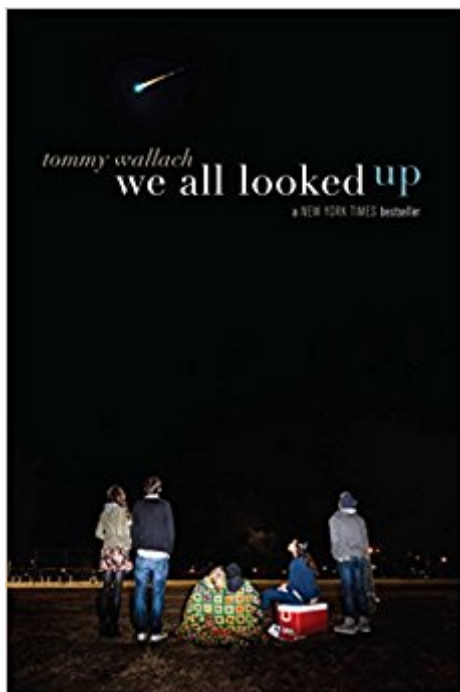


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We All Looked Up



Synopsis

Four high school seniors put their hopes, hearts, and humanity on the line as an asteroid hurtles toward Earth in Tommy Wallach's New York Times bestselling "stunning debut" (Kirkus Reviews, starred review). They always say that high school is the best time of your life. Peter, the star basketball player at his school, is worried they might actually be right. Meanwhile Eliza can't wait to escape Seattle and her reputation and perfect-on-paper Anita wonders if admission to Princeton is worth the price of abandoning her real dreams. Andy, for his part, doesn't understand all the fuss about college and career—the future can wait. Or can it? Because it turns out the future is hurtling through space with the potential to wipe out life on Earth. As these four seniors along with the rest of the planet wait to see what damage an asteroid will cause, they must abandon all thoughts of the future and decide how they're going to spend what remains of the present.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 10 Up • It's spring of senior year, and four students are questioning whether they're headed for the futures they want. For Peter (the popular jock), Anita (most likely to succeed), Andy, (the slacker stoner), and Eliza (the photographer with a reputation), the pressures of school, friends, and family feel massive until the announcement that an asteroid is on a collision course with Earth. Suddenly the future isn't so important. Wallach has created an accessible cast of

realistic teens struggling with identity, family, and loyalty. Substantial language, casual sex, drugs, and occasional violence occur throughout, but it almost always feels authentic to these teens and the world they're living in; even their worst mistakes feel relatable and worthy of empathy given the world-ending circumstances. Many adult characters feel one-dimensional, but the sense of the teens' urgency to live is palpable. In following his four protagonists as their lives converge, Wallach has written a coming-of-age novel with a captivating existential twist: What is truly important at the end of the world? VERDICT Fans of gritty and apocalyptic fiction won't be disappointed. —Amy Koester, Learning Experiences Department, Skokie PL --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

* —“In this stunning debut...Wallach pierces his darkness with tenderness and humor. A thought-provoking story that will bring out readers' inner philosophers.” (Kirkus Reviews, STARRED REVIEW) —“Tommy Wallach's *We All Looked Up* is a triumphant debut — this generation's *The Stand*. It is at once troubling, uplifting, scary, and heart-wrenching, and written with so much compassion for our fragile hold on the fleeting here and now. A glorious, wonderful, completely unforgettable novel.” (Andrew Smith, author of *Winger*, *Grasshopper Jungle*, and *100 Sideways Miles*) —“The story twists in unexpected ways, making it at times chilling but also hopeful...Wallach's debut is...a literary *Breakfast Club* for a modern generation, and it will surprise readers expecting another clunky dystopian novel with its solid, realistic writing.” (Booklist) —“Wallach has created an accessible cast of realistic teens struggling with identity, family, and loyalty | Fans of gritty and apocalyptic fiction won't be disappointed.” (School Library Journal) —“This compelling, well-written narrative, which offers sometimes raw insight into human motivation and behavior, will have readers racing to the final pages and pondering its ideas long after.” (VOYA, STARRED REVIEW) “Debut novelist Wallach increases the tension among characters throughout, ending in a shocking climax that resonates with religious symbolism.” (Publishers Weekly, STARRED REVIEW) “It's a dark novel, particularly as things fall apart and stop working (many people abandon even important posts to be with their loved ones), but Wallach uses black humor, sharp literary references (Vonnegut gets some attention, for example), and startlingly beautiful moments of true kindness to balance the dismal aspects.” (The Children's Bulletin)

This is my favorite book, next to the *Perks of Being a Wallflower*. I've given it to many of my friends, who all also loved it. It's a book for highschoolers, and it's fiction. Obviously. So if you don't want

that, don't post a negative comment later. This book was wonderful, and had real social interaction and showed teenagers as real people instead of the "head over heels like omg" type of teen. It explores dreams and goals, and what would happen if we all found out the world was coming to an end. Speaking of end, the ending is the best part.

