

Introduction

This is about a murder. A murder, that's committed in a continuation party of a reputed school. Everyone is in their party moods and a gunshot is heard. The shot was fired on the other floor than the one where the party was going on.

The rest is the aftermath. The repercussions of a murder, how the police becomes hyper active, how the media influences the shaping of a court case and a lot more.

Then there are the dates. The dates of the court proceedings which lead us to many different angles of the very same story. There are the angles of the two defense lawyers and there is the angle of the investigating officer.

This is where the story starts to unfold. We get to see a background, like a back story of all the popular faces at the continuation.

At a point, we are introduced to some unusual and unbelievable powers of the protagonist. He dreams.

Of course, everyone does that. No, but his dreams are reality. All the dreams he sees while sleeping during the day are those happenings where in reality he wasn't present in the past and sees them now with a clearer perspective.

He is still not present there, he just becomes someone else or something that was present actually. And sees everything that happened, clearly. This ability later helps him and his defense to shape the case and have quite a role in helping him win gradually.

We also see the defense of the opposition. He is a man with a lot of experience and caliber. He has won many cases and is one of the most successful lawyers the country has ever seen. He knows how to shape words. Knows how to play with words.

At the end, something comes as a clue out of some guessing work based on the protagonist's ability which we talked about. This something has shaken everyone. It is unexpected and unbelievable and at the same time it is the most logical. Most logical to prove right ones as right and wrong ones as wrong.

So this was it. This was the exact way how the following mystery takes shape.

The Night of the Event

There was a feel of party everywhere around the Marina Club. The reason being Continuation Party of class 12 students of St. Louis Convent School being organized there. This place has a profound ambience of its own. People have always liked Marina. They have been here during most parts of their lives by now. Be it world cups, be it a grand anniversary party be it anything people have loved it for ages now. Started officially about 25 years ago, it still doesn't miss to stand apart. Maybe that's why the students chose this as the ideal place for something like continuation.

Everyone is in their party moods. Girls in their black and red dresses with obvious heels and boys in their slim-fitted attire add grace to the party. The DJ is doing as the crowd says and bartenders are there to serve the poison. Wham! A gunshot is heard. And literally all of them scared to death. They all run to find the place of the happening and discover their most popular friend with the dead body. Vivaan Ahuja, the popular guy for no good reason is scared and drunk at the same time. The dead body is of Samar Singhania.

Few seconds and the cops are here with the media following. They arrest Vivaan Ahuja and take the corpse for post-mortem studies. Few hours later, Varun Ahuja's good image gets bail for his son to be taken back home. And Mahesh Singhania files a case against Vivaan demanding life imprisonment accusing him of his son's murder.

"Be honest with me at least!" says Mr. Ahuja to his son, demanding an honest reply.

"I am, dad. And you need to help me get out of this!" is the reply.

"How is this possible for you to be there co-incidentally and not do anything to get out?"

"I don't know. And that's what I have been thinking all the while I was in jail".

"Alright then if you haven't done it and you are sure that anything ever done by you can never lead to this then I'm going to go for the best of the best lawyers in town to get you out of this shit!" says Mr. Ahuja, taking out his phone and calling his manager to look for a defense.

"I know he is the one! He is the damn culprit! He is the one who killed my son!" says Mahesh Singhania to his defense. "And even if he isn't then I don't care whoever it is! I want life imprisonment for Vivaan".

"What do you think you are saying Mr. Singhania?" says Albert d Souza, the defense. "How do you expect me to get Vivaan arrested even if he hasn't done anything?"

"Because I pay you to do so!"

“Look Mr. Singhanian, I can do that and I will do that for you. But first let’s find out who the real culprit is?”

“I don’t care!” says Mr. Singhanian lighting up his Marlboro, “The thing is Ahuja group of industries is the only one ahead of Singhanian group. And I hate that. See, the point here is that if the only son of the owner of Ahuja group is in jail then that obviously will lead to a downfall in the company’s shares and brand value as well. That’s what I want. If the values are low for this year, then investors will not be interested in his company. But they’ll obviously go for the second best which will then by their investments become the first best”

“Okay I’ll do as you say. And don’t worry at all, we will win this for sure” says Mr. d Souza.

Mahesh Singhanian, the owner of Singhanian group of industries is not at all worried for who killed his son or the reason behind the killing. He just wants Ahuja industries to suffer. Albert on the other hand also doesn’t want to know the reason for such hatred Mahesh has for his son. But he asked an explanation for this but was denied and then he isn’t worried because he is getting paid for evicting Vivaan Ahuja so that’s what his focus is now.

Meanwhile, media reports start surfacing everywhere about the above stated case.

“Everyone knows Mr. Ahuja, a man with a heart of gold, a hardworking youth who started working at a very vulnerable age” says Raman Chandra, from his T.V. show- Live and Living.

“But we should also not forget Vivaan’s past events and his indulgence in crimes of all sorts” says a guest on his show.

Many such shows and discussion programs were aired on most of the new channels that day. Some declared Vivaan as culprit and some as a part of a bigger conspiracy. The day was finally over, but the night of this day was no easy on the two men whose names were no longer just big businessmen but now the offenders of crime for some or the other part of the country. Nobody knew the reality, except the victim and the guilty. But this is the magnitude of influence that media nowadays has on the minds of people. Imagine for a second- How can some display of colors affect a person’s thinking to this level? Sleeplessness of this night was much harsh on Vivaan Ahuja.

The Innocent but Guilty

It was 2:00 am already and Vivaan was still awake. Thinking of what had happened to him in the last 36 hours or so. Time passed but no sign of sleep was on Vivaan's mind. As the clock turned to 5:00am, he fell asleep.

The day was perfect. The cold breeze blowing and the little warmth of the vanishing daylight as a mixture worked well for the clothes I had put on. Brown leather jacket and a pair of blue jeans with a very thin black tie placed a bit differently on the white shirt was my outfit. Had left for the Marina Club at around 8 in the evening. Said goodbye to dad and saw him advice not to drink and split.

Vivaan was asleep at 5 in the morning. All this which he sees now is his dream. Yes, just a dream.

Vivaan has this unusual power of seeing things with a clearer perspective when asleep during the day. He doesn't see anything much more than what has happened in the past. But now, he sees things with a clearer perspective and a sense that's necessary to make something out of visuals.

It was the 18th of January and the weather was not as cold as an 18th Jan. Reached there at 8:25 and was then involved in the preparations for the night which were almost done. At around 9:30, everyone had arrived and no one else was left to come. Partying was on full throttle till the gunshot was heard at 11:30pm. It was on the second floor of the Marina Club where no one was present at that time. The silence of the room was such that even the slightest of the sounds could be heard very clearly. This place turned into one with most girls' scared shouts at around 11:33. And I was the one with the dead body.

He had to make out well. Really well. Because when he was present at the party, he was drunk to his limit and couldn't make out anything then. But now he had his brain on his side.

When he woke up from this dream, he started to think about all of this. Firstly, he was sure that he had not taken more than two drinks but still he was quite drunk. Secondly, he was taken to that floor of the club by his group of friends and he did not want to go there on his own. And just at the moment when the realization came that a crime has been committed there, everyone arrived and the accusation started.

The time was 5 in the evening when he woke up and was thinking of what he had seen in his dream. Till the end of his complete realization of that night's happenings, it was time for dinner.

After having dinner, Vivaan plans to go to the crime scene. Plans to maybe catch a sight of something. Something which might help him to convey to his defense and that could probably prove him not guilty?

The Marina Club has been closed since that night and the "Do Not Cross" tape is placed around that place. Vivaan quietly dodges the two security guards to enter the club. It's already 2 in the night.

He had always had interests in crime investigation and from his knowledge of the Internet and different crime shows; he has learned the act of taking finger prints and matching them later. So this is his entire plan. He would go to the crime spot and take with him all the finger prints. He takes all the finger prints and with the same quietness walks out of the club and goes home. He also plans to get finger prints of his best friends who were not on his side when the police arrived but had taken the other side now.

The place which was once the light of the town is now shut for the common public and people were seen remembering it and feeling of nostalgia was everywhere around the town.

There is a safer side in the story and as of now, Vivaan is not a part of it.

The Other Side

Vivaan did not sleep that night and kept thinking and planning.

Thinking about what actually happened to him and planning his further moves. Or statements maybe. Maybe he planned how he would face the opposition lawyers? Maybe he thought how he would explain his role in the case to his defense some day? Maybe he was wondering how good his defense would be? And what not?

He sleeps the next whole day. And this day, he saw his girlfriend in his dream. She has long hair, with streaks in between. Around 4-5 strands he sees are shining differently. While dreaming, he remembers telling her one day, "You will look the best in an entire blonde look" while gently caressing her hair.

"Then maybe someone else takes me away from you?" she replies while teasing him.

But this is not this dream. I shouldn't think of all this. What she actually did to me is true. What side she chose to stay on to is the only truth that I should be aware of now. All that caressing and love is past now. Vivaan literally wiped his forehead, during sleeping, to remove all the sweat including the thoughts of her girl.

In this dream, she is seen taking the other side. The side chosen by most people. Because this group just knows Vivaan as a man who has been involved in all the possible bad things there in this world. Be it drugs, be it trafficking, be it everything Vivaan has done in the near past.

Manya, Vivaan's then girlfriend is seen taking the cops' and the media's side while shaping a story. "We all were partying downstairs. Then there was this gunshot and we hurried to come up here. Here I saw Vivaan, who I was looking for all the time during the party", she is seen by him now. She is telling the journalists that Vivaan was not anywhere to be seen during the party. Which is obviously not true.

He was present there all the time. He was drinking and dancing also. He was out of the scene just a few minutes before. But she lied.

This shattered Vivaan in the first place. But then he thought maybe he was wrong when he chose her. Maybe she was not even worth his love which he had given to her all the time. Maybe all the time he had spent with her was a waste altogether? Maybe.

The most heartbreaking for Vivaan was when his group of friends also went against him. They were namely- Adi, Jay, Hardy and Shivansh. Adi and Jay were the best of friends. This group was complete with Vivaan as a part but now just four of them are here. Five of them were like the best buddies for each other.

There have been a lot of happenings in the past few years at school. It was at the beginning of class 11th that the five met for the first time. And by the first three months they were the best of friends. Since then they have been part of most activities denied by the law or considered illegal. The first such was a case of human trafficking and the last such was selling drugs at a rave.

But now, the four were on one side and Vivaan was on the other side. And as most people saw Vivaan at the crime scene, they all believe that being on his side will do no good. So they chose the other side and so did most people at Marina, that night. Meanwhile, there are a lot of media reports waiting to be seen by Vivaan that day.

It's a crime show now. And the editor in chief is present here, talking about Vivaan's past involvement in all sorts of crime.

Vivaan has earlier been arrested for cases such as drug smuggling and trafficking of girls and he was also found guilty by the court but always managed to get away because of his dad. Everyone knows that it's Varun Ahuja's image that works well for Vivaan and helps him nearly always in getting out of such cases.

Interviews of the people present at the party that day also surfaced in news reports. Many of his classmates said that his past explains his present and his present will later explain his future.

He was thinking of all this when weeks passed. He went completely into himself these days. Was not talking to anyone, was not taking any calls, wasn't seeing DM's and wasn't even sleeping actually. Maybe he was worried how to get himself out or how to blame someone else or both maybe. His dad suffered a great loss in shares due to the much expanded controversies around Vivaan. He was almost bankrupt.

Everyone has been wrong in some or the other way at some or the other part in their lives. And most of them admit it now but didn't admit then that yes it was I who was at fault. Maybe the guilt is heavy then. Time heals the weight. It reduces stress and also gives a feeling of satisfaction when realization is done. So why don't we realize at that very point of time? If people do realize then, then a lot of time invested in making them realize will not be wasted and the person can invest that somewhere else. Realization of something also instills a feeling of maturity and sympathy for the victim of your deed. Still we don't. In spite all the resulting benefits, we don't realize then. This is because the moment when a crime is done, at that time the weight of the guilt is more than the satisfaction of the realization. Also, at times there's a fear of hurting the other person's feelings so much that realization has no scope. But in this case, hurting has a multiplication in its magnitude when realization comes later.

Vivaan was a great thinker. And he was thinking of all of this. It was he who was involved in all bad deeds in life and was kind of trapped. Karma hits badly and Vivaan realized this.

All this was going on and the first date of the case arrived with curiosity for the country.

