

SANJIB SINHA



BLUEPRINT IN
BLOOD

Blueprint in Blood

Vikram, PG and Motilal Mistry's Thriller Universe

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Chapter 1: The Red Light Requiem



Vikram was a light sleeper by nature. So, even with his mobile on silent mode, the moment it began to vibrate against the bedside table, he was instantly awake.

The screen illuminated with a name: Motilal Mistry.

Vikram answered, his voice a low hum. Tell me, Motibabu. What is the news? Bhaya, can you come out for a bit? Hearing Motilal's tone, one might assume he was calling at this ungodly hour just to share an amusing joke.

Where to? Vikram asked.

A place you never visit. Chuckling his signature dry laugh, Motilal elaborated, Sonagachi. A girl has been murdered there. We were already tracking her. She had a connection with that robbery gang. I am coming to pick you up. Okay. Come on over.

As Vikram swung his legs out of bed, he saw Bishnu Thapa stepping out of the adjacent room. Ex-commando Vikram's finest student, Bishnu had voluntarily taken a job at Vikram's detective agency. Now, he was his constant shadow.

Heading out, Sir? Bishnu asked, his voice still carrying a slight Hindi accent.

Yes, going somewhere with Motibabu, Vikram said, securing his gear. If it gets too late, I'll call you.

Okay, Sir. Call me if you need me.

Sure. Just as the word left his mouth, Vikram heard Motilal's unmarked SUV pulling up outside.

For several months now, a highly organized gang of robbers had completely robbed the Kolkata police of their sleep. From major jewelry showrooms across the city and its outskirts to heavily guarded banks, they had spared nothing.

But their last bank heist had gone horribly wrong. The aging security guard, Bhagabandas, instead of surrendering his weapon, had opened fire.

His bullet had pierced the thigh of one of the robbers - Shyamal. In ruthless retaliation, the remaining gang members had riddled Bhagabandas with bullets. However, as the gunfire drew a rapidly growing crowd outside, the remaining three robbers hurled crude bombs and fled the scene, leaving the bleeding Shyamal behind.

It was during the subsequent interrogation and intelligence gathering that the police were caught entirely off guard. They discovered these men were no ordinary criminals. They were deeply connected to a massive terror module. The staggering amounts of money they were hoarding from these robberies was funding a terrifying blueprint—a much larger, more sinister conspiracy. Naturally, the immense weight of this investigation fell squarely onto the

shoulders of Chief Detective Motilal Mistry, inevitably pulling Vikram and PG into the fray.

As Vikram stepped outside, the clouds rumbled ominously. A jagged bolt of lightning slashed diagonally across the night sky of Kolkata.

A sudden, freezing wind swept past, followed instantly by exactly three heavy drops of rain hitting Vikram's skin.

Come on, Bro! Motilal yelled from the driver's seat. Looks like it's going to pour. Dashing across the street to jump into the SUV, Vikram noticed the storm had fully arrived. Settling into the passenger seat, he glanced at his watch.

Exactly 2:00 AM.

By the time they navigated into the labyrinthine alleys of Sonagachi, the rain was coming down in sheets. The waterlogged streets floated with the suffocating scent of cheap, stale jasmine, sweat, and absolute desperation.

The narrow, labyrinthine alleys of Asia's largest red-light district were slick with a sudden, unforgiving Kolkata downpour. Neon signs - promising heaven for a few hundred rupees - buzzed and flickered, casting violent, blood-red reflections in the puddles.

Chief Detective Motilal Mistry stepped out of his unmarked SUV.

He sidestepped a puddle with mathematical precision. His white shirt was crisp, his posture rigid. In a city that ran on nicotine and caffeine, Motilal ran purely on black-and-white logic. He didn't smoke. He didn't drink. He just hunted. Beside him emerged Vikram.

If Motilal was the scalpel, Vikram was the hammer. But a very, very quiet hammer. Vikram wore a fitted black tactical jacket, his face an unreadable mask. An ex-commando who now operated as a private investigator, he maintained a strict, punishing physical discipline. He breathed evenly, his eyes scanning the rooftops, the shadows, the doorways.

He didn't need a weapon; his body was one.

Third floor. Room 42, Motilal said, his voice a low, gravelly rasp that cut through the sound of the rain. ACP Rakesh is already up there.

Rakesh, Vikram muttered, He still sweats when he lies?

He's a politician in a uniform, Vikram. He always sweats.

They approached the entrance of a decaying, colonial-era brothel.

A massive local enforcer, a mountain of muscle scarred from years of knife fights, blocked the narrow staircase. He crossed his arms, reeking of cheap local liquor. Police or no police, nobody goes up without Madam's permission, the bouncer growled, spitting a stream of red pan juice near Motilal's polished shoes.

Motilal didn't even blink. He didn't reach for the service pistol holstered at his hip. He simply glanced at his watch.

Vikram stepped forward.

The movement was a blur, a fluid kinetic sequence defying physics.

One. A palm strike to the bouncer's throat, shutting down his airway.

Two. A sweeping kick behind the kneecaps, dropping the giant's center of gravity.

Three. A precision elbow to the carotid artery.

The bouncer crumpled to the damp concrete like a discarded ragdoll. He was out cold before his heavy frame even registered the impact.

Two point eight seconds, Motilal noted dryly, stepping over the unconscious man. You're getting faster. Must be the new diet.

Slippery floor, Vikram replied, his breathing completely unchanged, Let's go. They climbed the rotting wooden stairs, the air growing thicker, suffocating.

They reached the third floor. Yellow police tape cordoned off Room 42. Inside, the harsh glare of portable halogen lamps illuminated a nightmare.

ACP Rakesh Chowdhury stood in the corner, dabbing his forehead with a monogrammed handkerchief. He had been their classmate once, before the system molded him into a bureaucrat.

