



## The Big Gamble

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In Lincoln County, New Mexico, Deputy Sheriff Clayton Istee investigates a murder scene in an abandoned roadside fruit stand only to discover another corpse in the dugout cellar beneath the shed. Dental records identify the second body as that of a young woman from Santa Fe reported missing eleven years ago. Kevin Kerney, now Chief of Police in Santa Fe, had worked the original missing persons case. Kerney is Clayton Istee's father, a fact neither of them had known until recently, and Istee is unhappy to have to deal with Kerney again.

Kerney had long worried about the unsolved case, and now that evidence shows the woman had been murdered when she disappeared, he feels a need to handle the case personally. He also sees it as an opportunity to try to improve his relationship with his half-Native American son. Much of the novel alternates between the two men pursuing their separate murder cases, and the reader sees even before they do that they are connected.

It becomes apparent that the solution will not be a simple matter of finding one or two murderers. By the end of the novel a huge task force of over sixty law officers from many enforcement areas including the F.B.I. is organized to bring to justice a network of criminals spread out over four states.

*The Big Gamble* is the seventh in Michael McGarrity's excellent Kevin Kerney series. The novel is particularly rich in details of the police procedural and in descriptions of New Mexico places and politics.

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