



Apocalypse Cow

Michael Logan

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When scientists with warped imaginations accidentally unleash an experimental bioweapon that transforms Britain's animals into sneezing, bloodthirsty zombies with a penchant for pre-dinner sex with their victims, three misfits become the unlikely hope for salvation.

Abattoir worker Terry Borders' love life is crippled by the stench of death that clings to his skin from his days spent slaughtering cows; teenage vegan Geldof 'Scabby' Peters alternates between scratching furiously at his rash and baiting his overbearing New Age mother; and inept journalist Lesley McBrien struggles forlornly in the shadow of her famous war correspondent father and the star journalist at the *Glasgow Tribune*.

When Britain begins a rapid descent into chaos and ministers cynically attempt to blame al-Qaeda, Lesley stumbles upon proof that the government is behind the outbreak. During her bumbling quest to unveil the truth, she crosses paths with Terry and Geldof, and together they set out to escape a quarantined Britain with the evidence and vital data that could unlock a cure for the virus.

Standing in the way are rampaging hordes of animals, a ruthless security agent and an army ready to shoot anybody with a case of the sniffles on the off-chance the virus has mutated.

Three losers. Overwhelming odds. A single outcome: the world is screwed.

Apocalypse Cow Details

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Author : Michael Logan

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From Reader Review Apocalypse Cow for online ebook

Michael Logan says

I am shamelessly adding my own book (without a rating) to get one book closer to my 2012 book challenge total. I proofread it this year, and since that has the word read in it I feel I am justified. Actually, I know that is very weak, but I am 8 books behind. I am desperate!

Marc-Antoine says

I was expecting fluff with a few laughs, but was happy to get so much more. It was great fun to read, and the story was enjoyable, and captivating. Looking forward to reading the sequel.

Erik Smith says

I first heard of Apocalypse Cow by Michael Logan from my nephew (Wotcher, Nate!), who had picked it up at the library. Knowing my love of horror/comedy/animals-eating-people stories, Nate stopped by to show the book to me. One look at the cover, sporting a black and white bovine, with the glowing red eyes, and it was "To the book store, old chum!"

At the bookshelf, I tugged on Animal Farm, which opened a secret panel in the wall, and we slid down a pole to the hidden garage, where we jumped into the Batmobi...er...the Bookmo...uhm...the car, and headed out, in search of what looked to be a great novel.

Now, I have been burned by great looking novels, before. A fancy picture on the cover; an interesting premise, spelled out on the back; blurbs that would lead one to believe that you are holding the greatest story ever told. But these things do not a great novel make. It's almost enough to put one off their feed, as they say.

Such is not the case, with Apocalypse Cow. Sure, it has the things mentioned above. A couple of nice blurbs; a good premise (killer cows, and the "unlikely heroes" trying to survive.); and that wonderful, red-eyed cow on the cover (Am I the only one who thinks that cow should be the new spokes-bovine for the American Dairy Association?).

BUT...

I most certainly was NOT burned when I bought, and read Apocalypse Cow. Michael Logan has written one of the best, if not THE best, horror/comedy/animals-eating-people novels I have ever read.

Logan's writing is crisp and clean; never getting bogged down. He does a fine job balancing the comedy and the horror, with a little pathos and tragedy thrown in. The story flows well, eventually bringing together the disparate characters, and story lines, and builds to a great ending.

But, what elevates this book to the top of the food chain, is the characters. From Geldolf: the gawky teen, bullied by his classmates, forced into veganism by his mother, and crushing on his math teacher, to Lesley:

the struggling journalist, who has the story of the year fall into her lap, to Terry: the slaughterhouse worker and lone survivor of the initial cow attack, Logan has crafted a fantastic cast of characters that you will love, and, in some cases, love to hate.

Oh, and did I mention Mr. Brown? Even in the middle of a cow apocalypse you need an evil government agent, who believes that the best solution to any problem is to shoot first, and make up the answers to any questions later. Gotta love him.

So, if you like horror/comedy, if you like killer animals, if you like well written, highly entertaining stories of any kind, I can't recommend this book enough.

Apocalypse Cow by Michael Logan: Bow down before your bovine overlords!

