



At What Cost

James L'Etoile

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In a dark and unrelenting thriller, a father must hunt down a killer, all while trying to save his own sick and ailing son—until twists in the case reveal a sinister connection between the two.

Detective John Penley and his partner, Paula Newberry, of the Sacramento Police Department, together must lead the investigation into three murders in six weeks. Each body is missing its internal organs, but, for Penley, the creepiest factor of all is the personalized message the killer left behind for him—a message attached to a human kidney. Penley, who has a son on the kidney-transplant waiting list, suddenly realizes the attack may be personal—and unless he is able to outwit the sadistic and cunning killer, he may fall into a trap that could mean the end of his career for good.

At What Cost is a mystery that presents an intriguing moral dilemma at its center: Detective Penley must decide whether to fulfill his duty as an officer, trusting that his son will one day get the kidney that he needs, or to conspire, when the opportunity presents itself, with the very man he is trying to capture, in order to get his son the operation that could save his life. The first in this gripping series, *At What Cost* finds its power in the moral questions and gray areas that it raises, even as it delivers unrelenting suspense and action. Though the final twist at the end may lead to some additional questions, *At What Cost* is a strong debut mystery from a writer confident in his craft.

STEPHANIE BUCKLIN (Winter 2016)

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