

Chapter 1: The Body in the Alley

The rain was relentless that night in Bandung, a steady drizzle washing the streets clean—or so it seemed. Detective Arman Prasetyo, a seasoned officer of the Polrestabes Bandung, was called to the scene at 3:15 AM. The alley behind Jalan Braga, usually a bustling street filled with cafes and art galleries, was now cordoned off with yellow police tape. The lifeless body of 32-year-old Dimas Raharjo, a local entrepreneur known for his successful coffee shop chain, lay sprawled on the wet cobblestones.

Arman, 42, with sharp eyes that missed nothing and a reputation for cracking even the most complex cases, crouched beside the body. Dimas had a single stab wound to the chest, but no signs of struggle. His wallet and phone were untouched.

"Robbery gone wrong?" suggested Sergeant Rina Putri, his younger partner, barely 30 but sharp as a tack.

Arman shook his head. "Too clean. This was personal."

Chapter 2: The Suspects

By morning, Arman and Rina had compiled a list of potential suspects. Dimas was well-liked, but success often breeds envy.

1. **Ayu Raharjo (29)** – Dimas's estranged wife. They had separated six months ago amid rumors of infidelity. She claimed she was at her sister's house in Dago that night, watching movies.
2. **Gilang Santoso (35)** – Dimas's business partner. They co-owned the coffee shop chain, but recent financial records hinted at disputes over missing funds. Gilang said he was at home in Cimahi, asleep, with his wife as an alibi.
3. **Riko Pradana (27)** – A disgruntled former employee fired for theft. He insisted he was working a night shift at a local factory, with his supervisor able to confirm.
4. **Nadia Sari (31)** – A journalist who had been investigating Dimas for allegedly exploiting farmers in Garut. She claimed she was out of town covering a story in Tasikmalaya.

Arman knew alibis could be as fragile as the morning mist.

Chapter 3: Clues in the Shadows

The autopsy confirmed the time of death around midnight. The knife wound was precise, suggesting the killer knew what they were doing. Forensics found a single partial fingerprint on Dimas's watch—but it wasn't in the police database.

Rina dug into Dimas's phone records and found multiple calls to Ayu in the days leading up to his death. Their last call was heated, lasting nearly an hour the night before he died.

Meanwhile, Arman visited Gilang. The man was nervous, his story too rehearsed. A deeper look into their business revealed that Dimas had discovered Gilang embezzling funds. But Gilang's wife confirmed his alibi, and CCTV footage from his neighborhood supported it.

Riko's supervisor confirmed his presence at the factory, and attendance logs matched. But Arman wasn't convinced. He decided to pay a visit to Nadia Sari.

Chapter 4: The Break in the Case

Nadia's story about being in Tasikmalaya checked out—until Arman found that she had returned to Bandung the evening of the murder, something she hadn't disclosed. When confronted, she admitted to following Dimas for a story but denied any involvement in his death.

It was Rina who discovered the final piece of the puzzle. Surveillance footage from a shop near the alley showed a shadowy figure approaching Dimas just before midnight. The figure wore a hoodie, but as they turned, a distinctive tattoo on their wrist was visible.

Cross-referencing the tattoo against police records finally yielded a match—not Riko, but **Adi Raharjo (24)**, Dimas's younger brother. Adi had a history of minor offenses and a gambling problem. The family had kept him out of the public eye, but debts can lead people to desperate actions.

Chapter 5: The Confession

Arman and Rina brought Adi in for questioning. At first, he denied everything. But faced with the evidence—the tattoo, the fingerprint, and his mounting debts—Adi broke down.

"I didn't mean to kill him," he sobbed. "I just wanted money. Dimas refused to help me. He always looked down on me... I lost control."

Adi confessed to confronting Dimas that night, demanding money. When Dimas refused, Adi stabbed him in a fit of rage. He fled the scene, leaving his brother to die alone in the rain.

Chapter 6: Closure

With Adi's confession, the case was closed. But the resolution brought little comfort. Arman stared out at the Bandung skyline, the city lights flickering like distant stars.

"Sometimes," he muttered to Rina, "the shadows we chase are closer than we think."

Rina nodded, the weight of the case settling over them both. Justice had been served, but the scars would remain—on the Raharjo family, and on the city itself.

As they walked away from the station, the rain began to fall again, washing the streets clean once more—or so it seemed.