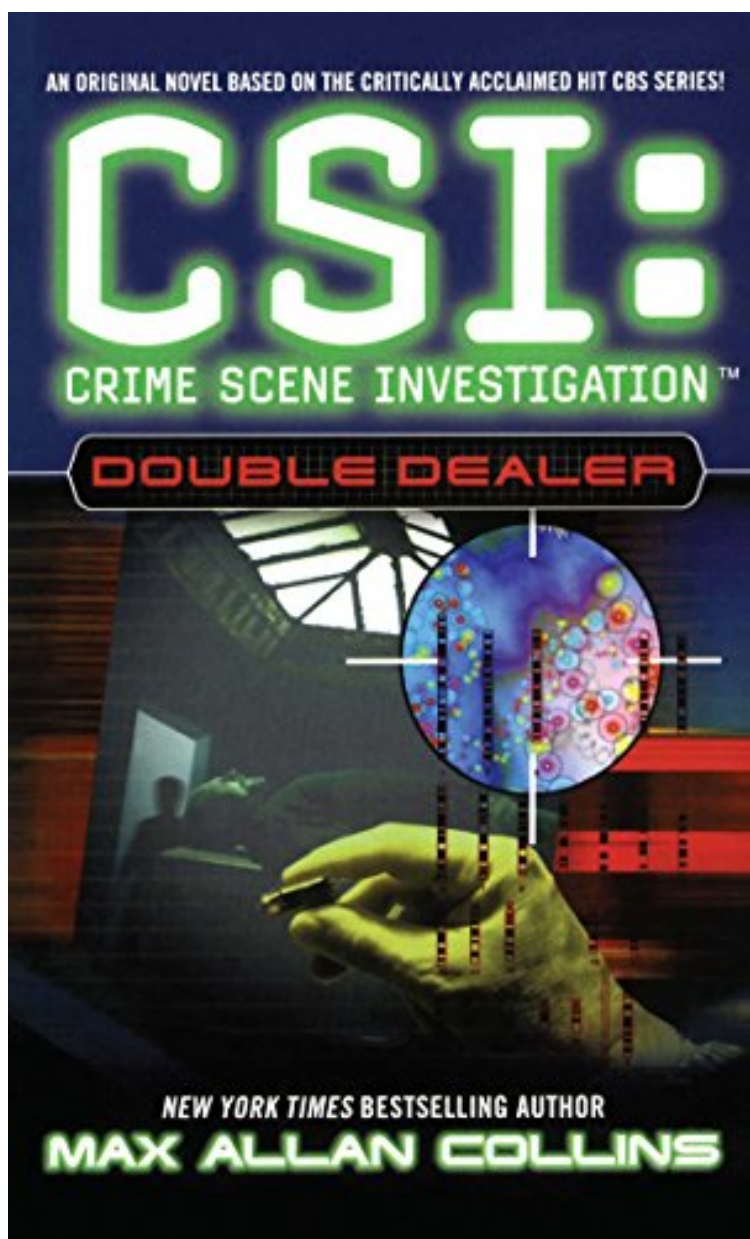


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Double Dealer (CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION) (English Edition)



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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurMeet the little known and even less understood heroes of police work in Las Vegas -- the forensic investigators. Led by veteran Gil Grissom, the remarkable team assigned to the Criminalistics Bureau's graveyard shift -- including Catherine Willows, Warrick Brown, Nick Stokes, and Sara Sidle -- must combine cutting-edge scientific methods and old-fashioned savvy as they work to untangle the

evidence behind the yellow police tape. While Nick and Catherine investigate a newly discovered fifteen-year-old murder, Grissom and the rest of the team must uncover the identity of a cold-blooded killer -- one whose execution-style, "double-tap" signature has provoked the interest of FBI agent Rick

Culpepper. Chapter 1 The siren's squeal split the morning, the flashing blue-then-red-then-blue dashboard light reflecting off other cars as the black Chevy Tahoe weaved its way through rush-hour traffic on US 95. The sun was rising orange and bright, tinting the clouds pink, and the air conditioning within the SUV was already grappling with the July heat. In the passenger seat sat Gil Grissom, graveyard-shift supervisor of the Las Vegas Criminalistics Bureau. In the driver's seat was Warrick Brown -- rank CSI3, just one notch under Grissom -- and in back was another member of their team, Sara Sidle, rank CSI2. Warrick sawed the steering wheel right and left as he dodged between cars, his expression impassive. He might have been watching paint dry. Grissom's boyishly handsome features were slightly compromised by the gray encroaching on his brown hair, and crow's feet were sneaking up on the edges of his eyes, frown lines etching inroads at the corners of his mouth. The politics of this job had taken their toll on Grissom of late.

