I did not get this book. There was so much going on and it didn't get anywhere. In the end i was still confused. And it just shows that it wasn't the best book to read.

When i got the book, mu hopes were so high. I'm just sad that it wasn't good.

Good thing is that my vocabluary is now much better. :)

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## Liz says

I tried several times to read this book. I'm sorry to say I really did not like it. The story line seemed to have no direction other than to serve the as the author's soap box for all that he sees wrong with the world. I felt no connection to any of the characters and that lack of feeling led to a lack of interest in what happened to them. I got this book for free from Library Thing in return for an honest review, so I felt I owed it everything I could give to read it but really, after many attempts I just couldn't finish it. Maybe some day I will try again, at which time if my opinion changes, I will write a more favorable review. But for now, I can't recommend this to anyone.

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## Anushri Prabhu says

I received SHOPOCALYPSE from Goodreads as a part of their giveaway program. I wish I could read this book completely before reviewing it to do full justice. But unfortunately, I couldn't read the book beyond 180 pages. Even reading 180 pages felt like a big accomplishment!

I have read two sci-fi novels before. The very popular Hunger games by Suzan Collins and the not-so-popular Next by Michael Crichton. I thoroughly enjoyed both. But this novel was not what I expected it to be.

In those 180 pages which I read, I came across two main characters and several sub-main characters. A large part of the book focuses on the sub main characters. The focus keeps shifting from one main character to the next in each chapter. It isn't a flowy narrative.

This book won't make you laugh. It won't make you cry. It won't stir any emotions in you. It won't make you ponder even. :(

The concept is great. (The book talks about over consumption of resources) But the story is bland and dry.

P.S: Hardcore sci-fi lovers MIGHT enjoy this book.

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## Illiterate Bibliophile says

I was conflicted about what rating to give this book, so excuse me for starting the review with this, but I have to explain. In the course of reading I liked the book, it dragged quite a bit, but I still enjoyed it. However, the last act was so strong, being a series of essential confrontations, full of twists and revelations, that I devoured the final hundred pages in a heartbeat, while my reading pace for the first (approximately) 400 pages was way slower. Anyway, I'm settling on **3.5 stars**.

Like I said, the novel was too slow for me at times; it was just hard to get totally absorbed with the story. The idea and the premise are grand though. It's not easy to say something new in literature (or anywhere) but I guess David Gullen overcame this obstacle, offering his elaborate take on consumerism.

There is a lot of characters in *Shopocalypse*. I understand how some people may get confused with such abundance, but I, on the contrary, liked the jumping from one storyline to another. Sometimes (mostly, at first) it was a challenge indeed to keep track of who was who and what their ambitions were, but I see no fault in author's storytelling in this aspect. It's bound to happen if there are so many characters in the book. Speaking of them, I must say that they were well-written and felt real but their transformations/arcs weren't

obvious for the most part of the novel, so it's a flaw in my opinion. I guess it's the reason why the story lacked focus sometimes and why me and some other people, as I gathered, had trouble getting through it.

I liked the world D. Gullen described, balancing between consumerist madness and serenity of remote isles, clashing the world of nature with the techno-world. Done nicely; different and right atmosphere for every place.

I guess that's it. I can only emphasize that if you fall into the group of people (like me), who had trouble getting into the story, the final act may surprise you. I liked it VERY much from (view spoiler). Very good.

Oh, and also kudos for the book style. I enjoyed menu features—it was refreshing. Edit: And I loved the media inserts. I'm a fan of this device.

*I won the book in a Goodreads giveaway.*

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### **glitrbug says**

This story just doesn't work for me. The book starts as Josie picks up Novik as he gets out of prison. They happen to acquire a smart-car that talks, drives itself and is battle hardened. Mr Car has a trunk full of money dusted with psychotropic drugs. Novic and Josie decide to save the world from it's consumerism by going to malls, buying everything and putting it into storage. What? How will that help? The stores would be full of merchandise from warehouses by morning. I got stuck on that plot point and the rest of the book just seemed foolish. I got a copy of the book from the LibraryThing Early Reviewers giveaway so I finished it but I can't say I enjoyed it.

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### **Angie Lisle says**

Dystopian/speculative fiction reminiscent of bizarro and splatter-punk in its over-the-top shock nature.

This book presents a world that shows us a outlandish-but-potential future based on current events. Half the continent is overran by Canadian trees creeping north to the pole while half of America is desert and Permanent Larry, the hurricane that never ends, batters Nu-Orleans and what's left of the Gulf of Mexico. Capitalism rules the world but the bad guys are so obviously bad that only some of them bother to call themselves politicians, the rest are mobsters and CEOs. The majority of the population is brainwashed into not caring by government-condoned drugs and encouraged consumerism. Sound familiar?

