**TENFOLD TALES: A WORLD IN EVERY STORY**

**VARDHAN TRIVEDI**

**COPYRIGHT PAGE**

**Copyright © 2025 by Vardhan Trivedi**

**All rights reserved.**

**No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the publisher, except for brief quotations used in critical reviews or articles.**

**Published by: Vardhan Trivedi**

**Website :** [**https://3161vardhantrivedi.wixsite.com/**](https://3161vardhantrivedi.wixsite.com/) **tenfold-tales**

**ISBN: 9798314246580**

**Cover design by: Author**

**Printed in U.S.**

**For information, contact through website-**

**FOREWORD**

**Step into Tenfold Stories: A World in Every Story, a captivating collection by Vardhan Trivedi, an accomplished author with five years of storytelling mastery. Each tale unveils a world brimming with suspense, intellect, and intrigue, blending handsome facts and gripping detective mysteries. From unraveling enigmatic cases to delving into the psyche of shadowy figures, these stories promise to challenge your wit, stir your imagination, and keep you hooked until the very last word.**

**ENJOY READING….**

**CONTENTS**

**CHAPTER 1: THE CRYSTALLING SHADOW OF ALICE HARPER…Pg 6-11**

**CHAPTER 2: THE SILENT SHADOWS OF GLIMMER RIDGE…Pg 12-17**

**CHAPTER 3: THE FORGOTTEN TUNNEL..Pg 18-24**

**CHAPTER 4: THE FLASHING LIGHT…Pg 25-31**

**CHAPTER 5: THE RESINGTON AMMUNITION KIT…Pg 32-38**

**CHAPTER 6: THE ENSNCI KATANA…Pg 39-46**

**CHAPTER 7: A SUSPENSEFUL BATTLE IN ANDES..Pg 47-55**

**CHAPTER 8: THE SNIPER’S GAZE..Pg 56-62**

**CHAPTER 9: THE UNDERGROUND ENIGMA..Pg 63-75**

**CHAPTER 10: THE COSTA RICAN CONSPIRACY…Pg 76-79**

**CALL TO ACTION AND AUTHOR’S NOTE..Pg 80-81**

**CHAPTER 1**

**THE CRYSTALLING SHADOW OF ALICE HARPER**

**D**etective Clarry Reynolds leaned back in her creaky leather chair, staring out the rain-streaked window. The dim light from the flickering desk lamp cast long shadows over the room, giving the office a gloomy, almost claustrophobic feel. The relentless tap of the rain against the glass was the only sound, punctuated by the occasional hiss of the heating system. It had been hours, and yet Clarry’s mind refused to make sense of the case laid out before her. Another missing person. Another story of desperation in a city filled with unanswered questions.

The name at the top of the file caught her attention: Alice Harper. A well-known artist whose brilliant abstract works had recently thrust her into the limelight. Two weeks ago, she had disappeared without a trace. No ransom note. No witnesses. No explanation. Just an unsettling message scrawled on her easel: "The past never leaves."

Clarry took a slow drag from her cigarette, her eyes narrowing as she read the words again. There was something about the phrase—something that lingered in the air, like a puzzle piece that refused to fit.

Her thoughts were interrupted by a soft knock on the door. Instinctively, Clarry reached for the revolver in her desk drawer—though she knew it was probably an overreaction. The door creaked open, and a tall, well-groomed man stepped inside—Mark Robinson, Alice’s fiancé.

“Detective Reynolds,” he said, his voice smooth but laced with quiet desperation. “I hope I’m not interrupting.”

Clarry glanced at the clock on the wall. It was late, but she didn’t mind. She had no intention of turning away anyone in need of help. “You’re not disturbing me, Mr. Robinson. Please, take a seat.”

He sat down across from her, his fingers nervously adjusting his tie. His calm exterior betrayed the storm brewing beneath the surface. “I don’t know who else to turn to. The police haven’t made any progress. I fear… I fear the worst. You’re our last hope.”

Clarry studied him with careful eyes. There was something unsettling about his demeanor—too controlled for a man whose fiancée had vanished without a trace. But Clarry had learned not to judge by first impressions. She motioned for him to continue.

“Have you spoken to Alice’s family?” she asked, her voice measured.

Mark hesitated, a flicker of irritation crossing his face. “Yes, but they don’t know anything. Alice wasn’t close to them. She preferred to keep her distance. That’s part of why I’m so concerned—she… she wasn’t herself in the days leading up to her disappearance.”

