

## Cover letter

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**Biography:** Siba Smarak Panigrahi, currently reading in class XI in Kendriya Vidyalaya, No 2, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. He loves to write fictional short stories. He has already published a novel for children named “Finding alpha”. Now let us read this story.

## THE CASE OF THE GRAND HEIST

It was one of the cases that had baffled Crick to a great extent.

”Your sleep has attracted the attention of the media also. They are thinking that you are now suffering from mental disorder that also multiple ones. Your brain has been tired of solving a lot of cases” said Jim.

“Just a few ones I have solved” objected Crick.

“Still you are at grave danger... ” A bell cut short the words of Jim.

“See I think again someone has arrived to ask about your mental condition” mocked Jim.

‘See what is there’

‘How could you be sure that something instead of someone is there?’ asked Jim.

‘If someone had been there then we should have heard the bell once more. But that is not the case here. So I assumed that something should be there’ Crick was able to pacify the storm inside Jim.

Jim walked through the corridor to reach the stairs. He walked down the stairs to get to the door.

He opened the door without noise. He gazed but didn't see anything outside. On close

contemplation he lifted a letter addressed to Crick and turned back. He rushed to the stairs and climbed with great vigour.

He reached Crick and handed over the letter to the latter.

Crick tore it up and saw a brief message in it.

### THE GRAND HEIST

At Hanson Bank on 25th Friday

D.R.L

'That's all, I thought some description should be there' sighed Jim.

'First of all who this D.R.L is and secondly why would someone who is going to do a robbery would intimate it to me beforehand' asked Crick.

'Moreover he has given the date. But I think this is a pure joke. 25th is not Friday'

'But you should mark that 25th of next month is a Friday' replied Crick.

'Then why he would give you a month time for preparation?' enquired Jim.

'That is what troubling me. All this is complicated. Let us wait for any further information' Crick signed off with great enthusiasm.

The next day a great news completely shook the city. There was a great robbery at two banks at the same time.

'The Gatre and The Hassick - the two banks robbed yesterday were going on a great loss and this incident left them completely devastated. The most eye-catching fact is that the person who robbed the two banks were same. Further details explain that they were the same person present at two places at the same time' read Jim while Crick silently kept listening to it focusing on the ceiling.

'How is it possible that a single person was present at two places at the same time?' asked Jim

'Any opinion formed?' again asked Jim visualizing the silence that had grasped Crick.

'No nothing of now. I have to investigate before I reply to Mr. Robert' replied Crick.

A few moments elapsed. John arrived. He saw the distressed faces of both of them.

'A message of a robbery following a robbery of double bank by identical human entity' replied Crick.

'Yeah I have read the newspaper. I came here for that purpose only. You know this is really complicated. I think we should travel to The Gatre bank and investigate the matter.' John formed an opinion.

Both Crick and Jim became ready and started downstairs. On the way to the door John saw the letter and picked it up from the table. He read and enquired about it.

'Nothing. It is a letter that is puzzling me from yesterday. It arrived at the door and without any prior knowledge, it washed away my brain. This letter gives me a one month time to prepare for a robbery at the Hanson Bank.' replied Crick.

'So you are going to handle two cases at one time' and John went to a small smile.

All of them booked a cab and rushed towards the Gatre Bank. On reaching they saw a group of town folks gossiping on what had happened yesterday. With the arrival of Crick the crowd dissolved and allowed him to pass through them.

The door of the shop was highly packed with great security. It was provided by three person and we're heavily built.

'I don't understand one point' said Crick.

'What is that?' asked Jim with great enthusiasm hoping for acquiring certain light on this case.

'It so happens that the security gets tightened after a theft or murder but before the activity, there is a sheer ignorance of the activity that is crucial for the safety of customers and protection of the shop. '

After marching up to the second floor they met William, the manager of the Gatre Bank.

'I want to ask you a few questions William. Would that be alright?' asked Crick.

'Fine' replied William.

'Was all the facts described by both you and Willis are true or something is fishy going on here?' asked Crick.

'Sir I am true to my knowledge but I can't say about Willis. It all happened suddenly that no one was prepared for this situation. This is a great loss.' replied William with a bit of disappointment.

'Can you sketch the brief outline of the thief?' again and asked Crick.

'Yes. He was a fellow of about 35 years old. He had a brief cover of beard on the chin and the necklaces for sure allured him to a great extent.'

'How could you be so sure about that?' questioned John.

'As he entered our shop he was wearing a golden necklace which appealed me very much. Though it was golden necklace but was studded with diamond. It was as if yesterday he had only put that necklace in the aqua regia!'

A person came to William and had a brief serious discussion. Hearing the discussions, Crick was able to conclude that it was about the happenings of the previous day.

'Sir I will meet you after the lunch at about 2 pm but frankly speaking this time my boss is going to get me out of the job. All my carelessness. Damn it. ' with a pitch of great disappointment and regret William dashed out of the place.