The First Judgment Day

This was the day most people had been waiting for. The whole nation wants this to be done because they have been talking about this all their previous weeks. They have seen it in the news, heard it in the radio and read it in papers. And they were eager for this day to finally come.

The setting of the court was not that great. It was a District & Sessions court in Delhi where this case had its first date. There were 53 cases that day and this was the first one. No one had known that this one would take all the time of that day's proceedings.

"My client, your honor, is a hardworking man who has earned all of his wealth by himself. He wanted nothing more in his life when this good-looking Vivaan who is a killer in reality took the most important part of Mr. Singhanian away" said Mr. d Souza as the starting statement of his case. "From the court I only demand justice and nothing else, your honor" he sits down.

Albert d Souza, was one of the most successful lawyers in India and also one of the most corrupt ones. He had lost just nine of the 65 cases he has done. His career, spanning a massive 30 years, he has taken the highest amount of wins among all the other lawyers here. He plays with the case and also has an evil sense of one-liners and flaunts his French accent which he has got to learn very recently. So the flaunting is necessary.

"Your honor, my client, Mr. Varun Ahuja is one of the most successful businessmen of this country. He is a self-made and self-established man of great reputation and respect in the society. He has had no cases against him in his entire career of 25 years. How can you expect a man like him to raise his son to be a killer?" says A.K. Sharma, the defense of Varun Ahuja.

Arun Kumar Sharma also was a greatly famous and young lawyer with a more realistic approach towards everything. He doesn't play much with his words but works on evidences and facts to prove his point. He has been compared to Albert d Souza for winning 20 out of 24 cases in his career. His fees is also as high as Mr. d Souza and he is also corrupt like him. But there's some difference.

"Shine some light, your honor because my worthy colleague, Mr. Sharma, doesn't fondly remember how Vivaan Ahuja's character has been in the past two years. And as they say, once a liar, always a liar" is the reply from Albert d Souza.

"But that should not mean anything and we should not declare him guilty without any discussion about this event. Your honor, I agree that Vivaan has not had a good past due to his involvement in cases of smuggling of drugs. I also agree that it was this only court where he was found guilty and punishment was also given here. But this is my point. This court has found him guilty in the past but in this case, Mr.

Albert d Souza wants a direct punishment which I feel is not right for the prestige of this place of justice” says A.K. Sharma.

“I never said that, your honor. Even I feel that it would not be right to declare him guilty straightaway but I am just saying that a boy like Vivaan, who has been involved in such cases in the near past, can easily commit a murder. So I only want justice, my lord, and nothing else”, said Mr. d Souza.

Many such exchanges took place that day in the courtroom and both the defense lawyers were in their best form when they were accusing each other’s clients. This case was important not only because of Mr. Ahuja and Mr. Singhanian being a part of this, but also because of Mr. d Souza and Mr. Sharma.

As we know that on the very first date, no evidences or facts are presented but the case is either accepted or rejected by the court. The whole day passed with accusation going on and then the judge said the acceptance statement.

“Listening to the point of views of both the defenses, the court is willing to accept this case with all the further proceedings going on from here. No one related to this case is allowed to leave the town till the completion of the case. Adjourned” saying this, the judge gave the next date.

The next date was two months later as you might have made up in your mind because of the 53 cases on that single day. Now imagine how many cases are there every day for the judiciary. This is the condition of the Judiciary now. There are so many cases pending, some are of small duration and some are of large no. of accusations with them. Some involve the poorest, who can’t even afford a good lawyer and some are those which have Albert d Souza. But still, somewhere in the minds of the common people there is still some faith for the judiciary because maybe that’s the reason for so many cases still pending.

Investigations and Investigator

Parallel investigations were going on after the acceptance of the case. Rajveer Shikhawat, the main investigating officer in this case is at the Marina Club, doing his job.

“When was the booking made for this place for the 18th of Jan?” he asks.

Rajveer is a man most people of the town recognize. He is not corrupt in any way, he does the investigation with all his blood and sweat and gets the guilty convicted. He is tall and sports a beard.

“The booking was done a month ago, on the 10th of Dec. Vivaan and Adi both had come together to make the booking” said the Bartender.

“Did you see any kind of rifts between them on the night of 18th Jan?”

“No, they seemed like best friends. They had danced together, Adi sir also bought drinks for Vivaan sir” he replied.

The further explanation given by the bartender included previous account of all meetings between the five best friends and also showed the CCTV footages of some of these meetings to Rajveer.

Rajveer comes back to the police station. Forensic expert Dr. Robert is waiting for him. He greets him with a hello and asks, “Found some evidence at the crime scene?”

“No sir, not even a single fingerprint was found on the dead body. But there was a mark of a gunshot on the wall right behind the dead body”

Dr. Robert and Rajveer, friends for many years now don't have any official informal meetings. They only meet in relations to the cases they are working on it and very professionally talk about the cases only.

Yet they have now become kind of best friends due to this professional talking for years.

“Oh” exclaims Rajveer.

“But sir, three different finger prints were found at different spots in the room where the body was found”

Rajveer asks him to identify the finger prints and let him know as soon as possible. He then goes to a coffee shop where he had arranged a meeting with the group of friends.

“Vivaan was the most popular face in your school, right?” he asks

“Yes sir, but mostly with the girls only” Adi replied.

“What do you mean?”

“Sir, he was never a part of our group. We always maintained a distance from him because of his involvement in the drug smuggling and other cases. Girls liked him because of the money he could spend on them and he was good-looking at the same time” was the reply.

“So what kind of friendship you guys had with Vivaan?”

“Sir we were not even friends, but just acquaintances.” Jay said.

“What about Samar, Samar Singhania?” Rajveer asked.

“Sir he was a friend” said Hardy.

Rajveer once had a thought that the main culprit has to be one of these four boys. Their answers seemed different and their behavior was different. Before going on to any conclusions, he thought to once meet Vivaan in person. He had later asked the group of friends to give him the account of the night and it was the same as known by most part of the country now.

Meanwhile, Vivaan had stopped seeing any more dreams and was also not planning anything. He just passed the days waiting for the date of the case and maybe praying as well. His nights were sleepless and so he was taking pills to sleep better.

He entered the coffee shop and Rajveer Shikhawat is already waiting for him.

“What kind of friendship you had with Adi, Jay, Hardy and Shivansh?” the first question.

“We were best friends. Everything we did together. Even on the night of the party we came in together” Vivaan said.

Now the obvious one, “Did you have any personal issues with Samar Singhania?”

“No”

“Did Adi, Jay, Hardy or Shivansh have some?”

“No” Vivaan replied.

“Tell me exactly what had happened on that night?”

“We were partying and then Adi gave me two drinks and then took me to the second floor of the club. I asked him why, he said someone is waiting for me. I was drunk to hell and could not make it then. But after I had been in the room on the second floor for a few moments, I had made out that I am with the dead body and everyone is there. All my classmates, some police officers and some news reporters as well. The rest you know, sir.”

Rajveer, now even more confused, thought from both sides of the story. On one side, there is the group of friends who are lying a lot. On other side is Vivaan who has had a bad record in the past but is constantly playing the victim in this case which is very strange and so, he isn't sure who the real culprit is.

Days had passed and then another date was there already. Already waiting to shock some.

The Second Date of the Case

Albert started, "Your excellence, there are a lot of police investigation also going on parallel. I have a strong feel that someone from the police department is playing from both sides and is helping to destroy the evidences. For some questioning, I would like to call Mr. Rajveer Shikhawat in the witness box please.

"Mr. Shikhawat, who do you think is responsible for destroying the evidences related to this case?"

There was silence for a while. For a few seconds. Rajveer was angry inside but calm outside. Angry because he himself was worried for the finger prints now and this accusing on him, this angered him even more. He then gathered some breath.

"No one in fact no evidences have been destroyed in this case and I am making sure nothing like that ever happens" said Mr. Rajveer.

"But what about the finger prints on the body of Samar Singhania?" Albert asked.

This shocked Rajveer. How did he get to know about all this? Is he also aware of the person who has done it?

"Mr. Rajveer, don't think that what you hide from one person can be hidden from the rest of the world"

"Mr. Rajveer, do you agree that you have no finger prints from the body of Samar Singhania?" the judge asked.

"Yes, your honor I agree" replied Rajveer.

"Then how can you think of hiding this from the court?" judge said.

"I am sorry your honor. I thought I would be the one blamed for that"

"Of course you will be blamed because even if you haven't done it, someone from your department has done it or someone's negligence has" Albert said.

He continued, "Now tell me who is responsible for doing this?"

"The guard who was there at night duty was the only one present that night and according to him he didn't see anyone getting in the Marina" Rajveer replied.

"No, your honor! It was Vivaan Ahuja! It was he who had taken the finger prints" Mr. d Souza yelled.

“Your honor, my worthy colleague, Mr. Albert is accusing my client for something which he cannot make any use of. I would like to ask Albert that what use a school boy can make of finger prints” Mr. Sharma spoke up.

“Well, if you ask me, then I would say Vivaan did it because it was his finger print which he wiped off”

“Your honor, Mr. Albert is again making false accusations against my client and this could amount to another lawsuit against him” Arun was furious this time.

The Judge interrupted, “I don’t know who has done it. Mr. Shikhawat, I want you to dig into this and find out who has done it as soon as possible” judge said.

There were a lot more happenings in court that day. Albert had once again tried to convince that it was Vivaan.

“Your honor, I think only Vivaan could have done this because he was the one found with the dead body at the crime scene and maybe it was his fingerprint that he actually wiped off”

That night, there were reports in the media about the involvement of Vivaan Ahuja in wiping off the finger prints off the dead body. That day in court, Albert d Souza demanded from the court that if Vivaan is involved in removing the finger prints, then he should be also tried for life imprisonment to which the judge had replied that since he is not 18 yet and due to this he cannot be tried for a punishment like this. The judge later warned Albert to be in his limits and not accuse someone so much. To this Albert also apologized.

Further meetings

Both the defense lawyers are meeting their respective clients in different places. Mr. Sharma is meeting Vivaan and Mr. d Souza is meeting Adi, Jay, Hardy and Shivansh.

“Two coffees without sugar”

“Seven coffees please”

Albert: Give me the exact account of that night what exactly did you see what exactly happened with you clearly.

Vivaan: Everyone was in the party mood and then I remember being present at the room on the second floor with everyone doubting me.

Jay: We heard the gunshot and then went upstairs to see what had happened.

Albert: Be honest and tell me have you done it?

Vivaan: No! Please understand this. I haven't and I can help you in whichever way you want me to.

Sharma: OK. I'll do my best I can.

Albert: You all rest assured and don't act smart to anyone. Just tell the truth to me and tell the others what I tell you to.

The meetings were over and thereon both the defense lawyers had to work hard to make their case strong. Both had a fair idea of their future planning.

Albert had a good point in Vivaan being present at the place of the murder. Arun on the other hand had to shape his words well. He had by now, known from Vivaan that his drink was adulterated with some drug which gave him hallucinations and so he wasn't really aware of what was going on around him for a few seconds.

The next date of the case was two months later.

Weeks passed. The date was of 5th May and there was only one reason to celebrate and that was Vivaan turning 18. And that's why everyone wanted to but could not celebrate such an important day. Vivaan himself was very worried about the case and scared also because now he can be given a life imprisonment if found guilty.

The next date of the case was very near. It was actually the very next day and everyone was present at the court.

The net result of this date was that since Vivaan Ahuja was 18 now, the judge reminded him that he can be tried for life imprisonment.

Another big event in this hearing was the main arguments put up by both the defenses.

“It’s clear from his presence at the murder sight that he is the culprit and he has killed Samar” Albert started.

“And it’s also clear that something was there in Vivaan’s drink which could have led him to do this” AK replied.

To this Albert had no clue what to say. This had happened to him for the first time in his entire career when he was falling short of arguments. But, with experience he had acquired the art of forming arguments with mere foreplay of words.

“So you say that his drink was adulterated. And this could have been done by him only so as to prove that he was under the influence of drugs” Albert said.

This shocked Sharma. He was not expecting such a reply from him. And he gasped on his breath in a few seconds and accepted his defeat at that hearing as Albert was a much experienced person. But he also managed to put a number of accusations on the four best friends.

Both the defenses have now had a fair idea of each other’s capabilities. Each other’s reach for words. Each other’s reality. Everything was clear in just a few dates.

Some more Investigation

Rajveer Shikhawat has now started his investigation from a very lay level. After that date of the case, he appointed two of his trusted guards at the crime scene. Forensic expert had found out and told Rajveer that Vivaan is the one who has taken all the finger prints from the dead body. So Rajveer knew that if he now asked Vivaan then he would obviously deny because he did the same thing at the court. Hence, he did not ask him about that.

