

Sahil Sharma

PROJECT X521

AND THE ANCIENT SAVIOURS

Part I

Sahil Sharma

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Project X521 and the Ancient Saviours

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**Dedicated to you, the reader, without
whom this book would be just ink on
paper.**

को अ॒द्धा वे॒दु क इ॒ह प्र वो॑च॒त्कुत॑ आजा॒ता
कुत॑ इ॒यं विसृ॑ष्टिः ।
अ॒र्वाग्दे॒वा अ॒स्य वि॒सर्ज॑ने॒नाथा॑ को वे॒दु यत॑
आब॒भूव॑ ॥६॥

But, after all, who knows, and who can say
whence it all came, and how creation
happened?

The gods themselves are later than creation,
so who knows truly whence it has arisen?

-Nasadiya Sukta 6, Rig Veda

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A team of 9 PARA SF a.k.a Ghost Operators goes missing on a routine operation in Kashmir Valley.

An event that sent tremors up to the Prime Minister's Office.

Will a mistake in the past prove to be too costly?

Chapter One

Gates of Hell

Year-2011 Month-February Day-12

Location- Islamabad, Pakistan

In the early hours of the morning, Vikram sat in his usual spot, holding a steaming cup of coffee. The quiet stillness of dawn surrounded him like a warm blanket, the rich aroma mixing with the crisp morning air.

Then—the silence broke.

The sudden, loud ring of the landline in the next room sent a jolt through his chest. His hand froze, the warmth of the cup forgotten. A call at this hour was never a good sign.

He glanced at his Titan wristwatch—5:10 AM.

‘Who would be calling so early?’ he wondered. A sense of unease crept into his mind. No one called at this time unless something was seriously wrong.

Setting the cup down with a quiet clink, Vikram walked quickly to the phone. The moment he picked up the receiver, he heard it—the shakiness in the caller’s voice.

‘Sahab... let's meet. It's urgent.’ Vikram’s grip tightened. It was Abdullah.

His most trusted informant. A man who had risked his life many times—always calm, always in control. But this time, something was different. His voice was full of fear.

‘Where?’ Vikram asked, grabbing a pen and scribbling the address down quickly.

‘Come fast,’ Abdullah whispered. His voice was barely louder than the faint crackle of the line. Then the call ended. Vikram put the receiver down, his mind already in action. The warmth of the coffee no longer mattered.

In one quick move, he grabbed his car keys, slipping into a state of urgency—a feeling he knew all too well. Adrenaline pushed aside any hesitation. As he stepped out of the Indian Embassy in Islamabad, the on-duty guard straightened and saluted. Vikram gave a brief nod, saying nothing.

The city was still wrapped in early morning darkness as Vikram pulled over near a small roadside tea stall. A dim, flickering bulb cast a weak glow, barely holding back the night. A few empty chairs lay scattered around, and from inside, the faint clatter of metal cups echoed in the silence.

Nearby, a public phone booth stood like a relic from another time, its scratched glass reflecting the yellow light of a dying streetlamp.

Vikram’s eyes swept the shadows.

Then, from the darkness, Abdullah emerged. He was in his early forties, usually composed—but not tonight. His face

was pale, beads of sweat glistening under the dim light. His hands trembled.

Vikram reached over and unlocked the passenger door, his voice calm but firm.

‘Get in.’

Without hesitation, Abdullah slipped inside. The air in the car felt heavier with his presence, his fear almost tangible. His fingers twitched. His breath was uneven.

Vikram studied him closely. This wasn’t just another lead. This was something else.

‘Why the urgency?’ Vikram asked, his voice steady but edged with curiosity.

Abdullah swallowed hard, his Adam’s apple bobbing in the dim light. He wiped his forehead with a shaky hand.

‘Sahab... these people... they’ve gone mad,’ he whispered, his voice raw with fear. ‘They’re meddling with the forces of nature.’

Vikram’s brow furrowed.

He had known Abdullah for years—practical, level-headed, never one to panic. The man had seen things, done things. He wasn’t the type to scare easily.

Yet here he was, shaking, speaking in riddles.

‘Cut the nonsense, Abdullah,’ Vikram said sharply. ‘Just tell me what’s happened.’

Abdullah shifted in his seat, uneasy. His eyes darted toward the darkness outside, as if searching for unseen eyes watching them. For the first time, Vikram noticed the slight tremor in his breath.

Then, with hesitant urgency, Abdullah reached into his pocket.

‘Sir, take this.’

He handed Vikram a crumpled slip of paper with an address hastily scrawled on it—and a small, undeveloped roll of film.

‘Develop this. After that... I’m done.’

His voice cracked.

‘No more, Sahab. I can’t be an informant anymore.’

Vikram’s grip tightened around the film.

‘What do you mean, you’re done?’ He searched Abdullah’s face, but the man refused to meet his eyes.

Instead, Abdullah reached for the door handle. ‘I have a family, Sahab. I need to walk away while I still can.’

Vikram exhaled slowly, then reached into his jacket pocket and pulled out a small brown envelope. Without a word, he handed it over.

‘Take this. It’s not much, but it should help.’

Abdullah hesitated. His lips parted as if to refuse, but after a moment, his fingers closed around the envelope. He held

it for a few seconds, the weight of the moment pressing between them.

Finally, he nodded. A flicker of gratitude flashed in his eyes, but fear remained.

Without another word, Abdullah stepped out, vanishing into the misty pre-dawn air. He climbed onto his old tattered motorcycle, the engine coughing to life.

Vikram watched in silence as Abdullah rode away, his figure swallowed by the night. The faint hum of the bike's engine faded into nothing.

For a long moment, Vikram just sat there.

He leaned back in his seat, exhaling slowly. The tension from their conversation still clung to the air, thick and suffocating.

He turned the small roll of film between his fingers.

What had scared Abdullah so badly?

And more importantly—what was on this film?

Vikram's grip tightened on the steering wheel as his mind raced, his car cutting through the quiet streets of Islamabad. The stillness of dawn had long been replaced by the weight of unanswered questions.

Two and a half hours had passed since he left behind the peace of his morning. Now, there was no going back.

Back at the Indian Embassy, Vikram wasted no time. He immediately contacted a trusted colleague and handed him the undeveloped roll of film.

‘Get this developed. Discreetly.’

His colleague nodded, sensing the urgency in Vikram’s tone.

Whatever was on that roll, Vikram knew it held answers—answers he desperately needed.

As a senior operative in WAR—the Wing for Analysis and Research, India’s external intelligence agency—he had dealt with his share of cryptic leads and shadowy dealings. But Abdullah’s fear was different. It clung to him like a warning, an invisible shadow of something far worse than espionage.

Settling into his chair, Vikram unfolded the crumpled slip of paper Abdullah had handed him. A single address stared back at him.

He immediately ran it through his network of sources.

Within minutes, the first puzzle piece clicked into place.

The location belonged to an old, abandoned laboratory.

Once a British-era research centre for communicable diseases, it had been shut down for over two decades. On paper, it had remained that way.

But recently, it had resurfaced.

The Pakistani military had quietly repurposed it into a makeshift hospital.

Vikram's instincts flared.

Determined to dig deeper, Vikram reached out to government contacts, trying to secure access to the facility.

Every attempt hit a wall.

Denied. Blocked. Restricted.

The Pakistani military refused to grant him clearance—a move that only confirmed his suspicions.

Something was being hidden.

And whatever it was, it had scared Abdullah enough to walk away from a life of risking everything for intel.

But the undeveloped film held the key.

Vikram just needed to unlock it.

Later that evening, the sharp ring of Vikram's phone cut through the quiet Embassy corridors.

He answered.

The voice on the other end sent a chill down his spine.

'Vikram sir... the photo studio—it's gone.'

His breath caught. 'What do you mean, gone?'

'Fire. The entire building burned down. Hm... The owner... didn't make it.'

For a moment, Vikram's grip on the phone tightened.

An accident? Or a cover-up?

A sinking feeling settled in his gut. Someone wanted that film destroyed.

And they were willing to kill for it.

Determined to find out if the film had survived, Vikram moved quickly.

He approached the local Police Superintendent, spinning a plausible excuse—personal photographs he had left for resizing. Irreplaceable.

The Superintendent, an old acquaintance, hesitated but eventually granted him access to the burned-down studio.

By the time Vikram arrived, the scene was chaotic.

Police officers combed through the wreckage, taking notes, searching for any surviving evidence.

The charred skeleton of the building stood ominous against the darkening sky. The acrid scent of burnt wood and melted plastic filled the air. Vikram picked his way through the ruins, his boots crunching over debris.

His pulse quickened. He needed to find something. Anything.

Minutes passed. Nothing.

Then—something glimmered faintly beneath a pile of ash.

His breath hitched.

Vikram crouched down, brushing away the soot with careful fingers.

There it was. A single photograph.

Burned at the edges. Barely intact.

His fingers curled around it, lifting it into the fading light.

The image sent a shiver straight through his spine.

Without wasting another second, he shoved it into his pocket. He straightened, scanning the ruins one last time.

Then, without a word, Vikram turned and walked out.

He climbed into his car, started the engine, and drove straight back to the Embassy.

As soon as he reached the Embassy, he set up his trans-receiver, his fingers working with practiced precision as he tuned it to a secured frequency.

His voice was steady, controlled—but beneath it lay a quiet intensity.

‘Eagle to Nest. Gates of hell have opened. Be prepared. IMIT sent. Over and out.’

IMIT—Imagery Intelligence.

The transmission ended with a soft click, but the tension lingered.