As much as he loved the science of investigation, the constant jousting with day-shift supervisor Conrad Ecklie, the strain on his budget, and the pressures of management had started to age the perennially youthful Grissom. This reality was aided and abetted by the fact that, even though he had never needed much sleep, now he hardly got any at all. The SUV hurtled toward a small Honda. Warrick slashed to the right, barely missed a FedEx truck, then bounced back left, coming within inches of a blue Lincoln stretch limo. From the back, Sara yelled, "Geez, Warrick, he's not gonna get more dead. Slow down." Warrick ignored her remark and jumped into the diamond lane to pass a cab, then hopped back into his own lane. "Why didn't you let me drive?" Sara asked her boss as she bounced around, her seat belt straining. "Grissom, will you say something to him?" Ignoring the exchange, Grissom turned his gaze toward the reddish sky. Quietly, without even realizing he was talking, Grissom said, "Red sky at night, sailor's delight -- red sky at morning, sailor take warning." Sara leaned forward. "What was that, Grissom?" He shook his head as he studied the clouds.

"Nothing." "Please tell me that wasn't an aphorism," she said. "Please tell me you're not spouting quotes while this maniac is -- " "Sailors?" Warrick asked. "Gris, we're in the desert." "Shut up," Sara snapped, "and keep your eyes on the road." Warrick shot her a glance in the rearview mirror, twitched a half-smirk, and crossed all three lanes of traffic, jerking the wheel to the right as they turned onto Decatur Boulevard.

Seconds later the SUV squealed to a halt in front of the Beachcomber Hotel and Casino. "Six minutes, twenty-seven seconds," Warrick said as he threw open his door, bestowing on his boss a tiny self-satisfied smile. "How's that for response time?" As the limber driver turned to jump out of the truck, Grissom gripped Warrick's shoulder, startling him a little. Grissom kept his voice quiet, even friendly, but firm. "From now on, unless I say otherwise, you obey the speed limit -- okay, Mario?" Warrick gave him a sheepish smile.

"Yeah, Gris -- sorry." In the backseat, Sara shook her head in disgust, her ID necklace swinging as she muttered a string of curses. As she climbed out, dragging a small black suitcase of equipment with her, she said, "Gonna get us all killed, then who's going to investigate our scene? I mean, we'll all be dead." Grissom turned and looked over his sunglasses at her, through the open back door. She got the message and piped down. Warrick grabbed his own black suitcase from the back of the vehicle and fell in next to Sara. Climbing down, Grissom -- carrying his silver flight-case-style field kit -- led the way. This early, the sidewalk was nearly empty in front of the hotel, the doormen outnumbering the guests. The little group was almost to the front door when Captain Jim Brass materialized to fall in step with Grissom. Brass said, "The hotel manager wants to know how soon we're going to be out of there." "Why?" Brass blinked his sad eyes. "Why? So he can let the guests move in and out of their rooms on that floor." Shaking his head, Grissom asked, "What'd you tell him?" Brass shrugged. "As soon as we possibly can." A rotund doorman stepped forward and opened the big glass front door for them. Sunglasses came off as they moved through the gaudy lobby -- Grissom tuning out the sounds of spinning slots, rolling roulette balls, dealers calling cards, the typical dinging and ringing casino cacophony -- and Brass led them to the right, toward a gleaming bank of elevators. "Where's the vic?" Warrick asked. "Fourth floor," Brass said. "Right there in the hall, outside his hotel room door, shot twice in the head, small caliber, a .22 or a .25 maybe. Looks like a mob hit, might be a robbery got outa hand." "We'll see," Grissom said, never interested in theories so early. "Is there videotape?" Most of the resort hotels on the Strip had video cameras in every hall, but not all the ones off the Strip, like the Beachcomber, had caught up. Brass nodded. "It's set up in the main security room -- waiting for you, whenever you're ready." When they were safely alone in the elevator, away from guests and staff, Grissom turned to Brass. "You tell the manager we'll be done when we're done. I don't care if he has to use a cherry picker to get these