He now went to the St. Louis Convent's School to dig deeper into this case.

“Ma'am, tell me something about this group of friends” Rajveer asks from the class teacher of Vivaan.

She has been their class teacher since the beginning of class 11th. St. Louis Convent had this habit.

To have the same class teacher in 11th and 12th. This was good. Really very good. So that the teachers and students become all the more frank and friendly with each other. And that the teachers could help the students in their personal lives also.

“This group was basically the one of the riches” she said.

She went on, “All five of them were good in studies but were equally known by the other students for all the bad reasons. They did everything like best friends they partied every week, used to sit in the class nearby each other”

“Did you do something to stop them and their involvement in all the bad deeds?”

“No, because all were really good in studies and whenever I called their parents, they said if my child is doing good then you don't need to worry about other things. On the 14th Jan was last such meeting and I had given them the last warning about rustivating them if they were found involved in any more activities of this kind”

“Were there any rifts between Samar and this group of five?”

“Only minor ones and even if there were, then teachers hardly get to know any such things in school, but most teachers have seen Samar as friends with the group of five” replied the physics teacher.

“Thank you, ma'am for you co-operation and I might need to contact you again so I request you to please be in the town till the investigation completes” said Rajveer and went out of the fifth room after seeing the Principal.

“Sure”

He had been seeing all the concerned teachers one after the other. And sad to know, that most students get frank with one or the other teacher of their school. But this group? This was exclusive. Nothing they did was known to anyone but them.

While coming out, he saw some students of the present class 12th discussing something. He went closer to get more of what was going on. In school, when it's the physical education class, most students are playing in the fields. No matter how harsh the weather may seem to most of us, but to these students, such classes are like heaven on the earth.

“We will do the toughest trek possible and will enjoy a lot” a boy was saying this with excitement to his friends in the school corridor.

“Yeah man! We will not be like other girls who act shy but we will surely have a good time there!” exclaimed another.

Rajveer stopped a passing peon and told him that he wanted to know more about the tour. He then took Rajveer to the school ground and was telling him about the tour while roaming in the shade of trees on that hot day.

“Sir, this was initiated by our school few years back. It's a tour, organized every year. Every year, the destinations are decided by the students where they want to go and the best thing that the students like in this tour is that no teachers accompany them in this tour. Last year, the batch of Vivaan Ahuja was the one that went on the tour. That's all I can tell you.”

“Thank you” said Rajveer and walked out of the ground.

The school's ground was located on one side of the whole campus. The school building was in the middle. So he had to once again cross the school building to get out of the school.

He then saw a nerd student from the current class 12th and wanted to ask him about the last year's tour. The boy told him that if you want to know more about the case, then you should go to Dharamshala, where the last year's batch had gone.

This aroused Rajveer and he decided to go there to find out more about the killing.

Palace among Mountains

I think, the title of this chapter describes the place clearly. If you have been there then you'd realize how beautiful yet calm that place is. It's basically for everyone. For young enthusiasts, there is a trekking expedition. For people who like to spend time alone there are a lot of other things but for now the place is a crime scene for Rajveer Shikhawat which could also give him important evidences.

I went there to get the slang and it was Samar who had seen me. I told him it's nothing but he wanted to see. He saw that and threatened to tell the principal about it. I was also scared because I knew that any more complaints to the principal could lead me in trouble. I threatened him that if he did so then I'd kill him.

This was the dream seen by Vivaan at the same time but in Delhi. At the same time Rajveer was at Dharamshala and was going place to place in search of the location of a rave party. This rave thing was by his gut feeling. He had already known that the students had come here last year. And he also knew that these boys were involved in all kinds of illegal stuff.

For obvious reasons a drug dealing in a rave party was somewhere in Rajveer's mind so he decided to track a location of a rave in Dharamshala. These rave parties are very private. No one apart from the ones who are going to be present there are aware of the actual location. This is because the police are always on track of such parties as they involve drugs. The location of such parties is not disclosed till a few hours are left for the party to begin.

Rajveer had a few contacts in Dharamshala so he met some of them and directly found the location of a rave that was happening that night in some outer parts of the city.

Now, these rave parties don't need any description. But without one, they seem like nothing big. Neon lights all over, masked people wearing neon bracelets and chains. Deep House Music to take over your senses. And drugs of course, to make you groove more even with the worst of the music. Here, you can find all kinds of drugs, be it ecstasy, GHB, meth, coke and what not. Pricing tells what works better for you.

Rajveer had got entry to one such party. It also had a loud music. A very loud one. There were people tripping over drugs everywhere. Rajveer saw two policemen also present but he thought not to focus on them but to find the dealer there. Soon, he found him. All guarded with two bodyguards, he was a man of good physique with toned muscles. And soon, he was quite familiar with the drug dealer. He asked whether he remembered one such party organized on the 31st Dec.

He gave the entire account to Rajveer. That night the only thing everyone remembers fondly was the rift between Samar and Vivaan in which Vivaan threatens to kill him.

“But it didn’t really seem like he would kill him really because he had just said to stop him from doing something which he was going to do in the near future”, the dealer said.

The Next Date

Two months had passed and there was the fourth date of the case. Journalists and reporters' numbers were getting reduced with each new date of the case.

These journalists need some spicy thing every other date. Which is not possible.

Some journalists, the serious ones. Were present on every other date of the case and were doing their job without adding any more ingredients to the story. And were presenting the story to the country.

All the court proceedings and accusations were going on quite well, suddenly someone from the people sitting in the court got up, said that she wants to say something. The judge orders her to say whatever she wants to say in the witness box.

"He tried to rape me" says Kriti Singhania, sister of Samar Singhania, when asked by Mr. d Souza during the court proceedings. Kriti was present at all of the previous hearings related to the case of her brother's killing but never spoke.

"Your highness, here I want to get the focus on something a bit off from the case but" d Souza was speaking when he was interrupted by Sharma.

"Objection, your honor"

"Overruled"

"My dear colleague here does not even want me to complete. I was saying it's a bit off from the case but has a very great influence on the character of Vivaan Ahuja"

"What is it all about, please be clear in your point" said the judge.

"Yes, your honor, what Kriti wanted to tell the whole court is offbeat and she is very right as well. Mr. Vivaan, I request you to show your six packs to the whole court. Take off your shirt, now"

"Objection, your honor! Mr. Albert here is doing character assassination and I can't let my client suffer" said Mr. Sharma.

"Let him do what he is doing. This is no character assassination, this could be an important evidence, said Ms. Sarita Roy, the Judge.

Vivaan took his shirt off.

"Wow, I wish I could have such abs. Coming to the point, Vivaan turn around. What we all see now are signs of resistance that I'm sure Kriti would have shown" said Mr. Albert.

“Do you want to say something, Mr. Sharma?” said the judge.

“Thank you, your honor. What I feel is this is still character assassination and everyone is aware of the fact that a woman resists by hitting the face of the attacker and not the back. What spots Mr. Vivaan has on his back are of something else and not resistance. And also, Kriti has never discussed anything related to this ever before in spite of being present in every date” explained Mr. Sharma.

“Mr. d Souza?” asked the judge.

“What I feel is if the attacker is much taller than the girl and if both are standing, then it seems impossible for her to attack on the face. That’s when she has to go for the back of the person. And this act of Vivaan also reflects what he can really be at times”

“Objection!”

“Denied”

“My only request from the court is to take this incident as evidence that Mr. Vivaan here, can go out of control at times and can do whatever he feels like doing”.

“Mr. Sharma, please proceed”

“Thank you, your honor. I just want to say that just these marks can’t prove that Vivaan is guilty of molestation. These can be mere co-incidence as well. Mr. d Souza, I guess I asked you something so I again request you to consider that as a question and give a valid explanation”

“Your highness, I want to say that maybe Kriti was a bit shy and did not want to discuss this in the first place itself”

“After hearing both the sides of the story, the court does not declare any judgment at this point, but this matter is not closed yet and there can be a future discussion on this whenever the court wants”

This was impacting on Vivaan. Because he had never imagined that someone whom he had known since very long would try to do something like this. Even Rajveer, had not thought that Vivaan could do something of this magnitude. Vivaan had to face a lot of flak after coming out of the court. Media was once again at its best in putting him in a category of bad character. Once again d Souza was on the leading side.

Meeting with both the Sides

Now, after the fourth date of the case, Rajveer was back on track with the investigations. Police officers have these men as kind of detectives who are not officially associated with the police department but they work for the officials as they have few more advantages than the officials themselves. They are common people in reality who cannot be recognized by anyone and they can do a lot of researches in relation to whatsoever case they are helping the officials with. Rajveer also had some of these kind of men associated to him, unofficially.

Meetings with such men were not even organized directly. All his earlier meetings with those men were like both of them on different tables, but adjacent to each other and Rajveer and that person sitting with their backs towards each other.

“Had updated my status one hour ago, let’s see how many likes have I got” Rajveer started.

“Got 3k likes man!” the detective said with enthusiasm.

“1k likes?” this was Rajveer.

“Call from landline club? Earlier this evening? Okay I’m coming” he had left saying that.

Rajveer made a note of this and ordered some more coffee. He left after an hour or so.

After coming back home, he started thinking about the clue given by his associate. He was thinking for like 7 minutes, and it struck him there and then.

“The call was placed earlier from the landline of the club earlier that evening” he realized he cracked it then.

Now, you must be thinking that how can such an info related to the call details of the Marina be given by a douche bag kind of a man? See, Rajveer has already known that Albert is cruel. He knows where his next steps of investigation go. So he already settled the matter with the landline company and also the call tapping section of the police department.

So Rajveer had to be as quick as possible as to put one of his men on this job of finding the call details of the Marina or else Albert would have deleted all possible call records available.

The guy Rajveer met, had later handed him over the recent call records in hard copy.

After this, the next day he met Vivaan and the group of friends, separately.

Rajveer- Tell me something about the brawl between Samar and Vivaan at the rave party in that trek last year?

Adi- Sir, Samar had seen Vivaan taking the drugs to the party and that's why he stopped him. Vivaan was firstly trying to convince but later he told him to fuck off somewhere or else he'd kill him there and then.

Hardy- But, Sir it didn't really seem like a real one because there are times when we say so to people but we never mean it so that was that for Vivaan.

Rajveer- Describe in detail, whatever the reason was, who was the main supplier of the drugs that Vivaan had?

Jay- Sir, it was a deal with Mr. Qamil.

Rajveer- So you guys know Mr. Qamil?

Shivansh- Yes, sir.

Rajveer- There is nothing unknown about that gangster and I hope you guys know what kind of criminal records he has had in the past?

Adi- Sir, we were not involved in any of the other things he was a part of.

Rajveer- Adi, that's a vague explanation possible for such a thing. If you guys are in contact with someone who has done all sorts of stuff in his entire life, then how can you justify that? I can agree to you all but the people will obviously see you in bad light and it is you who will be ignored by the society.

Jay- Sir, because of the amount of money it gave, we were a part of this and nothing else.

Rajveer- Adi, describe the deal in detail. With only true facts.

Adi- Sir, the deal was to sell 1000 such capsules in the rave at Dharamshala. We were done with almost 900 and also had the amount with us but at that very moment, Samar saw us.

Rajveer- Why only Vivaan was the one to threaten him? You also had the deal with Qamil right?

Jay- Sir we all had packets of 200 capsules each. We had only a few left with us but Vivaan was having around 50 capsules unsold. So we had thrown the packets away as we had made the amount of money Qamil was expecting us to make.

The meeting was later concluded with Rajveer getting to know this detail about the brawl at the rave. Irfaan Qamil, known by the name Qamil Mia in underworld was a gangster involved in all kinds of bad deeds. There was hardly a crime he hasn't been a part of. He started as a teen. At the age of 17, he stole a gold chain from a middle-age woman. At 19, he committed two murders. And at around 28 he had

established himself as the darkest side of crime anyone had ever seen. Now, he didn't even care about any rank, any officer, he just offered the concerned person. If the answer is yes then he paid him well and if it was no, then he got him killed.

Next he planned to meet Vivaan, later that day.

“Have a seat, Vivaan”

“Thank you, sir”

“Tell me about the brawl that took place in Dharamshala last year between you and Samar”

Account given by him was similar to that given by the other side. Vivaan also said about Qamil.

Yet another Dream

It had been a while since Vivaan saw something in his dreams. Now he also thought that were those dreams a mere coincidence or there was something more to it.