Leaning back in his chair, Vikram exhaled slowly, his mind racing through the puzzle pieces that refused to fit. The fire at the studio didn't sit right.

Too convenient. Too well-timed.

Had it been orchestrated to erase the truth before he could uncover it?

His thoughts were interrupted by the sharp ring of his desk phone. He picked up, recognizing the low, grave tone of his colleague.

'Vikram sir... I just spoke to the doctor who conducted the post-mortem on the studio owner.'

Vikram's grip on the receiver tightened. 'And?'

A pause.

'Cause of death: blunt force trauma to the head.'

A cold chill crept up Vikram's spine.

'But—' his colleague continued, 'shortly after, two military officers arrived. The official report was amended to 'death by burns.'

Vikram's knuckles whitened around the receiver.

There it was. The confirmation.

The fire wasn't an accident. It was a cover-up.

And the photo he had salvaged—it must have been the reason the owner was murdered.

The deeper he dug, the clearer it became—the Pakistani Inter-Intelligence Services (IIS) were involved in something far more sinister than he had imagined.

There was only one person who could fill in the blanks.

But meeting Abdullah again? That was going to be a battle of its own.

He dialled the number with practiced speed. The line rang. Once. Twice. Three times.

Then, a click.

A beat of silence.

Then, a voice—cautious, tense.

‘Sahab... I can’t. Not this time.’

Vikram’s fingers clenched the phone. ‘Abdullah, listen..’

‘No, you listen, Sahab.’ His voice was shaky, his breathing uneven. ‘You’ve seen the photo, haven’t you? You know what it means. These people—they don’t just threaten. They deliver.’

A pause.

‘If they know I’m involved... my family... my daughter... I can’t risk it.’

Vikram closed his eyes.

He had expected this. He had spent years building trust with his informants—but fear was a powerful enemy.

‘Abdullah... I understand. Believe me, I do.’ He stopped pacing, his tone shifting—less commanding, more personal.

‘I wouldn’t be asking if it wasn’t life or death. This isn’t just about me. Innocent lives are at stake. But I won’t force you. I just...’ He exhaled slowly. ‘I just hoped you might help me one last time.’

Silence.

Only the faint sound of Abdullah’s breathing. Vikram could feel it—the battle raging inside him.

He needed one more push. His voice turned gentler, deliberate.

‘Remember when your daughter needed that surgery?’

The line remained silent.

Vikram pressed on.

‘I was there for you. Right now, I need that same trust. That same courage. But if you say no, I’ll understand. No hard feelings.’

A sharp inhale from the other end.

Vikram imagined Abdullah staring at a photo of his daughter—the same daughter he had almost lost, the same daughter he had fought so hard to protect.

Then, finally—his voice cracked through the silence.

‘Sahab...’

A deep sigh.

‘You were there when no one else was. You saved my family... Alright. One last time. I’ll help you.’

Vikram let out a breath he didn’t realize he was holding.

‘Thank you, Abdullah. I promise—I’ll do everything in my power to keep you safe.’

Another silence. Not one of hesitation—but of unspoken understanding.

Then, Abdullah’s voice came through, resigned yet firm.

‘Just tell me where and when, Sahab.’

Vikram nodded, even though Abdullah couldn’t see it.

‘Tomorrow. 3 PM. The old factory. Just us.’

‘Okay, Sahab.’

And with that, the call ended.

Each man sat in his own silence, contemplating the storm they were about to step into.

Location- New Delhi, India

Meanwhile, in New Delhi, Radhika - who handled the Pakistan desk at WAR tore open the package. Her hands trembled slightly as she pulled out the charred photograph. Even in its damaged state, the image was enough to send a shiver down her spine.

Without wasting a second, she grabbed the photograph and rushed toward the office of Joint Secretary Arjun Tyagi. Bursting through the door, she barely caught her breath before speaking.

‘Sir, you need to see this immediately. It’s urgent.’

Arjun, known for his unshakable composure, took the photograph without a word. His eyes scanned the image carefully, his face betraying nothing.

Seconds passed. Then a full minute.

Finally, he looked up.

‘Radhika, leave this with me.’

She hesitated, but a slight nod from him sent her out the door.

As soon as she was gone, Arjun wasted no time and immediately reached out to his counterparts at the Bureau of Intelligence (BI) and Defence Intelligence (DI).

Both agencies denied any knowledge of the inquiry.

That confirmed his fear. This was something bigger. Something ominous and he needed answers.

Reaching for his phone, he called Radhika back.

As she stepped in, his voice was firm, unwavering.

‘Get Vikram on the line. We need answers, and we need them fast.’

Year-2011 Month-February Day-13

Vikram gripped the steering wheel as he navigated through the city's dimly lit outskirts. Fog clung to the streets like a ghostly veil, and the flickering streetlights only deepened the eerie silence of the night.

Pulling up near an abandoned factory, his eyes immediately locked onto a lone figure pacing near the shadows.

Abdullah.

A cigarette burned between his fingers, the orange glow briefly illuminating his gaunt, anxious face.

Vikram stepped out of the car, his boots crunching against the damp ground.

Abdullah turned sharply at the sound.

'Sahab, I came here especially for you.' His voice was low, urgent.

Vikram wasted no time.

'Abdullah, I need details—everyone working at that place. Every last one of them.'

Abdullah's eyes widened in disbelief.

'Sahab...' he stammered. 'All the employees live on the premises. Everything—logistics, supplies, movement—it's all handled through military convoys. No one goes in or out without clearance. Not even civilians from the area.'

Vikram took a step closer, his voice dropping to a near-whisper.

‘I need to get inside, Abdullah. I don’t care how risky it is. There has to be a way.’

Abdullah stared at him as if he had lost his mind.

‘Sahab, why? Do you even understand what you’re asking?’ His voice wavered. ‘You’re supposed to send this information back to New Delhi... which you’ve probably already done by now.’

Vikram didn’t blink.

‘Abdullah, if the photograph is real, we don’t have time. We need to know what’s happening inside that place—before it’s too late.’

A tense silence stretched between them.

Abdullah’s face darkened. He was no stranger to danger. But infiltration into that site?

This was suicide.

Still, there was something in Vikram’s eyes—a fire, an urgency that made him pause.

Finally, Abdullah sighed, running a shaky hand through his hair. ‘Sahab... I’ll take you as close as I can.’

Vikram didn’t hesitate. ‘I’ll take it from there.’

Abdullah exhaled heavily, then gave a small nod. ‘Meet me here tomorrow. 9:00 AM sharp. From there, I’ll guide you

near the entrance—but after that, you're on your own, Sahab.'

Vikram nodded, accepting the risk without a second thought.

For a moment, they stood in silence. Then, without another word, Vikram turned, got into his car, and drove away. His thoughts circled back to that photograph—the charred edges, the haunting image, the price someone had already paid to keep it hidden.

What was the IIS hiding?

And how far would they go to ensure no one ever found out?

Year-2011 Month-February Day-14

The car cut through the darkness, its headlights slicing across the winding road that stretched endlessly into the unknown. Isolation pressed down on them—mile after mile, the silence grew heavier, more oppressive.

Vikram's mind right now was a battlefield of calculations.

The mission was simple.

Gather intelligence. Get in. Get out.

But even as he reassured himself, a cold knot of uncertainty twisted in his gut. His instincts screamed:

This was no ordinary intelligence op.

This was something else.

He glanced at Abdullah, his trusted informant for years. A man who had always kept his cool. But tonight, even in the dim dashboard glow, his face was drawn, his grip on the steering wheel tense.

Vikram broke the silence. 'How long have you been watching the facility, Abdullah?'

Abdullah's fingers twitched slightly. His voice was quieter than usual, barely above a murmur.

'Twenty days, Sahab.'

That was all he said.

No unnecessary words. No details.

Vikram nodded but didn't push. The air inside the car felt thick, suffocating.

After nearly twenty minutes, the car came to a halt. Abdullah stepped out first, leading the way into the jungle, with Vikram closely following behind.

They moved in near silence, their steps muffled by damp earth and fallen leaves. After nearly twenty minutes of walking through the dense jungle, Abdullah froze.

He barely breathed as he lifted a finger, pointing into the shadows.

'Sahab, there it is,' he whispered, his voice barely audible. 'We don't go closer than this.'

Vikram followed his gaze.

Through a break in the trees, the facility emerged—a dark, looming structure buried deep within the forest.

It wasn't large, but it was fortified.

Perimeter fencing. Watchtowers. Spotlights sweeping the jungle in rigid, calculated intervals. The guards weren't just stationed—they were patrolling, constantly moving, hyper-vigilant.

This wasn't a standard military outpost.

This was something else.

Vikram pulled out his binoculars, scanning the facility. His breath hitched when he spotted a row of white containers near the far end of the compound—unmarked, heavily guarded.

Even from this distance, something felt... wrong. The hair on the back of his neck stood on end.

Just as he lowered the binoculars, Abdullah reached into his pocket and pulled out a set of crumpled notes.

'Sahab,' he whispered, handing them over with a trembling hand. 'Guard shifts, patrol routes, security protocols. Everything I could gather.'

Vikram took the papers, giving them a quick scan. The facility was airtight... but not impenetrable.

He nodded, slipping the notes into his pocket. 'You've done more than enough, Abdullah,' Vikram murmured.

But Abdullah didn't look relieved.

His eyes flickered toward the facility, then back to Vikram.

‘Sahab,’ he said, his voice lower now, almost shaking. ‘Be careful. This place... something’s wrong with it. I’ve seen things—strange things. I won’t wait for long. If you’re not back in an hour, I’m gone.’