people out of their rooms, they're not going to disturb my crime scene. The hotel gets it back when my people have finished with it." Brass held up his hands in surrender. "Okay, okay, I'll tell him. I just wanted to save the guy for you to alienate." Taking a deep breath, Grissom let his head drop a little as he exhaled. "Tell him we'll work as fast as we can, but this is not fast work." The elevator dinged, the door slid open, and it began. Stepping out, Grissom looked to his left where Detective Erin Conroy, stood interviewing a twenty-something young man who wore a white shirt, black bow tie and black slacks -- a waiter. The CSI group paused to snap on their latex gloves. "Guy's a spitting image for David Copperfield," Warrick said softly, behind Grissom. "The waiter," Sara said, amused. "Yeah -- spot on." Grissom turned to them. "Who?" Sara's eyebrows climbed. "Grissom -- you live in Vegas and you don't know who David Copperfield is?" "A Dickens character," Grissom said. "Is this pertinent?" Sara and Warrick, silenced, exchanged glances. Moving forward, Brass on his left, Warrick and Sara behind him, Grissom stopped in front of a uniformed officer on watch at the near end of the crime scene. Beyond the officer, Grissom saw the body slumped in a doorway alcove; a large, circular, silver tray lay on the carpet across the hall; and spaghetti, meat sauce, and the components of a tossed green salad lay scattered everywhere. A white carnation, spilled out of its vase, lay at the corpse's feet like an impromptu funeral offering. "Anyone been through here since you arrived?" Grissom asked. Garcia shook his head. He pointed to a rangy officer at the other end of the hall. "My partner, Patterson, had the manager let him up the fire stairs down there." "Good work." "Thank you, sir." Turning to Brass, Grissom asked, "Any idea who our victim is?" "Sure -- 'John Smith.'" Grissom raised an eyebrow. Brass shrugged elaborately. "That's how he registered. Paid for everything in cash too." "Right. You check for a wallet?" Brass shook his head. "Waiting for you to clear the scene. I used to have your job, remember?" Brass had indeed been the CSI supervisor until not so long ago; he'd been something of a prick, in fact, but had mellowed since returning to Homicide. Grissom asked, "Your people canvassing the guests?" "They're on it now -- they started at either end, so they don't disturb the scene." "Good call. And?" "Nobody saw anything, nobody heard anything." Stepping in carefully, Grissom bent over the body. Lying on his stomach, head just slightly to one side, his brown eyes open, glazed, staring at nothing, John Smith looked surprised more than anything else. Cautiously, Grissom changed position to better see the wound. Clean, double tap, small caliber; Brass was probably right -- a .25. The odd thing was the placement. Two small holes formed a colon in the center back of John Smith's skull, and -- if Grissom didn't miss his bet -- almost exactly one inch between them. Grissom felt gingerly for a wallet, found nothing, gave up and rose; then he turned to his CSIs. "Footprints first, you know the drill. If this guy wasn't Peter Pan, he left his mark." Warrick nodded, alertness in the seemingly sleepy eyes. "All comes down to shoe prints." "Yep," Sara said. Grissom stepped aside so Warrick and Sara and their field kits could pass. "Sara, you do the fingerprints. Warrick the photos." "Good thing I skipped breakfast," Sara said. "Least there's no bugs yet," Warrick said to her. Bugs and larva were about the only thing that threw the strong-spined Sidle. "I wouldn't bet on that," Grissom said. "This hotel might not like it, but our little friends are here." Sara and Warrick began by scouring the entire crime scene for footprints. This would take a while, so Grissom followed Brass over to where policewoman Conroy stood with the waiter. Flicking the badge on his breast pocket, Brass said to the waiter, "I'm Captain Brass and this is CSI Supervisor Grissom." The skinny dark-haired waiter nodded to them. Conroy, her voice flat, said, "This is Robert LaFay...." "Bobby," the man interjected. She went on as if he hadn't spoken. "...a room-service waiter. He was taking an order to room..." She checked her notes. "...four-twenty, but he never made it. Ran into the killer." Turning sharply to the waiter, Grissom asked, "Mr. LaFay... Bobby -- you saw the killer?" LaFay shrugged his narrow shoulders. "Sort of... not really. He was standing over the body, his back to me. Jesus, the guy was already down and he shot him again, right in the back of the head! Then he heard me and turned around, and blocked his face with his arm -- you know, like Dracula with his cape?" "Bobby, did you get any kind of look at his face?" "No. Not really." "Was he a big man, small man, average?" "Mostly what I saw was the gun. It seemed so big and it was the second gun I'd seen tonight." Grissom and Brass exchanged glances, and the former said, "Second gun?" The waiter nodded. "Up in eight-thirteen. Big guy, had a cannon on his nightstand. He said he was FBI, but..." "FBI?" Brass said, incredulously. "You didn't believe him?" Grissom asked. "Nope." Grissom gave Brass another quick look, then returned his attention to LaFay. "So, you saw the killer here -- and then?" His eyes widened. "Then I took the hell off toward the elevator and I guess he went the other way." "Down the hall?" "Yeah. Anyway, he didn't shoot at me that I know of." Brass said, "Bobby, wouldn't you know if you were shot at?" "I'm not sure. That gun wasn't very loud." Eyebrows up, Brass asked, "No?" "No. Loud enough to scare the crap outa me, though." Brass grunted a laugh, but Grissom was thinking he'd have to tell Warrick to dust that stairwell.

