



The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator

By Tarquin Hall

Download now

Read Online →

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall

The delightful, amusing, and deeply mysterious second novel to feature Vish Puri, a man after Hercule Poirot's heart, in a series that has already won diehard fans on three continents.

The bizarre murder of an Indian scientist in public by the goddess Kali is no laughing matter. Yet Dr. Suresh Jha, best known for unmasking fraudulent swamis and godmen, dies in a fit of giggles at his morning yoga class when the hideous deity appears from the mist and plunges a sword into his chest. The case is a first in the "annals of crime" according to Vish Puri, head of Delhi's Most Private Investigators. To get at the truth, Puri and his team of unstoppable undercover operatives must travel from Delhi's Shadipur slum, home of India's ancestral magicians, to the holy city of Haridwar on the Ganges — entering a world in which illusion and the supernatural are virtually indistinguishable.

From the Hardcover edition.

↓ [Download The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, ...pdf](#)

📖 [Read Online The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri ...pdf](#)

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator

By Tarquin Hall

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall

The delightful, amusing, and deeply mysterious second novel to feature Vish Puri, a man after Hercule Poirot's heart, in a series that has already won diehard fans on three continents.

The bizarre murder of an Indian scientist in public by the goddess Kali is no laughing matter. Yet Dr. Suresh Jha, best known for unmasking fraudulent swamis and godmen, dies in a fit of giggles at his morning yoga class when the hideous deity appears from the mist and plunges a sword into his chest. The case is a first in the "annals of crime" according to Vish Puri, head of Delhi's Most Private Investigators. To get at the truth, Puri and his team of unstoppable undercover operatives must travel from Delhi's Shadipur slum, home of India's ancestral magicians, to the holy city of Haridwar on the Ganges — entering a world in which illusion and the supernatural are virtually indistinguishable.

From the Hardcover edition.

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall
Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #4115881 in Books
- Published on: 2011-06-07
- Released on: 2011-06-07
- Format: International Edition
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 2
- Dimensions: 7.98" h x .95" w x 5.20" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 344 pages

 [Download The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online **The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator** By Tarquin Hall

Editorial Review

Review

"A terrific book with wonderful puzzle plot and a great setting."
— Globe and Mail

"Fictional detectives come in all shapes, sizes and ethnic backgrounds these days, and Tarquin Hall has created one of the most memorable. . . . Entertaining and enlightening."
— Edmonton Sun

"Unlike those of Alexander McCall Smith, the books in this series are genuine detective stories, but they are every bit as warm and entertaining and should appeal to much the same readership."
— Denver Post

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

TARQUIN HALL is a British writer and journalist who has reported extensively on S.E. Asia and the Middle East for the British press. He is also the author of the highly acclaimed non-fiction books **Salaam Brick Lane** and **To the Elephant Graveyard**. The Vish Puri series is his first venture into fiction. He divides his time between London, England, and Delhi, India.

From the Hardcover edition.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

ONE

Ensnared on the back seat of his Ambassador with the windows rolled up and the air conditioning working full blast, Vish Puri kept a wary eye on the crack in the car's windshield. It had started off as a chink – the work of a loose stone shot from the wheels of a speeding truck on Mathura Road that afternoon. But despite the sticky tape fixed to the glass like a bandage, the fissure was beginning to spread.

Delhi's infernal heat was bearing down on the windshield, trying to exploit its weakness, determined to conquer the defiant pocket of cool air within. The detective imagined what it must feel like to be a deep-sea explorer, listening to your tiny craft creaking under thousands of tons of pressure.

That Monday in early June, the top temperature in the capital had been 44° Celsius, or 111° Fahrenheit – so hot, the tarmac on the roads had grown pliable and sticky like licorice. So hot that even now, an hour after darkness had fallen, the air felt like fire in the lungs.

Nothing dampened the frenetic spirit of Delhi's rush hour, however. Everywhere Puri looked, thousands

upon thousands of people were making their way through the heat, the roar of the traffic, and the belching fumes illuminated in the headlights. Labourers, servants, and students crowded into non-air-conditioned buses; bicyclists in sweat-soaked shirts strained against their pedals; families of three, four, even five rode on scooters, mothers sitting sidesaddle, infants in their laps and older children sandwiched in between.

And everywhere commerce flourished. Chunks of ice-cooled coconut and bootleg copies of Booker Prize novels were being sold by children meandering through the crawling traffic. Watermelons were heaped on the pavements. Handbills advertising the powers of a hakim, who promised to exorcise malignant spirits and counteract curses, were being slipped under windshield wipers.

