



It Happened One Doomsday

Laurence MacNaughton

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This is one hell of a ride, and it begs for a sequel.

It Happened One Doomsday, by Laurence MacNaughton, is a fast-paced race against the apocalypse in which insecure, neophyte sorceress and shopkeeper Dru must rise to the occasion if humanity is to survive.

Dru's journey begins when a imposing stranger, Greyson, ventures into the wrong part of town and walks through the door of her occult shop looking for answers. To Dru, he shows all of the hallmarks of demonic possession. Thus begins a scramble to uncover sorcery's deepest secrets and unravel his possession before it unravels him—and maybe the world itself.

Faced with the end of the world, Dru gets by with the help of her friends, but the glimpses offered into these characters are tantalizingly superficial and often stereotypical. Dru herself is an “adorkable” pin-up girl who's insecure and supportive. Her non-magical boyfriend, Nate, is a skeptical, wealthy professional. Her friends are the shop's sole employee, Opal, a full-figured, sassy black woman, and her most frequent client, Rane, a statuesque blond sorceress whose friendship and admiration Dru accepts when she isn't worrying about its occasional romantic overtones. Greyson, with his tortured past and demonic possession, rounds out the group. Although everyone helps confront the apocalypse in his or her own way, these relationships are built more on shared experiences than intimacy. This makes for an action-packed plot, if also for some unsatisfying character development and growth.

Episodic in nature, the story unfolds in bold, cinematic strokes. Action sequences, particularly the final car chase, thrum with tension as Dru and her team streak through urban decay, mountains, high desert, and occult landscapes in sexy, demon-possessed muscle cars. Well-executed imagery and pacing make this a joyous thrill ride with a sense of peril. Interspersed dialogue and descriptions are often laugh-out-loud funny, and the cartoonish villainy of the demonic muscle cars and Dru's studious, pedantic application of magical principle provide levity.

A perfect summer read, *It Happened One Doomsday* doesn't lull. This is one hell of a ride, and it begs for a sequel.

LETITIA MONTGOMERY-RODGERS (Fall 2016)

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