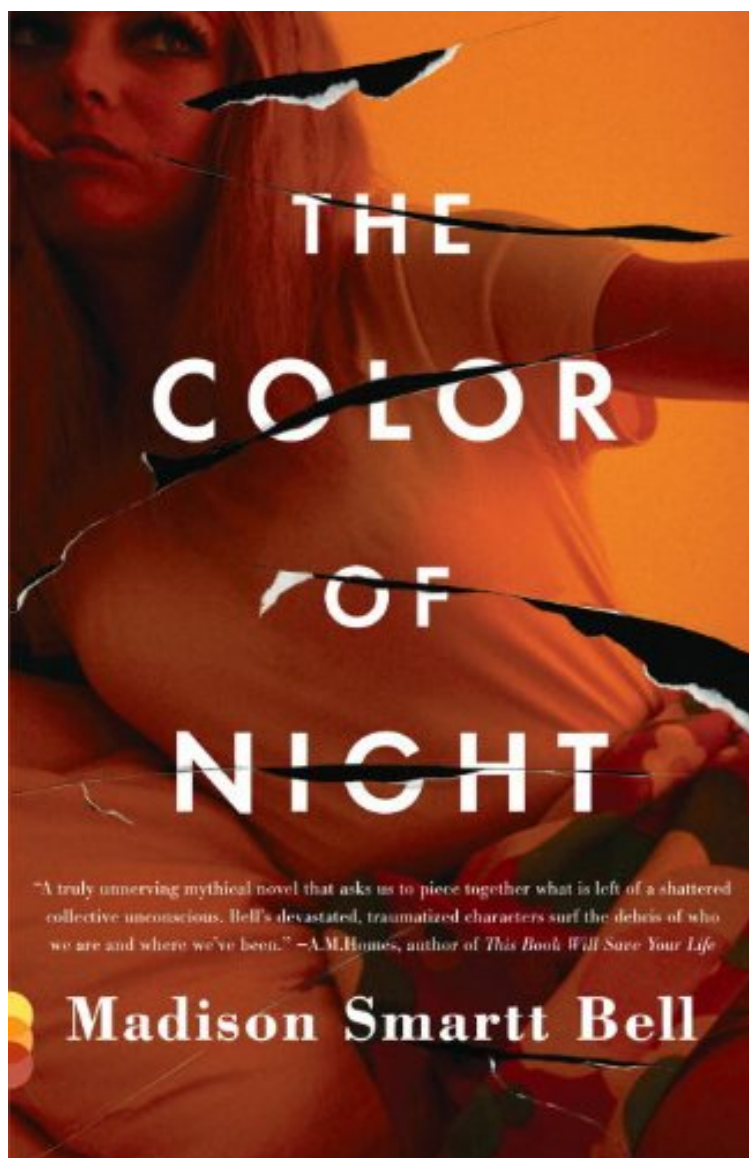


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# The Color of Night



*Par Madison Smartt Bell*  
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**Par Madison Smartt Bell : The Color of Night** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Color of Night:

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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurMae, a blackjack dealer in a Las Vegas casino, spends her free time wandering the desert with a rifle, or sitting in her trailer obsessively watching replays of an old lover escaping the wreckage of 9/11. What she sees in those images is different from what the rest of us would see. She revels in the pure anarchy, thrills at the destruction. These images recall memories of a childhood marked by unthinkable abuse, of her drift into a cult that committed the most shocking crime of the '60s, of her life since then as a feral and wary outsider, caught in a swirl of events at once personal, political, mythic.From the Trade Paperback edition.Extrait1Until the day the towers fell, I'd long believed that all the gods were dead. For years, for decades, my head was still. Only sometimes, deep in the desert, the sougning ghost voice of O.