Mark Lawrence says

Last year saw the launch of the Terry Pratchett Anywhere But Here, Anywhen But Now First Novel Award. More than 500 manuscripts came chasing the £20,000 prize for previously unpublished novelists, and ultimately it was split between two winners, Michael Logan and David Logan (no relation).

The winning novels, *Apocalypse Cow* and *Half-Sick of Shadows* are more different than chalk and cheese, which at least are both high in calcium. The competition's requirements boil down to alternative, imaginative, weird – which is a broad remit.

In *Apocalypse Cow* Michael Logan gives us a fast-paced dark comedy stuffed with violence, sprinkled with sex, not unreminiscent of Tom Sharpe's work. He includes witty lines and observations Pratchettesque in their pointiness. We're served an homage to zombie apocalypse movies. The disparate gang of survivors in this case battling to survive the predations of zombie herds rather than zombie hordes. Zombie (well, infected) animals of all shapes and sizes attempt to first have sex with, and then devour, our heroes.

Now writing comedy is hard. First, you have to write well, then you have to be funny. One-liners are good, but you can't build a novel from them. You have to make characters readers will care about, characters that live and grow. Fortunately, Michael Logan (a journalist by trade) has done a solid job of writing and an excellent job of being funny. Without the humour this could be a decent horror novel (providing you could take the zombie squirrels seriously). It's a light and very entertaining read, failing only at the last hurdle when it seems to lose internal consistency and fall into a cartoonish finale. Frenchmen seemingly drawn from Monty Python sketches shepherd us toward a weak conclusion, saved to some degree by the very last chapter.

Half-Sick of Shadows is a very different beast. Where Logan M. gives us workman-like prose and a compelling plot, Logan D. gives sublime prose and a general absence of plot. David Logan writes magical lines, he works wonders with word, loops them around ideas and captures them whole for you. He also deploys the child's-eye view to highly amusing effect with innocent interpretation and off-beat observation.

The first half of *Half-Sick* reads like literary fiction of high quality, calling to mind *Angela's Ashes* (Frank McCourt) though perhaps only because both are first person accounts starting with young boys growing in Irish poverty. There are hints of supernatural but through the eyes of a strange child one might imagine them to be unreliable narration, at least for the first half of the book.

At about the halfway point, strangeness sets in, credulity becomes strained, characters exaggerate into caricature and yet you can't believe it isn't by intent – the trust in Logan's skill built up in the opening carries you forward. Strange is stacked on strange and things grow increasingly surreal. I can't claim that I 'got' the ending. I'm not sure if there's a concrete thing Logan intends for the reader to get, or if it's an exercise in ambiguity and mystery. Either way, both Logans disappointed me with their endings after delighting me (in very different ways) with their starts and middles. In neither case though did I feel my reading time had been poorly spent. I can see why these books won and why the judges were unable to agree to select one above the other. Both probably had implacable champions around the judging table.

The TPABHABNFN Award's first year has brought forth two diverse offerings, one entertaining and uproariously funny in places, the other intriguing, beautiful, and ultimately baffling. Both very worthy of your attention.

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Paul says

When scientists with warped imaginations accidentally unleash an experimental bioweapon that transforms Britain's animals into sneezing, bloodthirsty zombies with a penchant for pre-dinner sex with their victims, three misfits become the unlikely hope for salvation.

Abattoir worker Terry Borders' love life is crippled by the stench of death that clings to his skin from his days spent slaughtering cows; teenage vegan Geldof 'Scabby' Peters alternates between scratching furiously at his rash and baiting his overbearing New Age mother; and inept journalist Lesley McBrien struggles forlornly in the shadow of her famous war correspondent father and the star journalist at the Glasgow Tribune.

When Britain begins a rapid descent into chaos and ministers cynically attempt to blame al-Qaeda, Lesley stumbles upon proof that the government is behind the outbreak. During her bumbling quest to unveil the truth, she crosses paths with Terry and Geldof, and together they set out to escape a quarantined Britain with the evidence and vital data that could unlock a cure for the virus.

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There is a theory that postulates that a monkey hitting keys at random on a typewriter for an infinite amount of time will eventually type a given text, the complete works of Shakespeare being the oft used example. I have developed a theory with a similar premise. If an author is going to write a novel that has a cheesy pun in its title and features zombie enhanced wildlife then it is only a matter of time before I'll read it.

