

“UNTIL THE END”

THE LAST CAST

EBOOK AVAILABLE

ABHISHEK
MISHRA



THE LAST CAST

ABHISHEK
MISHRA

The Last Cast

Publishing-in-support-of,

FSP Media Publications

RZ 94, Sector - 6, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075
Shubham Vihar, Mangla, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh - 495001

Website: *www.fspmedia.in*

© Copyright, Author

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, magnetic, optical, chemical, manual, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written consent of its writer.

ISBN: 978-81-19927-01-2

Price: ₹ 417.00

The opinions/ contents expressed in this book are solely of the author and do not represent the opinions/ standings/ thoughts of Publisher

Printed in India

THE LAST CAST

Abhishek Mishra

ABOUT THE BOOK

The book revolves around a mystery murder and an investigation that follows the murder. It is the story of Mrs. Wynnell, who post the break-up of a long standing relationship, moved to another State, with the hope to salvage a new beginning in her life.

Only until she realizes that the lady, who snatched her love away from her, the one who was responsible for her break-up- Joanna, had been murdered.

To her surprise, she finds herself amidst an investigation which targets her as the murderer and in a series of investigations done by the authorities; truth unfolds an impending danger to her life and the framing nature of the investigations in pursuit

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born to a middle-class family, I have always embraced remarkable dreams to my journey of life. Educated at a convent school, in a small town like Shillong, which is beautifully earthed as the capital of the abode of clouds – Meghalaya, in the North-Eastern hemisphere of India, I mastered my way to becoming an economics graduate from Symbiosis College of Arts & Commerce, Pune.



My nascent skills in writing was first recognized when I had a poem on Shillong – The Scotland of the east published in one of the daily newspapers (The Shillong Times); the interest only grew stronger hence and my will more concrete as I developed this unique interest in writing.

I have written a few poems, though unpublished, yet once in appropriate numbers could translate into another novel project.

The greatest inspiration towards fame has been my mother, who has dunked pretty much everything to ensure good education to my siblings and I.

“The Last Cast” is my debut novel and is written in light of targeting youth that have an undefeated craving for mystery and thrillers. Writing my first novel has indeed been an arduous task, as often I would find myself stationary on my desk wondering what the next words might be.

After an 18 month of constant effort, have I been able to foresee this dream of becoming an author come true.

I am an avid writer and love to craft emotions and existent entities into words. In my opinion, words are the most powerful medium and undeniably the best form to communicate emotions, feelings, aspirations, desires and achievement.

I hope, in context of my first novel, one should find interest and generate the liking to my writings.

CHAPTER 1

‘Yes, they said they were really pleased with what I have achieved in the job so far, Emma.’ I said, the pride in my voice sounding out loudly even to my ears. ‘Your old mum has pulled it off.’

‘I don’t doubt it for a moment, Mum... and you’re not old!’ my loyal daughter protested. ‘How are you settling into the house?’

‘Not too badly.’

My mind flitted to the damp I discovered in the bathroom but Emma will only worry and fuss if I mention it; I can deal with it ... though it was a nuisance having to move all the bedding out of the so-called airing cupboard in a hurry once I discovered it was damp. I must make a note to mention it to my landlord next time I see him; he seemed a decent sort of bloke. It’s probably only condensation but you never know.

‘It seemed like a nice village.’

‘Yes, it is. I’m getting to know my way around now too, Emma.’

‘Pity you had to move out of the house you were in before. Still, perhaps this one will be a longer term bet.’ Emma said, sounding slightly harassed. ‘Look, Mum, I’m hoping to be able to come up and visit you sometime soon ... Adrian is working a lot of overtime at the moment and it’s difficult but, I think I should be able to manage it soon.’ ‘Whenever you can, Em.’ I said as brightly as I can manage ... I’d been hoping to see her and going back to Bridgewater is not very desirable the

way things are. A fact of which Emma is fully aware. 'Aren't you off somewhere or other this weekend?'

'Yes, that's right, Mum. We're going down to visit Adrian's sister – it's her birthday and they're having a party. We won't be back until late on Sunday night.' She said, the irritation showing in her voice. 'I'd much rather spend the time with you, Mum.'

'Don't be silly, Emma, you go and have a good time at the party.'

I appreciate my daughter's affection – we've always been close; more friends than mother and daughter and I miss her as much as she misses me. 'If you say so, Mum.' She said laughing. 'But parties are far more your scene than mine!' 'Not these days!' I protested, trying to remember the last time I went out partying.

'Are you making friends at the school?' she asked, anxiety coloring her voice.

'Everyone is very nice and friendly.' I assured her, sidestepping the question a little. 'And the office staff are lovely.'

'You really ought to get involved in something in the village, Mum.'

Emma persisted, 'You can't just sit in that house on your own all the time.'

'Don't nag! I'm looking into what's available here ... honest, love.' I lied, 'But enough of that, whenever you can get away, I'd love to see you, Emma. Let me know when you have some idea of when.'