As Puri watched countless faces slick and shiny with sweat, eyes blinking in the pollution, lips parched with thirst, he was struck by how stoically “Dilli wallahs,” as Delhiites were known, went about their lives, seemingly resigned to the capital’s harsh and, for most, worsening conditions. Part of him admired their resilience, their surprising good humour in the face of such grinding adversity; but he also mourned humanity’s capacity to adjust to any conditions and perceive them as normal.

“The survival instinct is both blessing and curse, also,” was how he put it.

For his part, the detective had grown accustomed to air conditioning. Without it, dressed in his trademark safari suits and Sandown caps, he fared badly. At the height of summer, he stayed inside as much as possible. When venturing out was unavoidable, Handbrake, his driver, had to walk next to him with an umbrella to ensure that his employer remained in the shade. Puri had also invested in a small battery-powered hand fan. But in temperatures like these it had the opposite effect for which it was intended – like putting your face in front of an exhaust vent.

He could only pray that the windshield would hold. Tomorrow was the earliest he could afford to send Handbrake to get it replaced.

It was going to be a long night.

Puri glanced at his watch. Ten minutes to eight – ten minutes until the drop was due to be made at Fun ’N’ Food Village.

“Subject is approaching IGI overbridge, over,” he said into his walkie-talkie.

The silver Safari he was tailing left the gated colonies and posh villas of South Delhi and headed onto the new, elevated three-lane expressway that snaked past Indira Gandhi International Airport.

“In position, Boss,” came back a voice. It belonged to one of Most Private Investigators’s top undercover operatives. Puri, who was in the habit of giving nicknames to people, called him Tubelight because he was usually “slow to flicker on” in the morning.

“Tip-top,” replied the detective. “Should be we’re with you shortly. If only this bloody fellow will get a move on. By God, such a slow coach!”

From the moment they’d started to tail the Safari, the detective had watched its slow progress with incredulity. Unlike all the other cars, which treated the road like a Formula One racetrack, slaloming through the lumbering heavy-goods vehicles and diesel-belching buses, it had kept precisely to the speed limit. It was the only vehicle on the road that didn’t straddle two lanes at once and have its headlights on full beam. And

its horn remained silent despite the instructions painted on the backs of the trucks, horn ok please !

“Arrrey!” exclaimed Puri in frustration as the Safari gave way to a lowly auto rickshaw. “I’m all for sensible driving – speed thrills but kills, after all. But this man is some sort of joker, no?”

Handbrake was equally bewildered: “Where did he learn to drive, sir?” he asked in Hindi. “Ladies’ college?”

“No, United States,” the detective answered with a laugh.

In fact, Shanmuga Sundaram Rathinasabapathy, Most Private Investigators Ltd.’s latest client, had got his licence in Raleigh, North Carolina.

According to Rathinasabapathy’s dossier – Puri had managed to get hold of a copy from one of his military academy batchmates who was now working in Indian intelligence – “Sam” Rathinasabapathy was the son of a Tamil heart surgeon, who had been born and brought up in the Tar Heel State. A nuclear physicist and MIT graduate, he had “returned” to India a month ago, bringing with him his fellow “non-resident Indian” (NRI) wife and two young children. He was meant to be working for a joint American-Indian partnership building a new generation of nuclear reactors but had so far spent all his time dealing with problems and corrupt practices as he had tried to find an apartment to rent, enrol his children in school, and find his way around the city.

Three days ago, facing a crisis, Sam Rathinasabapathy had come to see Puri in his Khan Market office and outlined his predicament.

“This is my children we’re talking about! What am I going to do? I’m absolutely desperate!”

The detective had agreed to help him, advising the earnest, clean-cut Rathinasabapathy to play along with the demands of the middleman who had contacted him.

“Pay this bloody goonda the two lakhs and leave the rest to me,” was how he’d put it.

After that first meeting, Puri had marvelled to his private secretary, Elizabeth Rani, about the naïveté of “these NRI types.” More and more of them were being posted to India by top financial institutions and multinationals. Like the Britishers before them, the majority lived in pampered luxury, spent a good deal of their time complaining about their servants and Delhi belly, and didn’t have the first clue about how things were done in India.

“A topper this Sam fellow might be, but here in India he is quite at sea,” the detective had said. “What is required in this situation is experience and aptitude. Fortunately, Vish Puri can easily and willingly supply both.”

Having bestowed on his new client the sobriquet “Coconut” – “The fellow might be brown on the outside but he is one hundred ten percent gora inside” – the detective had put his plan into action.

That afternoon, Sam Rathinasabapathy had withdrawn the two hundred thousand rupees demanded – a hundred K for each of his children – from the bank. He had brought the cash to Most Private Investigators Ltd., where Puri had made a note of the serial numbers and packed the wads of notes in a brown duffle bag.

The call from the middleman explaining where to make the drop had come at six o’clock. This had given

Tubelight enough time to get to Fun 'N' Food Village first and get into position.

Now all Rathinasabapathy had to do was hand over the money.