Vikram met his gaze.

‘Understood.’

Abdullah hesitated. Then, with a quick nod, he melted back into the jungle, leaving Vikram alone.

The forest watched in silence as Vikram turned back toward the facility.

Location: New Delhi, India

Meanwhile, in New Delhi, Radhika’s hands trembled over her keyboard.

She had been trying to reach Vikram for hours now.

Nothing.

The comms line remained dead.

She exhaled sharply, dialling his satphone one last time. It rang. And rang. And rang.

No answer.

She gritted her teeth. ‘Damn it, Vikram.’

It wasn’t just her—none of his colleagues had heard from him either. A knot of dread had been tightening in her

stomach all night, and now it was turning into full-fledged panic.

Location: Outskirts of Islamabad, Pakistan

Year-2011 Month-February Day-15

The air was thick with the metallic stench of blood.

The first officer on the scene took a shaky step forward, his boots sinking slightly into the damp, leaf-littered forest floor. Shadows stretched long, creeping toward the mangled form in the centre of the clearing.

He swallowed hard.

Even from a distance, something was wrong.

Vikram lay unnaturally still, his once-powerful frame twisted in a grotesque rictus of agony. His chest cavity—obliterated. Ribcage splintered outward, bones bent like the petals of some nightmarish flower.

His heart was missing.

As if something had ripped it from him and left behind nothing but carnage.

There were no signs of a struggle. Just... absence.

And then, there was his face.

His features were stretched taut, his jaw locked in a silent scream. His fingers—curled into claws, frozen mid-reach, as if grasping for something unseen. Something just beyond his grasp.

The investigating officer, a veteran of violent crime scenes, took another step. His hands trembled as he pulled out a cigarette with unsteady fingers.

He had seen death before. But never like this.

A younger officer, barely out of training, gagged at the sight. 'Sir... what did this?' His voice was barely above a whisper.

The senior investigator didn't answer right away.

He knelt beside the corpse, inspecting the devastation. No claw marks. No animal bites. No human weapon could have caused such damage.

Then what the hell did?

The younger officer shifted uneasily, waiting for an answer that never came.

'Sir?'

The investigator exhaled, shaking his head. His voice came out quiet.

'Something unnatural.'

The words hung in the air, heavy. Final.

By the time Vikram's body was brought in for examination, rumours had already begun to take shape.

Some claimed it was a failed bioweapon. Others muttered about some demon, some ghoul that had crossed into this world. Something demonic, beyond human reckoning.

Whatever the truth, one thing was certain—the brutal condition of Vikram’s body suggested he had uncovered something far more dangerous than he had ever anticipated.

Chapter Two

X521

Year-2011 Month-February Day-15

Location: New Delhi, India

The news of Vikram's death hit the heart of India's intelligence community like a thunderclap. Within hours, WAR's corridors were buzzing with whispers—agents exchanged uneasy glances, cryptic messages were sent back and forth, and tension thickened the air like a storm waiting to break.

The official reports were vague, the details muddled, but the reality was far more chilling.

One of their best men—an operative who had survived high-risk missions in war zones and deep-cover espionage in hostile territories—was dead.

And no one knew why.

WAR Secretary Ashwin Sharma barely gave Arjun Tyagi time to step into his office before firing the first question.

‘What the hell is happening, Arjun?’

His voice was sharp, edged with something more than just anger—it was fear. He slammed a file onto his desk, the impact rattling a half-empty cup of tea. ‘What was Vikram doing there? His body was found near a classified Pakistani military installation!’

Arjun had no immediate answer—not because he lacked one, but because there were too many unanswered questions swirling in his own mind.

‘Sir, I don’t know exactly what he was doing there,’ he said, carefully choosing his words. ‘But if Vikram went that close to a Pakistani military installation, then he had a damn good reason. He wasn’t reckless—he was one of our best.’

Ashwin’s expression darkened. ‘And now he’s dead.’ The words hit like a blow. He gestured sharply toward a chair. ‘Sit down, Arjun. We have a serious problem.’

Arjun took a seat, bracing himself for what was coming.

Ashwin leaned forward, his fingers pressed against his temples, his voice lower now but laced with urgency. ‘Do you even realize the severity of this situation? If Vikram was caught spying—or worse, if Pakistan believes we sent him—this could escalate into something far worse than just another diplomatic crisis.’

Arjun exhaled, his mind racing. He understood what Ashwin was implying.

The wrong move here—one leak, one misstep—could ignite a war.

‘I have a feeling,’ Arjun said slowly, thinking through every angle, ‘that Pakistan is already up to something. And Vikram was close—too close—to uncovering it. That’s why he was there.’

Without another word, Arjun reached into his briefcase. The half-burnt photograph Vikram had retrieved before his untimely death lay within. The image itself barely discernible—yet powerful enough to stop Ashwin Sharma in his tracks.

As Ashwin leaned forward, his breath hitched. His face drained of colour. For a long, uncomfortable moment, the only sound in the room was the low hum of the air conditioning and Ashwin’s laboured breathing.

Sweat beaded on his forehead. His fingers trembled slightly as they hovered over the photograph, his mind struggling to process the implications of what he was seeing.

This wasn’t just an intelligence leak. This wasn’t just a covert operation gone wrong. This was something far bigger.

Ashwin finally spoke, his voice strained yet firm.

‘We need every piece of intelligence available within the next seventy-two hours.’

He locked eyes with Arjun, his next words carrying the weight of a nation.

‘This goes straight to the Prime Minister. We don’t have time to waste.’

Arjun headed straight for Radhika's desk, weaving his way through the bustling office. The urgency of the situation weighed on him like a lead cloak, and every second felt like time slipping away. He leaned over her desk, lowering his voice to avoid attracting unwanted attention. 'Radhika, have we uncovered anything about where Vikram was getting his intel? Any leads at all?'

Radhika's face mirrored the same sense of frustration and concern. She looked up from her screen, shaking her head slightly before responding. 'I haven't found much yet, but I'll speak to the Field Officer stationed at Islamabad. He might have some insights.' Arjun nodded in acknowledgement. 'Make it a priority. We're running out of time.'

Year-2011 Month-February Day-17

The Indian Embassy in Islamabad received an unexpected package intended for Vikram. It was handed to his subordinate, Field Officer-Akash Saxena. But as Akash cautiously opened the package, his steady demeanour began to crack. Inside, he found a letter, four photographs, and several documents, each one more disturbing than the last. As his eyes skimmed over the contents, a slow, creeping panic settled into his bones. His hands, normally so steady, began to tremble. Beads of sweat dotted his brow as the horror of what he was seeing became clear.

The paper was crumpled, its edges torn, as though it had been hastily stuffed into the package. The handwriting was hurried, uneven—written in fear. Akash's heart pounded as he read:

‘Sahab Ji,

I was an informer of Vikram Sahab. I am the one who told him about that site and the activities going on there. I warned him about the dangers, but it was of no use.

That night, I dropped him near the outskirts of the facility and waited near the car. After nearly two hours, gunfire erupted from the direction of the forest. I ran toward the sound. I saw Vikram Sahab stumbling out of the trees, gasping for air, his clothes torn, his face bloodied. But before I could reach him, he collapsed, his breath ragged. There was terror in his eyes.

I tried to help him to the car, but he shoved a bundle of documents into my hands, gripping my wrist. He whispered—‘Take these. Get them to the Embassy. No matter what.’

After that, I left the place in his car. Please, stop these people before more lives are lost.’

Akash’s heart pounded in his chest as he re-read the letter. His mind raced, torn between the grief of losing his superior and the ominous implications of the letter's contents. The details were chilling, and the photographs he now examined only intensified his growing fear. With each image, the weight of the truth became harder to bear.

With adrenaline surging through his veins, Akash lunged for his laptop, fingers flying across the keyboard. His mind raced as he established a connection to a secure VPN server with the urgency of a man who knew time was slipping

away. He attached the scanned photographs and documents, embedding them within WAR's end to end encrypted transmission protocol and with a final keystroke, he sent the files, ensuring they reached the right hands before it was too late.

Location: New Delhi, India

Miles away, in the heart of New Delhi, a secure server beeped.

Radhika's sharp gaze snapped to her screen as the encrypted transmission flashed across her terminal. Her pulse quickened as she decrypted the files, her trained hands moving instinctively.

The printer hummed to life, spitting out clear, high-contrast images. But the moment her eyes landed on the first photograph; her breath caught in her throat. Her skin prickled with a creeping unease.

Without hesitation, she snatched up the pages and stormed toward Arjun Tyagi's office.

Arjun barely had time to react when Radhika threw the documents onto his desk, her face pale.

'Sir, you need to see this. Now.'

Arjun picked up the first page. But as his eyes scanned the contents, his breath shallowed. His heartbeat slammed against his ribcage.

One by one, he flipped through the photographs. Each image worse than the last.

A sinking feeling settled in his gut—this was bigger than anything they had imagined. He didn't hesitate. Grabbing the files, he stormed out of his office.

Arjun barely paused before slamming the stack of documents onto his superior's desk.

'Sir, we've obtained the proof.' His voice was tight, his hands gripping the edge of the table like it was the only thing grounding him.

Ashwin reached for the papers, flipping through the first few pages with measured precision. His jaw clenched. His fingers gripped the documents harder.

The air in the room thickened as Ashwin and Arjun studied the four damning photographs, each one a distorted glimpse into a nightmare.

