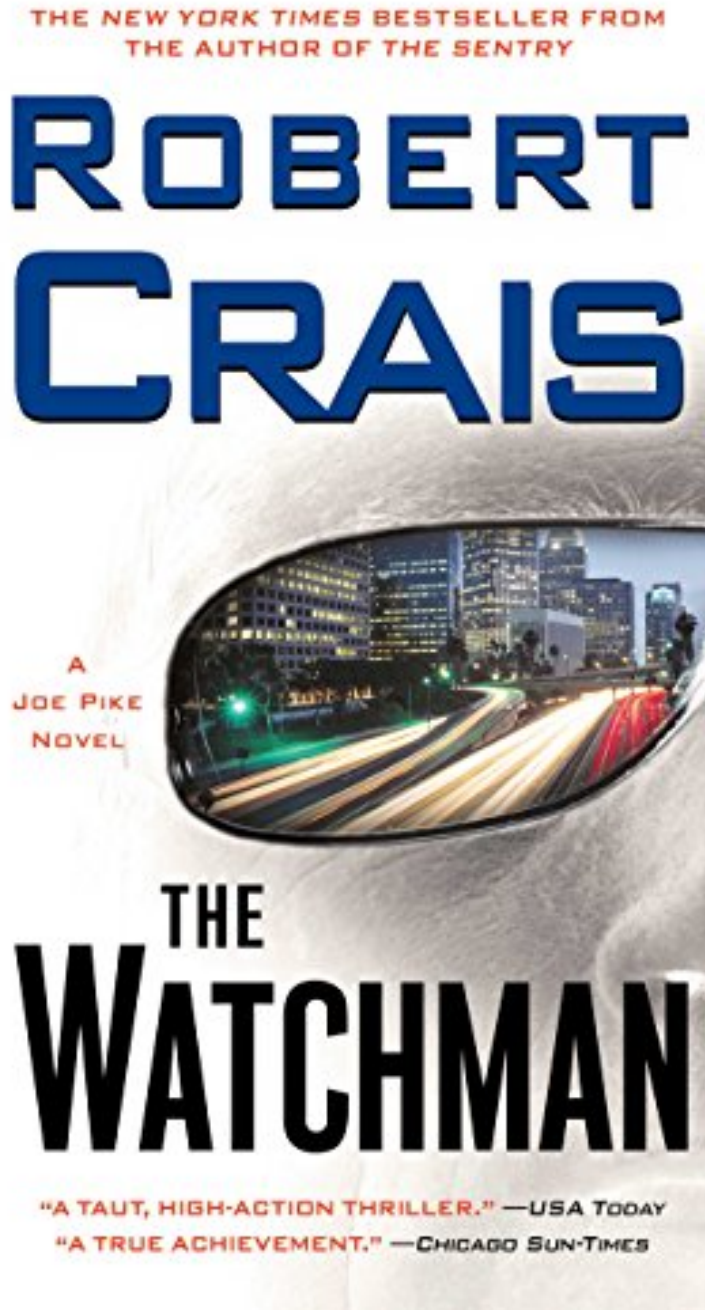


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The Watchman: A Joe Pike Novel



Par Robert Crais
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Par Robert Crais : The Watchman: A Joe Pike Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Watchman: A Joe Pike Novel:

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Description : Description du produitThe brilliant new thriller from Sunday Times bestselling author, Robert Crais

Prsentation de l'diteurAt last, the enigmatic partner of Elvis Cole (The Two Minute Rule) takes center stage in this pulse-racing thriller. When Joe Pike is charged with safeguarding a wealthy heiress, he discovers

protecting the sole witness to a crime is nothing compared to protecting an LA party girl from her own self-destruction. Larkin Conner Barkley lives like the City of Angels is hers for the taking. Young and staggeringly rich, she speeds through the city during its loneliest hours, blowing through red after red in her Aston Martin as if running for her life. Then suddenly she sees another car's metal-on-metal explosion of a terrible accident and, dazed, finds herself the single witness in a secret federal investigation. For maybe the first time in her life, Larkin wants to do the right thing. But in doing so she becomes the target for a relentless team of killers. And when the US Marshals and the finest security money can buy can't protect her, Larkin's wealthy family turns to the one man money can't buy: Joe Pike. Pike lives a world away from the palaces of Beverly Hills. He's an ex-cop, ex-Marine, ex-mercenary who owes a bad man a favor, and that favor is to keep the uncontrollable Larkin alive. Pike commits to protecting the girl, but it becomes clear someone in their circle is selling them out. Taking matters into his own hands, Joe drops off the girl with Larkin and follows his own survival rules: strike fast, hit hard, hunt down the hunters. With the help of private investigator Elvis Cole, Pike uncovers a web of lies and betrayals, and the stunning revelation that even the cops are not who they seem. As the body count rises, Pike's biggest threat might come from the girl herself, a lost soul in the City of Angels, determined to destroy herself unless Joe Pike can teach her the value of life...and love..co.uk

In Robert Crais' *The Watchman*, we have the author firing on all cylinders and Crais aficionados will know that's an experience to savour. It's one of the tough long-term Crais protagonists, Joe Pike, who sets the edgy narrative in motion here, and the narrative barely pauses for breath once one of Crais' most high adrenaline novels is in motion. Joe has been asked to look after a young female witness in a case involving a very dangerous gangster. The witness, Larkin Conner Barkley, couldn't be more different from the close-mouthed Joe: she's rich, wilful and very much used to getting her own way. The uneasy alliance between the two is not much helped when some very violent men start breathing down their necks. Joe realises that he has to drag a reluctant Larkin from her privileged background and hide her from view in the more downmarket areas of L.A., while at the same time bloodily taking the battle to the enemy. All of this is handled with the aplomb that we expect from the ever-reliable Crais, and admirers of the author will be pleased to hear that Joe Pike calls upon his partner Elvis Cole to help them stay alive and track down those wanting to eliminate Joe's wealthy charge. Crais calls upon some classic elements of the L.A. detective story here (corrupt cops are a feature of such novels all the way back to Philip Marlowe), but there's no sense of clichés being warmed over. Rather, this is a satisfying juggling of comfortable elements, with the mix shaken up by some new and surprising ones -- such as the fact that the girl Pike and Cole are trying to protect seems to have a pronounced death wish -- a death wish that looks set to take down her protectors along with her. Crais fans can safely start reaching for their credit cards. --Barry Forshaw

From Publishers Weekly

As the subtitle suggests, Joe Pike, the intriguing, enigmatic partner of L.A. PI Elvis Cole, takes center stage in this intense thriller from bestseller Crais (*The Two Minute Rule*). To pay back an old debt, Pike is coerced into protecting Larkin Barkley, a hard-partying young heiress whose life is in danger after a "wrong place wrong time" encounter that quickly escalates and spins out of control. The enemy is shadowy, violent and relentless but the fierce, focused Pike, one of the strongest characters in modern crime fiction, is equal to the challenge. The breathless pace and rich styling are sure to appeal to readers of hard-boiled fiction in general, but since up to now Pike has mostly remained in the background, some fans of the Elvis Cole series (*The Forgotten Man*, etc.) may find the explicit picture that emerges of Pike at odds with the image they've constructed for themselves. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.