

## What We All Long For

What We All Long for Deep truths simply explained Senate documents Novels The Works of the British Dramatists Philosophy and Religion The Chronicle The Cornhill Magazine The University correspondent and University correspondence college magazine (and The Educational review). The Girl's Own Annual The works of Leigh Hunt Harper's New Monthly Magazine Works The International The Gardener's Monthly and Horticultural Advertiser The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art Adventure The Bookman The Smaller British Birds. With Descriptions of Their Nests, Eggs, Habits, Etc Builder and Wood-worker Dionne Brand Helen Baillie Edward Bulwer Lytton Baron Lytton Sir John Scott Keltie Strong Leigh Hunt Henry Rider Haggard Henry Gardiner ADAMS (and ADAMS (Henry B.) Ornithologist.)

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they were born in the city from people born elsewhere what we all long for follows the overlapping stories of a close circle of second generation twenty somethings living in downtown toronto there s tuyen a lesbian avant garde artist and the daughter of vietnamese parents who ve never recovered from losing one of their children in the crush to board a boat out of vietnam in the 1970s tuyen defines herself in opposition to just about everything her family believes in and strives for she s in love with her best friend carla a biracial bicycle courier who s still reeling from the loss of her mother to suicide eighteen years earlier and who must now deal with her brother jamal s latest acts of delinquency oku is a jazz loving poet who unbeknownst to his jamaican born parents has dropped out of university he is in constant conflict with his narrow minded and verbally abusive father and tormented by his unrequited love for jackie a gorgeous black woman who runs a hip clothing shop on queen street west and dates only white men like each of her friends jackie feels alienated from her parents former hipsters from nova scotia who never made it out of subsidized housing after their lives became entangled with desire and disappointment the four characters try to make a life for themselves in the city supporting one another through their family struggles there s a fifth main character quy the child who tuyen s parents lost in vietnam in his first person narrative quy describes how he survived in various refugee camps then in the thai underworld after years of being hardened he has finally made his way to toronto and will soon be reunited with his family whether to love them or hurt them it s not clear his story builds to a breathless crescendo in an ending that will both shock and satisfy readers what we all long for is a gripping and at times heart rending story about identity longing and loss in a cosmopolitan city no other writer has presented

such a powerful and richly textured portrait of present day toronto rinaldo walcott writes in the globe and mail every great city has its literary moments and contemporary toronto has been longing for one we can now say with certainty that we no longer have to long for a novel that speaks this city s uniqueness dionne brand has given us exactly that donna bailey nurse writes in the national post what we all long for is a watershed novel from now on canadian writers will be pressed to portray contemporary toronto in all its multiracial colour and polyphonic sound but what we all long for is not only about a particular city it s about the universal experience of being human as walcott puts it brand makes us see ourselves differently and anew she translates our desires and experiences into a language an art that allows us to voice that which we live but could not utter or bring to voice until she did so for us

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