The first photograph revealed a dimly lit laboratory, sterile yet hauntingly ominous. At its centre, a person lay restrained on a medical bed, his skin pale and drenched in sweat. A cannula pierced his arm, the needle threading deep into his vein, connected to a container filled with an inky black fluid.

Four figures surrounded the bed, clad in crisp white aprons—their faces obscured by surgical masks. But there was something unmistakable about them: three bore distinct South Asian features, possibly Pakistani, while the fourth stood apart—taller, broader, his sharp features unmistakably European.

If the first image was unsettling, the second was pure dread captured on film. A dark, windowless chamber with walls lined with glass panels—but unlike ordinary observation

windows, these were tinted nearly pitch-black, absorbing light rather than reflecting it. The only visible details were two sinister, glowing orbs, burning through the shadows like a predator lying in wait. The eyes—if they even were eyes—were too high to be an animal crouching.

The third image was worse—a visceral display of unholy science.

A headless dissected corpse lay sprawled across an operating table. Blood pooled around the exposed vertebrae where the skull should have been.

Around the table, a team of white-aproned scientists worked with cold precision, their hands gloved.

What kind of science was this? Arjun could barely contain his revulsion as Ashwin examined the photograph with growing concern.

Then came the final image—and it stopped the air in the room.

It was the creature.

The same one from the partially burnt photograph recovered by Vikram—but now, there was no distortion, no blur, no haze hiding its horror.

It stood in front of a window, its scorched, mottled skin stretched taut over an unnatural frame. Its elongated fingers, each tipped with razor-sharp claws.

And then, there was its face.

The mouth, twisted into an almost human mockery of a grin, stretched wide, revealing a forked, serpentine tongue, flicking out as if tasting the air. But it was the eyes that sent a chill spiralling down Arjun's spine.

They weren't the vacant, empty gaze of an animal. They weren't the lifeless stare of an experiment.

They were aware. Watching. Waiting.

Ashwin exhaled sharply, slamming the stack of photographs onto his desk.

'What the hell are we dealing with, Arjun?' His voice was strained, barely masking the horror creeping into his mind.

Arjun didn't answer. He couldn't.

His hands curled into fists, knuckles whitening.

'This changes everything.'

Ashwin's voice was barely above a whisper, but the weight of his words pressed down like an iron fist.

Arjun nodded, his mind racing as he tried to process the enormity of what lay before them. Vikram had uncovered something beyond espionage, beyond politics—this was a threat that defied comprehension.

Ashwin exhaled sharply, rubbing his temples as if the act could somehow ward off the dread settling into his bones.

Then he started reading the documents and they were a blueprint of horror— a record of humanity's darkest ambitions.

He turned another page, and the past came alive before his eyes.

‘The documents detailed atrocities buried beneath the weight of history—experiments conducted during the Nazi regime, so vile, so grotesque, that even the ink on the pages seemed tainted. Every recorded observation spoke of inhumane and unethical procedures, of the most egregious acts disguised under the veil of ‘scientific inquiry’, prisoners in concentration camps turned into unwilling test subjects—stripped of identity, reduced to nothing but numbered specimens for scientific atrocities.

There were entries recounting the introduction of lethal gases like mustard gas into their systems, the harrowing details of how victims convulsed, their skin blistered and burned, noted without an ounce of empathy.

Sulphonamide antibiotics, applied with ruthless inconsistency, were meant to simulate battlefield injuries while their immune systems were overwhelmed by bacteria and viruses, each dose meticulously recorded, as if these shattered lives were nothing more than numbers on a graph.’

The text was emotionless, the researchers detached, and yet, every word screamed of agony. Ashwin’s fingers trembled slightly as he turned the page. His pulse quickened, a heaviness settling in his chest, but he read on.

The report continued, its tone shifting into something almost triumphant—a triumph born from madness.

‘The Nazi scientists had not stopped at just biological warfare. They had pushed their horrific ambitions even further.

In their twisted pursuit of power, they had embarked on experiments to merge traits from different species. The forced fusion of human and non-human traits—an attempt to create a soldier that was neither man nor animal, but something in between—a being that could serve as the perfect soldier. Unstoppable. Indomitable, something designed to kill without mercy, to endure without fatigue.’

Ashwin paused, the room around him fading away. He could almost see the shadowy confines of the laboratories described—hidden from public scrutiny, tucked away in the depths of war-torn Europe.

The horrors that took place there weren’t confined to these words—they were real, carved into the history of humankind, whispered about only in the darkest corners of memory. His breath caught for a moment, the realization settling deep within: science and ethics, in those places, had been pushed into unimaginable territories. The pursuit of dominance had turned men into monsters, and prisoners into nothing but tools for their madness.

He swallowed hard, pressing on to the next paragraph. The words now carried a tone of grim finality. Ashwin read aloud, his voice barely more than a whisper. The tightness in his chest increased as the true depth of the revelations began to unfold.

‘The war might have ended in 1945, but its ghosts still walked among them. With Germany’s defeat, Allied forces claimed to have destroyed all such facilities, and the scientists involved were either captured or killed.’

He paused, a flicker of unease crossing his face. His eyes darted to the next line; the sense of impending revelation thick in the air.

‘But, as history would soon reveal, A few of these scientists—the architects of suffering—vanished into the shadows, their knowledge intact, their twisted ambitions far from extinguished. They carried with them a twisted treasure trove of knowledge—decades ahead of anything the world was aware of, and tainted with the blood of countless innocents.’

Each paragraph in the documents seemed to drip with the horror of their legacy. Ashwin’s eyes narrowed as he read on, the chill settling deeper in his bones with every word.

The narrative shifted, dragging the horrors of the past into the chilling reality of the present.

Ashwin’s eyes narrowed as he read further. The words on the page weren’t just history; they were a blueprint for catastrophe.

‘Years later, a high-ranking IIS official found himself in Istanbul. It was there—in the heart of espionage and illicit dealings—that he encountered a German scientist—an heir to the legacy of the Nazi horrors.

A man whose grandfather had once stood at the forefront of forbidden experiments—experiments

meant to craft something beyond human, something engineered to dominate the battlefield.

But this man wasn't driven by ideology. He was driven by greed.

And he had a gift to offer—a secret that had survived the fall of the Reich, hidden in the shadows, passed down through generations.

The IIS official listened and he understood. This was power. The kind of power that could shift the balance of warfare forever—a project that could bypass technological limitations and create something entirely new.

A deal was struck in that dimly lit room—a contract not written in ink, but in ambition.

A facility was built in secrecy, hidden from the world, just outside Islamabad.

To the civilian government? It didn't exist.

To the handful in military? It was their most prized asset and on December 11th, 2003.

Project X521 was born.

Five German scientists spearheaded the project, they had come together with Pakistan's finest military scientists and surgeons, drawn by the lure of unrestricted experimentation—the kind of research that civilized nations had long since abandoned.

Their mission? To breathe life into horrors that should have died in wartime laboratories.

The early years were riddled with failures—bloody, grotesque failures.

One hundred and four subjects died during initial trials.

Each one was a discarded life—prisoners, political dissidents, abductees labelled as spies—men who would never be missed. Their bodies were warped beyond recognition, their existence reduced to nothing more than pages in an ever-growing catalogue of monstrous experimentation.

No ethics. No oversight. No limit to what they were willing to do.

The scale of the operation was staggering. 15% of the IIS's entire budget was quietly funnelled into Project X521.

A fortune, siphoned off into the darkness, unnoticed.

Years of failure had birthed something far worse than success.

A terrible breakthrough, forged in pain and death.

They had done it.

They had given created something new.

A creature that should not exist.

It was humanoid, but not human.

A fusion of multiple species, bound together by science that defied nature itself.

Its body was a testament to horror—engineered not for survival, but for predation.

Its tongue? Serpentine, dripping with venom more lethal than anything found in nature.

The venom itself? A monstrous blend—Oxyuranus microlepidotus, the Inland Taipan, and Bitis arietans, the Puff Adder. Part Neurotoxic. Part Hemotoxic, a twisted concoction. A single bite sufficient to extinguish a human life

One bite was all it took. No antidote. No survival. Just a swift, agonizing end.

And the worst part?

It wasn't just the venom.

It was terrifyingly agile, possessing strength far beyond human limits

Its flesh was nearly impervious to conventional firearms, bullets ricocheting off its unnatural hide. Only armour-piercing rounds could pierce its skin.

A test had been conducted—a display of the creature's capabilities.

It was supposed to be a controlled exercise. A mere demonstration of the creature's capabilities.

Twenty of Pakistan's elite SSG commandos.

Handpicked. Armed to the teeth.

They had faced insurgents, terrorists, and foreign operatives.

Two minutes.

That's all it took.

Two men had their hearts torn from their chests—devoured before their lifeless bodies hit the ground.

One was ripped apart, his spine yanked free as if it were an afterthought.

Another was bitten—his body convulsing as the venom worked its way through him, his veins turning black, his flesh rotting as he died in excruciating agony.

It wasn't just killing.

It was feeding.

And it enjoyed it.'

Ashwin turned to the sketch included in the report. His pulse quickened.

The creature stared back at him—even in crude ink, its gaze was haunting.

Ashwin paused, running a hand over his forehead. A sense of unease settled over him, his heart heavy as he absorbed the final details.

‘It’s IQ: 148. It adapted. It learned. It anticipated., its intelligence on par with humans but devoid of empathy.

Body temperature: 80°F. Unnatural, almost reptilian.

Cold. Calculating. A living weapon in the purest sense.’

Ashwin read the last sentence again, his breath caught in his throat.