'Okay.'

I get the definite feeling that she is not at all fooled by my assurance.

The Last Cast

There are times when I wonder who is the mother and who the daughter in this relationship!

'And give that son of yours a hug for me, will you?' I said before she 'Will do, Mum. Take care of yourself.' She promised laughing, before hanging up.

I put the phone down and stand for a moment smiling to myself. Liz, you did the right thing getting out of Bridgewater. Okay, so the first month or so was lonely, but I've got used to being on my own now and the relief at knowing that I am not going to run the risk of seeing Joanna or Dan every time I leave the house is priceless ... it says a lot that I still feel like that, even though I've been away from the place for nearly a year now.

I knew it was getting me down living like that, but hadn't realized just how much until I was driving away from Bridgewater following the removal van... I'd actually found myself singing along to the radio as I drove across the Somerset levels... yes, despite all the upheaval, it was the right move.

'So, are you coming to the pictures with us, Joanna?' Jan asked as I spoon sugar into my mug.

'No ... I'm meeting up with a friend for a drink.' I said, wishing I hadn't arranged to see Liz tonight. The film looks good and it would have been nice to go with Jan and the girls.

'Oh? Who's that?' Jan asked, leaning on the table and sipping her tea.

'Liz ... she's the mother of a girl I used to go to school with.'

I told her, reaching for a biscuit.

'Eh?'

'I got friendly with her years ago in the drama club.' I explained, 'She's really nice and I used to go and talk to

her when I had any problems. Didn't get on with my mum when I was a teenager.'

'Oh ... I see.'

'Yeah, Liz was great... she even let me stay overnight sometimes when I'd had another massive row with Mum. I'm meeting up with her and her man tonight for a drink.' Jan glances at the clock.

'Drink up, Joanna, time we were back on the ward.' She said, emptying her mug and rising to her feet. 'Pity you can't come to see the film tonight, though.'

* * * * *

'Liz, there is no denying that things are starting to look up a bit now.'

My voice sounded loud in the silence of the empty house.

I look round the room, my gaze lingering on the view from the window... okay so the other house I rented was probably in better condition than this place, but it is worth putting up with a little damp in the airing cupboard for the views from the south side of this one... and this place is handier for my new job. Leaning against the window frame, I sigh contentedly... it's a relief not having to spend so much time on the road now... it was a good job I had with the firm in Taunton – and well paid into the bargain - but even that was not worth the time I wasted driving backwards and forwards along the motorway... let alone the hours I spent sitting in traffic, immobile and tired.

It is just so bloody unfair that you had to move in the first place, a little voice reminds me. I feel anger start churning in my stomach at the thought of why I'd been forced to move and yet again try to dismiss it... no point getting up in the air about it... it's water under the

The Last Cast

bridge now... I fiddle with the strings of the window blinds as the rising fury thins and starts dissipating. That's better.

I stare at the view again as the last shreds of my rage drift away ... yes, it was the logical thing to do, taking that job at the school. Salary wasn't really a problem... the rent I get from the tenants living in my house is more than enough to pay for my accommodation here. So, as long as I earn enough for my daily needs, I don't have to worry about money. I'll have to look into selling that house, I suppose... maybe when I am a little more established here... I don't want to rush into buying a property out here just yet. Still, it looks as though I am settled here, at least for the time being... again, I think over the meeting I had today with the head teacher at the school. I'd been nervous about this assessment... although I know I have been making a good fist of the job, this appraisal was the turning point, the end of my trial period. Ted, the head teacher had been very positive and even mentioned that the governors had commented favorably on the small changes I have made so far to the way the office works... and he didn't have to do that. There's not a lot of difference between running an admin department in a company and in a school, despite my fears to the contrary... although I have to say that the children in the school are a lot better behaved than many of the so-called executives I have come across in my time!

I'd been sweating more than a little over this appraisal, not because I thought I was making a mess of the job as such, but more from the point that I don't yet trust good luck to come my way and I know from bitter experience how the actions of other people can demolish what I believed to be an unassailable position... it occurs to me yet again, that my confidence still isn't what it used to

be... it throws you to realize that you don't know the people closest to you, makes you doubt yourself.

* * * * *

It's a long time since you last walked down here, Joanna, I thought to myself as I make my way towards the pub where I've arranged to meet up with Liz and Dan. Still, it's good to be back in the old town again... Bristol was great but ... oh well , it didn't work out... move on, Joanna. I kick at an empty lager can lying mashed on the pavement, the clang as it hits the wall an exclamation mark to my

thought.

I spot Liz as soon as I get into the pub, even though there are quite a few people in here. It's a good five years since, I last saw her but she hasn't changed much. Her hair is not showing much grey, but it doesn't look as though she colors it... that brown is far too natural to be out of a bottle... she still wears it long too... but I suppose if you find a style that suits you, you stick to it and that long Bob does frame her face nicely... sets off that sickeningly good complexion of hers. She's looking good for her age... she must be getting on for fifty now, I suppose... We've kept in touch by phone over the years ... more often than not a case of me ringing up when I've got a problem and need a shoulder to cry on, but she was always there for me.