Clarry leaned forward, intrigued. “What do you mean? How was she acting?”

Mark’s gaze darkened, his fingers fidgeting with the cuff of his sleeve. “She kept talking about the past. About things that happened a long time ago, things she couldn’t escape. She kept saying that there were people… things that wouldn’t let her go. I thought it was just stress, but now, I’m not so sure.”

A chill ran down Clarry’s spine. It wasn’t the first time she had heard of someone vanishing because they were running from something—or someone—that wouldn’t let them escape. “Tell me more about her art. Was there anything unusual about the pieces she was working on before she disappeared?”

Mark’s face tightened with the memory. “Her latest work… It was different. Dark. Unsettling. There were symbols—strange, cryptic symbols woven into the abstract patterns. At first, I thought it was just a phase, but now… Now, I can’t help but wonder if it’s connected to her disappearance.”

Clarry’s mind sharpened at the mention of symbols. “Where is her studio?”

“She rented a loft downtown,” Mark replied, his voice heavy with anxiety. “I can take you there, if you’d like.”

The loft was located in a crumbling building on the edge of town. The door creaked open as Clarry stepped inside, greeted by the familiar scent of oil paint, dust, and the musty air of neglect. The space was eerily quiet, save for the faint hum of an old refrigerator in the corner. Large, unfinished canvases leaned against the walls, their edges curling from age. But it was the massive painting on the far wall that immediately drew Clarry’s attention.

It was chaotic—violent swirls of crimson, indigo, and midnight blue collided with harsh, jagged shapes that seemed to pulse with a strange, unsettling energy. At the center of the madness was an intricate, swirling symbol. Clarry’s breath caught in her throat. She knew that symbol. She had seen it before—in old occult texts, in the rituals of secret societies.

“This was the piece she was working on when she disappeared?” Clarry asked, her voice barely a whisper.

Mark nodded, his eyes fixed on the painting. “Yes. She spent weeks on it, obsessing over every detail. I didn’t understand it at the time. But now, I can see… I can see it meant something more than just art.”

Clarry moved closer to the canvas, her fingers hovering just above the paint. The symbol seemed to shimmer, almost alive under her gaze. It sent a chill down her spine, but she resisted the urge to step back. She needed answers.

Her eyes darted around the room, scanning the walls for anything else that might provide a clue. Then, her gaze fell upon a small leather-bound notebook resting on a table beside the easel. She picked it up carefully, flipping through the pages. At first, it seemed like just more sketches, but as she turned the pages, the drawings grew stranger—more distorted. Faces—twisted, nightmarish faces—intertwined with the same cryptic symbol. In the margin of one page, Alice’s neat handwriting read: "The past never leaves."

Clarry’s heart raced. This wasn’t a simple missing person case. Alice hadn’t just disappeared. She had been trying to warn someone. Something important. Something sinister.

She turned to Mark. “Do these symbols, these faces, mean anything to you?”

Mark’s face paled, his expression twisting with confusion and fear. “No… I don’t know what any of this means. But now, I’m beginning to think that whatever Alice was running from, it has everything to do with her past.”

Clarry’s instincts were on high alert. “What if I told you that Alice didn’t just vanish? What if she left because she had no choice?”

Mark’s face drained of color. “What are you suggesting?”

Clarry took a deep breath, her voice firm and unwavering. “I think Alice was being hunted—not by a person, but by something far darker. These symbols, her art—she was trying to send a warning. She was trying to escape something from her past, something that was crystalling around her, closing in.”

The air in the room seemed to thicken, a heavy weight pressing on her chest as the pieces of the puzzle clicked together. She turned to Mark, her voice low but urgent. “You said she was afraid of her past. I think the key to finding her is uncovering what that past holds. Was there anyone—anything—she was running from?”

Mark’s eyes narrowed in thought. His lips parted, but no words came. Then, it hit him.

“I think we need to go deeper into her past. Find the roots of these symbols. It’s not just Alice we’re looking for. It’s the shadow that’s been chasing her.”

As Clarry and Mark set out to trace the tangled history that led to Alice’s disappearance, Clarry knew one thing for sure: Alice’s past wasn’t merely a shadow—it was something alive, something sinister, and it wasn’t going to let go easily.

