



The Kept: A Novel (P.S. (Paperback))

James Scott

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Set in rural New York state at the turn of the twentieth century, *The Kept* is the superb literary debut by James Scott—a propulsive novel reminiscent of the works of Michael Ondaatje, Cormac McCarthy, and Bonnie Jo Campbell, in which a mother and her young son embark on a quest to avenge a terrible and violent tragedy that has shattered their secluded family.

In the winter of 1897, a trio of killers descends upon an isolated farm in upstate New York. Midwife Elspeth Howell returns home to the carnage: her husband, and four of her children, murdered. Before she can discover her remaining son Caleb, alive and hiding in the kitchen pantry, another shot rings out over the snow-covered valley. Twelve-year-old Caleb must tend to his mother until she recovers enough for them to take to the frozen wilderness in search of the men responsible.

A scorching portrait of a merciless world—of guilt and lost innocence, atonement and retribution, resilience and sacrifice, pregnant obsession and primal adolescence—*The Kept* introduces an old-beyond-his-years protagonist as indelible and heartbreaking as Mattie Ross of *True Grit* or Jimmy Blevins of *All the Pretty Horses*, as well as a shape-shifting mother as enigmatic and mysterious as a character drawn by Russell Banks or Marilynne Robinson.

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