This could have been true. What if everything he is been seeing in his dreams is all fake? What if nothing like the dream had actually happened?

And also, it had been months since he dreamt of something like that.

After meeting Rajveer, Vivaan decides to find out. He sleeps during the next day, starting at 5, like always.

Everything apart from him is well. A club, he sees.

The vision becomes more clear now.

He, the eye of the bartender on the leftmost counter, is getting a visual. A visual he never expected, nor will ever expect. He is seeing a clearer vision now. There is loud music. He glances around. Few people are present. Very few are dancing, rest are drinking and talking. He sees familiar faces now.

Manya and Kriti, both are seen. Also present are Adi, Hardy, Jay and Shivansh. They all look frightened but showing as if confident.

Adi starts, "You both need to lie. Kriti you accuse him of molesting you and Manya, you need to be on our side at all times"

"Okay, I'll do that but are you sure this will help the defense in any way to get life imprisonment for Vivaan?" said Kriti.

"Yes it will. Because you accusing him of such a thing will create a stir in the media and also the judge will herself understand this and she will also reward your courage to speak up" said Jay.

Manya said, "Guys how does being on your side helps Vivaan in getting life imprisonment?"

"It does because if you be on his side, trying to be a good girlfriend, then police might accuse you also"

"And that you would never want"

"True, Shivansh"

This was that. This was what was seen by Vivaan in his yet another dream. He saw that Kriti can be right because she is demanding justice for her brother by accusing him. He thought to himself, "And

what is wrong in a false allegation if that could help me get a life imprisonment? If such a thing had happened to me, then wouldn't my sister do the same?"

Manya on the other hand was the one in darkness. She is scared; she doesn't trust Vivaan and trusts this group because they are known to be Vivaan's best friends since long. So somehow, she is also right because she wants to be safe and not accused so that her family doesn't suffer because of her relationship with someone.

Rajveer was planning to meet the gangster Qamil. Nobody knows where he lived. But the detectives of Rajveer were smart enough to find it out and let him know. So he leaves for the meeting at Qamil's residence.

And by the end of this dream, Vivaan was very clear in his mind about his dreaming ability. All these dreams were not just coincidence, but had a lot more to be discovered and planned.

Vivaan realized that he saw these dreams only on those days when the previous day he had either talked about that or had thought about that. So from now onwards, whenever he wanted to investigate something about the case, at the night he used to plan and think about the topic and the next day he dreamt of that. A separate chapter would be required to explain to the reader what the result of all his planning was.

Meeting the Boss

Before going onto the ability of dreaming and Vivaan's planning, there is the need to describe this meeting.

The area was awfully unhygienic.

There were brothels all around, red light areas, blue light areas were clearly seen by Rajveer.

Women, of all ages are seen by him. He had been here before but never got into this much of a detailing.

There was loud music everywhere because on the ground floor of all these buildings were clubs and the brothels were above that, i.e., on the first floor. The look on people's faces was also very different. Everyone looked drunk and was staring at Rajveer as he walked down the lane.

One of these doubtful looking people also tried to drag him into one of the clubs and other one also tried to steal his wallet but as they say, a cop is smarter than he looks. Rajveer was smart enough to stop him from doing so. Just at the time when Rajveer was about to kill him with his 9mm, a guy came closer and whispered to Rajveer, "Qamil Mia doesn't like to be kept waiting". Rajveer followed him thereafter.

That ugly looking guy took him to the third floor of one such brothel cum club. There is a dingy room was Irfaan Qamil, surrounded by both men and women.

"Welcome Inspector, welcome", exclaimed Qamil.

"Thank you, Irfaan Qamil. But don't you think this place is quite small for your stardom and fame?"

"Stardom? My stardom is of that magnitude that if I put a finger on a building then that belongs to me in the next few minutes"

"Never pointed towards my Police Station, did you?"

Qamil was angry but smart enough not to lose, and said, "That needs improvement to match my stardom and standard" and everyone started laughing.

"What brings you to me, Inspector?" he continued.

"Need some privacy if you can please get me some?" Rajveer said and within 2 seconds, everyone was out.

"Please continue, Inspector."

"You must have heard about the case which is the most talked about in the media?"

“Samar Singhania? Tell me what you want to know”

“I want you”

“I can give you the amount you desire”

“Tell me from the start since you know these schoolboys”

“I saw them first two years ago. It was a rave where I was with my drug and they were selling theirs. The people didn’t like mine but they fell for theirs. It was then that I realized that my package isn’t the best out there in the market. I then killed the man from whom I had bought my drug and asked from these schoolboys about the contact info of that person from where they bought their drug. Since then I have been paying them well in whichever thing they want to do with me and my team”

“Last when you had met them?”

“At a rave in Dharamshala where I wanted them to sell 1000 capsules and I gave 200 to each one of them”

“You know I can arrest you for doing that?”

“You know you are at my place and it’s my dignity that I am keeping you alive?”

“Okay. I’m not arresting you but I might want to speak to you more often so don’t leave the town till the investigation is done”

“Sure”

Killing Qamil would have given no clue to Rajveer about the case. So he didn’t do it. It also could have been the reason of him being at Qamil’s place and there was a constant eye on the door of the room he was present in.

“Sir, why did you let him say all that to you without your permission? Why didn’t you give an order to kill him then and there?”

“Killing him would have had no benefit. It would have just got more media on us and this whole case. Rajveer Shikhawat is just a pawn in this game. And a pawn’s sacrifice to get the queen is surely worth it. But not now, later”

Walking through the streets of the most popular red light area of the town, Rajveer thinks of the women here.

Trapped. Maybe not by choice. Maybe they don’t really ‘enjoy’ their job.

Rajveer thinks and has one thing to say about their lives.

Miserable.

Protagonist and Defense

Coming back to Vivaan's ability to dream, he had earlier stopped seeing them in between but now he knows when and how to see them.

He is now aware of the ability and can use it whenever he wants to. So, after seeing the previous dream, he made a time-table for himself.

In the daytime, he would dream and in the night he will be planning. A planning that will be really helpful in the long run in finding the real culprits and in the short run, it helps him to see dreams whenever he wants to. The long term effect of the dreaming will be illogical to describe here because there is a certain time period which needs to pass to consider it as a long term. But the short term effect was helpful in further planning and a step towards proving himself as innocent.

So the day had come for him to dream. This was the first one after he had seen Manya and Kriti in the previous dream where they were convinced by the evil four to go against me.

A hazy clear outlook to every other thing in the world could yield good results if combined with perseverance. The night wasn't clear but it was two of them. Before the night of the party, they were meeting, probably their second or third meeting with the dark-faced and buffed up physique. They seemed to be discussing something. It could be a plan, a plotting against someone, maybe against me. But I, standing at a distance, on that cold, shivery night at around 11:15pm and yet observe so clearly. I could feel the real cold and that was the reason for me to have four blankets that day and had locked the door from inside so that dad doesn't see me going insane. He might have observed me before that I was sleeping during daytime with blankets on. It's not that cold nowadays, rather it's hot. Dad doesn't use any blankets now. But when he sees me with so many blankets, he might be worried for me. Maybe today, he bangs on my door, or does he do it every day? And then when he gets no answer from me, he goes back to his room and there awaits him self-introspection. But today, the door is locked by me, & I had told him to stay outside.

Coming back to the new observatory set up by Vivaan, the two boys are almost done talking and the tall, dark man is starting now. He tells them to listen now. And says that the planning should be so perfect that everyone blames him and not a single finger is pointing to them. Both of them agreed, but being unaware of the observer on that cold freezing night, who doesn't even stand there now but starts to walk back now. He was never a fan of lonely walks, was always surrounded by many because popular, he was. Although now he has no other choice but to walk back home alone today.

This all was happening to Vivaan that day. His dad, constantly banging on his door, demanding the door be open. He got up and opened the door and told him that he was not feeling that well so he was sleeping with blankets on. His dad obviously got this was a lie but didn't say anything then.

The next day came. There was not much speculation and not that much of planning done by him. He was thinking of telling his defense about these dreams as it might be of some help to him. This day had come with a gift, a gift of knowledge, a gift of superpower, a gift of dream. Now, observing he was in his dream and the temperature was a bit higher than the last meeting in yesterday's dream. One party was the same, but other was someone with a French accent which he had got to know very recently and was flaunting that everywhere. This night, was a few days after the murder. The big deal was done, the plan was executed well, every finger in the club pointed at Vivaan, that is, me. So this meeting was between Irfaan Qamil and Albert d Souza. Still I, I was same, same outfit, same distance, same observatory. But, others' behavior was different. Albert was scared that I might see him as I was out on bail those days. Yet, among all the fear, the meeting began at 10:00pm in a coffee shop on the outskirts of the city, waiting to be seen by me yet unaware of my presence. Took two cups each and then they started. The dark and taller one was going to speak. He told him his reason for worry that the call was done by the landline number of the club. But Albert, although worried of getting spotted by me was not at all worried on Qamil's tension. He confronted Qamil by saying that no one would investigate that deep. But then suddenly, I who was in the same coffee shop started hitting the table hard. I didn't know then what was happening to me. It was actually dad at my door and he was banging. I got worried and so started to run out of the coffee shop. Full of heavy breathing I kept running till I guess a large distance was covered. As I stopped, I glanced a look in the front and saw Albert and Irfaan, both in front of me. They started to shake me from head to toe. Then dad said get up, you need to see a psychiatrist.

I somehow told him that I was fine and he was not that much convinced, but still, he went away.

All this was happening to Vivaan and he then plans to meet A.K. Sharma. On meeting him, he described all this and said, "Sir, this is all true and now it's up to you how much you want to believe and how much you feel is fake"

He needed time to think and answer.

"I am stunned now. I don't know what to say. The landline thing I know because it was my main point in the previous date and even I was thinking that there is some connection between Qamil and Albert", said Sharma.

"How did you guess this?"

"With Albert's confidence, I was able to. There have been instances during the dates when Albert should be very worried but seems to be alright. So from that I thought that he has some support on his back" Sharma said.

"So what should be our next step?" Vivaan asked.

"I'll speak to Rajveer and then maybe we can decide"

The Fifth Date

Albert-Your majesty, I want to first ask Vivaan some questions

Judge-Vivaan, come in the witness box

Albert-Vivaan can you tell the court about any rifts between you and Samar?

Vivaan-There were no such rifts between both of us which would have led to a murder been committed

Albert- Oh dear! Why are you angry then? Please calm down, son. I didn't wish to hurt you in such a way.

Vivaan- No, I'm not hurt, I am just telling the truth.

Albert- Tell me another truth then, who made this?

Albert then pointed to a CD and then played it in the courtroom.

This was made at the rave party at Dharamshala. It had both Vivaan and Samar. And Vivaan was threatening Samar in the Video shown.

Sharma- Your honor, firstly we were not aware of this evidence and as a rule all the evidences have to be submitted in the court and also to the opposition. Secondly, this was just an argument not amounting to an actual murder being committed by Vivaan just because of this.

Albert- Wow. I mean what a speech Mr. Sharma. But you see this is not true, as there was a copy submitted to the court and as well as to you but you didn't see it since you seem busy. And secondly, the way Vivaan is seen threatening Samar, it clearly shows that this is the way hatred starts for someone which can amount to a murder someday. So don't give me this shit Mr. Sharma!

Sharma- Your honor, I will not accept anything he says which is personal. Please tell him to keep quiet or else

Albert- Else what? What do you think you can do? Nothing! Absolutely nothing you can do

Sharma- You don't know what I can do to you

Judge- You both seem to be accusable of contempt of court. I request you two to please sit down or else this case will not proceed further.

Sharma had known that no notices were issued either to the court or to him but he had clearly managed to bribe the officials of the court but he was wondering why the judge didn't express?

This was the end of the date and the net result was that Vivaan was still on the losing side and he was also helpless as the bribing was done so perfectly that no one could have guessed that.

Vivaan, now all tired and messed up. He stopped doing everything again.

Way back, Vivaan was confronted by Sharma that it was just the beginning and there will be instances when more intense accusations will be made against him but he needs to follow what Sharma says and this is the only way to win this.

Accusers and Accusations

There was a date in which Samar's sister, Kriti had accused Vivaan of molestation and by now it is well known that Manya was on the other side and not on Vivaan's side. Rajveer didn't quite get all this. He, in his another meeting with Vivaan, had figured it out that these two girls are lying. Because Manya was quite serious with Vivaan.

