



Booklist... Virtually tomorrow in England and Belgium (and one presumes the rest of the West), real sex and violence rule the media. The mayhem on Contraband, which broadcasts via mobile phones, is so popular that to meet the demand it pays for new content, which has made even, perhaps especially, young kids (their small size helps them video unobtrusively) entrepreneurs of sleaze. Older young (22) "citizen journalist" Toby is discovered videographing Contraband proprietor Tucker doing something (never specified) illegal and is coerced into finding Charlotte, star of Contraband's top-ranked video, recording her capture by terrorists in Afghanistan. A complicated chase ensues, which Behe and Elliott relate in chapters alternating between London in May and Belgium in June. The talk is nonstop, fraught with tech speak, Tucker's terminally cynical take on everything, and extreme-entertainment protester Jarvis' tough propagandising. Toby digs his own grave deeper by not divulging that he has met (heck, slept with) Charlotte until just before the showdown. At times barely comprehensible, Contraband is a disturbingly plausible vision of future media heading toward wall-to-wall snuff films...