



The Big Gamble

Michael McGarrity

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When a fire in an abandoned fruit stand in rural Lincoln County reveals the murdered body of a woman gone missing from Sante Fe years ago, Police Chief Kevin Kerney finds himself cooperating with his estranged son, a man he hardly knows, Deputy Sheriff Clayton Istee. While Kerney digs into the woman's past, hoping to find clues that will lead to a credible suspect, Clayton must unravel two more homicides that seem on the surface totally unrelated.

As Kerney chases down clues that raise questions about the legitimacy of a highly regarded modeling and talent agency, Clayton works to discover the identity of a murder suspect alleged to have ties to prostitution and illegal gambling.

Set against the backdrop of the high mountains of southern New Mexico, where gambling is big business and private sexual encounters for VIPs can be discreetly arranged, Kerney and Clayton must go up against the rich and politically powerful opponents who are willing to protect their reputations at all costs.

The Big Gamble Details

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Author : Michael McGarrity

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From Reader Review The Big Gamble for online ebook

John says

Another in the Kerney series. Story of a 10 yr old murder investigated by him originally then brought up 10 yrs later with the discovery of the body. His newly discovered son is in on the investigation the widens to cover politicians, sex trafficking and gambling.

Dr T says

This is one of the best of the Kevin Kerney series. It starts as two murder investigations widely separated in time but connected by the location of the bodies, and proceeds to the point where the two cases are obviously related. The investigations become more and more complicated until it seems that some very big names in New Mexico and beyond appear to be involved. The investigation into the earlier murder is led by Kevin Kearney, now chief of police in Santa Fe County, while the more recent case is assigned to young Native American (Apache) detective Clayton Istlee of the Lincoln County Sheriff's Department, and who happens to be Kearney's son. The investigations are documented in some detail, and watching the whole thing come together is a big part of my enjoyment of this book. The New Mexico settings of the book are depicted accurately and with a familiarity that reflects on the author's obvious love for the state.

Al says

One more very interesting page turner by Mr McGarrity. I enjoy his writing style and his ability to keep you involved with his characters. This was the first of the Kevin Kerney series that I had figured out before the last few pages. Even with my guess it was a great read to see how the characters solved the crimes and put the bad folks away.

Cindy says

Always love these, but the end had a 1 month gap after following the investigation throughout the book. You lost the last month of it and it just jumped a month. Perhaps he was trying a new style. I was disappointed. But, will read on in the series.

Michael Sump says

I like this series by Michael McGarrity and I like his main character, Kevin Kerney--but a bad trend is developing. As in his last book, the ending seems hurried and formulaic. The beginning and middle are good. There are a lot of characters and McGarrity well details the relationships between the various leads. These are well drawn, believable, and interesting. The plot is complicated and takes a long time to unwind. Also good. It's a real page turner, but you reach a point where it all hurries to the end. It's as if McGarrity got to page 320 and said, "Okay, time to wrap this up!" It all ends too soon for me. The various bad guys are dealt with and the issues between the good guys are resolved, more or less. I like this series and will read the next

one but with a hope that the author takes a bit more care with the final chapters.

Lynette says

great story - crappy ending

Kellie says

An abandoned warehouse burns to the ground. Two dead people are found but one of the bodies has been there for years. Kerney's son, the newly appointed Deputy Sheriff investigates the newly opened cold case. These mystery's are pretty good. I like the southwestern setting. Clayton is married with 2 kids and is trying to adjust to his new job and is new found dad, Kevin Kerney. Kevin is trying to handle a long distance relationship with his pregnant wife and is also adjusting to a new job as a police chief of Sante Fe. Clayton and Kevin work the cases separately until they are brought together at the end. The suspense is good and the action at the climax is rewarding. The only negative I find in reading these books is, the characters are sometimes hard to follow. McGarrity has a log of players in his plot and I get confused as to who is who. Other than that, I enjoy this series.

Cybercrone says

Good one!

Nina Chambers says

One of his very best!! This may be the smartest homicide procedural yet!! Smart investigators doing gritty, due diligence, multi-county, -state & agency collaborations, & addition of complex characters, growing in depth as they reappear in later books in series. You can tell it's written by someone who has worked in the field, & has had real-life experience with the occasional lucky tip, & adroit interviewing & deductive clues to pursue. It also has all too human interactions of families dealing with a loved one in this line of work. This is really a cut above!!