"No, inspector. Vivaan had been involved with the gangster and not only him, but all his four friends but these boys never ever looked at any girl like a pervert. So it's hard for me to believe that Kriti accused Vivaan of such a disgusting thing" Said Vivaan's class teacher from previous year.

Rajveer visited the school once again, in search of the real truth.

Even the peon from the school, who was kind of familiar with these boys, had given a similar statement. So from all these people's account, Rajveer decides to meet the two girls.

Rajveer without any greeting, just started, "When did Vivaan actually try to harass you? Give me the exact account"

"Sir, it was two days after he got bail. He wanted to meet me and I was angry and didn't want to meet him for obvious reasons. But still, he begged me and that was why I had decided to go and meet him", said Kriti.

"Then"

"Then as I reached the place of meeting, he gave me a call and told me to go to some other place. I asked him why he had changed the location on such short notice, but he said that the cops are on the lookout for him and that's why he can't afford to be seen in any public places. So I went there and it was at that isolated place that he tried to molest me"

"Where were you guys planning to meet earlier, before the change of place had taken place?"

"It was a coffee shop, about 3 miles from the Marina"

"And which was the second option for meeting?"

"I don't actually know. But it was on the outskirts of the town"

After some time, Rajveer meets Manya. And the interrogation began.

"You were quite serious with Vivaan and wanted to take your relation forward, then why did you go against him? Don't you think there should have been more trust for him in your mind?"

“I do think and I had thought a lot about going against him. But Sir, since everyone around me has been telling me stuff like he doesn’t deserve you and all and that he is just involved in bad things all the time, I thought that maybe it was him who was the main culprit and so, just to save the reputation of my family and mine as well, I decided to let him be on his own and had gone against”, said Manya who was constantly crying.

“It still doesn’t get in me because for you, being with Vivaan was like everything. Look, if there’s someone or something that you’re scared of or someone is forcing you to do this then you can tell me and I’m sure I’ll be able to get you out of that” said Rajveer with confidence and care.

She did not tell him then, but he had made it out that she is being threatened by someone, maybe some organization or some group of people he doesn’t know about. But he was sure in his mind that she is lying and she can’t even think of going against him.

Earlier that day

“The CCTV footage of the Friends’ All Café says something else, dear”, Rajveer told Kriti, handing her a laptop on which the footage of the day when she had met Vivaan is being shown.

The footage shows both of them sitting and talking to each other like friends.

Rajveer continues, “You were crying in the beginning but with his condolence, you were calm and then the two of you discussed something with great secrecy and doubtfulness. I have always said this and I’m saying this again, please feel free to tell me anything. I’m not going to let the victim suffer and the murderers walk free and I say this to you also don’t try to help the murderers and because now I have your voice and you lying to me, I can easily get another case filed against you and get you in trouble. So you are left with no choice but to tell the truth”

Kriti was scared to death. She then told him the truth.

“Sir, it was the four of them who made me believe that it is Vivaan who has killed Samar and that’s why I had to believe them because everyone around is thinking the same. So I don’t think I did something wrong there. But if you still feel I have then please arrest me. To go with the truth, they had told me to say so and so in the court to make their point strong and they could easily have the advantage in such an accusation because the judge is a female. And so I blamed him and there was nothing like this that had happened that day or ever between me and him”

Rajveer had then met Manya and he gave a similar proof for telling the truth to him but Manya, two years ahead of Kriti was strong in her point and thus, Rajveer had to work a bit hard to convince her to tell the truth to him.

But even she was convinced soon by him. The explanation given by her was similar to Kriti’s and Rajveer also got to know from her that it was Albert whose planning all this was.

Rajveer later meets Arun Kumar Sharma, that evening and tells him about all this.

“Even I was thinking of such a great extent of planning. Who wouldn’t believe in Kriti when she talks about a case of physical harassment” Arun was startled.

“Yes, true. And everybody did believe her, so quickly and easily!” said Rajveer.

“Obviously, inspector. As the judge is also a female so her feminist had risen from inside of her!”

“So, what now?” asks Rajveer.

“I think we both know which side we are on and to save Vivaan, we need either a good amount of evidence against the four, or a small amount of evidence of large magnitude in favor of Vivaan” said A.K.

“True that”

They planned all night about the upcoming dates and A.K. asked him, “Get in touch with your forensic expert and tell him to explore every single thing once again and share every single thing with you and from that I expect you to share with me. So that we can both use our brains to infer from the evidences found from the crime spot.”

“Okay, I’ll do that but you ask Vivaan what he is doing with those finger prints. There is a lot of pressure building on me by Albert and the judge to find the one who is hiding the finger prints”

“You don’t need to worry about that, I’ll handle this in the next date with some quality proof which you have with you” assured A.K.

“What are you talking about? What evidence do I have?” Rajveer said.

“You met Kriti and Manya yesterday, right?”

Rajveer gave an evil smile, a sign of acceptance, and sighed.

Qamil and his Subordinates

The day was finally over for both Rajveer and Arun. And it had already begun for someone else, somewhere else.

Irfaan Qamil, the infamous man, is in his residence, an undisclosed location is talking to his men. He is sure of his next step, but doesn't really seem convinced. A drop of sweat is still on his forehead. This change of place is cumbersome. And at the same time, is necessary also. But he doesn't like it. And he is frustrated also, because of this.

“Your honor, I would only like to say that the police investigations are not questionable and they are very clearly proving that Irfaan Qamil, here, is worthy of the crime the court is accusing him of and there are no two ways about it”, said Rajveer, five years back which eventually led to Qamil being arrested and given an imprisonment of seven years. Following which, he did spend two years but got out of it with ease. Was that actually easy?

No. it wasn't.

Rajveer had been on his track since then. He had been following him wherever he has been shifting and has been taking him to court and putting him back in jail really soon. But after two or three proceedings, he was also unable to do much as Irfaan had been playing his mind in these courts. Changing papers, faking documentation showing him as completing the period of imprisonment and threatening the judges had been easy for him.

Now, in Vivaan's case also, since Rajveer has got to know his involvement, he doesn't want to miss a chance to prove him guilty.

“But if we kill him, then there will be another problem and this one would be a bigger one, sir. The media would be after us, the courts will unite, and people can also organize marches against us! Which could be devastating!” said a boy who has been with Qamil since long. He seems to be scared and at the same time is wise when he prevents Qamil from doing any such thing.

“Sir, the change of places is only temporary, and it is for good only. If we stop at one place, then it will be easy for Rajveer to have an eye on us”, said another.

The experienced one spoke up then, “I don't know what he can do or what he cannot. I only know that if we stop moving then I can get a sigh of relief in one place at least. And are we falling short of men to guard the place where I live? No right? So from today the order for you all is to find a place which almost no one is aware of and shift to there as soon as you ready for it.”

They nodded yes then. And then started looking for a better place. Irfaan wiped his forehead and went asleep.

Next morning was clear, with the weather also and with his further plan.

He came downstairs to see four boys waiting to see him. And they don't need identification.

Everything was clear. The four boys and Irfaan were there to discuss further steps. How they would shape the case, how and what will be the further accusations that they were going to put on Vivaan in future dates.

“You just don't worry, Albert and I have decided on every step and how we'll go about the accusations. You all just need to mould yourself the way we want you to and you will not be in trouble anymore”. It's hot outside and humid as well.

After the meeting, the four best ones are walking out as quickly as possible and then, get into Irfaan's car and the car takes speed and leaves the locality.

Someone, from a close observation, is talking over the phone. He is actually whispering.

“Sir, you were right, Irfaan is making some plans with the four boys” said a man standing not so far from Irfaan's hiding place. He was one of Rajveer's “detectives”.

Rajveer had him following Qamil since long. And he has always been a good choice. This time too, he was good until now.

“Okay, you be out really son now, else he might sense you there” was the reply.

A gunshot was heard few seconds later. The dead body was taken away and was hidden somewhere deep.

Qamil was the one who took the shot. He took the wireless from the dead and after tuning it, said, “I think now you wouldn't ever try to have an eye on me right?”

Rajveer was shocked. He was sweating faster for the next two seconds and became normal soon. He wanted to but didn't speak anything in reply. He was very much aware of what Irfaan would do next. Irfaan on the other hand, thought that the actual plan died with the detective and proceeded unaware of Rajveer's knowledge to meet someone with an ability.

“Listen, Vivaan. I know I seem to be going against you in the court. But that's a part of our plan as you know” Irfaan said.

“I know but you are completely on their side and this gives me a bad feeling about you”. He looked worried and scared.

“All I can say to you is trust me. Let me tell you all further accusations that they will be putting on you, so that you can tell A.K. and be on the upper edge in the next date”.

Vivaan was now sure. He was sure about this one thing. This thing, which he has been having a doubt about since very long. But now it seems clearer. With a clearer perspective. That on his side is no one except his father and A.K. Sharma. Irfaan is definitely on the other side, he thinks to himself.

This time, Rajveer was smart. He knew something, really important. And thanks to the now dead detective associated with Rajveer, who told him so. He knew that Irfaan will never take the risk to kill Rajveer or any of his associates in his presence. So Rajveer used his brain and went to the location where he was with Vivaan and caught him red-handed. Since he had two of his men and one was having a camera to seem like a journalist, Irfaan couldn't do much to get away and was arrested at that very moment.

There was something more awaiting in the next hearing.

The Next Big Thing

The day was a bit harsh and hot. But the heat was more in the people due to the date of the case, another big date which was going to have a lot of new things to be opened up for all the associated ones with the case.

At 9 in the morning, everyone was present in the courtroom waiting for the judge to sit. She also sat and there was the announcement of the number of the most awaited case's number and short details.

With the announcement, the proceedings began slowly.

Albert- Your highness, there's not much left to be discussed in this case now. I don't think that there is much that A.K. here, can do or say to save Vivaan from getting imprisoned.

A.K. smiled, got up and said, "Your honor, I have something to show the court" pointing to a CD he was holding then.

It was a CD but it only had audio. Audio of Rajveer's meeting with the two girls, Manya and Kriti.

It surprised everyone in a bad way and Manya and Kriti both were stunned for two seconds. Later they realized goosebumps all over.

The audio had clearly displayed how the two girls chose to be on the side opposite to Vivaan's and played their blame game on being convinced by Jay, Hardy and the rest.

"Sir, it was the four of them who told us to go against Vivaan and be on their side. We also went on to that side as everyone was on that side thinking that maybe Vivaan is the only one who killed Samar" the audio said.

Sharma started again, "Your honor, not only this, at one place Manya agrees to the marks on Vivaan's back were of something else and not resistance by me"

This was proved right by the next part of the CD.

Albert was allowed to speak up following his objection request.

"It seems doctored!"

He was furious. "How can someone revert back so easily when the same person was confident in the court a few dates back?"

"Mr. d Souza, but she is reverting! She is herself denying it! Can't you see it?" shouted Sharma.

“Exactly, Mr. Sharma, I can surely hear but can’t see and this leads to the CD been doctored”

Everyone was quiet. Judge spoke up later.

“We’ll see if it’s doctored or not but this is taken as an important evidence for now”

A.K. was pissed as hell. It was the first time in a few dates of this case that he had got something to shut Albert’s mouth but here also, he didn’t quite win completely over him. And Albert quite succeeded in making the CD look like doctored.

But Sharma had yet not played his main cards. He was waiting, actually, for a nod from someone round the corner. Rajveer therefore nodded. And A.K. started.

“Your honor, I want to draw your attention towards something serious now. If he is done with playing with words” he said pointing towards Albert.

Albert was furious. He wanted to smash a whole speech at him for his behavior but he stayed calm and didn’t say anything. Maybe he knew what he was about to say, maybe he was already expecting him in such a way, all angry. All confident. All ready to face whatsoever answer Albert has. Whatever he will say, Arun was all prepared and was about to give him on his face come what may.

“Proceed”

“Irfaan Qamil, your honor, is playing a double-sided thing in this case” he looked at Albert all this while, giving him a reminder of what he said about Vivaan in an earlier hearing when he was talking about him wiping off the finger prints.

The look which was on A.K. that day, similar look was on Albert’s face today. He was also shivering from inside but didn’t let it come on his always-confident face.

Everyone, including the judge herself, was not expecting a bad name as Irfaan Qamil. He had been on search everywhere, and no one ever had found him. But it was our Rajveer, the kind of hero here, found him and involved him in this case. Media was in a state of shock. No one, literally no one, was in a state of accepting such an involvement. Everyone was curious to know what comes next.

