



The Strategist

John Hardy Bell

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Camille Grisham was once a decorated field agent with the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit. Her job was to solve the country's most complex and violent crimes, often with little more than a textbook profile of the perpetrator to go on. No one did it better. But after her partner's death at the hands of serial killer Daniel Sykes, she has lost faith in everything she once was.

Forced to leave the Bureau under the weight of guilt, Camille returns to her childhood home, hopeful that the presence of family and friends can heal the wounds that time could not. Unfortunately, a change in scenery does not bring about a change in fortune. Less than twenty-four hours after her arrival, Camille is left to deal with yet another tragic loss - the brutal murder of her best friend in an apparent home invasion. For local police, the case is open and shut; for Camille, it is anything but.

Desperate for answers, she becomes an unwitting participant in an investigation that winds through the darkest corridors of wealth, power, and political corruption. All the while, a killer waits patiently in the shadows, watching Camille's every move.

With the help of a young homicide detective whose doubts about her department's case increase by the second, Camille races to uncover the true motives behind her friend's murder, even though doing so will put her on an inevitable collision course with a past that she desperately wants to leave behind.

The Strategist Details

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From Reader Review The Strategist for online ebook

L.F. Falconer says

There is much that's right with this novel: an imperfect heroine who's strong, smart, and skilled, yet is no plastic superwoman; a cast of believable characters; realistic dialogue and concrete setting descriptions. Mix all that with a plot that progresses through murder, adultery, and dirty politics, and this crime drama should have been a sure hit. However, for me, it just missed the mark. It failed to completely draw me in and take possession of my attention. Written with just enough tension and promise of excitement, it never quite delivered a punch and hardly compelled me to keep reading. Tighter writing might have helped, as it sometimes seemed bogged down in extraneous details.

Frank Roberto says

A really enjoyable book!!

I really enjoy reading books about cops and lawyers and the cases that they have to solve. This book was very fast paced and easy to read. The author didn't use any big words that would get the reader lost. I look forward to reading more books by this author in the future.

Steven Freeman says

In “The Strategist,” FBI agent Camille Grisham’s meteoric career trajectory is derailed by the onset of a panic attack during a confrontation with a serial killer, resulting in the death of her partner. The stress of the event leads her to quit the FBI and head home to Denver, only to encounter an even greater tragedy within the first twenty-four hours of her arrival.

Camille seeks to excise the demons of her past while simultaneously probing the circumstances of the latest trauma. As she relentlessly pursues the case, a cloud of evil conspirators gathers around her, leading to a dramatic confrontation in book’s finale.

I rarely give five-star ratings, but with “The Strategist,” first-time author John Hardy Bell has defied the odds and delivered the goods. Finely-described, three-dimensional characters, lucid descriptions of people and action, a plot that keeps the reader guessing until the very end, and protagonists possessing the right balance of strengths and failings all serve to move this page-turner along at a brisk pace. While the book certainly stands on its own merits, it also invites a sequel, which this reader would welcome.

If you’re looking for a story with plenty of twists and multiple layers of complexity, “The Strategist” is just what the doctor ordered.

Delta says

Free 02-04-15 (Mystery Thriller)

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00EZGEV6Y?i...>

Kathryn Dionne says

When FBI agent, Camille Grisham, is forced into early retirement due to emotional reasons, she reluctantly returns to her childhood home to recover. But when she discovers the gruesome death of her best friend, Julia, her need to find and expose her best friend's killer becomes her priority even if it means putting her own life in mortal danger.

John Hardy Bell does an amazing job of weaving a suspenseful story filled with characters and situations that move you. His story-telling abilities create realistic and plausible scenarios that drive a reader's mind with speed, taking them around many surprising curves. What an amazing ride! Can't wait to read more from this author.

I would highly recommend this read! Well done, John Hardy Bell!

C. Coleman says

Fantastic page-turner murder mystery. The plot layout is perfect, the characters well developed. Suspense throughout the book keep the reader on edge and reading frantically to keep up with the tidbits of explanation for endless cliffhangers. Seriously hard to put down. Very well developed story with the backstory just right and revealed perfectly through the book.
Highly recommended!

Barbara says

Well written.

Really enjoyed this story. Loved the female characters. The plot is also great as I could not tell until the very end if we had all the players involved in this crime. It was a great depiction of political power. I will read the next book also.

Connie says

I have never read anything by this author before, so didn't know what to expect. I was pleasantly surprised. This book was actually excellent. The story caught me and kept me reading. There were twists and turns that made the book engaging.

