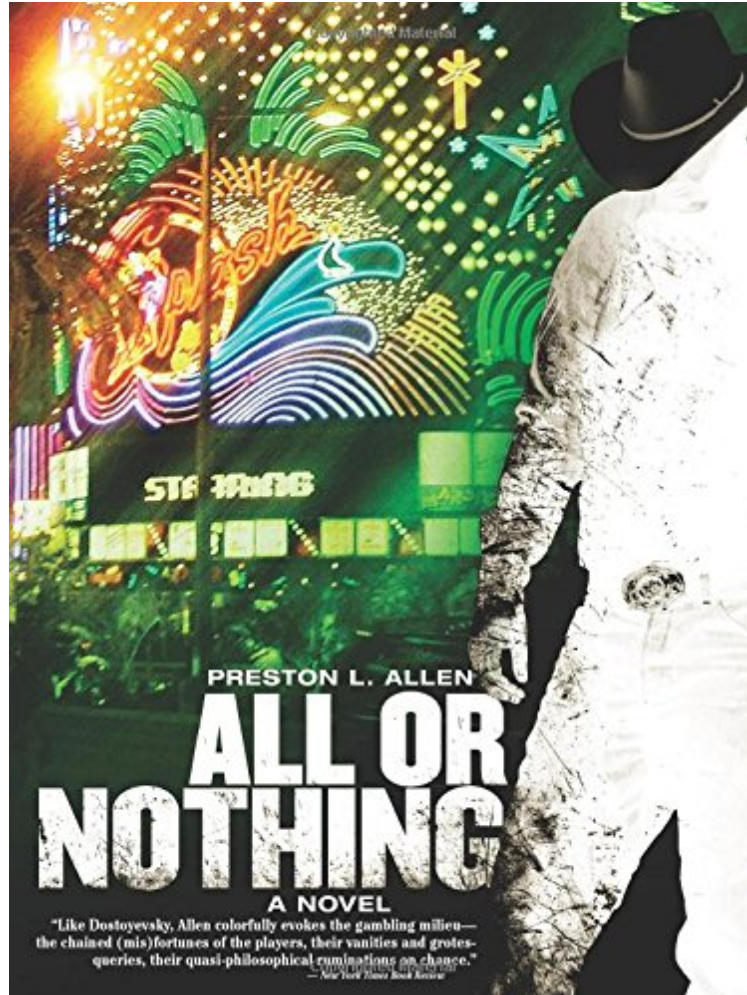


(Ebook free) All or Nothing

All or Nothing

Preston L Allen

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Preston L Allen : All or Nothing before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised All or Nothing:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Almost All or NothingBy Cassandra_was_rightThis is a difficult book to rate: it has some stunningly original insights, but is flawed as a final product. That is, the depiction of the mind and logic of an addicted gambler is fascinating; I learned a lot from it. The plot, on the other hand, isn't quite sure what to do with itself. The first third, in which the gambler shows his normal life and the workings of his logic, is almost perfect. I only wish there had been more about his relationship with his wife: the few glimpses of her were extremely interesting - part critic, part enabler. Would have loved to have seen more of HER logic. The middle section is far less interesting and realistic. The denouement comes almost as if the editors demanded it so the writer was forced to add it, but his heart wasn't in it. In short then, a book of wonderful, highly original insights marred by an uncertain plot. But

completely worth buying and reading. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Breathtaking By Desiree What Fyodor Dostoevsky did for *The Gambler* over a hundred years ago, Preston Allen does for his bus driver "P" in *All or Nothing*. A degenerate gambling addict on a losing streak, "P" will do anything for the big win, believing that one vast win will save him. He gets that win, and many more, and along the way you meet all different types of gamblers. Allen proves that this addiction crosses all barriers and does not discriminate on race, ethnicity, sex, age, or class line. Anyone can be taken prisoner and held hostage by this addiction, and intellect has nothing to do with it. "P" is a lovable, warm, and generous guy, and you are rooting for him all the way, but in the end, Allen proves that no matter what the stakes are, no matter how much you win....it is never enough. A fascinating, heartbreaking, beautifully written "must read" for anyone interested in the topic of gambling, or gambling addiction. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. All or Nothing By Baraniecki Mark Stuart I'm not sure about this book. It's a long string of variants of the bad things that gambling can do to your life (and the lives of others) while at the same time playing up the big money glamour. The hero (?) is a sleazy lying bus driver who wins a few million and loses it all again.