First things first, there is absolutely no getting around the fact that the plot is incredibly silly. That being said, there is a good chance you've already figured that out just by reading the title alone. Once you have accepted that, then the good news is that you will be in for a bit of treat.

Blending horror and comedy has always struck me as being an incredibly difficult thing to pull off successfully. The author takes the sensible option and has all his characters play the whole situation entirely straight. Though the initial idea of zombie wildlife starts off as an amusing notion, as events unfold the plot gets darker and darker. Like the bookish equivalent of *Shaun of the Dead*, things are a great deal of fun right up until the moment where you realise that no one is safe and some of the characters are destined to be dispatched in a variety of gruesome ways.

A personal highlight for me is that the vast majority of the action takes place in and around Glasgow. There is nothing better than reading about the apocalypse when it is taking place in the city you grew up in. Scattered throughout the novel, there are a number of small references that any Glaswegian would easily pick up on, this Glaswegian certainly did.

Apocalypse Cow is a difficult novel to compare to anything else. The best I can come up with is think *Night of the Living Dead* meets *Countryfile* and you are about half way there. I have to admit, the novel's end does leave some tantalising questions left unanswered. Like the best zombie stories, there is always a suggestion that there is more to learn and that if you think things are bad now they can always get infinitely worse. Overall a fun debut and I'll be looking out for more of Michael Logan's work in the future.

Apocalypse Cow is published by Doubleday and is available in both paper and ebook formats now.

Jason says

4 Stars

Apocalypse Cow is Grade 'A'-musing... This is a comedic horror novel that puts a nice twist on the zombie genre. Michael Logan has created a fun little read that is similar in plot to David Moody's *Hater* series. Only in this one, it is our animals that are doing the hating.

There are some laugh out loud moments in this one. The pacing is good. There are plenty of characters to like and to loathe. This is the perfect afternoon read.

Sure there is a pretty in your face political message in this one about animal rights, eating meat, and the nobility of the vegan. But, it does not detract from the fun of this read. You can chew the fat of the message later on...

“Let me get this straight. Your plan is to sit here and hope the good vegan vibes you’re sending out will protect us?”

Fanny and James both nodded.

‘It’s Judgement Day for all the carnivores, Geldof,’ Fanny said. ‘Those poor animals lived a life of servitude to fill mankind’s bellies. Now they’re fighting back. But the righteous will survive.’”

My favorite scene involves the main hero Terry, the abattoir worker, explains why he chose his profession.

“Terry sighed deeply. ‘When I found their bodies, the cows had fled the scene of the crime. But I swore I would avenge my parents’ deaths. I took a job in an abattoir, hoping one day to meet the cow that killed my parents and claim my vengeance.’”

A fun read that is easy to recommend.

Rebecca McNutt says

I don't get it. Was this meant to be funny, or just plain vulgar?

I don't like crude humor at even the best of times, but that's not my only issue with this book. It uses the hugely cliche zombie subgenre plot, the "jokes" are either incredibly lame or disgusting, and although it's written for an older audience, its style just screams "*immature 7th grader, proud of himself for writing a curse word on a school bathroom wall*". I just didn't find this book funny or original at all.

Lilyn G. | Sci-Fi & Scary says

You can find this full review and many others at Scifi and Scary's Book Reviews.

There have been many novels about the end of the world, but there's only been one Apocalypse Cow. Okay, so technically there's 2 because there's a sequel called World War Moo, but still. The beef (and pork? and chicken? Awww, crap!) has a, uh, beef it needs to settle with us. Hang on to your britches, folks, this book was moo-stly fun and udder madness!

This is going to be one of those books that you either love or hate. I absolutely loved it. I'm almost as hard to please with Comedy as I am with Fantasy books, but Apocalypse Cow hit the nail on the head. I did everything from snicker to guffaw, to choke on my food while I was reading.

“But good looks counted for nothing when you smelled of intestines.”

“Colin threw his head back to let out a laugh so loud and brazen in its bum-lickery it resonated through the office window”

“Behind wire -rimmed glasses, he had the eyes of a man who would strangle his own mother in order to get his inheritance early. Had Terry met him under different circumstances, he would have assumed he was a banker.”

“Let me get this straight. Your plan is to sit here and hope the good vegan vibes you’re sending out will protect us?”