“He had been observed by Mr. Rajveer since a long time and he was seen meeting both the sides. Earlier, he met Jay, Hardy, Shivansh and Adi and later he was seen meeting Vivaan the same day. Now it’s he who has to tell all of us what he has been up to when he met both of them separately. Is he aware of something nobody here knows?” Sharma said.

Or is he trying to save and help some one of the two sides? We were sure to find out.

Albert wiped off a drop from his forehead. He was now relieved. He guessed it right. And got the answer correct. It was nothing to worry. Nothing to make a mountain of a molehill.

He smartly got up from his seat on being asked by the judge to speak up. Strange this was. The judge did not ask Rajveer to bring Irfaan to the witness box and say something for himself. But instead asked Albert about what was going on.

Maybe she knew Albert's conscious. Maybe she also realized a change in Albert's behavior. She had realized his sudden calmness and seen the frown on his face suddenly disappear.

"Forget his presence. Forget his meetings. Forget everything!" Albert d Souza started with his exceptionally smart flow of words from his extremely red lips.

"Forget everything, and start at something new. Something never explored from the actual angle. The angle which should have been the most important aspect apart from this ongoing case. Rajveer had been observing Irfaan since long. So what was his intention all this while? If he was suspecting him to be involved in the case then why didn't he tell this to the court? What was his motive for observing him for this long? His doubtful observation, I am not quite getting this, your highness."

Arun began, "Because without any big proof he didn't want to waste the court's time by talking about Irfaan. And this would have made him cautious and he would have eventually stopped. What else could have been the reason behind him not telling all this to the court?"

It was the judge's turn now. "Mr. Arun, Rajveer could have told someone, who is related to the court, secretly. Maybe, if the news was disclosed to me, then I could have helped him in enforcing the police officials involved in this. He could have told you, so that you also could have helped him in increasing the number of people involved in this. Did he tell you all this? Were you aware of his so close observation about Irfaan? What was the reason behind you not telling it to the court? Why did you hide it from the other police officers Mr. Rajveer?"

This was getting on his nerves. A.K. Sharma, standing there with all his control over himself was no longer able to control. Was no longer able to force himself to be quiet at all these accusations on him and his long time friend Rajveer.

"Maybe it's a well thought about plan of Mr. Sharma and Mr. Rajveer since they are friends since long?" the last nail in the coffin was pushed deeper by Albert here.

This was it and then someone shouted. It was A.K. for obvious reasons.

"He didn't tell anyone because everyone is bribed. He did not tell anyone because that piece of news, that important piece of news could get circulated. Maybe in the media, maybe in the court only and it could have gone back to Irfaan only and he could have become more aware of his further moves and not go according to the way he had earlier planned to go. He did not tell anyone because everyone is bribed by Albert and Irfaan himself not to go against them in whatsoever situation. Whatever be the crisis, whoever may die, these two should never be at the losing side. And the truth of the matter, as now everything is exposed, is that these two are really scared to face the reality, they actually like to run away from the reality. They don't want to be losing at all. And in this case also, everyone here present,

knows that the killer is some man of Irfaan only but no one is accepting the truth including you, your highness because you too are scared of these two over here or maybe you are also bribed by them!”

This was all said by Arun. And he was gradually gaining speed and momentum. His voice getting louder with each line he spoke.

Moment of silence was there in the court for a few minutes. Albert was sweating like hell. He was sweating profusely. He was not expecting such a truthful statement in his name.

Even the judge, she was also not at all aware of her perception in Sharma’s mind. She wanted to adjourn at that very moment but she didn’t lose her calm.

This sixth date was much hurtful. Going by the accusations and the false allegations which seemed to be true, Vivaan is guilty but going by the words of A.K., Vivaan is not guilty.

So it was more confusing now. Nobody is the killer, nobody is the victim. Arun and Albert have played their cards well but yet, there was no clear vision on either Vivaan or his friends on the other side.

Rajveer had to meet A.K. sometime soon. And A.K. had decided to meet Vivaan as soon as possible for him. So the three decide to meet.

A meeting necessary for the further planning. For further steps. Stepping stones of success.

The Meeting of the Three

It was a secret place. Somewhere in the backyard of Varun Ahuja's house when the first such meeting took place. All three are present. Vivaan Ahuja, A.K. Sharma and Rajveer Shikhawat.

All three are planning. The abilities of Vivaan were no longer a secret to A.K. and now in this meeting, they get revealed to Rajveer also.

"How is this possible?" exclaim was expected. "How can such an inception occur to you and nobody else?"

True. Everything said by him was true. True that nobody sees dreams just like that. True, nobody can see dreams on their own will. And true that such special power was not discovered by Vivaan in all these years of his life.

Obviously, there was no time for such long discussions. The next date was near. It was barely a month away now. This was because this case has been extended for an almost year now and nobody in the media is in the mood to extend it some more. And even if such an extension took place, the journalists were not going to wait anymore. They were all divided.

Divided in two parts. One part supports Vivaan since the very beginning and the other part supports the four best friends since long.

So the court also has to think of that and thus the seventh date was very near.

Though it is very ironical that in courts, media reports are not considered as evidences but media influences are very important these days.

"It doesn't matter Rajveer. It doesn't matter. I know it's a bit hard to believe as no one ever has had such abilities but still Vivaan has them and now we have this kind of advantage with us so we should use it wisely" said A.K.

"True, very true. Sorry for wasting the time we don't have much because. Vivaan, tell me about what you did with the finger prints that you got from the dead body at the crime scene" Rajveer asked Vivaan.

"Sir, I did nothing with them. But I now need your help in identifying them" Vivaan said.

"That reminds me. Thanks Vivaan" said Sharma. "Rajveer, Vivaan has these prints so can you appoint any of your men to go into Irfaan's residence and get the prints of most of them present there?"

Rajveer gave it a quick and deep thought. And after this thinking, he started again.

“No. I don’t think this will lead us somewhere. Because if the killer is among any of Irfaan’s boys, then he would have done something to save him from getting identified. I’ll do one thing. I’ll check my databases for all images of Irfaan’s men that I have and circulate them at all bus and railway stations. Because he would not try escaping from the airports as they have good CCTV’s. But being unaware of all the latest CCTVs installed at railway and bus stations, he would definitely go from one of them”

Obviously. How can Sharma think of such foolishness? But no worries here. No casualties. Rajveer is still not out of his head. He still has not lost his minds while playing with words all the time like A.K.

The night was over. Finally over. Some unknown person was seen and ignored by A.K. around Vivaan’s house.

Rajveer then got out of that place with Sharma and both of them sat in his jeep and went away. Vivaan also went to sleep. He didn’t have to plan anything that day. He didn’t have to stay awake to dream the very next day. He just had to rest so that the next time these three met, he doesn’t miss any point to be told to them.

The next day was here. And Rajveer had planned a meeting with all the constables whom he could trust to check with the CCTV footages of all the bus stops and railway stations of the past few months.

It was a tough task. It had to take days altogether. They all were sleepless for the coming week, including Sundays.

But finally, they got something. Three faces were found. Their finger prints were matched with the ones with Vivaan. One of them matched.

Yes, matched. Matched. That too perfectly. The other two men were also Irfaan’s subordinates but had nothing matching with the finger prints. This worried Rajveer but he was going good with his moves now.

He thanked all of his constables who were on the job. And then bid farewell to them, gave them a promise of a party when this case got over and then was heading out to pack his stuff and go home.

He was cross checking all the computers and was shutting down databases, just then, he saw someone. An identifiable face.

“Singh, what the hell do you think you are doing here?” he said to him, demanding an explanation.

“Nothing sir. I just wanted to ask you something”

Rajveer gave a nod and so he could go on with the asking.

“Sir, now the investigations are almost over, so can we now go to home or will you call us once again the way you did last week?”

Rajveer smiled and said no. knowing that Ram Singh, was one of his most trusted ones and he would not do anything Rajveer never expects. So with no doubt anywhere, Rajveer also goes home, to his wife who has been waiting for him for almost a week to come home now.

He went home. Took a shower, and was asleep an hour or so later.

Next day he plans to meet Dr. Robert, the forensic expert of his police station.

The Second Such Meet

Before going to the title of the chapter, there is a meet of the forensic expert and Rajveer also awaiting.

Also the person whose finger prints had matched perfectly also had to be arrested. So he was arrested while getting away from the city from the same bus stop, rather bus terminal.

After all such background work was done, Rajveer was meeting Robert after quite a long time. Two months actually.

“Finger prints matched! Congrats sir. You did get the main culprit behind the killing. Your job is done. Now why do you need me?” said Robert with a smile.

Rajveer smiled back and said, “Come on Robert. Can’t I meet you in the name of our friendship?”

“Yes you can. Of course you can. But from your face, I am making out something else.”

Rajveer had known him since years. They both have started working there almost at similar times in their lives. Eleven years back, the history of their friendship goes. They both have worked on almost every case kind of together only. So Robert had known that Rajveer was not seeking him as a friend but as a source of some information related to the case. Some info only Robert can give him. And so Robert was constantly smiling when he said this.

Rajveer was also smiling when he said this, “You are too smart for just a forensic expert, Dr. Robert. Since you know why I’m here, I want to ask you something. What was the kind of wound on Samar’s body when you had first examined it?”

“Well, it was like a gunshot from a 9mm thing. But it doesn’t really seem perfect”

“Elaborate, please”

“It seemed doctored.”

“What do you mean? Are you sure?”

“Wasn’t that sure at first but after two or three detailed studies of my past cases’ wounds, I am really sure now. The wound was seeming to be like the one from a 9mm but wasn’t that perfect. It seemed like it was made with the help of some cutting tool. Also due to such wounds, there could be a resultant severe tissue damage or a broken bone. But there was nothing like that on Samar’s abdominal area. Also, I seem to be more convinced of a death by something else. It could be starvation.”

It could be starvation. Yes it could be. Most wouldn’t really seem convinced by this but it could be.

By a 9mm pistol shot, surrounding tissues are also damaged significantly. In case of Samar, the shot seemed to be in around a few meters and the abdominal tissues were also damaged. The killer was smart. Very smart.

He showed the wound as if done by a 9mm and he also succeeded in proving the surrounding tissues damaged by the use of some tablets before the killing was done. But he forgot that as soon as the person dies, nothing happens to the food stuff present in the intestines.

The poor killer, assuming that by now the tablets which damaged the surrounding abdominal tissues are digested but they were not. They were found as they were sent into the small intestines. They were absorbed and assimilated but to a very small extent.

Robert continued, “The tool used by the killer to shape the 9mm wound was very rare and has been earlier used in movies only to shape such wounds. It’s very exclusive in the real world. One of its kind is available in somewhere in Dublin’s forensic institutions. The wound found on Samar’s body was a bit larger than expected and this only had led me to investigate further. My further investigation led to finding out that the wound was made by a tool, originally being used by experts like me to take out a 9mm bullet.”

“So what you are saying is that the gunshot heard at the party was fired but it never got into Samar Singhanian’s body.”

“Certainly”

God. This was all above anybody’s head. Rajveer was also shocked. How can someone shape a starvation death into a gunshot kind of murder? The person who has done it must have a lot of expertise in all such things.

The gunshot was actually just fired and there is still a mark of the gunshot on the wall of the room on the top floor.

That’s why the killer was a man from Irfaan’s subordinates. Irfaan. A man who knows all kinds of stuff himself. Who has all kinds of expert men in every kind of killing you can imagine.

The arrested person was sent to remand and by this time, Irfaan was already aware of the killer being arrested.

Also it was time for Rajveer to meet Vivaan and A.K. today’s night.

When he reached there, he first told them about the finger prints getting identified. The killer being caught.

They both were also very happy. But the main problem was still not solved. The main problem was Albert. He was the one to be faced by Sharma in the court in a few nights. He was the one who knew to play with his words and statements very well.

He was the one capable of making everyone believe that the killer is an elder brother of Vivaan. Which obviously isn't true.

"Sir, let's plan now." A young voice in the room echoed.

Both the elder ones looked at each other's faces.

Plan. Let's plan.

Sharma started, "Rajveer, if we talk about, like if we only talk about the finger prints, then it won't be that great point for us. Because then Albert will be there to back that how come now finger prints are available and they were stolen sometime back?"

"True" said Rajveer.

All three thinking. The younger one, the two elders, all of them, just thinking.

In the utter silence of the mighty night, someone spoke, "Rajveer, did you check with your forensic expert for any other evidence on the dead body which could help us distinguish the killer?"

"No, but there could be a blood spatter."

"That's awesome!" exclaimed Vivaan and Sharma.

"Don't think about DNA sample!" warned Rajveer.