'So what should be our next step? ' asked John.

'Let's have a hang of time with Willis. Something's great trouble is going on around. ' remarked Crick.

All the three of them quietly unnoticed by anyone walked out of the Gatre Bank and waited a few moments outside the bank.

Unnoticed, a person deliberately banged against Crick and that brought a wry smile on his face.

'Sir it is nice that I met you. I had work with you. ' saying this he handed over a piece of paper and departed ways from them.

From the back it was clear that he was of about thirty years old. He was dashing through the mob and it was clear that he is a busy fellow. He was wearing a black shirt and carried a small duffel. It was light brown with black spots collaged together.

'See this is the replica of yesterday's paper' asserted Jim.

'Okay let's move out of here and have a brief talk with Willis' advised John leading the way to the other two.

Within a span of half an hour they were standing in front of the Hassick Bank. It was more palatial than the Gatre Bank. Here the security was upon first visual can assure you about strength but it was a piece of porcelain cup.

The windows were sparkling upon reflecting the beam of sunlight intensing on its glassy outlook.

'I may meet Willis' politeness of Crick was remarkable.

'May I know your identity' asked one of the security personnel.

'Crick' replied Crick.

'Yes sir' replied the guard .

Crick along with his two good friends entered the bank and captured the sight of the person whom they had met just about half an hour ago.

'What are you doing here? ' asked John.

'What, I have never met you in my lifetime' replied that person.

'You had banged against us just half an hour ago in front of the Gatre Bank.' accused John.

'Stop accusing me as an imposter.' argued the person who was under the speculation of the three detectives.

Disgusted the three of them walked upstairs to reach second floor.

'How are you going Willis? ' asked Crick.

'Nothing is fine here. After what had happened yesterday it is quite difficult to revive from the situation. ' replied Willis.

'So can you just explain yesterday's incident?' asked Crick.

'It was about ten in the morning when he arrived here. The morning was quite warm, we all were covered either by muffler or a warm jacket. He dashed through the door.

He had beard on his chin and wore a golden necklace and that also studded with diamond. I thought that necklaces allured him very much.

He wore a dark brown colored shirt and a black coloured pant. He was so dressed as if someone would observe him in the dark then he would be completely camouflaged!'

Then he took a deep breath and resumed.

'He came straight to me and asked for the locker's key. I was completely terrified as such an incident had never took place in the history of the shop. I shouted at the security personnel. But they too were nugatory.

Before my arms were in favour of me, he had his upper hand over me. A black coloured revolver pointed my throat and another hand bore another one. With the second one of my guards was shot and now he is in the hospital. The doctor remarked that it had been a close shave.

Then after a short span of arguments with the thief, I became docile and allowed him to overpower me. He got the keys forcing me to a difficult situation and conjured all the amount of money in the locker and walked away.' completed Willis.

'Can you just show me the locker?' asked Crick.

'Definitely, accompany me' and Willis trotted towards the locker.

Crick went inside and found that it was completely empty. But he observed that on the floor there is a cover which was placed as if no one would check it out.

'What is below that cover? ' asked Crick.

'Nothing the gutter passes below this place.' replied Willis.

'Oh! I see' responded Jim.

All the three of them turned back and walked off.

'Why would anyone place such a huge amount of money above gutter? This is puzzling me. There might not be another place to keep them. I think so.' Crick muttered to himself and booked a taxi to the Gatre Bank.

It was about three in the afternoon when they reached the bank. Directly they entered and asked about the yesterday's incident.

William explained everything that too clearly. After making the trio satisfied he went to his chamber.

'Really both the description were mostly the same' said Jim.

'More important is that they were exact as if someone had prepared them for this' said John.

Crick remained in his silent thoughts and headed back to his home. On the way Crick was filled with thoughts but as they approached their house his mood lighted up only to be disheartened.

Another scenario was present outside his house. Mr. Robert, the cop, blocked his path inside house.

'So what do you think?' asked Mr. Robert.

'Till now I have not made any opinion about this and this all thing is a bit complicated. But I think I have a brief idea about what is going on.' replied Crick.

'So you thought that you would use your popularity to do an work up to such an extent. We found out the dead body of Mr. Phil on the basement of your house' said Mr. Robert.

'No it can't be possible!' exclaimed Crick.

All the people who stood outside the house of Crick entered inside and really a dead body was found in the basement. A large gust of murmur passed through the people. They observed the body and accepted the fact that Crick has done the murder of Mr. Phil and has kept this a secret.

'You are under arrest, Crick' said Mr. Robert.

'As you say I will go with you but this is not justice' said Crick and with dignity accepted his fate.

Crick went with Mr. Robert and for the first time in his life he was under the cop's custody. Now the situation was completely out of the control of Crick. This time Crick was desperate without any hint of saving the Hanson Bank. Accused of wrong murder he had stay under the observation of cops and could not be released before trial that was to be held after three months.