-Michael Logan, Apocalypse Cow

Basically, the government screws up, and this virus gets released. The food chain gets fried. At first it's just the cows that are infected, but it soon spreads, and it's a rip-roaring read with some shockingly gory and also

sad moments acting as a balance to the hilarious zingers Logan casually tosses about during the udder madness of Apocalypse Cow. Its beefed up with enough action to keep the pace feeling almost frenetic, even when there's really not that much going on. The characters are disturbingly believable, though the representation of the vegan might offend other vegans.

I was surprised to find that I actually ended up caring about Geldof, the youngest of the crew, and even Lesley and Terry. The rest of them were take or leave (primarily because they were bull-headed toe-rags.) It was ridiculous, hilarious, disturbing and odd, and definitely supplants Year Zero as the best comedy book I've read in 2015.

Stuart Nager says

I picked this up because it won an award from (for?) Terry Pratchett. It also had an endorsement quote from him on the cover.

I didn't "snort out loud" once, and barely got a chuckle (those were mainly in the punny titles to the chapters). I finished the book: a tough slog at times, not because of density of writing, but because it was boring and predictable. I kept hoping I was wrong, that there'd be something just around the bend...

nope.

It takes the idea that I've thought of often with all zombie books/movies: why aren't the animals affected? Mr. Logan's entire premise is just that. The set up is the animals turn, the humans don't. I'm ok with that.

SPOILERS (seriously: don't read more of this if you are still thinking of reading the book:

Things happen towards the end that, with all that same set up, turns on a dime. The villain does turn, and then all of Great Britain does as well, even though our main characters who survive have been sneezed on/bitten/scratched during the book. No rhyme or reason why, and it all seems like a set up for a series.

I'll pass.

sixthreezy says

Obviously I picked up Apocalypse Cow because it was a book about zombies, and cleverly titled to show that the author had a sense of humor. One would assume that this book would be beyond silly, and not really worth much at all but for a few laughs. The cover, title, and plot summary makes you think this is just some B-level trash. In all honesty however, this book was entertaining as hell. I haven't read a book so genuinely fun and exciting since something like Wayside School back in the days of elementary school. Michael Logan did an outstanding job at making a story of zombies or infection unique, creative, and it stands out as some of the best work in the genre.

The book definitely kind of reads like a B-movie in the horror genre, but there's something about Logan's writing that is just laugh-out-loud hysterical. I haven't been tempted to laugh frequently when reading a book, or even as often as I did while reading *Apocalypse Cow* and that really speaks volumes for how great this book is. It's not just a silly book, and it's not full of only laughs and witty writing. The book is equally as disgusting and horrifying as it is hilarious, and it goes to show why Michael Logan won the Terry Pratchett Prize for this book even though it's his very first full-length novel. I was so impressed by Logan's writing, especially being that it was his first novel ever written. Everything was present at the beginning of the book to get you reading, all of the humor and comedy draws the reader in. Then as the book progresses, it gets more intense and a lot more metaphorical as the story shapes up. It is really such a perfectly layered work of fiction, it makes you wonder how Michael Logan has never published a full book before.

There's so much content in this book, and I wish I could talk about it more in depth to explain how this could be one of the greatest horror/comedy experiences I've ever had. I'm a huge fan of horror/comedy film, and to be as impressed by this as I am by one of my favorite films *Shaun of the Dead*, I'd say Michael Logan did a great job. There is plenty of blood and gore here, there are plenty of characters with variety to empathize with. Geldof (the Gray) was a very likable, innocent, but intelligent protagonist who serves as the main voice of the story. Lesley is your ditzy blonde character in typical horror fashion, and Terry is your bad ass guy that has to be the ring leader at times to get things done in the apocalypse. The greatest characters in this book however, are the infected animals. There are some outrageous and completely wacky scenes with these creatures, and their entrances into their scenes were always classic. From cows to pigs, and squirrels to rats, there was no shortage of animal gags and gross-outs. I would highly recommend *Apocalypse Cow* to anyone looking for a good book of laughter, a unique take on the zombie genre, or just a downright entertaining book. Don't let the cover and title fool you, this book won the Terry Pratchett for a reason. May Michael Logan milk the success of this book for as long as he wants, it is well-deserved, but please bring us some more this greatness please!