'Joanna! Lovely to see you.' Liz said warmly, rising and giving me a hug, 'How are things?'

'So-so.' I replied, looking around. 'Where's Dan?'

'Gone to the loo.' she replied, sitting down again 'How are you getting on in the new job?'

The Last Cast

'Good. The girls are really friendly.' I told her, taking off my jacket and sitting down. 'It was the right thing... coming back here.'

'It's always difficult when these work place relationships go sour.' Liz said sympathetically, her eyes understanding. 'Have you heard from him at all?'

'No ... but I don't expect to.' I admitted ruefully, remembering the slanging match which had finished with me socking him round the face. 'Anyway, I'm thinking positive and making a new start.'

'Well done you! We'll have to find you a nice man.' she said thoughtfully 'Are you going to come back to the drama group?'

'Don't know at the moment, Liz, the hospital is playing around with my shifts and I'm not sure when I'm going to be free.' I said, 'So, how are things with you and Dan?'

'Great.' she said, her face softening into a smile. 'I think he is finally coming round to the idea that we are an item.'

About bloody time too! I thought to myself ... it must be at least eight years now that he has been messing around with her. It's blatantly obvious to everyone that they belong together, but will he accept it? Will he hell! Talk of the devil ...!

'Hi, Joanna - nice to see you again.' Dan said sitting down at the third chair at the table.

'And you, Dan.' I replied, smiling at him.

I'd forgotten how charming Dan is - he's an attractive man - in more ways than one ... his business is a success and, as is blatantly

obvious from the expensive gold watch he is wearing, he's not short of a penny or two. Unlike some men of his

age, he still has a full head of hair, though being so fair does mean it is pretty invisible if he wears it too short ... probably why he lets it grow ... very much the hippy look!

They make a good couple though, even if Dan is some years younger than Liz ... and that's what's been the cause of the trouble between them to a large extent. Liz is a widow and has a daughter ...

Dan hasn't married and it is no secret that he has a hankering for a bog standard family set up. The fact that he's plainly crazy about Liz has tended to get in the way of any advances he has made towards various unattached women in the drama group over the years, though he has maintained at regular intervals over the years that he and Liz are 'just good friends' which is pretty rich considering everything I don't know it for a fact - Liz has been pretty reticent on the subject generally and you can't go around asking people to their faces if they are sleeping together - but it was a common belief at one point that they were living together. His reluctance to accept the facts has caused a lot of friction between them at times, especially as they both have volcanic tempers which has made for some pretty violent screaming matches over the years, but somehow they have always got back together again. She's a lucky lady, he's an attractive man... I wish I could find one like him. Oh come on, Joanna, he's a good ten years or more older than you ... be sensible!

'Drink, Joanna?' he asked, 'Liz, do you want another one?'

'Thanks.' she said, looking up at him and they exchange one of their intimate glances... no-one, seeing that, would believe they are not lovers. Lucky woman ...

The Last Cast

It's nice chatting to Liz and Dan... I'd forgotten what good company the pair of them are. Their joint description of the problems experienced at this week's rehearsal for the latest production by the drama group has me in fits of laughter.

A couple of drinks later, the subject turns to Dan's hobby and he goes on at some length about his latest steam engine project.

The man's loony on the subject of steam engines and Liz has spent a lot of time over the years sitting in his workshop watching him making metal bits for his models. She seems to enjoy it ... sounds pretty boring to me ... but I suppose that's what love does to you.

'So when are you showing this one?' I asked, as he runs down a little. 'I've never seen a steam engine in action.'

'Haven't you?' he commented, his eyebrows rising with surprise.

'No, it's one of life's little delights which have never come my way.' I replied, catching Liz's eye and repressing a smile as she smiles understandingly.

'Well, I'm taking this one to a steam fair up Newport way next month.' he replied enthusiastically. 'There's ...'

'Oh, Dan ... I meant to tell you.' Liz broke in, frowning slightly, 'I can't make that one - Emma has asked if I can babysit that day. Do you mind?'

'Oh ...' he said looking disappointed.

'Joanna - you've never been to a steam rally ...' Liz went on.

'Dan why don't you take Joanna with you?'

'Good idea - can you make it?' he asked, brightening up.

THE LAST CAST

Liz parts away from a long-term relationship to give life a new beginning, until, she finds herself amidst scripts of investigations to counsel the murder of Joanna, the lady responsible to bring her relationship to an end. The investigation entails not just an attempt to frame her reputation but also unveils an impending danger to her life.

"UNTIL THE END"



ABHISHEK
MISHRA

Also available as an eBook

FICTION/THRILLER

ISBN 978-81-19927-01-2



9 788119 927012

Cover Design by Tahir Kapadia



FSP

FSP MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

BOOK AVAILABLE

Flipkart



GET IT ON
Google Play

amazon

amazonkindle