But still, the bell of my head was silent, swinging aimlessly over the void.\*\*\*I could watch it again, as much as I wanted, since the TV kept playing it over and over like a game of Tetris no one could win. No limit to how many times I could consume, could devour those images. Again and again the rapid swelling, ripening to the bursting point, and then the fall. The buckling, crumbling, blooming outward in the great orb of ruin before it showered all its matter to the ground. Those gnatlike specks that swirled around it proved to be mortals, springing out of the flames. Wrapped in the shrouds of their screaming, they sailed down. It didn't matter how many saw one watching, since none can know another's heart or mind. I had not known my blood could rise like that. Still, again, despite the years, the withering of my body. Sometimes the television showed a plane biting into the side of a building, its teeth on its underside where the mouth of a shark is then flame leaped up from the wound like the red surge from an artery. Then there were shots of living mortals on the street, wailing, raking the flesh from the bone of their faces, or some of them frozen, prostrate with awe. So I saw Laurel for the first time again, Laurel kneeling on the sidewalk, her head thrown back, her hands stretched out with the fingers crooked, as weapons or in praise. Blood was running from the corners of her mouth, like in the old days, though not for the same reason. 2 Inside the casino, it never happened. Nothing there can enter in. Only the whirl of lights and the electronic burling of machines, rattle of dice in the craps table cups, an almost inaudible whisper of cards, the friction-free hum of roulette wheels turning. Nothing is permitted to change. It is a sort of fifth-rate hell, and I a minor demon posted to it. A succubus too indifferent to suck. I have my regulars, of course. Sometimes I even know their names. I deal them cards and they lose money. Occasionally one of them wins, of course, but not for long. "Mae," tonight's mark says. My name's a little sinister in his faint Slavic accent. He's told me his but I've forgotten. A retired airline pilot, I think he said. Some would find him good-looking, in that square-headed way all the pilots have. Silver hair and a face burnt to wrinkly leather. It takes a long time to catch a buzz from the watered drinks they give free here, but my regular has the determination to do it. "When you get off work, Mae? When you coming home with me?" I part my painted lips to show my pleasant teeth to him, smooth away the black wing of my hair. I am conscious of not looking up at the dark bulb in the low tiled ceiling, where the two of us are captured by a fish-eye lens. I am older than he, perhaps a lot older, but as far as I know he doesn't know it. I show my hole card: eight to a jack. Not much of a hand, but my regular took a hit too many and he's busted. I might have worked a double shift, meaning sixteen hours straight. Sometimes I do. I don't get tired. Even in a fifth-rate hell there is no sense of the passage of time. I don't remember anything unusual that day if there were fewer people than we normally got, a sudden emptying of the place, illumination from outside. No I don't think there was that. It hardly matters what I recall, since no one is going to call me to witness, at least not on that point. Probably two hours of darkness remained by the time I got into my car. It takes barely a quarter of that to drive from the casino to my dwelling. I don't listen to the radio. I don't like the chatter, and I don't like music with singing in it, and I don't like to hear guitars or strings. Maybe I listened to piano during the dark drive, Bach or Chopin, in a minor key. No voice told me what rent had been torn in the world that day. When I went into the desert, I still didn't know. *Revue de presse* "A truly unnerving mythical novel that asks us to piece together what is left of a shattered collective unconscious. Bell's devastated, traumatized characters surf the debris of who we are and where we've been." --A.M. Homes, author of *This Book Will Save Your Life* "A work that makes lucid the shadows and darkening corners that were encroaching on an America increasingly lost to its own history and self-respect. . . . As unforgettable as the events that inspired it." --Robert Stone, author of *Dog Soldiers* "In twenty books written over nearly thirty years, Madison Smartt Bell has gone from a writer of enormous promise to a master and more, a living literary resource. As his avid admirers will be happy to tell you, if you haven't read him, you don't know what you're missing. *The Color of Night* is characteristically brilliant and compelling, a terrifying vision of American dreaming. It may not be pretty, but it's certainly beautiful." --Michael Herr, author of *Dispatches* [A] sharp blade of a novel, every word is weaponized as Bell stands at the portal to chthonic evil. *Booklist* A hybrid of mid-career Cormac McCarthy and the film collaborations of Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez. . . . Bell's skills as a novelist are amply in evidence. *Kirkus*