‘With everything in place, X521A could be fully deployed in the field in the coming years.’

He clenched the folder shut, his fingers trembling against the aged paper.

This wasn’t just an experiment.

This wasn’t just classified research.

The implications were horrifying.

His mind spiralled.

The creature wasn’t locked away in some forgotten laboratory. It was active, growing, waiting and something they intended to use, to release into the world

Ashwin exhaled slowly, trying to steady his nerves.

Because he was staring into a future sculpted by the nightmares of the past. A future where humanity’s deadliest mistakes had evolved.

The burden of what he had just read weighed heavily on him. He knew now, without a doubt, that he had stumbled upon something monstrous—something that should have remained hidden, forever buried in the shadows of history.

This couldn't wait. Not a single second.

Ashwin reached for his phone and punched in a number with swift, deliberate precision.

The line clicked. A voice on the other end answered.

‘Office of the Prime Minister. Who is calling?’

Ashwin's voice was tight, controlled—but beneath it was something almost primal.

Fear.

‘It's Ashwin Sharma. Secretary WAR. We have a national security crisis. I need an emergency meeting with the Security Committee at 10:00 AM tomorrow. It can't wait.’

The gravity of his tone must have conveyed the seriousness of the situation, as his request was granted immediately.

The meeting was set.

Chapter Three

Time is of the Essence

Year-2011 Month-February Day-18

Location: New Delhi, India

The emergency Security Committee meeting gathered an elite assembly of India's top brass. Around the large oval table sat the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, the Defence Minister, the Minister of External Affairs, the National Security Advisor (NSA), Ashwin Sharma, Secretary of WAR, alongside his Joint Secretary Arjun Tyagi, the Director of the Bureau of Intelligence (BI), the Chief of Army Staff accompanied by the Lt. General in charge of Defence Intelligence (DI), the Chief of Air Staff, the Chief of Naval Staff, and the Chairman of the Organization for Defence Development and Research (DODR).

Ashwin stood at the head of the table, the tension in his shoulders evident. Despite his composed posture, his eyes betrayed the urgency clawing at his insides.

'Gentlemen,' he began, his voice cutting through the thick silence. 'I apologize for the abrupt nature of this meeting. But the situation we are about to discuss is one that requires immediate, decisive action. Time is not on our side.'

The air grew heavier. No one spoke.

Ashwin turned to Arjun, who stood by the projector, laser pointer in hand.

‘Arjun, begin the briefing.’

Arjun stepped forward, his voice calm but unrelenting.

‘The information you are about to see was extracted from classified documents recovered by our late officer, Vikram—who was murdered in Pakistan a few days ago.’

With every photograph that appeared on screen, a deeper pall fell over the room. It was as though the temperature had dropped, and the silence that followed Arjun’s presentation seemed to echo with the weight of impending danger.

Finally, the Air Chief broke the silence, leaning forward, his eyes narrowing as frustration edged into his voice. ‘Our MiG 27s can obliterate that site in no time.’

His tone was curt. Efficient. Decisive.

The Chief of Army Staff shook his head almost immediately. His voice was calm, yet tinged with a gravity that none in the room could ignore.

‘An airstrike that deep in enemy territory risks sparking a full-scale war with Pakistan. This is a line we cannot cross hastily,’ he stated, his gaze fixed firmly on the Air Chief.

A beat of silence passed. The unspoken tension between the branches of the military was palpable.

The Minister of External Affairs leaned back in his chair, choosing his words carefully. ‘Perhaps... a diplomatic approach?’ He hesitated, measuring the weight of his own suggestion. ‘We could approach the Pakistani government with what we’ve uncovered. From our intelligence, it appears the Pakistani Army is acting independently. Their government seems entirely unaware.’

The Director of the Bureau of Intelligence (BI) scoffed, shaking his head with a dismissive wave. ‘The Pakistani Army is notorious for its rogue behaviour. We can’t afford to bank on diplomatic channels alone. If they are operating without oversight, our diplomatic efforts would only tip them off.’ He leaned forward, his voice dropping lower, tinged with scepticism. ‘We must prepare for a more tangible response—something that can genuinely counter this threat.’

The weight of his words settled over the room like a heavy fog. For a brief moment, there was no counter, no retort—just the quiet hum of impending consequences.

The Prime Minister tapped his fingers against the table, his face unreadable, his sharp gaze scanning each individual seated before him. He wasn’t just listening. He was calculating.

Ashwin saw the hesitation, the doubt—a roomful of powerful minds scrambling for a solution, each seeing a different piece of the same puzzle.

He took a deep breath, then stepped forward.

‘Sir, what we’ve seen so far is just the beginning. One prototype. We have no idea how far they’ve gone, how many more are out there. If they manage to create an army of these creatures’, he paused, letting the weight of the word sink in, ‘even a small number could annihilate our entire battalions. We can’t afford to wait. We need to act—and we need to act fast.’

The silence that followed was not one of disagreement. It was one of realization.

The Prime Minister leaned forward, his eyes fixed on the Chairman of the Organization for Defence Development and Research.

‘What solutions can you propose?’

The Chairman shifted uncomfortably, clearing his throat before responding. ‘Sir, there are potential solutions—next-gen armoured suits, enhanced kinetic weapons, high-frequency energy-based arms.’

He hesitated, casting a glance at the defence minister before continuing. ‘But... we need time. Years.’

The defence minister let out a sharp breath, his frustration barely restrained. ‘Time is the one thing we don’t have!’ His voice cut through the room like a knife. ‘How do we design weapons against something we don’t even understand? What makes these creatures so powerful? Do they have weaknesses?’ His gaze moved around the room, as if daring someone to provide an answer.

The Chairman shook his head. ‘That’s precisely the issue. Without studying them, we’re operating blind. We need

biological samples—blood, tissue, DNA—at least something. Until we have that, any countermeasure is just theoretical.’

The Prime Minister frowned; his frustration barely concealed. ‘What about the energy weapons you’ve been developing with the Nuclear Research Institute? Are they operational?’

The Chairman straightened slightly, seizing the opportunity. ‘The large-scale variants have shown promise. But the portable versions—what we’d need in the field—are still in prototype stages. At least seven to eight years away from deployment readiness.’

The Prime Minister's jaw clenched. ‘We don’t have that kind of time.’ He swept his gaze across the table, eyes locked onto each official. ‘We reconvene on Wednesday. By then, I expect something concrete from DODR. Something deployable.’

Silence gripped the room.

The Prime Minister stood, exhaling sharply. ‘And one more thing—this is no time for inter-agency rivalry. Effective immediately, all intelligence, assets, and personnel are shared. The survival of this nation may depend on it.’

The meeting adjourned, the room dispersing into tense murmurs.

As Ashwin Sharma gathered his files, the Prime Minister stepped forward, his voice low but commanding. ‘Ashwin, you have full access to every resource you need. Emergency

funds, black ops personnel—whatever it takes. This cannot spiral out of control.’

Ashwin met his gaze, nodding firmly. ‘Sir, we will find a solution.’

The next forty-eight hours were a frenzy of activity at WAR Headquarters.

Hundreds of calls were made, classified files pulled from the deepest vaults of India’s defence research labs, black projects, and experimental weapons programs. Teams worked around the clock, combing through reams of data, searching for anything—anything—that could serve as a viable countermeasure.

They scrutinized every project under development, from advanced bio-weapon neutralizers to autonomous combat drones to hypersonic precision strikes.

One initiative stood out—the Nano-bot Miniature Missile System.

A conceptual program that proposed injecting microscopic nano-bots into a target’s bloodstream, allowing them to track and eliminate the target within a 50-kilometer range. On paper, it looked promising. But the reality? It was nowhere near field deployment. A promising theory—nothing more.

Other projects, like directed-energy weapons and sonic disruptors, showed potential but were years away from viable military use.

By Monday night, exhaustion weighed heavy on the entire team. Despite their best efforts, they had nothing solid. No solution to present at Wednesday's Security Committee meeting.

The failure gnawed at Arjun.

Returning home, Arjun found no respite. Dinner was a tasteless blur, his mind looping through the day's failures. He lay in bed, eyes locked onto the ceiling, sleep refusing to come. The ticking of the clock felt like a countdown—to what, he didn't know.

At around 3:30 AM exhaustion pulled him under.

His alarm jolted him awake at 5:00 AM. A restless, broken sleep had done nothing to clear his mind.

He swung his legs off the bed, rubbing his eyes. His body ached from stress; his mind dull with fatigue. Nothing. No breakthroughs. No solutions.

But they couldn't stop.

Lacing up his running shoes, Arjun stepped outside into the cold morning air. He needed clarity. Needed to move.

The city was still asleep, the streets bathed in an eerie silence. He jogged through the empty roads, each step pounding against the pavement, mirroring the urgency in his mind.

Arjun hadn't expected to run into anyone—least of all, someone from his past.

But fate had a way of intervening at unexpected moments.

A familiar voice cut through his thoughts.

‘Arjun?’

He turned sharply. Standing a few feet away was Dr. Krishnan Ayer, an old acquaintance—once a cryptography specialist and research officer within WAR, now a distinguished professor at IIT Delhi. The two had worked together in the past, their professional bond built on mutual respect and intellectual synergy.

Dr. Ayer studied him, his sharp eyes narrowing. ‘You seem... preoccupied.’

Arjun hesitated, debating how much to reveal. But Krishnan Ayer wasn’t just an old colleague—he was a trusted friend. Carefully, he explained—without revealing classified details—the crisis that was gripping the agency. He needed a fresh perspective.

