A BLAST FROM THE PAST

After the political thriller *Chanakya's Chant*, Ashwin Sanghi is back with *The Krishna Key*, which he says offers an alternative explanation for stories from mythology

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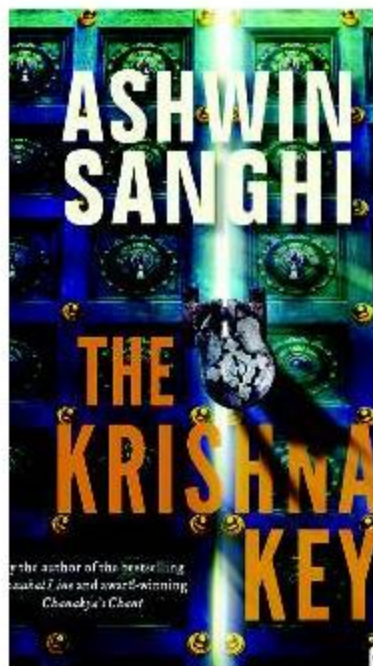bmfeedback@indiatimes.com

The key to writing a book is to have a story. And that's easy for Ashwin Sanghi who likes to call himself a story-teller rather than a writer. His third book, *The Krishna Key*, is a thriller like his previous book *Chanakya's Chant*, and promises "all the twists and turns that a thriller should have".

There is a method in the writing for this entrepreneur author. "Where many say that they have an organic, of-the-moment way of writing, mine is a structured process," says Sanghi. "An idea is fleshed out with 8-9 months of research followed by a skeleton outline of the story which takes me 2-3 months. The outline will have all the chapters, the twists and turns that need to be there. Then, it takes me at least a few months to write."

'PLAUSIBILITY IMPORTANT'

The need for a structure when penning a fiction book becomes important for Sanghi because of his penchant for the thriller genre. He says, "I can't possibly write and produce the surprise elements as the story progresses. A thriller has to have plausibility."

The Krishna Key is a contemporary story about a 'poor' little rich boy who grows up believing that he is the final avatar. Only, he is a serial killer. Add to this a sinister conspiracy to an ancient secret—Krishna's priceless legacy to mankind. Sanghi's previous book, *Chanakya's Chant*, was a contemporary political thriller with roots in ancient history. The debut book, *The Rozabal Line*, was a fictional rendition of Jesus in India. The pattern that runs through three of his books is clear: a tendency to delve into ancient history and my-

thology. Sanghi agrees. "I am fascinated by our ancient history. Also, I probably belong to the last generation which grew up listening to bedtime stories from their grandparents about Gods and Indian mythology. So, these two elements are there in my stories. However, today's generation seems to have little access to such stories and even if they do, they want rational explanation. *The Krishna Key*, like my previous stories, gives an alternative explanation for stories from mythology."

To detractors of mythology, Sanghi tells them to peel away the layers, what he calls 'flights of fantasy' and chances are that you can see the truth that is there in a mythology text. He elaborates: "If people talk about Krishna, I say the stories are definitely based on the fact that there was his existence at some point of time. Similarly, Ravana has 10 heads and even if one head falls to the ground, a new one springs up.

> **New generation seems to have little access to mythological stories. Even if they do, they need rational explanation**

My explanation would be that maybe the ancients had knowledge of cloning. Who knows? What I give in my stories are propositions that can be plausible."

ON THE STYLE OF BANKER & TRIPATHI

Another new trend is delving into our history and coming up with contemporary plots.

Authors such as Ashok Banker and Amish Tripathi have also been following in the same style. Sanghi begs to differ and offers an explanation of how the three of them, though they write similar genre, are quite different. "Banker writes the mythology text in a relevant and contemporary manner, Tripathi takes the characters from mythology and offers his own fantasy, and I offer different explanations to the mythological events."

After the movie rights for *Chanakya's Chant* has been snapped up, does he feel that *The Krishna Key* also has similar chances? "I don't write for such eventualities. A story can be told in multiple formats, I choose words. Until 2005, I had not written more than 1000 words at a time. But today, it is different. I write because it is my passion. Although I was geared to run the family business, I have been working since I was 17, writing is way to pen stories that need to be told."