“Estimated time of arrival ten . . . by God, better make that fifteen minutes, over,” Puri said with a sigh as Rathinasabapathy’s Safari turned off the expressway and onto a dusty single-lane road.

Here, confronted with potholes and unmarked speed bumps, as well as the usual honking cacophony of traffic, the vehicle slowed to a crawl, narrowly missing a bicyclist transporting a tall stack of full egg trays. Handbrake, struggling to keep a safe distance and incurring the wrath of a Bedford truck, was forced to brake suddenly. At the same time, he instinctively leaned on his horn.

“Sorry, Boss!” the driver quickly said apologetically. “But he drives like an old woman!”

“All Americans drive in this style,” affirmed the detective.

“They must be having a lot of accidents in Am-ree-ka,” muttered Handbrake.

It was a quarter past eight by the time Rathinasabapathy reached his destination and parked outside Fun 'N' Food Village. He hurried to the ticket office, duffle bag in hand, and got in line.

Bracing himself, Puri opened his door and the heat and humidity hit him full on. He felt winded and had to steady himself. It was only a matter of seconds before the first trickle of sweat ran down his neck. Perspiration began to form on his upper lip beneath his wide handlebar moustache.

Fanning himself with a newspaper, the detective bought himself an entry token and followed his client through the turnstile.

Fun 'N' Food Village, a distinctly Indian amusement park with popular water features, was packed with giddy children. Squeals filled the air as they careered down Aqua Shutes and doggy-paddled along the Lazy River: “Phir, phir! Again, again!” Mothers in bright Punjabi cotton suits, with their baggy trousers rolled up just beneath their knees, stood half-soaked in the shallow end of the Tiny Tots Pond playing with their toddlers. In the Wave Pool, a group of Sikh boys in swimming trunks and patkas played volleyball. On benches arranged along the sidelines, aunties dipped their toes into the cool water and ate spicy dhokla garnished with fresh coriander and green chilies. Occasionally, cheeky grandsons and nephews splashed them with water.

Puri followed Rathinasabapathy as he squeezed through the crowd toward one of the many plaster-of-Paris characters dotted about the park: a fearsome ten-foot-tall effigy of the ferocious, ten-headed demon king Ravana. With savage eyes and sneering lip, he brandished a great scimitar with which he was preparing to smite a hideous serpent.

It was in front of Ravana that the middleman had instructed Puri’s client to wait.

Rathinasabapathy stopped in the shadow of the towering divinity. His apprehensive eyes scanned the crowd of revellers passing back and forth. Meanwhile, the detective, keeping his client in his sights, joined the unruly queue in front of a nearby dhaba. When it came to his turn, he ordered a plate of aloo tikki masala. It might be hours before he got to eat again, he reasoned, and the Gymkhana Club’s lunchtime special of “veg cutlet” had left him craving something spicy – no matter that he had drenched the food in a quarter-bottle of

Maggi Chili Sauce.

The food was delicious and when he had scraped every last bit of chutney off the bottom of the tobacco-leaf plate, he ordered another. This was followed by a chuski, a jeera cola one with extra syrup, which he had to eat quickly before it melted, avoiding incriminating stains on his clothes that would be noticed by his eagle-eyed wife.

By eight thirty, there was still no sign of the middleman. Puri was beginning to wonder if the plan was blown. He cursed under his breath for not having anticipated his client's poor driving skills. But then what sort of fellow didn't employ a driver?

An announcement sounded over the PA system, first in Hindi and then English. "Namashkar," said a pleasant sing-song voice. "Guests are kindly requested not to do urination in water. WC facilities are provided in rear. Your kind co-operation is appreciated."

Another five minutes passed. Puri diligently avoided eye contact with his client in case the middleman was close by. A balloon wallah, who had been doing brisk business in front of the Wave Pool, came and stood a few feet to the left of Rathinasabapathy.

Then a short, chunky man with a thick neck and dyed black hair approached the nuclear physicist. His back was turned to the dhaba so that the detective was unable to see his face. But beyond the obvious – that the man was in his early to mid-fifties, married, owned a dog, and had reached the rendezvous within the past few minutes – Puri was able to deduce that he was having an affair (there was a clear impression of an unwrapped condom in his back pocket) and had grown up in a rural area where the drinking water was contaminated by arsenic (his hands were covered in black blotches).

Puri pressed the mini receiver he was wearing deeper into his ear. It was tuned to the listening device housed in a flag of India pinned to his client's shirt pocket.

"Mr. Rathinasabapathy, is it?" the detective heard the middleman ask over the din of the children. His voice suggested a confident smugness.

"Yeah, that's right," answered the nuclear physicist, sounding apprehensive. "Who are you?"

"We spoke earlier on phone."