Motilal. Vikram, Rakesh nodded nervously.

Glad you're here. It's a mess.

Motilal ignored the greeting, but replied, Yes, we can guess.

His sharp eyes instantly mapping the crime scene.

The room was no larger than a prison cell. A rusted iron bed, a single wooden chair, and a cracked mirror. On the bed lay the body of a young woman, mid-twenties.

Her skin was unnaturally pale beneath the halogen glare. Her eyes were wide open, locked in a frozen scream. A deep, purple ligature mark circled her throat.

Garrote wire, Vikram observed from the doorway, his eyes darting to the lack of struggle in the room. Professional. Quick. She knew whoever came through that door. Didn't even have time to fight back.

Exactly, Motilal said, kneeling beside the bed. He didn't touch her. He just observed. But she's not a local worker. Look at her hands. No calluses. Look at her clothes. Expensive denim, imported sneakers. She was hiding here.

A sharp, synthetic voice crackled in both Vikram and Motilal's earpieces. Testing, testing. Can the analogue boys hear the digital god?

It was PG. Sitting miles away in his dark, multi-monitor fortress in Salt Lake, the genius hacker was already inside the local network.

We hear you, PG, Vikram whispered. What do you have?

I've hijacked the street cameras within a two-mile radius, PG's voice buzzed. Someone deployed a localized EMP jammer exactly forty minutes ago. Wiped the digital memory of every CCTV on this block. These guys aren't just street thugs. They understand network infrastructure. Oh, and Motilal? I'm looking at the victim's facial recognition ping through the national database. You're going to want to sit down.

I prefer standing, Motilal replied coldly. Tell me.

No matches in the civilian registry. But I ran her dimensions, height, and gait analysis against the CCTV footage from the three bank robberies. PG paused for dramatic effect. Match confirmed. That dead girl on the bed? She's your ghost. She's the burqa-clad scout who cuts the camera feeds before the gang hits.

Motilal stood up slowly. The pieces of the puzzle shifted, interlocking with a terrifying click.

Before he could speak, heavy footsteps echoed in the corridor. Four armed tactical police officers escorted a man in a wheelchair into the cramped room.

It was Shyamal. The leader of the five-man crew.

He looked like a ghost himself. His right shoulder was heavily bandaged, courtesy of the bank security guard's bullet. His face was bruised, his eyes hollow with the exhaustion of heavy police interrogation. He had been a

brilliant student once, swallowed by a corrupt system, spat out as a ruthless criminal.

Why did you bring him here? Rakesh hissed, panicked, He's a high-risk prisoner!

I ordered it, Motilal snapped. He walked over to Shyamal, towering over the broken man and then said, Look at the bed, Shyamal.

Shyamal slowly lifted his head. The handcuffs clinked against the metal armrests of the wheelchair. His eyes found the girl.

For three seconds, there was absolute silence in the room. The only sound was the rain hammering against the tin roof outside.

Then, Shyamal shattered.

It wasn't a cry; it was a visceral, animalistic howl of agony. He violently thrashed against his restraints, tipping the wheelchair over. The armed guards scrambled to pin him down, but Shyamal didn't care about them. He dragged himself across the filthy floor toward the bed, weeping uncontrollably.

Nandini! he screamed, his voice tearing his vocal cords. No! No, no, no!

Motilal watched with clinical detachment. She wasn't just your scout, was she, Shyamal? She was your anchor.

Shyamal sobbed into the dirty tiles, entirely broken. We were supposed to leave..., after the bank..., we had enough. I told them to leave her alone! I told them!

Who? Vikram asked, his voice low, commanding. Bibhu? Ajoy? Nirob? Who silenced her to protect themselves?

They're monsters..., Shyamal choked out, spitting blood and saliva. You don't understand. Nirob..., he thinks he's a god. He cleans up loose ends. Even her. Even my Nandini.

Motilal exchanged a look with Vikram. The gang was imploding. Paranoia had set in. The educated unemployed youth had crossed the final line from thieves to murderers. Take him back to the prison hospital, Motilal ordered the guards. Put him on a twenty-four-hour suicide watch. He's the only thread we have left.

As the guards dragged the screaming, weeping Shyamal out of the room, the oppressive silence returned.

Tragic, Rakesh muttered, wiping his neck. There's nothing else here. Forensics will sweep it, but if they used a garrote and a jammer, they didn't leave fingerprints.

People always leave something, Vikram said softly.

He walked slowly around the bed. His eyes, trained to spot tripwires in dense jungles, scanned the microscopic details of the scene. The ruffled bedsheets. The angle of her neck. The scuff marks on the floor.

He stopped at the foot of the bed.

PG, Vikram said tapping his earpiece. Did you say she was the tech scout? Affirmative. She was the one cutting the feeds. PG replied.

Vikram knelt down. He looked at the victims' expensive, imported sneakers. The right shoe was perfectly tied in a double knot. The left shoe laces were hastily tucked in, the tongue of the shoe bulging unnaturally.

She knew they were coming, Vikram murmured. She couldn't run. But she knew they would kill her.

He snapped on a pair of blue latex gloves. With absolute precision, he reached out and pulled the tongue of the left sneaker back. Wedged deep inside, slick with a fresh smear of blood from a cut on her ankle, was a small, stiff piece of rectangular cardboard.

Vikram pulled it out and held it under the harsh halogen light.

It wasn't local currency. It wasn't a note.

It was a physical, old-school railway ticket stub. The QR code was partially obscured by a thumbprint of blood, but the destination printed in bold black ink was perfectly legible.

Motilal stepped closer, reading the destination over Vikram's shoulder. The Chief Detective's eyes narrowed into dangerous slits.

The chase had just begun.

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6:00 AM.

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