

WHISPERS

in the shadows

VARGHESE M. THOMAS



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First Edition

Author

Varghese M. Thomas



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Lastly, to my dear childhood friends, Jiju and Piyush—I miss you both deeply and often find myself reminiscing about the wonderful moments we shared.

Prologue

The city never sleeps. Beneath the luminous glow of Mumbai's sprawling skyline, amidst the swift movements of pedestrians and the cacophony of honking vehicles, and behind the façade of laughter and late-night excursions, a more sinister presence lurked. A murmur in the shadows—stemming from jealousy, treachery, and a bitterness that festers unnoticed until it ultimately devastates all it encounters.

Five friends. Once inseparable. Now strangers.

Once upon a time, they seemed to have it all—dreams as vast as the Arabian Sea, heartwarming conversations at Marine Drive, and promises exchanged over steaming cups of cutting chai. They were united by their youthful spirit, shared ambitions, and the beautiful belief that their friendship would endure forever.

But even the strongest bonds can snap.

The situation began subtly, resembling an unnoticed fissure in a mirror. A promotion that one individual rightfully deserved was awarded to another. Initially viewed as a trivial falsehood, it gradually evolved into something more malign. A whispered rumour emerged, far too convenient to ignore. Envy began to take root, distorting friendships into muted rivalries. Each accomplishment transformed into a source of animosity, and each setback was perceived as an unspoken triumph.

They drifted apart, not in distance but in trust. Smiles became strained, conversations cautious. The past they had built together became delicate, something to be rewritten rather than cherished. Friendships that once thrived on shared victories crumbled beneath the burden of jealousy—slowly, silently.

And then—one of them was dead.

The news spread through hushed tones, through headlines that barely scratched the surface. An “accident,” they said. A “tragedy.” The truth was far more sinister. The ones left behind knew it wasn’t fate—it was the consequence of years of bitterness, of wounds left to rot. The guilt was suffocating, the regret unbearable, but the worst part was the silence. Because now, it was too late.

There were whispers in the shadows, whispers of regret, of guilt, of secrets buried beneath years of unsaid words.

It wasn’t just their story.

This is how friendships fall apart, how ambition turns toxic, and how love curdles into resentment. The same toxic whispers follow individuals through the gleaming offices of corporate towers, where competition replaces camaraderie and success is measured by betrayal. Where work seeps into personal lives, and people smile while silently hoping to see one another fail.

Mumbai moved on, as it always does. But they couldn’t. Not when the weight of the past still clung to them like the city’s unyielding humidity.

Because the truth is simple.

Friendship doesn’t always fade. Sometimes, it rots. And sometimes, it kills.

**"Friendships rarely explode in
fury; they erode in silence—
until one day, all that's left is a
memory... or a motive."**

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Varghese M. Thomas is a seasoned communications leader with nearly 30 years of experience in strategic communications, branding, and social media management across industries such as technology, automotive, and manufacturing. Throughout his distinguished career, he has held leadership roles at Tata Electronics, TVS Motor, BlackBerry, Cisco, and Intel, spearheading global communication strategies across Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific.

Beyond his professional achievements, Varghese is a recognized thought leader in PR and communications, earning numerous industry accolades and being named a Top Corporate Voice in Communications on LinkedIn. His expertise has been instrumental in driving successful product launches, rebranding initiatives, and crisis management efforts.

Committed to advancing the corporate sector, he actively mentors communication professionals and students while contributing articles to major publications. He also serves on the board of a leading NGO and is currently authoring a book on public relations and corporate communication. Holding a Master's in Management Studies, Varghese exemplifies leadership and excellence in the field of communication.



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