We All Looked Up was an unexpected pleasure. It didn't take me long to realize that this book was not going to be the action packed apocalyptic thriller I was expecting. When we first meet the cast of characters through the author's seamless switching of points of view, I was skeptical. All of these characters seemed pretty stereotypical, and the pacing seemed rather slow. The entire apocalyptic event seemed to take a back seat to a slew of usual teen problems. Then, something strange began to happen. All of these characters started to break free from their cliches. The jock begins to wonder if true satisfaction can ever be found in athletic victory, The school slut reveals herself to be a young woman of unexpected depth, and the smart girl with the perfect life is all of a sudden not so perfect. Oh yeah, and an asteroid is on a collision course to make everything irrelevant. The author follows each of these characters as they struggle with coming to terms with the end of the world, and as they learn that the things they held most dear were actually of very little importance. To see these young people struggle with understanding what really matters in life at a time when they have so little time left made for an absolutely riveting read. To feel such levels of suspense and anticipation in what is essentially a character driven novel is a testament to the author's fine writing and strong grasp of a teen voice. I totally believed in each of these characters, and by the end cared deeply for all of them. *We All Looked Up* addresses issues of forgiveness, mercy, second chances, and grace. Some will say that those elements give this book a certain religious tone or subtext. I can't disagree with that, although I will admit to being a bit surprised that the religious elements weren't more overt. It's the end of the world, so it shouldn't be surprising that these teens would turn toward religion. Instead, they turn toward ideas and philosophies, and those are what form the subtext of this novel. My 15 year old son recently informed me that teenagers today are searching for answers to the big questions. Coming of age now involves more than puberty - now teens entering the adult world are looking for answers to the meaning of life as they search for purpose. The philosophical explorations of the teens in this book address some of those questions, and this is the reason that I think this novel has a great chance of becoming a new teen classic. This is a compelling and thoughtful read that is most appropriate for older teens. The sophisticated thoughts and ideas developed here will be best appreciated by young readers facing their own futures and wondering what is most important to them. A caution to parents of younger teens: Be aware that this book

contains language, sexual situations, drug use and violence before making a decision to share this with teens under the age of fifteen. *We All Looked Up* will stay in my memory for quite a while and will likely be one of the few books I wish to take out and re-read. A powerful and enthusiastic recommend.

Four high school seniors who couldn't be more different are suddenly thrust into each other's lives when they are no longer worrying about college applications or life after graduation, but about just living when an asteroid is headed straight for Earth. They come to need each other more than they will realize, and the reader needs them too. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys YA literature, as well as anyone looking for a great story of love, life, and friendship. 5/5 stars.

We All Looked Up is my favorite read of 2015 so far. I am a fan of realistic novels with strong plots and well-drawn, relatable characters (I'm not that unusual here), and oh boy did I love this book. I love how the characters are far, far from perfect and make plenty of realistic mistakes. Sometimes I feel like multiple POV novels don't work, but that's because it's a hard trick to pull off, and Wallach pulls it off beautifully. This book was funny, sad, thought-provoking, and interesting.

When I first heard about this book I knew I had to read it, and in the end I'm gonna say I'm actually satisfied. Though *We All Looked Up* wouldn't be named as one of my favorites of all time it's a different type of your everyday apocalypse story. I watched as the characters grew as a person and learned how to shape themselves into that person they were meant to be all along. Though the middle was pretty slow the end definitely redeemed itself. I just wish they didn't kill off the one character I actually liked, but that's real life. And this book carries a lot of it.

I loved every part of the novel. So much truth to the questions everyone has about life. I really enjoyed how you see life through the prospective of 4 totally different characters and how they come together. This book really hit home for me and I hope that it does for others. It's an emotional read about the appreciation for life's mystery and love for others.

This isn't your typical apocalyptic fiction. Wallach has taken a group of average high schoolers and set their ordinary teenage struggles against the backdrop of a slowly pending apocalypse. What do you do when an asteroid is on a collision course with the earth and has the potential to wipe out all life? What are your priorities when there may no longer be a future? He addresses these questions

through a typically angsty group of teens drawn to change what they can as the asteroid approaches. It was a dark, intriguing read that somehow still managed to be beautiful and hopeful. Just about everyone can probably see bits their teenage self in one of the characters - each of whom is nicely developed. The book was a page turner from beginning to end.

While I wasn't sure what I was getting into with this read, as I watched a group of teenagers face their impending doom, I understood the variety of feelings and range of crazed actions by all. By the end, the truth is that the asteroid killing everyone is not what really matters...if you seem the answer to that, you will be disappointed.

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