



## All She Was Worth

By Miyuki Miyabe

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### All She Was Worth By Miyuki Miyabe

Here is a deftly written thriller that is also a "deep and moody" (NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW) journey through the dark side of Japan's consumer-crazed society. Ordinary people plunge into insurmountable personal debt and fall prey to dangerous webs of underground creditors-so dangerous, in fact, that murder may be the only way out. A beautiful young woman vanishes, and the detective quickly finds she is not whom she claims to be. Is she a victim, a killer, or both? In a country that tracks its citizens at every turn, how can two women claim the same identity and then disappear without a trace?

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## All She Was Worth By Miyuki Miyabe Bibliography

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- 296 pages

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Recovering from a leg injury, a 43-year-old Tokyo police inspector named Shunsuke Honma realizes how out of touch he has become when a relative asks him to make some private inquiries into the disappearance of his fiancée. While he wasn't paying attention, it seems that everyone in the country but Honma has been caught up in a consumer feeding frenzy--going into heavy debt and declaring bankruptcy at a snowballing rate. This engrossing story of the search for happiness through shopping marks the first appearance in English of one of Japan's leading writers.

### From Publishers Weekly

The horror in this beautifully fashioned tale of stolen identity lies not in the cold-blooded crimes but in the motive? a desperate hunger for consumer goods. Shunsuke Honma, a widowed 43-year-old Tokyo police inspector with a 10-year-old son, is on disability leave. The boring cycle of idleness punctuated by painful physical therapy sessions comes to a halt when a nephew asks for Honma's help in finding his missing fiancée, whom he knows as Shoko Sekine. As Honma's search intensifies, he realizes the fiancée had actually assumed Sekine's identity and possibly killed her. For the American reader, the jewel in this enormously compelling novel is the portrait of working- and middle-class Japanese getting caught in a cycle of astronomical personal debt in order to enjoy the good life. Also eye-opening is Japan's elaborate registry system for keeping track of its citizenry. In order to become Shoko Sekine, the impostor had to perpetrate an ingeniously elaborate series of hoaxes and lies. Honma is tenacious, methodical, an attentive listener with a retentive memory and the ability to connect disparate bits of information. The trail takes him back through the real Sekine's history and into the life of the other woman, whose family ran afoul of vicious loan sharks. Miyabe drives her complex plot with spare prose, combining expert pacing and psychological nuance to ultimately haunting effect. (Feb.) FYI: All She Was Worth was named Best Novel of the year and Best Mystery for 1992 in Japan.

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### From Library Journal

This popular Japanese writer's work, translated admirably well, offers finely detailed narrative, Tokyo backdrops, and an approachable police detective. Shunsuke Honma, the 42-year-old investigator, looks for a young woman while recuperating from a gunshot wound. Honma soon discovers that a relative's missing fiancée had more to hide than a bankruptcy in her past: she assumed another woman's identity and may have killed to do so. Honma struggles with this unofficial job, with his young son, and with self-doubt? all of which add subtle complication and psychological depth to a masterful plot. Super work from an award-winning author.

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### **Dorothy Payne:**

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