



Long for This World: A Novel

Michael Byers

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This wise and richly symphonic first novel by the award-winning author of *The Coast of Good Intentions* is a thoroughly contemporary family drama that hinges on a riveting medical dilemma. Dr. Henry Moss, a dedicated geneticist, happens upon a possible cure for a disease that causes rapid aging and early death in children. His discovery may hold the key to eternal youth, but exploiting it is an ethical minefield. Henry must make a painful choice: he can save the life of a critically ill boy he has grown to love — at the cost of his career — or he can sell his discovery for a fortune to match the wealth of his dot-com-rich Seattle neighbors. For help Henry turns to his close-knit family, and in their intimately detailed lives a story blossoms of unforgettable characters grappling with their own demons. Henry's wryly intelligent wife, Ilse, longs to rediscover some passion as she faces middle age and languishes in a dead-end job. Their daughter, a high school basketball star, suffers setbacks and the pangs of early love, while their sweet, hapless son drifts into adolescence. These utterly real characters inhabit a story that, in Elizabeth Berg's words, "will move you to tears and make you laugh out loud. It will also probably make you lie in bed at night and think about things that should be thought about: medical ethics, the moral choices of everyday life, the meaning of friendship and love and compassion, the need for connection."

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