Sandie says

If you are a fan of Tony Hillerman's Jim Chee and Joe Leaphorn novels which regularly serve up a cocktail of assertive storytelling, unusual mysteries, wonderful atmospheric descriptions of Southwestern geography, and accurate portrayals of Native American culture, this offering by Michael McGarrity will not slake your thirst.

Sure, The Big Gamble is set in New Mexico and one of the two protagonists is a Mescalero Apache Deputy Sheriff, but that is about as "Native American" as the story gets. The two protagonists have recently learned that they are father and son, and go to great lengths to avoid communicating with each other as they each

investigates one part of the mystery surrounding to discovery of two dead bodies that were disposed of in the same place.....11 years apart. The villain(s) in the mystery are pretty obvious and the final "roundup" of the bad guys unfulfilling, almost like the writer had a certain number of pages he was obligated to complete in order to fulfill his contract and had achieved that number so he wrapped up the entire story in 4 pages.

The thing that keeps the reader engaged is the authenticity of police procedure in the gathering of forensic evidence during the parallel investigations being conducted by the duo as well as the interconnection of the plethora of crimes, ranging from gambling and prostitution to murder, that their diligence unearths.

Not a great book, but not all that bad.....Overall, an okay choice for a lazy afternoon.

Atomicmass1969 says

Always enjoy reading the Kevin Kerney books. This book almost resembled what's going on in the US in late 2017: politicians and actors getting busted in sex scandals, although the book was written in the early 2000's. I am enjoying the development of the relationship between Kerney and his estranged son Clayton. Can't wait to see what happens with the remaining 2 books I have left to read before the brand new one comes out OCT 2018.

Kevin says

Darkest places of the soul

Very attractive series based on a lawman in New Mexico and his family. This is part of the series called the *Kevin Kerney Novels*. This paragraph applies to all books in this series. The story's are great, but what makes this series stand out is how the country is worked into the story, It's almost as if you are there. The author is a gifted story teller.

Do you need to read this series in order: Yes, it helps a lot. Note that *Hard Country* and *Backlands* (and one pending maybe) are the prequels.

Triggers: Cops and police situations, there are rapes, homicides, and crime.

Michael McGarrity's acclaimed Santa Fe police chief, Kevin Kerney is back-with his estranged son. Two bodies have been found in a burned building. One is a missing person from Kerney's cold case files. The other is a more recent homicide. Both will lead father and son into a vast network of crime...and the darkest places of the soul.

Gloria Bernal says

2 stars for it was OK, not one of the best in the series of Police Chief Kevin Kerney of New Mexico. It dragged on a bit for me and didn't get a lot better towards the end. My husband and I are reading them in order so best to understand the personal side of Chief Kerney's life and his relationship with his wife, Sara, a military Lt. Colonel, and also his new relationship with his half-Indian son, Clayton, and 2 grandkids he

recently got acquainted with. The two homicides they are working on in this novel bring Kerney and Clayton closer together as individuals, but their relationship as father and son (both police officers) is a work in progress.

A highly recommended crime series with good personal plot lines, and an "enchanted" New Mexico locale.

Ed says

This book in the Kevin Kerney series was a bit of a disappointment: Too much police procedure, too little plot and character development.

The story follows Santa Fe police chief, Kerney and his recently discovered son, Clayton Istee, who is a Lincoln County, NM detective as they pursue two separate murder investigations that turn out to be related. Their work together is complicated by Istee's ambivalence about having a "white" father. Istee's mother is an Apache.

The story goes back and forth as Kerney and Istee each try to solve the case they are working. There are a couple sub-plots, one involving Kerney's relationship with his new, pregnant wife, Sara, a career Army Officer. Another involves Istee's relationship with his boss and co-workers. Neither is particularly gripping.

The villains are stereotypical to a great extent and not particularly interesting. The same can be said for the minor characters, with the possible exception of one of the murder victim's parents and a young, female police officer working undercover.

The narrative does move along briskly and I was never tempted to put the book down and not finish it. The outcome is predictable but satisfying. I hope the next book in the series gets back to the high level of storytelling that the previous six showed.

Ellen says

Interesting structure to the book. Kevin's son Clay investigates a cold case independently from his Dad. Their interviews prove to be the keys to solving the case. Hard to put McGarrity's book down.