Normally, I don't like books with sex in them because the sex becomes redundant. This book has a sex scene that I have never seen anywhere else. The scene also offered up the line that made me laugh the most: (paraphrased) "I don't want penetration but you can fist me if you like." (I kind of want that printed on a shirt).

If I have to read sex, that's how I want to read it - strange, disturbed, and not seen elsewhere in the literary canon.

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for a review.

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## Glen says

Parachute yourself into the dystopic future right around the corner, where clichés are taken to their extreme: America shops until self-storage is the only growth industry, the EU has glommed together to be a super Green alliance, and one man controls 60% of the world's GDP. Throw in a massive pile of money laced with psychotropic drugs and an ex-con who has the idea to use shopping as terrorism, to change the system. Gullen brings out a debut that's wickedly inventive and wildly ambitious. It creaks, sometimes, holding together this world and the various plot threads, but it's bloody good.

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## Katy says

**Book Info:** Genre: Speculative fiction

Reading Level: Adult

Recommended for: fans of speculative fiction

Trigger Warnings: murder, violence, torture

**My Thoughts:** This was a really strange book, and I ended up reading it much more slowly than I normally read books. There was just so much going on that I kept needing to stop and process for awhile. On the one hand you have the caper aspect of the story, which involves Novik and Josie (and Benny and Mr. Car and then Marytha) doing their best to crash the economy, which is currently being bolstered by the administration urging people to buy, buy, buy. Then there is a huge conspiracy/dystopian element from the US administration, doing their best to take over the world. There are aliens (or are there?), and the talking car, and crazy weird weapons.

This world is very different from our current world in a lot of ways. For instance, in this future, it is “cool” and sexy to be heavy. Morbidly obese women are the superstars of the day. The pop group Bariatric Babes, and Palfinger Crane's daughter, Ellen, are held up as icons. The global temperature is higher, which has led to many low-lying areas along the coasts, and small islands, being flooded. In response, the EU has gone green, and Canada has planted a lot of trees, as have people in the Amazon.

Some of the things I found quite funny, such as some of the crazy rants that Novik and Benny went on under the influence of the drug on the money. I had one particular one highlighted to share, but my Nook is not working properly, so I'm not able to copy it out. But there is some very funny stuff there. Mr. Car is also very funny, especially when he goes out on his own and we keep hearing the rumors from various blog and magazine articles.

The idea of the para-humans is very cool, although I don't know how realistic it would be. There would need to be significant changes made to various creatures to allow them speech, for example. But it was a cool idea and one I enjoyed.

The US government is scary in this book. The president is crazy, and has surrounded herself with more crazy people. Another scary thing is the Meeja technology, which as nearly as I can tell is basically an artificial reality system.

The characters are wonderful, all very well developed. If you like speculative fiction, especially with some great characters, and a plot well balanced between character development and action, check out this book. Very enjoyable.

**Disclosure:** I received a copy of this book from the LibraryThing Early Reviewer's Program in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own.

**Synopsis:** Novik and Josie have a lot of catching up to do. Two years he's been in jail; two years she's been waiting. They never want to be apart again. A stress-filled encounter with some "Old-fashioned Boys" at a chain eatery turns their best of intentions upside-down; they're now on the run and in possession of a super-hot sentient muscle car and over 190 million dollars, covered with a potent psychoactive powder. Welcome to the Shopocalypse.

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## Hayley Gullen says

Full disclosure: I'm his daughter. And normally I wouldn't go for this sort of science fiction, but the familial connection compelled me. I really enjoyed it. It was funny, weird, and a scarily believable satire on politics and consumerism. It was really quite moving in places as well: particularly Palfinger Crane's relationship with his super-obese daughter, Ellen. All the money in the world can't give him what he wants - a healthy daughter.

My one criticism is that sometimes it's quite hard to keep track of all the different characters, what they're doing and what their various agendas are. I do love the little updates/adverts/news bulletins between chapters though - they give colour to the Shopocalypse world and are very funny.

It even reminded me in places of David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest* - specifically the idea of Canadian terrorists, the dystopian near-future America, and the ludicrous advertising. Dad have you read that?

Anyway, well done Dad!

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## Monica says

This is the complex tale of Novik, a recently paroled man on a quest to save the world. That's also why he went to jail, for protesting in order to save the world. This also contains the Cranes' fight of Ellen's illness with the estrangement of the mother/wife story line also, President Snarlow's desire to revamp the economy, Wilson's desire to kill mafia mogul Gould, and Gould's thoughts of retirement after one last mission.

The number of story lines and perspectives are somewhat daunting, particularly in the beginning. However, it does get easier and flow better between perspectives as the story progresses.

As an interesting break between certain chapters, story specific articles and ads are inserted. The ones about the sentient car were my favorites.

The story line is complex and well written. The characters are authentic. Descriptions are crisp and scenic.



Overall, an intriguing read.

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