They sat down on a nearby bench. The weight of Arjun’s words lingered between them. Dr. Ayer was silent for a long moment, his fingers steepled in thought. Then, he spoke.

‘There is something... something unconventional.’

Dr. Ayer spoke, his voice thoughtful. ‘I don’t know if this will help, but a few years ago, I met a Professor from IIT Roorkee at a conference. He was researching something rather unusual—genetic memory and the links between DNA, light, sound, and vibrations.’

Arjun raised an eyebrow, intrigued.

Dr. Ayer continued, ‘His research was inspired by ancient texts—the Vedas, to be specific—but grounded in modern scientific principles. He was trying to prove how vibrations and frequencies could interact with DNA at a fundamental level, perhaps even activating certain latent abilities encoded within us. I remember he was struggling to find funding at the time, but he was convinced he could present tangible evidence within six months to a year. I don’t know how far he got or if he ever found the financial backing, but it might be worth reaching out to him.’

Arjun, though initially sceptical, couldn’t dismiss the idea outright. The current situation demanded out-of-the-box thinking, and if there was even a remote chance that this Professor’s research could be useful, it was worth exploring. He quickly jotted down the Professor’s details.

‘I appreciate this, Ayer,’ Arjun said, the gratitude clear in his voice. ‘I’ll contact him and see if there’s something there.’

Dr. Ayer nodded; his face serious. ‘I hope it helps. Let me know if you need anything more.’

After parting ways, Arjun returned to his residence, glancing at his watch as he waited for the clock to hit 8:00 AM. It would be unprofessional to call someone too early. The minutes crawled by, but finally, the time arrived. At exactly 8:00 AM, he dialled the landline number of the Professor from Roorkee.

The phone rang a few times before a housekeeper answered, and Arjun asked to speak with the Professor. A few moments later, the voice of the Professor came through, sounding worn but still sharp.

‘Good morning, sir. My name is Arjun, an official from the Office of the Prime Minister. I’ve read through some of your research articles on genetic memory and the links between DNA, light, sound, and vibrations,’ and I must say I was very impressed,’ Arjun began, his tone respectful but direct. ‘I believe your work has the potential to help us.’

There was a pause before the Professor replied, his voice tinged with disappointment. ‘I’m afraid I no longer pursue that research. No one showed any real interest, and after presenting it to every major university and research institute, I was turned away. It seems the world isn’t ready for ideas that don’t fit neatly into existing frameworks.’

Arjun felt a flicker of frustration but kept his tone calm. ‘Sir, I understand your discouragement, but I believe that your research could be invaluable to us. If everything falls into place, I can assure you we’ll secure all the funding you need. But first, I need to understand everything about your work.’

The Professor paused, considering Arjun’s words carefully. Finally, he agreed. ‘Alright. I’ll be home all day. You can come anytime.’

‘Thank you, sir. I’ll be there within a few hours,’ Arjun confirmed.

After ending the call, Arjun immediately reached out to Ashwin, briefing him on the situation. ‘I have a lead in Roorkee. I’ll be meeting with the Professor today. I’ll be back by evening.’

Ashwin, ever the pragmatist, gave him the green light. ‘Go ahead, Arjun. And keep me posted.’

Given the urgency, Arjun arranged for an Army helicopter to take him to Roorkee, bypassing the usual commercial routes. By 11:30 AM, the helicopter touched down, and Arjun set off for the Professor's residence, his mind racing with possibilities.

Chapter Four

Tvasta

Year-2011 Month-February Day-21

Location: Roorkee, India

It took approximately fifteen minutes for Arjun to reach the Professor's residence from the Army helipad in Roorkee. As his vehicle came to a stop, he felt a mix of anticipation and uncertainty. Would this visit be worth the effort, or was it simply another dead-end?

The Professor had been expecting him and was already at the door.

He greeted Arjun warmly. 'Good morning, Mr. Arjun,' he greeted, stepping aside and gesturing him in. 'Please, come in.'

Arjun shook his head with a polite smile and entered.

He led Arjun into a dimly lit but orderly study, bookshelves towering against the walls, crammed with ancient manuscripts and modern scientific journals alike. A faint smell of old paper and sandalwood lingered in the air.

He gestured toward a chair before settling into his own with practiced ease and asked, 'Tea or coffee?'

Arjun shook his head. ‘No, thanks. I had my coffee this morning.’

Leaning forward, he continued, ‘Alright, then. Tell me—what has suddenly sparked the government's interest in my research after all these years.’

Arjun met the Professor's gaze with practiced composure, carefully choosing his words. ‘I'm not fully aware of why your research may have gone unnoticed previously, sir,’ he began, his tone measured, diplomatic. ‘But I can assure you that our government is always on the lookout for initiatives with significant potential.’

Half-truths. Enough to sound convincing, but not enough to reveal too much.

The Professor leaned back, studying him with unnerving intensity.

‘Which department did you say you worked for at the Office of the Prime Minister, exactly?’

A test.

Arjun barely hesitated. ‘I'm an advisor for innovation and research,’ he said smoothly, ‘and your work caught our attention due to its potential applications in medical sciences.’

The Professor's lips curled into a faint smile—one that didn't quite reach his eyes. Amusement.

‘Oh, Mr. Arjun...’ he murmured, ‘my research goes far beyond medical applications. It touches on things much deeper than that.’

He rose from his seat with surprising energy. ‘Let me fetch my old papers—it’s better if you see for yourself.’

As the Professor left the room, Arjun sat back, his thoughts swirling. He couldn’t shake the feeling that this was a gamble. Had he come all this way to be led down a rabbit hole of eccentric theories? Still, the stakes were too high to dismiss anything outright.

The Professor re-entered the room, arms burdened with yellowed documents and brittle research papers, their edges frayed by time. He placed them on the table between them with a reverence that suggested they carried more than just words—they carried history.

He met Arjun’s gaze, his expression unreadable.

‘Most people today believe that we stand at the pinnacle of scientific advancement—that no civilization before us has ever attained the knowledge we now possess.’

Arjun, shifting slightly in his seat, felt a flicker of impatience. He had expected a conversation about hard science, not sweeping philosophical claims.

‘Isn’t that true?’ he countered, his tone measured but firm. ‘We’ve achieved things that would have been unimaginable even a century ago. We’ve mapped genomes, harnessed nuclear energy, explored space. What could possibly suggest otherwise?’

The Professor smiled, a knowing, almost amused expression flickering across his face.

‘That’s what I used to believe as well,’ he admitted, his voice steady. ‘When I was younger, I was convinced that modern science had finally unlocked the deepest mysteries of the universe. I saw history as a linear progression—each generation surpassing the last. But I was wrong.’

Something in his voice made Arjun hesitate. This wasn’t blind nostalgia. There was conviction in his words—conviction born from experience, not speculation.

Still, Arjun remained cautious. He needed something tangible, not cryptic riddles.

The Professor pressed on, his expression turning more serious.

‘The truth, Mr. Arjun, is that there was a time, long ago, when knowledge far surpassed what we have today. But much of it has been lost—buried beneath centuries of war, destruction, and ignorance. My research... was an attempt to reclaim that lost wisdom.’

Despite himself, Arjun leaned forward, curiosity now outweighing scepticism.

‘Where does your research come from, then?’ he asked. ‘What inspired you to pursue this?’

The Professor’s eyes drifted, gazing past Arjun, as if momentarily caught in the grasp of old memories.

‘It started when I was about to leave for the United States. I had a Postdoc offer from Caltech, and my future was set. I had spent years at IISc, dedicating myself to the rigid frameworks of modern science. But then... everything changed.’

Arjun waited, sensing that this moment—this turning point in the Professor’s life—was crucial.

‘My paternal grandmother passed away,’ the Professor continued, his voice quieter now. ‘As tradition dictated, I travelled to Haridwar for the final rites.’

The air in the room felt different now—charged, expectant.

‘There i met a sage,’ he began. ‘An old man, surrounded by young pundits, sitting by the banks of the Ganga. They listened intently as he spoke about the virtues of gemstones.’

Arjun arched an eyebrow, scepticism flickering across his face.

The Professor smirked, as if anticipating the reaction. ‘I found it amusing, honestly. Here I was—a man of science, trained in some of the world’s most prestigious institutions—and these people were discussing how gemstones could amplify positive energy. I chuckled, unable to hide my disbelief. The sage noticed.’

Arjun leaned in slightly. ‘And what happened next?’

‘He called me out on it. Asked me why I laughed.’ The Professor paused, his fingers absently tracing the edge of an old research paper. ‘I said nothing. But then, to my surprise,

he started talking about energy—not in mystical terms, but in a way that was... unsettlingly logical.’

Arjun folded his arms, intrigued. ‘What did he say?’

The Professor let out a small chuckle, as if still recalling the moment. ‘He asked me a simple question: ‘What is the human body made of?’

‘I answered like any scientist would—organs, tissues, and cells.’

‘He nodded, then asked, ‘And what are cells made of?’”

‘I told him—organic molecules.’

‘And then he asked, ‘And what are molecules made of?’”

‘I replied—atoms.’

‘Then he asked, ‘And atoms?’”

‘By now, I knew where this was going, but I played along—subatomic particles: protons, neutrons, and electrons.’

Arjun nodded, following along.

‘Then he asked, ‘And what are those made of?’”

‘I told him—elementary particles: quarks and antiquarks. I thought that would shut him up, but he pressed on.’

The Professor’s fingers tightened around a sheet of paper. ‘Then he asked me the one question that no scientist can definitively answer.

‘And what are quarks made of?’”

