

You need more than one voice to create harmony!

INDIAN MYTHOLOGY AND THRILLER FICTION WRITER ASHWIN SANGHI TALKS ABOUT HIS LATEST BOOK PRIVATE INDIA AND HIS COLLABORATION WITH JAMES PATTERSON

Anannya Chatterjee

Tearing the world's biggest selling thriller writer with India's best-selling author of Chanakya's Chant and The Krishna Key, Private India combines the suspense and fast-moving plots of Patterson with the gripping plots of Sanghi's thrillers. James Patterson has co-authored all the books in the 'Private' series which is about a global detective agency that is called in to solve criminal cases that baffle the police. 'Private India' is an extension of that franchise in India set against the Mumbai backdrop with the full impact of maximum city through Bollywood, the mafia, god men, politicians and business tycoons. In a duologue with Ashwin Sanghi,

How did the combination of trademark suspense and fast-moving plots with the exhaustive research and thriller gripping plots come about?

I like the way that you have described the collaboration! James was looking for someone to partner with for an India-specific thriller and my name cropped up, possibly because of the fact that my previous books—

The Rozabal Line, Chanakya's Chant and The Krishna Key—have all been thrillers. My initial reaction was measured because I did not know how the collaborative process would work. I was subsequently assured that I would have full creative freedom to develop the story outline. That clinched it.

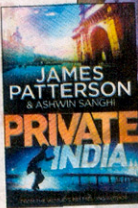
How was it working with James Patterson as a writing partner?

Working with James has been a refreshing experience. My focus has always been on research and plot while the Patterson formula is pace and character. This book has given us a chance to combine our respective strengths and present something that represents the best of both.

Describe your creation and the protagonist Santosh Wagh, and a little about 'Private India'. Private India is the eighth book in James Patterson's Private series. It's about a global detective agency that



Ashwin Sanghi



is called in to solve crimes that baffle the police. Thus, Private India follows in the foot-

steps of other international bestsellers such as Private Berlin, Private LA and Private Oz. Private India is set in Mumbai and is a gritty crime thriller involving a race to track down a serial killer. The protagonist in Private India is an alcoholic

ex-RAW agent, Santosh Wagh, who heads the detective agency's Indian operations. The back story of this character is integral to the plot and I hope that my readers will like him.

Was it easy working with James to create a unique, Indian-based adventure?

Oh absolutely! You need more than one voice to create a harmony! My insid-



James Patterson

er's perspective on India and its culture along with my passion for research and fast-moving plots were complementary to James Patterson's proven formula for creating larger-than-life characters and building conflict. Multiple voices work well in a choir as long as they sang the right notes. I think you will find that we hit the right notes with Private India.

In which way did it help you strop your skills in this different and exciting genre?

Writing thrillers is not only about inspiration and imagination but also about craft. There are a few simple rules that make a Patterson thriller: amplify character traits—make them larger than life; eliminate fluff; build twists and suspense ever so often;

never compromise pace; build conflict until the very end. The Patterson style is to say absolutely nothing that does not advance the plot. That is the key takeaway for me from this collaboration: less is more.

What should the readers expect out of this fusion of ideas from East and West? Will it succeed in engaging the readers?

Even though Private India is a mainstream crime thriller, it is inspired by my deep respect for the power of Shakti. I have always wondered why we worship the sacred feminine in our temples but wantonly desecrate that very symbol in our daily lives. That is the key Indian element in this book. You will clearly be able to see the individual contributions of both authors.

Your next book will be?

I have started writing my next independent title Sialkot Saga. It all goes well, I would hope to release it by mid-2015. It is my opportunity to discuss the world of business, finance and economics in the context of Indian history. As you know, I love page-turners and I hope that this one will be precisely that.