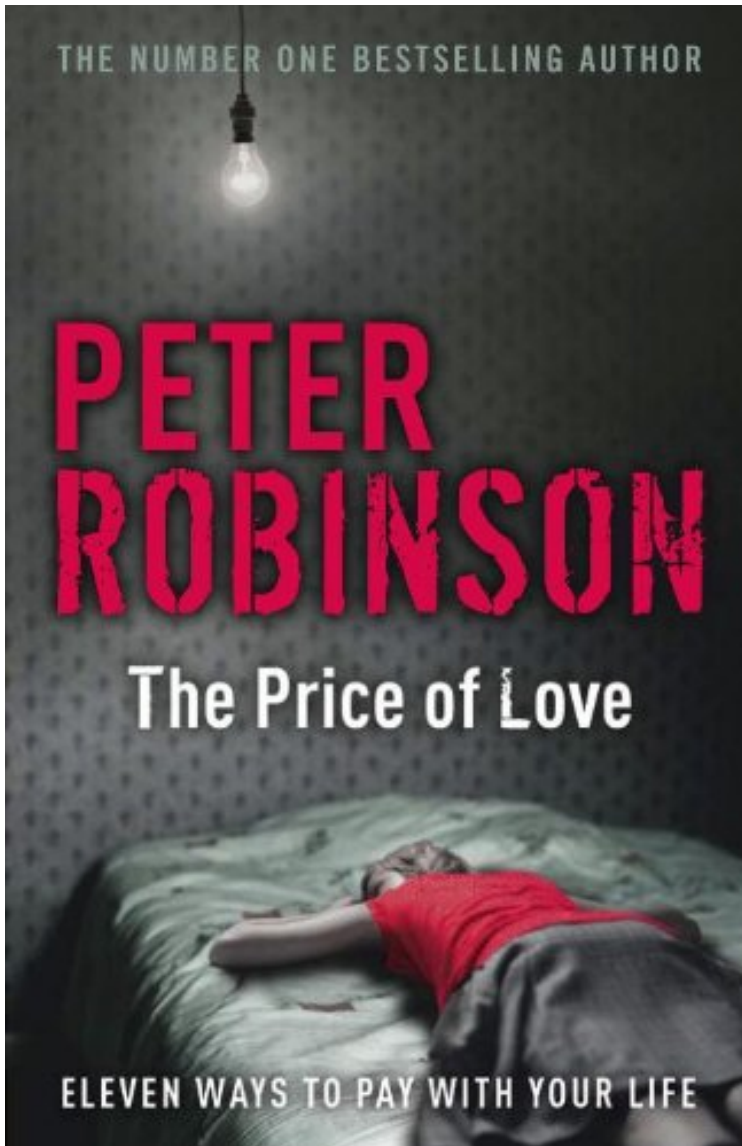


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The Price of Love: including an original DCI Banks novella (English Edition)



Par Peter Robinson
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWhen DCI Alan Banks arrived in Eastvale his life was every bit as much of a mess as it is now. But he is holding an envelope that could change everything he understood about the events that sent him north twenty years ago.Walking again the narrow alleys and backstreets of his mind, he remembers the seedy Soho nights of his last case - dubious businessmen in dodgy clubs, young girls on the game. And a killer on the loose.In addition to the brand-new novella that fills in the gaps in Banks's life before Yorkshire, Peter Robinson gives us ten more brilliant and eclectic stories that have never before been published in the