Arjun let out a short laugh. ‘What did you say?’

The Professor’s smirk faded, his voice turning solemn. ‘I told him the truth. That we don’t know for sure. I mentioned string theory—that at the smallest level, everything we know is made up of vibrating strings of energy.’

The Professor leaned forward, his eyes locked onto Arjun’s. ‘And then he said something that changed my entire perspective on reality.

‘So, you agree that we are all just different orientations of vibrations.’

The room fell into silence.

Arjun exhaled slowly, realizing the weight of the statement. ‘And the gemstones?’

The Professor’s lips curled into a small smile. ‘He told me they were just specific configurations of energy—natural resonators, amplifying certain types of vibrations.

He tapped the pile of research papers. ‘And if stones could do that, then what about the human body? What about our DNA?’

Arjun felt the hairs on the back of his neck rise.

‘That’s when I knew,’ the Professor continued, ‘that our understanding of energy, matter, and even life itself was incomplete.’

A silence stretched between them, but it was no longer empty. It was charged.

Arjun sat back, his mind racing.

For the first time in this conversation, he felt something shift within him.

Arjun, now fully ensnared by the Professor's revelations, felt a rush of adrenaline course through him. What had started as an obscure conversation was rapidly evolving into something monumental—something that could change everything.

The Professor continued, 'Intrigued by the depth of knowledge hidden within the Vedas, I began studying them intensively. What I discovered was beyond anything I had ever imagined.' He paused, as if measuring the weight of his words. 'The Rig Veda, the oldest known text to humankind, is more than just religious hymns. It is a coded manuscript, concealing a scientific understanding that surpasses even our modern capabilities.'

Arjun's scepticism flared, but he was too deep into this now to dismiss it outright. 'Are you saying the Rig Veda contains scientific theories that we haven't yet grasped?'

The Professor's eyes gleamed with an intensity that sent a chill down Arjun's spine. 'I'm saying that our ancestors understood concepts far ahead of our time. One of them, which has obsessed me for years, is genetic memory—DNA as a carrier of past knowledge. The ancients referred to it as Tvasta.'

Arjun's fingers twitched. 'DNA?'

‘Yes,’ the Professor confirmed, his voice lowering as if revealing a secret forbidden by time. ‘We call it the blueprint of life, yet 98% of it is dismissed as ‘junk DNA’—sequences with no known function. But what if I told you this so-called junk is not junk at all? What if it is, instead, a vast archive—an encoded repository of our ancestral experiences, knowledge, and abilities?’

Arjun leaned in, his heart pounding. ‘You’re saying that our DNA doesn’t just determine our physical traits but stores memories? Skills?’

The Professor nodded, his fingers tapping lightly against the old documents on the table. ‘Ever wonder why some children display extraordinary talents without any formal training? A musical prodigy at four, a mathematician who solves equations beyond his years? Science calls it ‘genetic predisposition.’ I call it ancestral recall. A fragment of knowledge passed down through generations, lying dormant until something awakens it.’

Arjun processed this, his mind spinning. ‘And what awakens it?’

The Professor inhaled deeply, as if preparing to unleash a truth too heavy for most minds to bear. ‘Vibrations. Frequencies. Light. Sound.’

Arjun frowned. ‘You mean like music?’

‘More than music. Specific frequencies, certain Vedic hymns—sound vibrations that resonate with the unique energy signatures encoded in our DNA. The ancients understood this. They used rituals, mantras, and yajnas not

just for worship, but as tools—tools to activate hidden potential within the human genome. I conducted experiments, isolating precise frequencies that can trigger this awakening. And I had success, but...’

His voice trailed off, the weight of lost years pressing against him.

‘But?’ Arjun pressed.

The Professor exhaled, frustration flashing across his face. ‘But funding dried up. No one believed in my work. Without resources, I was forced to abandon the research.’

Arjun felt a surge of conviction. He knew, in that moment, that this wasn’t just another eccentric theory. It was a potential key to something much bigger.

Arjun, now more convinced of the Professor’s genius, saw an opportunity. This could be the breakthrough they needed. ‘Professor,’ he said, his voice firm, ‘I believe your research could help us. But the problem we’re facing is far beyond anything you’ve dealt with before.’

The Professor eyed him with growing suspicion. ‘You don’t work for the OPM, do you?’

Arjun hesitated for a fraction of a second before replying, ‘I do work for the OPM, but I’m with a specialized unit—WAR, which operates under the OPM.’

He then disclosed some details about the threat looming over them.

What I need to know is this: can your research help us neutralize creatures created through genetic experimentation? Could specific frequencies weaken or incapacitate them?"

A long silence followed. 'If their genetic structure retains certain latent human elements, then in theory, yes. But without a test subject, there's no way to know for sure.'

Arjun clenched his jaw. That was a problem—one that, for now, had no solution.

Then the Professor leaned forward, his eyes sharp. 'However, there is another approach.'

Arjun's pulse quickened. 'What approach?'

The Professor's voice turned deadly serious. 'We don't just fight them—we match them. We create our own warriors.'

Arjun recoiled. 'What do you mean? We're not going down the same road as them, creating our own monsters.'

The Professor waved a hand dismissively. 'No, not monsters. I'm talking about enhancing humans, unlocking their full potential—creating warriors who possess the strength, speed, and mental agility to take on these creatures.'

Arjun's scepticism returned. 'Is that even possible? How could we create such soldiers?'

The Professor's expression grew more intense. 'Throughout our history, there have been humans of incredible strength, warriors whose capabilities far exceeded those of ordinary

men. Some of them were known as ardh-deva—half-gods. One parent would be human, and the other...’

Arjun raised a hand, interrupting. ‘Wait, are you saying you believe in devas? Gods?’

A faint smile tugged at the Professor’s lips. ‘Not gods, at least not in the way modern religion defines them. There are realms or lokas beyond our perception, where beings exist who are not bound by the same physical laws as us. They can manipulate elements, alter the very fabric of nature itself.’

Arjun’s mind raced. ‘And you think they live among us?’

The Professor shrugged. ‘Perhaps. Some may cross into our world from time to time. But in the past, they walked among us freely.

They formed relationships with humans, and their offspring’s the ardh-devas—inherited extraordinary abilities. The ancient texts are filled with accounts of such beings. Warriors whose strength rivalled that of entire armies, whose perception extended beyond normal sight. They weren’t myths, Arjun. They were real. Their bloodlines still exist today, hidden among us.’

Arjun’s breath slowed as a chilling realization set in. ‘You’re suggesting that we track down the descendants of these ardh-devas... and somehow activate their latent abilities?’

The Professor’s expression was unwavering. ‘Exactly. Their genetic memory has been locked away, suppressed over generations. But if my research is correct, we can reactivate

it—awaken their dormant power within two years, perhaps even sooner.’

Arjun exhaled slowly, considering the enormous task ahead of him. ‘It’s going to be a hard sell to the Security Committee. They’re going to need more than theories and old stories. But I’ll try. We’ll figure it out on the way.’

The Professor looked at him, puzzled. ‘On the way? Where are we going?’

Arjun stood up. ‘We’re going to meet the Prime Minister.’

Hriday had been quiet for most of the training.

He was not the strongest, nor the fastest.

But he was the most precise.

Everything he did—every movement, every breath, every strike—was executed with surgical efficiency.

Where others fought with brute force, Hriday fought with perfection.

His mind was a razor blade—his control over his body something Arjun had never seen before.

It was during the long-range combat assessments that Hriday's true nature had revealed itself.

His shots never missed.

His strikes never wasted energy.

Everything was calculated.

As if he already knew the outcome of every battle before it began.

Where Anuj's instincts were reactionary, Hriday's were deliberate.

He was not a warrior.

He was a weapon.

The Wrath of Parshurama: Nirbhay Tyagi

Nirbhay was the wild card.

Unpredictable. Dangerous. Fearless to the point of madness.

Where others fought with skill, Nirbhay fought with rage.

It was during close-combat trials that his true self had emerged.

He had been matched against a veteran soldier, a man twice his size, trained in unarmed combat for over fifteen years.

The instructors expected a good fight.

What they got was a massacre.

Nirbhay hadn't fought.

He had destroyed.

His opponent never stood a chance.

His strikes were vicious, relentless, fuelled by something primal, something ancient.

Arjun had never seen a candidate fight like that before—not with training, but with pure, unfiltered aggression.

It wasn't just skill. It was something else entirely.

The Unerring Aim of Karna: Angad Dhillon

Angad Dhillon was the perfect marksman.

Where others relied on instinct and training, his shots were something else entirely.

He didn't just fire—he calculated.

Every bullet, every arrow, every thrown blade found its mark with impossible accuracy.

At first, the instructors thought it was just skill—years of training, disciplined control.

But then the tests became harder.

Moving targets. Unpredictable flight patterns. Extreme wind resistance.

Still, Angad never missed.

He adjusted in fractions of a second, compensating for environmental factors that even the most seasoned snipers struggled with.

Then came the blindfolded tests.

Arjun had been sceptical. No one hit a target blindfolded—not with precision.

But Angad had stepped forward without hesitation.

The instructors set up five stationary targets at varying distances.

Then they removed his sight.

Angad stood there, breathing slow, fingers steady.

He lifted the weapon, exhaled—and fired.

One. Two. Three. Four. Five.

Every shot landed with absolute precision. The instructors fell silent. This wasn't skill. It was something else.

So, they changed the test.

They made the targets move.

Still blindfolded, Angad tracked them as if he could see without seeing. He fired. Every shot hit home.