He had thought that before one week of the grand heist he would inform the Hanson Bank and would make them prepared for the future events. But now he was helpless. Even Jim and John could not help the bank as they were not allowed to go out of the house and were moreover closed in a room.

But every cloud has a silver lining.

The next day a letter addressed to Crick came to the hands of Crick. As he looked into the letter he became happy that it was from Mr. Phil.

It said that he was in Russia and in a house out from a thief and murderer named Douglas. He had been looking for his wife as she had been his primary love interest. He is quite embarrassed to accept this but in his heart he searched and is searching for her. And finally he requested to help him out of this situation. The letter also contained two photos - one of Mr. Phil and other of Douglas.

The image of Douglas flashed a familiar image in front of Crick. It was the same person who they had met accidentally outside the Gatre Bank.

Crick has upon the two photos and all the happenings around flashed across his mind in a moment.

'That's it. I have to only search for Douglas and my case is over' Crick said to himself in a sotto voce.

Before he could say anything in his favour he was released from the custody as the cops had already read letter before he had.

'Sorry of accusing you, but can you say whose dead body it is?' asked Mr. Robert.

'Yes, in the letter it was remarked that Mr. Ratchet, the cop in Dent was killed by Douglas. You should now help me in finding this man Douglas.' said Crick. 'Surely' said Mr. Robert.

The next day Crick remained out of house and went to various places to complete his suspicion. In the evening he came back and said to Jim - 'Tomorrow would the preview of the grand heist'.

The next day a young man came to Crick's house and informed about the whereabouts of Douglas.

'Sometimes these young people come to a lot of use' said Crick and followed him to reach the destined place.

'Everything was so well planned that no one could even smell the dung present in the rose bed.' said Crick.

'So already you got me but I will have an extra edge over you' laughed Douglas.

'Mr. Robert, catch him!' shouted Crick and in no time Douglas was under the clasp of the cops. He was forced to sit and explain all the matter but Crick said that it would be his pleasure if he would explain the facts.

It was like round table conference and everyone occupied a seat.

Crick began 'Douglas should support me whenever required lest I can explain his primary love interest to one and all present in the city. '

'But how the heck could you know about my life and especially this part?' asked Douglas.

'It was Mr. Phil'

'I will kill him'

'And in this attempt you had already killed Mr. Ratchet and dumped his body in my basement if I am true' said Crick.

'Yeah whatsoever' said Douglas.

'So it all started on twenty fourth of this month. I received a letter containing a message of a grand robbery on Friday twenty fifth and it took me a fraction of seconds to think that this is going to happen the next month. I thought about that carefully and took a rest.'

'The next day there was the news of the theft in the Gatre Bank and the Hassick Bank. For investigation I had to leave my house under the charge of the maid servant. Somehow or the other this man Douglas lured her to allow entry to house and using chloroform he completed his work. This he has all done in the afternoon at about one.'

'How could you know that?' questioned Douglas.

'You first diverted my attention from the Gatre Bank and checked if all was correct in the Hassick Bank and then returned to check that all was correct in the Gatre Bank. Then after your lunch you must have completed your work. '

'The next day when I went to the Gatre bank I perceived that the fellow William was fumbling which means that he had not ordered or given adequate information to convert to me.

Douglas had planned that he would ask the head or the boss of both the banks about a multiple attack by unique identity at same time so that my attention would be diverted and he would put the dead body which he killed unknowingly in my custody and would escape. He would put me in cop's custody and in my known presence he would do the grand heist. That means he threw me an open challenge!'



'When Douglas knew that I had arrived at William before nine in the morning he was taken aback and send a person to call back him from me. Next on the way he knowingly bumped into us and dropped the paper written in same size and handwriting so that I would go back house to check it and he would check that if everything is going all right at the Hassick Bank. But unfortunately I directly went to Hassick Bank and that is why we met Douglas there. But preparation was complete.'

'One thing became clear that Willis was telling lies when we went to check the locker. He said that they were letting money above gutter and so yesterday I went there to try my luck and became sure that I was correct that is under that cover there was all the money. '

'Next Douglas walked back to the Gatre Bank and informed him about all the details he had to say and henceforth both of them explained the situation.

While I was busy outside he placed dead body of Mr. Ratchet in my house and went back happily. '

'The later facts need not to be explained as Mr. Robert knows that well. This was a masterstroke by Douglas. If that letter from Mr. Phil would not have come then he would have completed the grand heist. He first of all informed me and then an open challenge then diverted my attention to a fake case so that I would be disturbed and he would bring the dead body and place that in my house.

When I would be in cop's custody he would complete his grand heist at the Hanson Bank. Really it was a well planned masterstroke by Douglas.

'One thing I am not able to get that why William and Willis agreed to help Douglas?' enquired Mr. Robert.

'When a bank manager goes at a loss, helping a thief would be far more better way to earn than wait for days to turn their stone into gems!'