Originally posted at [sixthreezy at the movies & more!](#)

Heidi says

Three a stars: An entertaining but totally predictable zombie book.

Geldof isn't your typical teenager. He absolutely detests hemp because his mother insists that he wear all hemp clothing which he is extremely allergic to. His parents are liberal hippies who walk around naked, and they are strict vegetarians. His father spends his days gardening and smoking weed, while his mother preaches her beliefs to anyone who will listen. Terry spends his days working in a beef slaughterhouse where he mindlessly kills cows. Across town, Lesley is an aspiring reporter going absolutely nowhere. Soon all three of their paths will collide thanks to a virus unleashed among the cattle population causing the cows to become zombies. The virus quickly spreads throughout the animal population bringing death and mayhem. Terry and Lesley stumble upon the truth, and it is up to them, with the aid of Geldof and a few others, to get the truth out to the world. Can the trio survive the cow apocalypse?

What I Liked:

*Being a sucker for a good zombie book, I had to pick up *Apocalypse Cow*. Even though I was a bit disappointed in the predictability of the story, I found that I liked the characters, and that I enjoyed the twist on zombies. You will think differently about cows and rats after reading this one.

*There are three main characters. Geldof, an awkward, brilliant, teenage math genius, forced to acquiesce to his parents strong hippy views. Geldof longs to eat meat and he fantasizes endlessly about his neighbor

Mary. Terry is an average man who toils in a slaughterhouse. He is unable to form any romantic attachments because he is convinced he smells like rancid meat. Lesley is an intrepid reporter who has yet to receive her big break. I loved this rag tag band of characters, and I liked that there were misfit, awkward and struggling. The rest of the characters are just as interesting from Fanny, Geldof's liberal mother who believes animals will get their dues, to the crazed, meat eating neighbor next door. I liked the different personalities and watching them clash and then learn to work together. This is surprisingly a very character driven story. *Even though there wasn't much originality with the whole zombie virus aside from the fact that it affects animals. I did like the twist with the zombie animals. I also liked the sinister motives behind the zombie cows, and it was a bit terrifying to think that it could possibly happen.

*The story is full of blood, guts, death and mayhem as the population succumbs to rampaging zombie animals. You can expect some nasty deaths, and lots of action. I liked, though, that this wasn't all horror and gore. It has some surprising funny moments. The strong cast of characters also helps to balance out the horror. If you like your horror on the lighter side, this is a good one to pick up.

*The ending is satisfying in that it brings to a close the story without leaving a bunch of unanswered questions. It seems it is going to end well, and then the author throws out a tantalizing tidbit for the next book. Not exactly a cliffhanger, but it does end with a big hook for book two.

And The Not So Much:

*I picked up Apocalypse Cow expecting a unique zombie book, but unfortunately aside from the twist with the zombie animals, it plays out like a typical zombie book. You get the arrival of the virus followed by the quick and catastrophic destruction of society. The story line tracks a rag tag group on the run as they try and reach safety, and of course along the way, they encounter all kinds of obstacles and their numbers are diminished as they move along. It plays out like any other zombie book you have read. It does have the zombie animals and some humor going for it.

*I was led to believe that this was going to be a funny book. While there is some comedic relief in it, overall, the story isn't that funny. I was hoping for quirky and demented but that isn't what I got. Again, this is pretty much a regular zombie book.

*There is a twist at the end with the sudden mutation of the virus, and it didn't really make sense as to why all of a sudden the virus changes. It wasn't realistic especially considering the number of times the main characters were exposed.

Apocalypse Cow was an entertaining read that provides a new twist on zombies. I enjoyed the characters and story, but was a bit disappointed that the book ended up being predictable and that is played out like any other zombie book I have read. I was hoping for a bit more originality and I wanted more humor. Still if you are a fan of zombie books, this is worth a go.

I purchased a copy of this book. All opinions are my own and I was not compensated for this review.

Posted@Rainy Day Ramblings.

Ellie says

The news reports says it was a stampede that sadly resulted in the abattoir burning to the ground. But one cow didn't die and soon a virus has been unleashed which turns Scotland's cattle into slobbering, sneezing, flesh-craving and horny beasts.