Arjun watched, his skin prickling. It was impossible.

And yet, there it was.

Angad Dhillon was not just a marksman. He was something beyond human.

Year-2011 Month-August Day-25

Location: Maikal Hills, Madhya Pradesh, India

Upon completing the final shortlisting process, the five candidates were gathered in a modest chamber, where Arjun and the Professor awaited their arrival. As the young men took their seats, the atmosphere was charged with anticipation. Arjun, assuming his authoritative role as the head of the training facility, stood before them with a calm yet commanding presence.

‘As you are well aware,’ Arjun began, his voice steady, ‘I have been entrusted with overseeing this training facility, and the Professor, who stands beside me, has been your mentor and guide throughout this journey. I have no doubt that many of you have silently grappled with questions

about the unorthodox training procedures we have employed and the purpose behind them.'

He paused, allowing his words to settle in. A ripple of anticipation coursed through the room, each candidate leaning forward slightly, eyes locked on Arjun.

Arjun continued, his tone more serious now, 'Five months ago, we received intelligence from our trusted sources in Islamabad that our enemy was working on something previously thought inconceivable. The evidence we obtained painted a very different picture—one that threatened our safety, our future.'

The gravity of his words hung in the air, deepening the tension. The candidates exchanged glances; their curiosity evident.

'The officer assigned to investigate this project paid the ultimate price,' Arjun said, his expression hardening. 'He was ruthlessly murdered, and the project he uncovered was called Project X521.'

Arjun's words carried a weight that seemed to press down on the young men. He looked each one of them in the eye as he spoke. 'Now, we shall share the details of this imminent threat and explain why each of you has been specifically chosen.'

With meticulous care, Arjun and the Professor provided an overview of Project X521, taking great caution not to delve too deeply into the intricate capabilities of X521A and X521A-β. They recognized that the candidates needed time

to absorb this revelation, and too much detail could overwhelm them.

As the Professor elaborated on the reasoning behind their selection, he explained the concept of genetic memory and how each of them possessed extraordinary potential—potential that connected them to their lineage and the legendary warriors of old.

For Anuj and Chandra, their military backgrounds made it easier for them to grasp the gravity of the threat and the nature of their selection. They listened, nodding thoughtfully as they processed the information. However, for Hriday, Angad, and Nirbhay, the weight of the revelation was almost suffocating. They had been pushed beyond their limits in training, but this was something else entirely—something far more daunting.

Hriday and Angad, visibly shaken, stood up, their faces flushed with disbelief. Hriday shot up from his seat. ‘This can’t be real.’ His voice was raw, laced with anger and disbelief. ‘You expect us to fight some... engineered monsters?’

Angad followed, shaking his head. ‘Tell me you’re bluffing.’

Arjun didn’t flinch. His gaze was steady, unreadable. ‘No. Every word is true. And now you have a choice.’

The room seemed to shrink, the walls pressing in as reality closed around them.

‘You can leave,’ Arjun said, his voice like steel. ‘No one will stop you. No one will force you to fight.’

A pause.

‘But remember this—when these creatures breach our borders, when they arrive in your streets, your homes, where your families sleep at night, you will remember this moment. The moment you walked away.’

The room fell silent, the weight of Arjun’s words sinking into each of them. Hriday and Angad stormed out of the room, their expressions a mix of fury and confusion. The rest remained seated; the tension palpable.

The Professor glanced at Arjun, his eyes reflecting both concern and understanding. ‘Give them time,’ he said quietly.

Hriday and Angad returned, the fire in their eyes dimmed but not extinguished. Their expressions were unreadable, but something had shifted.

Angad crossed his arms. ‘We’re not soldiers. We’ve had barely four months of combat training. Against this... abomination, what chance do we have?’

The Professor stepped forward, his gaze sharp, unwavering. ‘Because you are not ordinary soldiers. The potential within you is greater than any war doctrine, any modern science. Trust the process. Trust yourselves.’

Arjun exhaled. ‘You have until 1400 hours to decide.’

No further words. Just silence. Just waiting.

The candidates nodded, the weight of the decision was evident in their eyes, each of them grappling with the enormity of the task ahead.

The Professor watched them as they left the room, a hint of pride in his gaze. He turned to Arjun, his voice filled with conviction, 'They will stay. They may be uncertain now, but they will stay. They have the spirit within them, even if they don't fully realize it yet. I've reviewed their psychometric and psychological test results thoroughly '

Arjun looked towards the door through which the candidates had exited, a thoughtful expression on his face. 'I hope you're right, Professor,' he said quietly. 'Because we're going to need every ounce of strength they have.'

The Professor placed a reassuring hand on Arjun's shoulder. 'Trust in them, Arjun. They've already come this far, and they'll go even further. This is just the beginning.'

Arjun sighed, nodding, but the doubt in his eyes remained. He turned toward the window, staring at the horizon, lost in thought. For all his conviction in the power of Professor's theories, he knew that the human element—the unpredictability of fear and choice—was something that could never be fully controlled.

At precisely 2:00 PM, The chamber door opened.

All five men walked in. No hesitation. No doubts.

Arjun met their eyes one by one. He saw it in them now—the choice had been made. A slow, knowing smile ghosted across the Professor's lips.

They were ready.

Days turned into weeks, and the transformation of the five candidates unfolded in remarkable ways. The changes were not just physical but almost mythical in scope—proof that the line between science and something greater was beginning to blur.

Chandra was the first to reveal his transformation. His bone density had increased to a staggering 2.5 g/cm^3 , an impossibility by all modern standards. His strength was no longer just exceptional—it was terrifying. During sparring sessions, even the elite commandos of the Frontier Special Squad failed to match his raw power. One punch—that was all it took to send a sand-filled punching bag exploding into dust.

His grip was unbreakable, his movements fluid yet devastating. He was power incarnate, a force that seemed ripped straight from a battlefield lost to time.

Anuj was different. His skeletal density wasn't as extreme as Chandra's, but his muscles had rewired themselves for pure explosive force. He didn't just run—he glided, covering miles without a hint of exhaustion.

One day, during an endurance trial, the others collapsed—bodies pushed beyond their limits. Anuj? He kept going. His breathing was controlled, his pulse steady. It was as if his body was pulling energy from some unknown source, a wellspring of endurance that should not have existed.

Arjun watched him closely. This wasn't training. This was something deeper.

Angad had become a phantom with a rifle.

His marksmanship had surpassed even the most elite snipers in the country. Targets that others could barely see with high-tech scopes, he hit instinctively, as if his body knew the trajectory before he even pulled the trigger.

During live-fire drills, the instructors didn't even bother correcting him anymore. He never missed. Never.

When Arjun asked him how he did it, Angad only gave a quiet smile. 'I don't think. I just see.'

It was more than skill—it was precision beyond logic. As if his very perception of reality had shifted, allowing him to calculate bullet paths, wind resistance, and angles in an instant.

Then there were Hriday and Nirbhay.

They moved like ghosts.

During sparring, their bodies twisted and evaded with an unnatural grace, reacting milliseconds before an attack even began. Was it reflex? Or memory? A memory not of their own lives, but something written deep within their DNA, a warrior's instinct from a forgotten age.

But their true mastery lay in close-quarters combat.

The facility had flown in special forces experts—men trained in Krav Maga, Pekiti-Tirsia, and Systema, some of the deadliest martial arts in existence.

Hriday and Nirbhay dismantled them.

Their bodies responded with movements that should have taken years to master. It was pure instinct, raw and untouched by time.

One night, Arjun overheard two instructors speaking in hushed tones. ‘They’re not normal. They... they are beyond anything human.’

He didn’t correct them. Because deep down, he wondered the same thing.

Their training wasn’t just limited to hand-to-hand combat.

They were subjected to rigorous weapons training, handling everything from INSAS rifles to AK-47s, Dragunov sniper rifles, and the deadly Mauser SP66.

Each weapon became an extension of their bodies, a seamless part of them.

They were trained in urban warfare, jungle operations, and extreme terrain combat—simulated battlefields designed to break even the strongest soldiers.

None of them broke.

The Professor watched it all unfold, his heart swelling with vindication.

For decades, his theories had been dismissed. They had called him a fool, a fantasist, a madman chasing ghosts in ancient texts.

But now?

Here they stood. Five living, breathing testaments to his life's work.

He watched as Chandra shattered punching bags with a single strike, as Anuj ran without exhaustion, as Angad saw targets others couldn't even comprehend, as Hriday and Nirbhay moved like spectres of war.

One evening, Arjun and the Professor stood on the observation deck, watching the candidates spar.

The sun dipped below the Maikal Hills, casting the sky in hues of crimson and gold—as if the very earth understood that something monumental was happening here.

The Professor spoke first. 'We have something they don't.'

Arjun turned to him, curious. 'What?'

A slow smile crept onto the Professor's face. 'Belief.'

Arjun's brow furrowed. 'Belief?'

The Professor nodded. 'Belief in what they are capable of. Belief in what we are capable of. And that...' he gestured toward the five warriors below, '...is something no amount of genetic engineering can ever create.'

Arjun exhaled, watching them move, watching the impossible become real.

For the first time, he allowed himself to believe.

They had a fighting chance.



Hey Reader,

If you're still here, chances are the story has caught your attention.

But this was just the beginning.

Q what lies ahead is darker, deeper, and far more dangerous.

Ready to unlock the rest of the mystery?

☞ Grab your full copy of *Project X521: The Ancient Saviours (Part I)* here: [ebook](#)
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And remember—**this is only Part I. The real game begins in Part II.**