DNA sample from a small sample of blood is captured. But having that much amount of blood that the identification could be done and also the same procedure to be repeated in the court in the respective hearing was all the more difficult and impossible.

Impossible for such an experienced and seasoned killer to leave his blood.

A phone ringed. Rajveer's phone. The call was from Robert.

"Are you serious? You got the blood?"

"yes", came the reply and Robert also said that it also got identified but with the third man.

"With the third man?" Rajveer demanded explanation now. He was sweating. He was shivering. He was over thinking. He was miserable now.

Reply from the phone, "There were three men who were Irfaan's subordinates, the third among them had his blood matching with the one found on the dead body"

Now he was fine. He was getting better. But similar was the condition of Arun and Vivaan.

Rajveer cut the call and started to explain to them, “We can win this. We will win this. Listen now, the murder was committed few hours before the commencement of the continuation party. It was committed at Samar’s residence. There were two of them present. One was the guy whose finger prints matched and the other was the guy whose blood reports matched. Robert said that it was impossible for one person to create such a good wound without the use of his fingers, without dropping any single drop of blood. This led him to investigate deeper. He had caught hold of the three of the men identified as Irfaan’s subordinates by our databases and then tried matching the blood reports. Which matched, eventually. So the act was committed by both of them. The shaping was done by both of them. Also, there were marks of resistance also present. And due to Samar’s buffed physique, it would’ve been impossible for one of them to kill him.”

Now, the two of them, were calm. After such a deep explanation of the story from the other side, the right side, they accepted it.

The next day, A.K. received a notice from the court. It had the subject “Postponing the next date of your case”

And reading this, he seemed to be convinced that it was Albert who has done this.

The Third Meet

“How can this be true?” Vivaan had lost all hope now. He was not expecting such a thing to happen now. At this moment? Obviously not. He was getting furious. He could’ve done nothing. He was almost declared the culprit. And now he had given up.

All his dreams, all the help, whatsoever it maybe, which his dreams have done of A.K. and Rajveer, was now seeming worthless.

“Now you don’t lose hope, Vivaan.” exclaimed Sharma.

Rightly said. He was the one who had given all hopes to Rajveer and Sharma. And now he was losing hope, just with the dates being shifted. Was he reasonable now? Was he overreacting? Will find out for sure.

Sharma and Rajveer were friends. Not everyone knew that but kind of good ones now. And their friendship is not that old. It was two or three cases before that Rajveer and Sharma got to know each other. It was at the very twisted moment when Rajveer had asked Sharma, “Sir, why did you not say a word today?” to which Sharma also replied, “Saying doesn’t mean winning at all times”.

This was how the two became friends. And till now they both have a clear idea about who is right and wrong after every first hearing of a case. They both like to work together. Like to hang out sometime, maybe.

Backing on to this current state, which they are in now. They are not that clueless. They now know that they can surely win this in the next date.

So they should not worry right? They should just do a run-through of their plan this night and should go to sleep?

Wrong.

They were discussing the run-through thing suddenly, there was a wham noise at the shutter of the garage they were seated in.

They had been sitting in this garage in the backside of Vivaan’s house. And it had the kind of door which opens like a shutter. The shutter was opened from the outside.

And there were three men standing there. Known yet unknown personalities.

One was with a recent, very recent French accent, other was with a buffed physique and other was with a constable’s outfit.

“Ram Singh!” shouted Rajveer on that rainy night where even the slightest of the talks needed such shouting.

“Hello sir. Sorry for changing sides, but money can buy you something, right?” Ram Singh replied laughing hard.

“Hello to my worthy opponent here, Mr. Sharma!” exclaimed Albert with a jolly face.

An evil face in reality. Irfaan was holding two knives pointed at Sharma and Vivaan.

Ram was holding dual 9mm pistols pointed towards Rajveer and Albert was grinning continuously.

“Sit, why don’t you!” said Irfaan.

They all sat, three of them scared. Three of them confident. Three of them with weapons, three of them unaware.

“How did you get entry here?” Vivaan was scared while asking this.

“Listen boy, when elders are talking, you won’t be talking. And if that happens again then you know what happens to you.” Albert took a pause and started again, “Regarding your worry about the entry, we killed your two guards and your dad is a hostage there.”

“Let’s finally start the story!” said Irfaan.

“What story? Sharma, don’t be scared, they can’t kill anyone of us. Because that will obviously lead to a new stir in the media and that these cowards cannot afford. They might be here to beg us for some help which is up to us to help or not. Simple!” said Rajveer bursting into laughter.

Irfaan couldn’t take it. He seriously couldn’t. This laughter of Rajveer was getting on his nerves. With every laugh that came out of his face, sweat on his collar was increasing. His grip on his knife was tightening. He could have killed him there and then but Albert was present there.

Albert. He was calming Irfaan and was continuously patting on his back. His patting was helping but only to a small, very small extent. Ram Singh too wanted to kill Rajveer but he was also controlling on his nerves.

Albert was in no such mood as he was having a feeling that things might be ending up in their favor. Maybe the need to kill will be sufficed in their further talks? Maybe they walk out clean-handed?

So he started talking. “Story begins now. Rajveer, what do you think? All the evidences that you have got till now are enough to prove that Irfaan is the one who has planned Samar’s murder? All the hard work that you’ve put in this case is worth the win that you are getting. Wrong! Absolutely wrong. Let me tell you the whole thing. Everything is planned. Your every move had been calculated long time back and clearly thought over to yield you nothing of that magnitude. The nerd guy at school, the dealer

at the Dharamshala rave, even the finger prints were left deliberately! Everything was done deliberately. To guide you on to the path which leads you nowhere.”

As these words were coming out of his mouth, Rajveer was sinking in his place. He was sinking in his place. He was sinking like a ditch. He was sinking like he was in the middle of some ocean.

Same was the condition of Vivaan and Sharma. They both were also completely unaware of such a deep planning. A planning which was going on much more earlier than they even started to think about it.

He continued, “Each and every move had been walked over about twice to lead you absolutely nowhere. The maximum evidence that you could have got from your investigation could have been that the murder was committed by a 9mm pistol from a short range, but you could have never found that pistol. Because the murder was not committed by a pistol. It was shown, just shown to you and the whole freaking world.”

His voice was becoming louder and harsher and moving with every sentence he spoke to the three. He was hurting them exactly where he wanted to- in their hearts. Deeper somewhere within the aorta. So that the blood supply could be stopped or something might choke them.

“What did you think, the ball was in your court, it never was. And it never will be. Thanks to Ram Singh. A very disciplined employ of your department. Whom you could never doubt. How can he go against you? He was trained a long time ago. By Irfaan only. And who else would dare of doing that? Irfaan paid him very well, like very well. And that leaded him to betray you, you Mr. Rajveer Shikhawat.”

Rajveer had almost died. He had spend all his time, all his sweat, all his hard work on this case, and now these goons, out of nowhere, take everything away, citing that it never was his hard work. The actual work was done by them?

Wrong.

He started, “Rest is all clear. But how the fuck did you manage to postpone the dates?” and ended up shouting.

“Good question, sir”, said Irfaan Qamil.

“Simple. Very simple. We just killed someone in Sarita Roy’s family, so that she would take a family leave and that too a very long one. So that the next day, the judge is of our favor and the judgment changes from life imprisonment for Vivaan to hang till death” explained Albert.

Rajveer took a deep breath. A very deep. So deep that he had never taken ever before.

Then he started, “Well, I was getting scared for no reason. The most important evidence, the finger prints have matched and the guy is in jail and will be present in tomorrow’s hearing. This you guys, you fools don’t know. Because you just walked over my steps just from the upper layers. The lower ones

were never actually explored by you. Those are the layers explored by only those who live in the real world. Who exist in the real world. Not like you, Irfaan, who have always lived in darkness and think of lighting up my lives? Huh! You don't know that the right person is caught this time and he will be present at court tomorrow. His finger prints will also be present tomorrow. A test in the court will be thereon conducted and the culprit will be you, Irfaan Qamil. Then there will be life imprisonment for you! Death sentence for you and nobody else, not Vivaan and not Adi, Jay, Hardy or Shivansh because it was you who played with the youth-like minds of these students.”

What a speech. Absolutely what a speech. With what ponderous magnitude was it said.

To shut everyone's literally everyone's mouths especially the three unexpected guests.

The Unexpected Guests

We all are aware of the three unexpected guests in Vivaan's garage. And how they were acting smart by declaring almost everything in their plan. And how Rajveer had shut their mouths with his high magnitude speech.

The tale continues further.

"Here's the deal, Rajveer. We know what you are up to tomorrow in court. We also don't want the dates to be postponed any further. As a friend, I am requesting you to call Robert and tell him to release Irfaan's two subordinates which you have put in jail for no reason." said Albert, polite this time.

"Or else?" said Rajveer.

"Else we kill you and nothing else!" shouted Irfaan, almost ordering Ram to shoot.

Ram was stopped by Albert later on. "What are you up to now? This was not the plan! Just go with the plan dude!"

Albert then shouted on Irfaan.

Irfaan was calm but his reactions were mixed. His face did not seem to be calm but his body was burning in fire. Fire of anger. Fire of revenge from Rajveer. Fire of everything said by Rajveer.

The shutter was open all this while. Maybe it was that which led to such high intensity shouts. Rain was hell all this while. They say 'Cats & Dogs' true. It was a cats and dogs rain.

Someone's running was heard. Maybe more than just someone. It seemed like there were two or three men running towards the garage.

Albert was about to start his word play but didn't after hearing the padding sounds.

It was Vivaan's dad. Vivaan was very excited and angry at this site. Angry for the unexpected guests sitting inside the garage and excited for the unexpected guests who came running as fast as they could in that rain.

Something happened. Something unexpected. Something really not acceptable. Something Albert would have never let happen.

A gunshot was fired. Two actually. And one of them hit Rajveer, close to his heart. Or maybe through it?

The three started running out of the garage. The gunshot fired was necessary to scare Varun Ahuja, who had come running in this heavy rain towards the backside of his house.

Two men who had accompanied Varun were scared to death and they fell on the ground suddenly. Varun was not scared. As he could see the three running towards the main gate, he snatched the pistol from one of his men who were lying on the ground, to aim at the three running people and ended up shooting one of them.

That one shot was Ram. He died on the spot.

After that the two had escaped from the main gate and went long away. Never to return.

When everyone gathered breath, they picked up Rajveer, thinking he was alive, but he never seemed to agree to that.

How much he would have begged the almighty to save him. Just one more day of his life. Just one more day to work for the good and punish the bad. But no, said the almighty.

And took him away from all.

They all rushed him to Varun's car and rushed him to a hospital.

There, Robert was already present. And after the short operation was over the doctor in charge came out of the operation theatre and said, "There was no bullet found. He is fine now. Will be fine in two days."

Of course. He will take these many days to be able to give a statement in court. He was talking now but not walking now.

He showed resistance when he was shot. And that's probably why he wasn't dead at that shot.

And since the shot was taken by Irfaan, someone so close to killing yet so far. Or maybe he didn't shoot at the right spot because he was scared and was running all that while struggling to take the best shot.

True.

But there was something for which not much time was left. It was 2 already and the next date was around 8 hours from now. And becoming fine for the upcoming date in these many hours was next to impossible.

But he had to be fine. If he ended up being fine, then this would have been a sure shot victory for Vivaan and A.K. and if he wasn't fine then they were losing. Because without his orders, the two actual culprits could not be taken to the court and proved guilty.

But somewhere, Vivaan and A.K. had planned to play on the next date and win somehow.

Meanwhile, the tension was more in some other place, about ten kilometers from Rajveer's hospital.

The Few Hours Before

The place was Albert's and only two are present here.

One, the illiterate, the guilty, the one who has just committed a murder and has been a part of another. One who doesn't really respect the law and has been going against it since last few years.

And the other one. One who is literate and respects law. Is respectful. Is rich. But in front of the omnipotent, is guilty. Because as the saying goes, he who helps in hiding a crime is surely a part of it.

Both friends, since long. Since long they have known each other. Though, officially they are fighting a case together for the first time. But it's not in the near past that they actually met for the first time.

It was 2009. And Albert was cited to go against Irfaan Qamil. But scared at first, he decides to go to Irfaan first and then take the next step.

Irfaan told him straightaway. By now everyone is familiar how at first Irfaan is friendly, as he was also with Rajveer, and so was he with Albert.

But there's a difference between the two. A difference of a high magnitude. One had accepted the friendship and the other had refused.