"Can you tell us anything about the killer?" "I didn't see him good at all." "Think, Bobby. Close your eyes and visualize." LaFay did as he was told, his brow furrowing. "White guy." "Good. What else do you see, Bobby?" "Older guy." "Older?" "Forty maybe, maybe even older." Feeling suddenly ancient, Grissom nodded his encouragement. "Anything else? Scars? Tattoos?" The waiter shook his head. "Nope." "What was he wearing? Shut your eyes, Bobby. Visualize." "...Jacket -- a suit coat." His eyes popped open and he grinned. "I remember that! 'cause afterward, when I had time to think about it, I wondered why anybody would wear a suit coat in Vegas in July." "Good, good -- anything else?" "Nope. Mr. Grissom, I can close my eyes till tomorrow this time, and I won't see anything else." Grissom granted the waiter a smile, touched his arm encouragingly. "Mr. LaFay, do you think you could identify the killer?" The waiter thought for a moment, looked at Grissom and shook his head slowly. "No....That good I can't visualize." Grissom and Brass thanked him, then rejoined Warrick and Sara. They found Warrick kneeling over something on the floor as, nearby, Sara carefully bagged a piece of tomato. "Got anything?" Grissom asked. "I've got a footprint in the blood," Warrick said, "but it's smeared, like the guy slipped trying to take off." Carefully stepping around Sara, Grissom moved in next to Warrick and followed Warrick's gaze. Warrick was right: the footprint was useless. Turning on his haunches and lowering his head, Grissom carefully studied the hallway. "Look," he said pointing another three feet down the hall, behind Warrick. "Another one." Warrick got to it, checked it, then turned back to Grissom. "Smeared too." His head still bent down near the floor, Grissom said, "Go another yard." "I don't see anything." "Ever use Leuco Crystal Violet?" Warrick shrugged. "Yeah, sure, but it's been a while." Grissom grinned. "Now's your chance to get back in practice." Brass walked up as Warrick withdrew a spray bottle from his black field-kit bag. "What's that?" "See the spot on the carpeting?" Grissom asked. The detective shrugged. "All I see is a dirty carpet." "There's a bloody footprint there." "Really." "Yes -- we just can't see it." Brass frowned. "A bloody footprint we can't see?" "The red cells have all been rubbed off the shoe, but the hemoglobin and white cells remain." Warrick carefully sprayed an area of the rug and picked up the lecture. "This is Leuco Crystal Violet -- a powder. But here today on the Home Shopping Network, we've added it to a solution of sulfosalicylic acid, sodium acetate, and hydrogen peroxide." With a small chuckle, Brass asked, "If it's going to explode, you mind giving me a heads up?" As the solution began to work, Grissom jumped back in. "It's going to work like a dye and bring out the footprint in that dirty carpet." "No way." "Way," Grissom said as the spot on the floor turned purple, showing the outline of a running shoe. "About a size eleven, I'd say," Warrick said. "Now we photograph it." Brass asked, "Can you match that to anything?" Grissom nodded. "Once we get it back to the lab, we'll tell you exactly what kind of shoe that print belongs to. After the database tells us, that is. Then, when we get a suspect, we'll be able to compare this to a shoe of his and give you an exact match." "Hey, Grissom," Sara called. "All I'm finding is pasta and a salad. And let me tell you, the buffet at Caesar's is better." "Keep digging, anyway. And, Warrick?" Warrick's head bobbed up. "Yeah, Gris?" "Make sure you do the stairwell -- that's the way Elvis left the building." Warrick nodded. "So -- mob hit?" Brass asked. Grissom led Brass back up the hall toward the elevators. "Too soon to tell." "Robbery gone wrong?" Grissom ignored the question. "Let's go see the videotape." "Go ahead," Brass said. "I'll join you after I head upstairs and talk to that guy first." Grissom's eyes tightened. "Our FBI man with the cannon?" "Precisely." "The tape can wait. I'll come with you." "Fine. You interface so well with the FBI, after all." Upstairs, Brass led the way out of the elevator. Grissom slid in next to him as they moved down the hall toward room 813. Pulling his service revolver from its holster, Brass signaled for Grissom to hang back out of the alcove. Frowning, Grissom stopped short of the doorway as Brass moved into the alcove and knocked on the door with his left hand. "Just a sec," said a muffled voice beyond the door. His feet set, Brass leveled his .38 at the door, which thankfully had no peephole. Peeking around the corner, Grissom watched as the door cracked slowly open. He saw the big man in boxer shorts -- and the monstrous automatic in his beefy hand. And Grissom said, "Gun!" Brass ducked out of the alcove, plastered himself to the wall, away from the door, and yelled, "Police! Put that gun down, and open the door, and put your hands up -- high!" Silence. "Do it now!" Brass said. The door opened and the big man -- hands way up -- stepped back. His expression was one of alarm, and he was nodding toward the nearby bed, on which the pistol had been tossed. "I'm unarmed!" he said. "Unarmed..." Brass forced the big man up against a wall. "Spread 'em." He did as he was told and Grissom eased into the room behind the pair as Brass frisked the man. "Why the gun, sir?" Grissom asked, his voice cool. Over his shoulder, the big man said, "I deliver jewelry. It's for protection." Brass jumped in. "Did you know a murder was committed downstairs this morning?" The man looked thunderstruck. "No! Hell no! You don't...you don't think I did it?" Grissom moved forward. "Let's slow down for a moment. What's your name,