"You said to be here at eight o'clock. I've been waiting nearly half an hour."

"Eight o'clock *Indian* time, scientist-sahib. You know what is Indian time? Always later than you would expect." The middleman let out a little chuckle. "By that account I'm extremely punctual. But enough of that, haa? What is that you're carrying? Something for me I hope?"

"Look, I'm not handing over any money until I know exactly whom I'm dealing with," insisted Rathinasabapathy, repeating the words Puri had coached him to say.

The middleman gave a petulant shake of the head and turned his back on the balloon wallah.

"Don't be concerned with my identity. Important thing is, I'm a man who gets things done," he said.

“You must have a name. What am I supposed to call you?”

“Some people know me as Mr. Ten Percent.”

“That’s very amusing,” said Rathinasabapathy dryly.

“So glad you think so, scientist-sahib. But I’m not a joker to do rib tickling. So let’s do business, haa? You’ve got the full amount exactly and precisely?”

“Yes, I’ve brought your two lakh rupees,” said Rathinasabapathy, returning to the dialogue Puri had scripted for him. “But how do I know you’ll keep up your end of the bargain? How do I know you won’t just take the cash and my kids still won’t – ”

“Listen, Textbook!” interjected Mr. Ten Percent. “In India deal is deal. This is not America with your Enron. Everything’s arranged. Now you’re going to give over the cash or what?”

Rathinasabapathy hesitated for a moment and then handed over the duffle bag.

“It’s all in there. Two – hundred – thousand – rupees,” he said, raising his voice and enunciating each word clearly.

The middleman took hold of the bag and held it by the straps in his right hand, gauging its weight.

“Very good,” he said, apparently satisfied.

“You’re not going to count it?”

“Here? In such a public place?” He chuckled. “Someone seeing so much of cash might get a wrong idea. Who knows? They might rob me. I tell you there’s dacoitery all about these days. One more piece advice to you, scientist-sahib: keep hold of your wallet, haa. The other day, only, a thief grabbed my portable straight out my hand. Can you believe? Right there on the street in daylight hours. Luckily for me I got it back one hour later. The thief himself returned it. That is after discovering to whom it belonged. He was most apologetic.”

Mr. Ten Percent extended his hand.

“Good doing business with you,” he said. “Welcome to India, haa, and best of luck.”

“That’s it? When will I hear from you again?”

“You’ll not be hearing from me. Next communication will come from the principal.”

With that, the middleman walked off in the direction of the exit, soon vanishing amidst the crowd.

The balloon wallah was close behind him.

His bunch of silver helium balloons bobbed along above the heads of all the happy children and parents, indicating his position and that of his mark as accurately as a homing device.

Puri watched their progress for a few seconds. Then the detective signalled to his client to stay put for at least ten minutes as per the plan and went in pursuit of Tubelight and his balloons – and Mr. Ten Percent.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Mitchell:

Do you one among people who can't read pleasant if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this aren't like that. This *The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator* book is readable simply by you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the data here are arrange for enjoyable examining experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer involving *The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator* content conveys prospect easily to understand by lots of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content but it just different such as it. So , do you nevertheless thinking *The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator* is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

Tamara Evans:

Hey guys, do you would like to finds a new book to see? May be the book with the name *The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator* suitable to you? The particular book was written by well-known writer in this era. The book untitled *The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator* is the main one of several books that will everyone read now. This specific book was inspired a number of people in the world. When you read this e-book you will enter the new shape that you ever know just before. The author explained their thought in the simple way, thus all of people can easily to recognise the core of this e-book. This book will give you a wide range of information about this world now. So you can see the represented of the world with this book.

Peter Beaton:

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book specially book entitled *The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator* your head will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in each aspect that maybe unknown for but surely can be your mind friends. Imaging each and every word written in a e-book then become one form conclusion and explanation that maybe you never get just before. The *The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator* giving you an additional experience more than blown away your head but also giving you useful facts for your better life in this era. So now let us explain to you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

Gerard Norman:

This The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator is great reserve for you because the content which can be full of information for you who else always deal with world and also have to make decision every minute. This specific book reveal it data accurately using great plan word or we can point out no rambling sentences within it. So if you are read the item hurriedly you can have whole info in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but tough core information with beautiful delivering sentences. Having The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator in your hand like having the world in your arm, data in it is not ridiculous one particular. We can say that no reserve that offer you world within ten or fifteen moment right but this guide already do that. So , it is good reading book. Hi Mr. and Mrs. stressful do you still doubt which?

Download and Read Online The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall #EU5WSKJ6FCN

Read The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall for online ebook

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall books to read online.

Online The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall ebook PDF download

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall Doc

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall Mobipocket

The Case of the Man Who Died Laughing: Vish Puri, Most Private Investigator By Tarquin Hall EPub