Since then, whenever Albert needed some kind of threatening work for the opposite party, he had always invited Irfaan in the scenario.

Now they both are seated. On this rainy night, which is about to turn to daylight soon. Just seated. Doing nothing. Thinking, seemingly worried. Yet seated.

Albert starts, "You are insane, who said let's discuss the plan before going there so that something wrong doesn't happen?"

"I said"

"And who was the first one to go against the plan?"

"It was me, of course" the modesty was fake and Albert could make it.

"It's not at all funny. You need to understand this. Now due to this act of yours, there are two possible news. One could be that we lose this case and face another. One could be that we might win this one, but surely face another"

"Rajveer was getting louder and I cannot take it. I couldn't take it then also. So I shot him!"

“Wow! Simple explanation for your simple deed” said Albert.

“What now? What’s your take on the whole thing?”

“There’s no my take now. My image is gone now. When people will get to know that Albert has been involved with a gangster then what’s my take left to be? I don’t have any take, we’ll see tomorrow what happens and don’t you dare spoil tomorrow’s plan! Else I’ll prove you guilty and escape the light of the media” Albert said this and left.

The place was Irfaan’s. Albert left to get ready for tomorrow.

No one’s ready for tomorrow. The big day.

Irfaan throws the pistol he had used to accidentally commit two murders and goes to sleep.

The Last Hearing

The big day, was here. Finally. Finally now the country can take a sigh of relief. Today will be the verdict. The verdict to the most anticipated, most talked about case of Samar Singhania's murder.

The one possible culprit is Vivaan. No one is opposite to him whom he could have blamed in all these dates. One who could have been the probable guilty in this case. But not. It's everyone against him.

And now, Rajveer is also not seen. A person who truly cares for the innocent and doesn't for the guilty. Such a hard-working, honest man in the police department is nowhere to be seen.

It's already time for the hearing to begin and there is already a stir in the media after they haven't seen Rajveer around. Because since he was the main investigating officer, he should have been present here. But no.

"Case number 23798/C77"

Inside the court now.

Albert- Your honor, now there's nothing much left in this case. I think Mr. A.K. also hasn't got much to say now.

A.K.- I think that's on me, your honor.

Sarita Roy- You may proceed, Mr. Sharma.

Sharma- Thank you, your honor. Now I would like to draw everyone's attention to something else.

Albert d Souza wasn't expecting such an answer. Such a starting statement. Did he really have something like a real proof?

Sharma- Mr. d Souza here, once talked of Vivaan's accusation in molesting Kriti. Kriti, come here in the witness box.

Kriti was present there, but not expecting this. She wasn't prepared by Albert d Souza the last night, though Vivaan was.

She was there, in a few seconds, in the witness box.

"I do solemnly affirm that what I shall state shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth"

Sharma- You have said this, so now will you be speaking the whole truth?

Kriti- Yes, sir.

Sharma- Did Vivaan molest you or you were accusing him falsely?

Kriti- Sir he did.

Albert- Of course, he did. There's no doubt about it. And I guess I proved it also. Don't you remember Mr. Sharma?

Sarita Roy- Mr. Albert, please don't speak in between, please. You will be given time to speak. And Mr. Sharma, we have discussed this so please elaborate.

A.K.- Yes your honor. This is my point. This is what I want to show the whole court. It is a CD of a meeting between Rajveer and Kriti Singhanian. Here, she is saying something different.

The CD showed the two of them present. Kriti and Rajveer are present. This CD is different from the previous meeting where Manya was also present. Here, only two are present. And Kriti accepts lying in the court.

Sarita Roy- Enough. It's been enough. Kriti, you are now accused of lying in the court. You don't have any respect for the jury, for the judge, for anyone present here. This court shall not hear any more statements either for Kriti Singhanian or by her. Mr. Sharma, you may proceed.

Kriti was then ordered to come out of the witness box. She was shocked. Disturbed. Affected. And what not.

Albert also was furious. He was scared also. He feared that what happened to Kriti, could happen to any of the witnesses present here.

The look on Arun's face was also some kind of confident now. Kind of more confident. And he was also about to start with the same speed once again. Had he recorded the whole last night? Whatever happened in Vivaan's garage? Was he about to show all that to the Court? This could bring Albert d Souza's career to an end straightaway. This could keep him shattered all his life.

A.K.- Thank you, your honor. Now I want to talk about another previous date. Where Mr. Albert here, talked about some evidences been removed. I would like to call the forensic expert, Mr. Robert in the witness box, please.

This was it. This was the moment Albert had been waiting for all this while. Now he could easily talk anything and change the topic. He was relieved.

Albert- Objection, your honor!

Sarita Roy- Overruled.

Hell. Absolutely hell. How can she? How can she do such a deep wound to Albert?

Sharma- Mr. Robert, tell the court about the 'wiped' finger prints.

Robert- No finger prints have been wiped from the crime spot since I have been there on the first night, the night of the murder.

Sharma- Have you tried using them to identify someone, who could be the main culprit?

Robert- Yes, and recently, I found success.

After saying this, he gave a slight wink to A.K. Sharma.

And he winked back. What was that?

The Final Thing

Flashback to the last night. At the hospital.

The same hospital where Rajveer is being operated upon. Robert and Arun, both are present.

“What if he never got up? What if the doctors lose him?” A.K. was worried.

“Don’t worry. This is not the first time he has had a bullet in his chest.” said Robert.

“Doctors were saying the bullet has pierced very close to the heart.”

There was silence. Silence for a few seconds.

Robert then was crying. Not literally, but sobbing silently.

“Then we might lose him and the case”, he said after some time.

“You please calm down. If you’re saying then he will get up. He will surely get up, we won’t lose him this soon.”

The doctors then came out and said that he was fine but needs bed rest for 2 days before starting to walk normally again.

“See, he came fine. But not absolutely” said Sharma.

“Man now you see! He will be fine within a few more hours. You just go prepare for tomorrow”

“Are you sure? What if he didn’t get fine this soon?”

“I’ll give you a wink at the courtroom when you would be interrogating me. And a wink means”

“Yes, he is here”

So this was all about the wink game.

And after the wink, something happened.

Sharma- What, Mr. Robert, what did you find out? What success are you talking about?

Robert- The finger prints led me to three suspects. And I would like to bring them in the court.

Albert was almost in tears. He then calmed himself. Motivated himself. And then, was fully ready to face anything.

The judge then allows him to call any witnesses he wants to.

Then everyone sees a very strange sight. The sight of a heroic tale. Where the hero is all bandaged and tied up at every body part of his and still saves the girl at the end.

Such a hero was coming, with the help of two constables.

It was Rajveer. Yes, he had survived. And he was able to walk almost on his own. He entered the courtroom with many constables, as the three doubtful ones were also there.

Talking about the three doubtful men. Two days it had been since these three were sent in remand. Their statements had been recorded there only. But they will be speaking here as well. And they were threatened by Rajveer that if you lied in the court, then you die in the court.

The look on the people's faces- speechless. Speechless to see how one man is giving all his sweat and time to prove the right ones right and the wrong one wrong.

The three were ordered to stay close to the witness box.

The judge ordered Robert to speak and explain.

Robert- The finger prints of these three have been found on the murder spot. I myself have confirmed it. No finger prints were lost, they were just out of records for a while. The two of them here, had their finger prints on the dead body as well. Then I got to record their statements and this is what they've told me.

A CD is played in front of the whole court. Everyone keenly listens to it.

1st person- Sir, we reached Samar's house three days ago to kidnap him. We stealthily breached the security in and out and took him to our place. We knew that his dad was out. We starved him and gave only tablets to him.

2nd person- Tablets that could affect his abdominal area and damage all the surrounding tissues.

3rd person- Sir, then with the use of a special tool, they shaped his wound. I was keeping a track of his dad's movements, meanwhile.

1st person- Sir, then we also had dressed him up in his party wear clothes so that we could make it look like the murder was committed on the party night.

2nd person- On the continuation party night, we went to the Marina and silently placed him on the empty room on the floor above.

3rd person- I had some contacts in Marina. So I could get entry whenever I wanted.

Done. Everything was done. And everyone was getting shockers one after the other as the seconds on the video timer moved forward.

After a few more moments of silence, the court proceedings had to proceed.

The three of them had also said that it was Irfaan Qamil who had forced them to do so as if he survived, then his whole smuggling would get affected.

The silence continued for a few more moments. Maybe it seemed like moments because no one wasn't even moving. Maybe it was way too much than just moments. And then suddenly.

Sarita Roy- After hearing Mr. Arun Kumar Sharma's reports and the statements of these three men. the court would now like to give Albert d Souza a chance to speak up for himself.

Albert- Now, your honor, I would like to say that there's nothing left in this case. Vivaan is not guilty, true. True that I was wrong in judging him so badly. And also true that I was putting up some false allegations on him. But anyone in my place would have done this, or maybe more. About the three of them, I would only say that everything, seriously everything now seems in place after listening to their statements. And now the main culprit is here your honor, so you should do justice to the people present here and so I would not really like to say much but only request the court and you, your highness, to do the best to the guilty and also to the innocent.

Irfaan. Irfaan Qamil. Sitting on the hottest seat. At one corner. Was listening to all this. All of this going on and Albert, his once good friend doing nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Nothing to save him. Nothing to even reduce his death sentence or even life imprisonment. But he was just waiting and watching. He had to wait longer to see whether he was getting life imprisonment or death sentence straightaway. He was waiting. Waiting and warming. Heating actually.

Sarita Roy- Thank you, Mr. d Souza. Now, listening to both sides of the story and an entirely new side of the three proven guilty men here, the court has given death sentence to the three and life imprisonment to Irfaan Qamil.

She paused. She needed to think. She was sweating. She was in vain. She spoke up once again. Once again fearless and bold as she has been in all her 37 cases of her career.

Sarita Roy- And the court also gives 1 year of jail to Kriti Singhania, on finding her guilty of lying in court, making fun of the jury and the constitution of our country. Adjourned.

Saying this, she wrote something and broke her pen.

The court was adjourned.

Aftermath

Adjourned. The court was adjourned. And so was the rest of the country, after a year of Samar Singhanian murder case.

Everyone was taking a sigh of relief. Everyone was talking about it in a very positive way. There were talks about most of the people involved in the case.

People talked of Vivaan Ahuja, that how one's past should not base his present or future. That how a boy, found guilty many a times be not guilty always.

The popular saying, once a liar always a liar changed to once a liar is never always one. It's the circumstances that could make him one always.

For him also, there was a great lesson from this case. To stop all the bad things he had previously been doing freely. And he now decided to make his father proud and never ever take advantage of his father's image to get out of any such incidents. For the rest of his life.

Then there were talks of A.K. Sharma. How a very young lawyer can also be so hard-working and act like a very experienced one in courts and win the case at the very intense moment of the entire case.

There was silence also. There was a place in the very centre of the town where there were hue and cries. A place once of the riches, belonged now to the ones most desperate, most sad people.

The Singhanian Residence.

The people here, were now sad. Very sad. Mahesh Singhanian had been crying since the day of the case. The last date in the hearing. He had lost both his children. His son, Samar was killed as a part of a big conspiracy. The conspiracy which shook everyone. His daughter, Kriti, was fooled by her brother's friends. And that led her in trouble. She was in a 1 year refining custody of the police. Where she will be constantly counseled.

Counseled to trust only those who are actually trustworthy. Trust those who deserve her trust. They will teach her the importance of friends in her life. So that she doesn't end up being a loner the rest of her life. So that she doesn't end up being in bad company. So that she doesn't do any bad deeds ever in her life, like her brother once did. So that she never ended up anywhere like Irfaan.

Irfaan Qamil.

The prime suspect of Rajveer and the prime guilty in the case. Was now behind bars, for the rest of his life. Or was he?

He was obviously not going to stay there long.

He would obviously come out one day. Would obviously fool some other batch of rich teenagers in some other rare location in this country and will again land them into such problems.

Problems which they would never ever see again in their lives. Problems which might spoil them then and there. And such problems will not leave them able to do anything. To smile, to play, to learn and fall. Nothing.

Because the problems which he would land them in would've already ditched them. Had spoiled their future, had stopped their dreaming abilities and could also land them behind the bars or maybe at the tallest spot outside this world.

So who was actually at fault here? Was he Qamil's father? Was it Irfaan? Was it the drug? Was it the school's responsibility to send teachers with the students? Was it the fault of the instrument which was used for such a deep injury?

Or was it everyone and everything?

Well, that, I leave on the reader to find out. And change maybe?