sir?" "Ron Orrie." "ID?" Brass asked. Orrie nodded toward the nightstand. "My wallet's right there." "Do you have a permit for the pistol?" "In the wallet, too." Grissom studied the gun for a moment, a .45. "Is this your only handgun?" Looking nervous, Orrie nodded. "Only one I have with me." Glancing toward Brass, Grissom shook his head. "Wrong weapon. Too big. John Smith was killed with something smaller." Brass didn't seem so eager to let Orrie off the hook. "Why did you tell the waiter you were with the FBI?" Orrie shrugged. "I didn't want to explain my business. The more people that know what I do, the better chance I'll get knocked over. It was my own damn fault. Normally, I wouldn't have left the gun laying out. But I'd ordered breakfast from room service and he showed up before I was completely dressed and had it holstered." The detective looked skeptical. Grissom thumbed through the wallet, finding a New Jersey driver's license and concealed weapons permits from both Jersey and New York. "You are in fact Ronald Eugene Orrie," Grissom said as he compared the photo on the license to the man, "and you have up-to-date concealed weapons permits." "I know." "With your permission, I'd like to have your hands checked for residue." "What...what kind of residue?" "The kind a gun leaves when you fire it." "I haven't fired a gun in months!" "Good. Any objection?" "No...no." "Thank you. Someone from criminalistics will come to see you, within the hour." The man winced. "But can you make me stay in this room? I don't mean to be uncooperative, but..." A frown seemed to involve Brass's whole body, not just his mouth. His whole demeanor said, I knew it couldn't be this easy, and Grissom's eyes replied, They never are. Brass said, "Mr. Orrie, do you have a concealed weapons permit from the state of Nevada?" Orrie shook his head. "Then you know you can't leave this room with that gun, correct?" The man nodded. "If I catch you on the street with it, I'm going to bust you." "Yes, sir." "And don't tell anyone else you're with the FBI." "No, sir...I mean, yes, sir." "And wait here until somebody from the crime lab comes to see you." "Yes, sir." "And if we decide to search your hotel room, will you require us to get a warrant?" "No, sir." "Are we done here?" Grissom asked. Brass still seemed to want to hang on to the only suspect he had. Finally, he said, "Yeah, we're done." Grissom said, "Let's go look at the tapes." Copyright 2001 CBS Worldwide Inc. and Alliance Atlantis Productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Presentation de l'auteur Meet the little known and even less understood heroes of police work in Las Vegas -- the forensic investigators. Led by veteran Gil Grissom, the remarkable team assigned to the Criminalistics Bureau's graveyard shift -- including Catherine Willows, Warrick Brown, Nick Stokes, and Sara Sidle -- must combine cutting-edge scientific methods and old-fashioned savvy as they work to untangle the evidence behind the yellow police tape. While Nick and Catherine investigate a newly discovered fifteen-year-old murder, Grissom and the rest of the team must uncover the identity of a cold-blooded killer -- one whose execution-style, "double-tap" signature has provoked the interest of FBI agent Rick Culpepper.