UK. The Eastvale Ladies' Poker Circle finds that murder may be just another game of risk. Is a suitcase of cash worth a man's head on a plate? And tragedy leads a young boy to learn the price of love . . . ExtraitAn excerpt from the new novella about DCI Alan Banks, Like A Virgin, one of three stories about Banks in The Price of Love. In the soft light of the red-shaded bulb that hung over the centre of the room, the girls body looked serene. She could easily have been sleeping, Banks thought, as he moved forward to get a better view of her. She lay on her back on the pink candlewick bedspread, covered from neck to toe by a white sheet, hands clasped together above the swell of her breasts in an attitude of prayer or supplication, her long dark hair spread out on the pillow. Her pale features were delicate and finely-etched, and Banks imagined she had been quite a beauty in life. He wondered what she had looked like when she smiled or frowned. Her hazel eyes were devoid of life now, her face free of makeup, and at first glance there wasnt a mark on her. But when Banks peered closer, he could see the petechial hemorrhages, the tiny telltale dots of blood in her conjunctiva, a sign of death by asphyxia. There was no bruising on her neck, so he guessed suffocation rather than strangulation, but Dr. OGrady, the Home Office pathologist who knelt beside her at his silent ministrations, would be able to tell him more after his in situ examination. The room was small and stuffy, but the Persian-style carpet and striped wallpaper gave it a homely touch. It seemed well-maintained, despite its location on the fringes of Soho. No sleazy backstreet hovel for this girl. The window hadnt been open when Banks arrived, and he knew better than to tamper with the scene in any way, so he left it closed. There wasnt much space for furniture a small dressing table with mirror, a washstand in the corner next to the cubicle WC, and a bedside table, on which stood a chipped enamel bowl where a facecloth floated in discoloured water. In the drawer were condoms, tissues and an assortment of sex aids. Did she live here? Banks didnt think so. There were no clothes and no cooking facilities. The victim could have been anywhere between fifteen and twenty-five, Banks thought, and her youth certainly added to the aura of innocence that surrounded her in death. Whether she had appeared that way in life, he didnt know, but he doubted it. Someone had clearly gone to great pains to make her look innocent. Her legs were stretched out straight together, and even under the sheet she was fully dressed. Her clothes a short skirt, patent leather high heels, dark tights and a green scallop-neck top were provocative, but not too tarty. Much more tasteful than that. So what was it all about? Her handbag contained the usual: cigarettes, a yellow disposable lighter, keys on a fluffy rabbits foot ring, makeup, tampons, a cheap ballpoint pen and a purse with a few pounds and some loose change. There was no address book or diary and no credit cards or identification of any kind. The only item Banks found of any interest was a creased photograph of a proud, handsome young man in what looked like his best suit, bouncing a little girl on his knee. There was a resemblance, and Banks guessed it was the victim and her father. According to the girlfriend who had found her, Jackie Simmons, the victims name was Pamela Morrison. Banks went back to stand in the doorway. He had quickly learned that the fewer people who entered a room before the SOCOs got to work, the better. He was on detachment from Soho Division to the West Central Murder Squad. Everything was squads and specialists these days, and if you didnt find your niche somewhere pretty fast, you soon became a general dogsbody. Nobody wanted that, especially Banks. He seemed to have a knack for ferreting out murderers, and luckily for him the powers that be in the Metropolitan Police Force agreed. So here he was. His immediate boss, Detective Superintendent Bernard Hatchard, was officially in charge of the investigation, of course, but he was so burdened by paperwork and public relations duties that he rarely left the station and was more than happy to leave the legwork to his DI and his oppo DS Ozzy Albright as long as he got regular updates so he didnt sound like a wanker in front of the media. Banks liked the way things were, but lately he had started to feel the pressure. It wasnt that there were more murders to deal with, simply that each one seemed to get to him more and take more out of him. But there was no going back. That way lay a desk piled with papers or, worse, traffic duty. He would just have to push on through whatever it was that was dragging him down, keeping him awake at night, making him neglect his family, drink and smoke too much . . . the litany went on. Harry Beckett, the police photographer was next to arrive, and he went about his business with the usual professional detachment, as if he were photographing a wedding. Dr. OGrady, who had been called from a formal dinner at the Soho Club, not far away, finally finished his examination, stood up and gave a weary sigh. His knees cracked as he moved. Im getting too old for this, Banks, he said. And he was looking old, Banks thought. Neat but thinning grey hair, the veins around his nose red and purple, perhaps due to his known fondness for fine claret. Any idea when she might have been killed? Banks asked. Somehow, I knew youd ask me that first, the doctor said. None of this is written in stone, mind you, especially given the temperature in the room, but judging by the rigor Id say shes been dead since last night, say between ten and one in the morning. Revue de

Outstanding story collection....Banks fans will be delighted....An excellent introduction to one of the best voices in contemporary crime fiction. (Publishers Weekly (starred review))This collection distinguishes itself from recent crime anthologies....The final novella is a deeply satisfying procedural. (Library Journal)The writing is, as always with Robison, colorful and evocative, and the characters are brilliant in their unpersonable way. This book is a must for Peter Robison completists, of course, but also for anyone who appreciates good stories well told. (Globe and Mail (Toronto))