

At What Cost?

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Rebecca Tanner is going home. A small town girl who left to chase her dreams in the city, she has a successful career, a happy family, yet there is something still missing. A trip to visit her parents in the small town where she grew up rekindles memories of a life she never fully left behind. Shagbark, a small town nestled in the hills of western Pennsylvania is a place where families have lived for generations and everyone knows one another. Rich in memories and in community, people there have struggled in recent times to make ends meet. Rebecca moves back home to the now abandoned farm once run by her grandmother with three children and a husband of her own. In this place where her fondest childhood memories were made, she hopes her children will connect to the land like she once did and for her family to find happiness. Not without struggle, her family finds a new rhythm to this country life, in the people who make up this small town, the bounty of nature all around them, and in each other. Rebecca's dream seems to be coming closer to reality, but then an opportunity arises which changes everything. Natural gas is discovered in the area. With plentiful Shale creating the opportunity for a local economic boom the likes of which hadn't been seen for decades, the Tanners find themselves caught up in the euphoria of the situation. Everything seems perfect until Rebecca faces an unforseen and personal consequence of having industry in their own backyard when her daughter becomes sick, changing everything once more. Balancing health risks versus financial benefits, Shagbark begins to tear apart at the seams as neighbors become adversaries, friendships become strained, families become divided, and they all face difficult choices about just what future they want for themselves. The Tanner family is at the heart of these struggles, as these difficulties reveal to them what really matters. Inspired by real personal experiences happening to families and towns throughout western Pennsylvania, this book looks at the impact of natural gas drilling and shows just how much it is changing how these people live. At What Cost is their story, the people of this and every small town who struggle to find the balance between the past that made them, the future they hope for, and an uncertain present where they face important and difficult choices where there is no one right answer.



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