John Bell says

I understand that a five-star review from the author himself must be taken with a GENEROUS grain of salt, but with 'The Strategist' I've done my level best to write an entertaining, thought-provoking, and timely suspense novel. Camille Grisham is a character I hope you will not only relate to, but will eventually grow to love. She has been beaten up and broken down. But like the true heroine that she is, she will eventually find her way back ~ though the road to redemption will be a harrowing one. It wouldn't be any fun if it wasn't, right? :)

Abby Vandiver says

I give this book 4 1/2 stars

The Strategists is a story about the consequences of actions. They can make you lose everything you hold dear, even your life.

Camille Graham is a former FBI agent, suffering from anxiety attacks, she leaves Washington, and seemingly, all of her troubles to head home to family and friends. Julia Leeds is one of those friends waiting for her at home. Her best friend. But the day after Camille arrives, Julia is murdered.

In his debut novel, Bell weaves a very good story of murder, the far reaching hand of those in power, facing your problems and making decisions that can bring harsh consequences. Everyone in this book suffers from their choice of action. Camille in not getting help with her emotional problems, Julia for delving into uncharacteristic territory, as well as all those that participate in the crime and it's cover-up. The book is about learning from your actions, unfortunately, the author offers, sometimes you learn too late. The characters are real and relatable. The opening chapter pulls you right in, it is suspenseful and enticing. The book has a good pace and even though you know early on who is responsible for Julia's death, you won't want to put the book down. It is that good and well-written. The Strategist is one of those books that gets inside of your head and stays with you even after you have finished it.

For me, hence the 4 1/2 stars, there were logic gaps. Police detectives remiss on Constitutional law, killers pulling up to their mark's front door in the middle of the day to do a hit. And a trained criminal investigator who has trouble recognizing faces. I think that there was too much direction around the dialogue instead of letting the dialogue set the emotion. Also, although it is a great title for a book, the name doesn't fit the story as it wasn't about the person deemed that and the strategy (if you can call it that) that he employed was lacking, and not well executed.

Overall, it is a good book from what I think is a talented author. I look forward to reading more of his work and highly recommend The Strategist.

Patty Beyer says

Seriously hard to put down. Very well written and developed. The story has just the right amount of

character building which was revealed perfectly throughout the book.
Highly recommended!

Sylvia Aichel says

Recommended

A fast moving tale of friendship and betrayal. I look forward to reading more by this author, particularly more about Grisham and Sullivan 's futures.

Eric Praschan says

John Hardy Bell's The Strategist is a fast-moving, gripping thriller from start to finish. The dialogue crackles, the tension is palpable, and the characters' are multi-dimensional. I was drawn into the story by the first page, and the twists and turns kept me riveted.

The conspiracy plot unfolded in a believable, elaborate fashion. Despite some sections which were exposition-heavy, the pace was smooth and carried the reader along. Camille's character contained flashes of Clarice Starling, but she was distinct enough to have her own identity. Overall, I found the story fascinating and exceptional. Highly recommended!

Fiona Rawsontile says

As a debut, the book is surprisingly well written. It's not a CSI-typed story trying to dig up the truth. It's more about fighting the wealthy and powerful who are able to corrupt any aspect of our public and personal life.

My only complaint is that sometimes there are excessive dialogue exchanges, especially in the first eight chapters before crises and actions take place. After that, I could not put it down. The characters are very realistic. The rascal cop who "intimidates people simply by the way he wears his badge", the woman politician who answers every question by not answering the question ... I especially like the way the devils are brought down - not by justice, but by the selfishness of their own people. That's the sad reality!

I hope the author will keep producing good work like this!

Shirley Ford says

A gripping read, right from the first chapter. I was hooked. Camille is heading home after leaving the FBI, a career that she had loved until something traumatic happened, which she was unable to come to terms with. We find what it was later on in the story. She feels a failure. What will people think of her? What will her father think of her? The best part of returning home would be spending time with her friend of many years,

Julie, but sadly it was not to be. We already know from the first chapter that Julie has a terrifying secret, but she is murdered before she can tell Camille about it. Instead, she leaves instructions for her friend to carry out in the event of her death. Not satisfied with the way the investigation is going, Camille is drawn into the case. Her FBI training kicks in as she delves deeper and deeper into the homicide. The characters are real, the reader can't help but be drawn in. The story keeps you guessing right to the end. Not at all predictable. I thoroughly recommend this book
