

From Jerusalem to Vaishno Devi

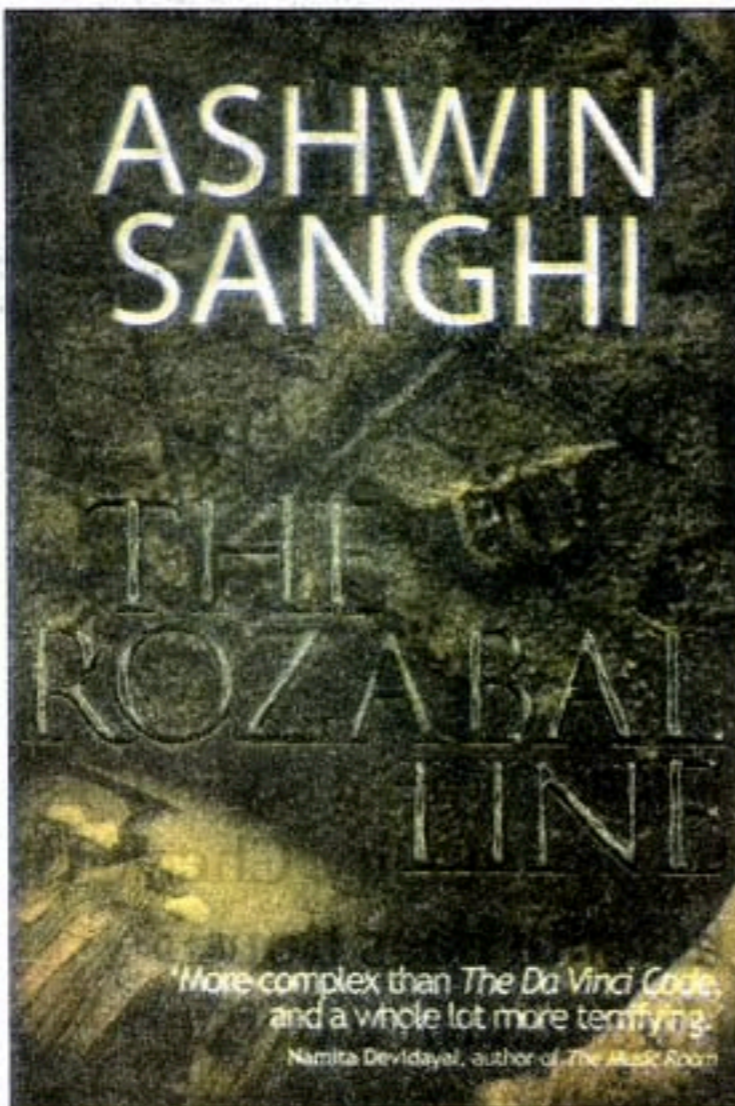
A mixture of comparative religions, dangerous secrets, thrilling plot and interesting characters makes for an esoteric read

THE ROZABAL LINE
Publisher: Westland
Price: Rs 250

If the vested interests of the temple Jews had wanted to kill Jesus, they had the power to do so by stoning him to death without taking any permission from Rome. Why did this not happen?" The questions surrounding what happened to Jesus after the crucifixion forms the crux of *The Rozabal Line* by Ashwin Sanghi. Ashwin's first attempt at fiction offers another point of view to the controversial world myth. A thriller, a la *The Da Vinci Code*, it is built around various religions, historical facts and dangerous secrets.

Sanghi's flair for religion, history and politics is clearly visible as he takes the reader across the world spanning

BOOK OF THE WEEK



different decades. From Srinagar, Mecca, Saudi Arabia to Waziristan, London, Vatican City and Zurich in 2012; Ladakh in 1887, Srinagar 1975, Gulmarg 1985, Osaka (Japan) 1972 or India AD 52, the characters are scattered across centuries and various continents.

The story follows a priest, Father Vincent Morgan who has had visions of the crucifixion as well as some of his own past lives. Searching for answers to his visions, he stumbles upon the alternative religious theory - that Jesus did not die upon the cross but was instead rescued and taken to India where he lived out the remainder of his life as a prophet, a husband and a father. The Catholic Church's leaders do not want Father Morgan to find any proof of these theories and send an assassin to stop him.

Creating further complications is the group of 13 terrorists (the leader of which it is indicated may be descended from Christ and the 12 other men, when they are finally killed, are each murdered as each of the Twelve Disciples were killed) who are attempting to bring about

Armageddon. This group ultimately works for Osama bin Laden who in turn is being manipulated by Opus Dei and the Illuminati.

The plot is further enriched with the beliefs and practices of various world religions. Hidden links between opposed organisations are revealed quite gradually, and so are the principals' true goals. Though there are numerous characters and sub-plots in the story which impede the flow, everything falls into place in the end.

Here's an excerpt from the story:
An interpreter was called for and began translating the scrolls while Dmitry attempted to make copies of them. The scrolls told the story of a boy called Issa, born in Judea. The story went on to explain that sometime during the '14th year of his life, the boy arrived in India to study the teachings of the Buddhists... Dmitry was excited. Then petrified. He knew that there was no going back on his discovery. He now knew that he had in his hands one of the most stunning revelations in two millennia. A revelation about Issa, the Arabic form of the Hebrew name Yeshua, also known as Jesus.

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