Not only did a cow survive, but abattoir worker, Terry also made it through the massacre but is now being

held hostage in what looks suspiciously like a secret government research facility. The tip-off of the government's involvement falls into the lap of the worst reporter at the Glasgow Tribune, who's just lost her job. Geldof is a miserable teenage boy, ginger hair, English, vegan parents that force him to wear hemp and won't allow him to even have a sniff of meat. Their neighbours include Terry's meat loving cousin who also has anger issues. Can this motley bunch save the day? Or is Britain doomed to be nuked by the French?

There are some of you that will shy away from this because it has zombies in it. Yet the death is never the subject of the jokes. The characters mourn their losses and feel regret at leaving people behind. The humour is in the things that people do under stress and their reactions. Middle class suburbanites trying to hoist their Samsonite cases onto evacuation trucks. The vegan who is convinced her meat-free life will ultimately save her. The things that teenage boys do that could possibly be mistaken for a zombie attack. The squirrels! The kitten! Go on, read it and you'll see.

Humour is often under-appreciated in the book world. People want books that make them feel something but often dismiss books that will make them laugh out loud. It's hard to say in a review what I thought was funny because I can easily ruin the jokes for you but I can say that after chapter 18 I had to put the down for a few minutes because I was laughing so much. The kind the bubbles up when you think you're done.

Nats says

Firstly, for full disclosure I'm married to this man. Whether this means I'm a harsher critic or biased in his favour, I'll let you decide.

This is essentially my husband in book form: hilarious, a bit gross and a bit cheeky. It's a novel about zombie cows after all.

Apocalypse Cow is very visual, well-paced, the dialogue is great and the characters are funny. I read this during its many edits and enjoyed it every time. Although the topic is pretty unique, the writing style is similar to authors such as Jasper Fforde and Robert Rankin.

I'll stop there since you may not place too much value in my opinion, but it did make Terry Pratchett "snort with laughter".

Melki says

It started with the cows.

They were beyond MAD, sporting disgusting lesions and red, glowing eyes.

The virus spread quickly from animal to animal, and soon, even the cutest kittens were infected and...hungry...

Logan has dreamed up a fun story. Most of the tale is played for laughs, though there are some serious and violent moments. He takes the done-to-death plot device of having a small-band-of-survivors-trapped-inside-a-confined-area-by-a-swarming-horde-of-zombies and turns it sideways by having the zombies consist of cute woodland critters and former household pets. This is made even more delicious by having one of the survivors, an avowed meat-eater, constantly clashing with his rabidly vegan neighbor. Ah, the fun times these two get up to...

The whole book is a delightful exercise in pure escapism, although the bits about the government's involvement and subsequent cover-up make everything seem, well...just a little bit...plausible.

Wait! What's that scratching noise at the window?

Nooooooooo!

Lauraloves says

I was sent this book by the publishers, Transworld in exchange for a review. Now although this book isn't my usual genre, when I read the synopsis I really had to read it.

This book is about several unlikely heroes who need to try and get out of Britain as the animals are turning into bloodythirsty zombies. There is Geldof, who is born to hippy parents and is a vegetarian. However, as a teenage boy he is none too happy about this and craves meat. Their is Lesley, a journalist, although not a very good one who is the daughter of a high profile journalist and wants to prove herself. Lastly there is Terry, an abattoir worker who is one of the first to come across the virus in its horrific form. Together they must work together to get the proof out of the country and the formula to develop a vaccine.

One of the main concerns throughout the book is can the virus spread from animals to humans? And what would happen if it did. Now I am not a fan of zombies at all, to be honest the idea of them scare me and I don't always enjoy zombie books. Now this was good. There is a bit of Zombie theme in the book, but not enough to be scary. This was a very good twist on the very much overdone zombie genre.

This book is very very good. It has all different themes to it. It is very funny in places some parts of the book had me laughing out loud. For example when Geldof is having his teenage fanasties about his next door neighbour. Also it is quite a sexual book, so probably not one to lend out to youngsters, but very good for a more adult audience. At the same time, parts are quite gruesome and upsetting, but this is to be expected from a book like this.

The overall thing that struck me was if this really happened the world would be screwed, Britain is a tiny little island and we could just be cut out from the rest of the world which was a bit of a scary thought.

The ending of the book was left open a bit so I'm hoping that there could be a sequel in the future, I would definitely read it.

This book is seriously good, I would highly recommend it and would say . . . Read it :D