Preston L. Allen's witty, charming, and very likable school bus driver named P is a desperate gambler. He has blown the hundred thousand dollars he won at the casino six months ago, but his wife and family still think he's loaded. P spins out of control on the addict's downward spiral of dependency, paranoia, and depression, as he must find ways to keep coming up with the money to fool his family and fund his growing addiction. The bets get bigger and bigger, until finally, faced with the ultimate financial crisis, he hits it really big. Yet winning, he soon learns, is just the beginning of a deeper problem. The one constant for P who rises from wage-earner to millionaire and back again in his roller-coaster-ride of a life is that he must gamble. That his son has died, that his wife is leaving him, that his girlfriend has been arrested, that he has no money, that he has more money than he could ever have dreamed are all lesser concerns for P as he constantly seeks out new gambling opportunities. While other books on gambling seek either to sermonize on the addiction or to glorify it by highlighting its few prosperous celebrities, *All or Nothing* is an honest, straightforward account of what it is like to live as a gambler whether a high-rolling millionaire playing \$1,000-ante poker in Las Vegas or a regular guy at the local Indian casino praying for a miracle as he feeds his meager life savings into the unforgiving slot machine. *All or Nothing* is the first novel to dig beneath the veneer to explore the gamblers' unique and complex relationship with money. If you've ever wanted to get into the heart and psyche of a compulsive gambler, here is your chance. Preston L. Allen is a recipient of a State of Florida Individual Artist Fellowship and author of the thriller *Hoochie Mama*, as well as the collection *Churchboys and Other Sinners*. His stories have appeared in numerous magazines and journals and have been anthologized in *Brown Sugar* (Penguin) and *Miami Noir* (Akashic). He lives in South Florida. *New York Times Book Review*, Sun., June 15, 2008 "As a cartographer of autodegradation, Allen takes his place on a continuum that begins, perhaps, with Dostoyevsky's *Gambler*, courses through Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano*, William S. Burroughs's *Junky*, [and] the collected works of Charles Bukowski and Hubert Selby Jr. Like Dostoyevsky, Allen colorfully evokes the gambling milieu. Like Burroughs, he is a dispassionate chronicler of the addict's daily ritual, neither glorifying nor vilifying the matter at hand. Yet he never wallows like Lowry nor amuses like Bukowski. His spare, efficient prose could be called medium-boiled." *Library Journal*, Nov. 15, 2007 "Allen's new novel poignantly depicts the life of P . . . Told without preaching or moralizing, the facts of P's life express volumes on the destructive power of gambling. This is strongly recommended and deserves a wide audience; an excellent choice for book discussion groups." *Kirkus Reviews*, Sept., 15, 2007 "A gambler's hands and heart perpetually tremble in this raw story of addiction . . . Allen's brilliant at conveying the hothouse atmosphere of hell-bent gaming." *ForeWord*, Jan/Feb. 2008 "All or Nothing is funny, relentless, haunting, and highly readable."

From *Publishers Weekly* Allen's dark and insightful novel depicts narrator P's sobering descent into his gambling addiction. P, a Miami native, is a school bus driver and desperate gambler who spends his nights (and many of his days) in south Florida casinos. Both a surprisingly likable and an often despicable character, P is a perpetual loser with a \$1,000-a-day habit who lies to his wife and scrounges in the seats of his bus looking for loose change the kids left behind. He takes the small amounts of cash that his destitute, dying mother offers him to support his obsession. P knows he's sick, but he doesn't want any help; he lusts for the next big score. Finally, his luck begins to change, transforming him from a broke degenerate into a legendary professional gambler in a signature black cowboy hat. The well-written novel takes the reader on a chaotic ride as P chases, finds and loses fast, easy money. Allen (*Churchboys and Other Sinners*) reveals how addiction annihilates its victims and shows that winning isn't always so different from losing. (Nov.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "By turns harrowing, illuminating, and endearing, Preston Allen's *All or Nothing* is more than a gut punch, it's a damn good book." -- Maggie Estep, author of *Flamethrower* From the Publisher "All or Nothing is a breathless tour through the mind of P, a gambling junkie who divines lucky numbers everywhere, even in the mumblings of his severely asthmatic son as he comes out of anaphylactic shock. Winning the bet is the only thing. And money has little value except as a means to place the next one. Preston Allen's writing is as tight as a high wire. Out of the hyperkitsch world of gamblers and the casinos they inhabit, Allen creates a novel that is frightening and sad and thrilling." --

Gonzalo Barr, author of *The Last Flight of Jose Luis Balboa* "Allen has done for gambling what William S. Burroughs did for narcotic addiction. He's gotten into the heart of the darkness and shown us what it feels like to be trapped, to be haunted, to live without choice. Allen is relentless and unsparing in his depiction of the life of a gambling addict, from the magical thinking to the visceral thrill of risking it all. And now the world will know what we in Miami have known for a long time: Preston L. Allen is so good a writer it's scary." --John Dufresne, author of *Johnny Too Bad*