"The Crystallizing Shadow of Alice Harper" unfolds as Alice, a once-promising artist, struggles with self-doubt and external expectations. Her journey to reclaim her artistic vision is intertwined with a mysterious shadow that challenges her perceptions. As she confronts her inner fears, Alice discovers that true creativity thrives through embracing vulnerability.

As Clarry and Mark dug deeper into Alice’s past, they uncovered a chilling history tied to the occult—a past that Alice had desperately tried to escape. The cryptic symbols were linked to an ancient society, and Alice's art had become a dangerous reflection of that past, a warning that only now seemed clear. In the final confrontation, Clarry discovered that Alice hadn't just run away—she had sealed herself into hiding, trapped by forces beyond her control. The shadow that had followed her now loomed over them all, and in the end, Alice’s fate remained an unresolved puzzle, her warnings haunting the edges of their reality.

**CHAPTER 2**

**THE SILENT SHADOWS OF GLIMMER RIDGE**

**I**n the village of Trisaliies, Rajendra Joner gripped the worn leather straps of his pack as he trudged through the dense, snow-covered trees. His breath came in slow, labored exhalations, the cold air biting at his face like needles. The mountain peaks loomed above him, distant and unforgiving, but they had become the least of his concerns. The storm had rolled in faster than expected, a howling, relentless force that had swallowed the path ahead.

Behind him, Clise Devloft was stumbling, his boots sinking deep into the snow with every step. He wasn’t built for this, not like Rajendra. Clise was a city man—a detective, sharp-minded and resourceful, but ill-prepared for the brutal forces of nature that surrounded them.

“Keep up, Clise,” Rajendra called, his voice cutting through the rising wind. “We need to find shelter before the storm worsens.”

Clise’s response was barely audible, a strained grunt, but he managed to pick up his pace, his eyes scanning the mountain range in vain. Rajendra, on the other hand, was focused on their immediate survival—shelter, warmth, and the promise of something to eat. He had trekked these mountains before, but this time, the sense of foreboding gnawed at him. There was something about this storm, something… unnatural. He could feel it, deep in his bones.

The two men had been called to investigate a strange disappearance, a case that had baffled even the most seasoned detectives in the region. A renowned scientist, Dr. Benedict Forshaw, had vanished without a trace while researching ancient artifacts in the remote areas of Glimmer Ridge. His last communication, an incoherent message written in haste, spoke of "voices in the wind" and "shadows that linger in the snow." It had been enough to send Clise and Rajendra into the mountains, searching for answers in the freezing isolation.

"Any sign of shelter?" Clise asked, his voice trembling from the cold.

Rajendra paused, scanning the horizon through the falling snow. A narrow cliffside came into view, its jagged rocks jutting out against the darkening sky. It wasn’t much, but it offered something—shelter from the biting wind.

"Over there," Rajendra said, pointing. "We’ll make do with that overhang. It’ll be tight, but it’ll keep us from freezing."

They hurried toward the cliffside, struggling against the wind that whipped through the trees with a deafening howl. When they finally reached the overhang, Rajendra was the first to slip beneath it, grateful for the shelter. Clise followed suit, though his steps were slower, his breath rasping as he collapsed against the rock wall.

The two men huddled together, the darkness around them growing thicker with each passing moment. The storm raged relentlessly outside, but within the small overhang, they found a strange sense of security—an illusion, perhaps, but one they desperately needed.

"How much further do you think we need to go?" Clise asked after a long silence, his voice low and strained.

Rajendra shook his head. "Hard to say. The storm has slowed us down more than I expected. But we’ll press on in the morning. First, we need to rest."

Clise nodded, pulling his jacket tighter around him as he leaned back against the cold stone. His thoughts kept returning to the case, to the strange messages from Dr. Forshaw, and to the unsettling feeling that had settled in the pit of his stomach. There was something off about this place—something sinister that he couldn’t put into words. The wind howled outside like a wailing ghost, and he couldn’t help but feel that it was more than just a storm.

"Rajendra," Clise murmured, breaking the silence once more. "Do you think it’s possible that Forshaw’s disappearance… isn’t just a matter of him getting lost? What if… what if there’s something more to it?"

Rajendra looked over at him, his face etched with weariness but his eyes sharp. "What do you mean?"

"I don’t know… it’s just this nagging feeling I have. Forshaw was an experienced researcher. He wouldn’t have just gotten lost. Not without leaving some kind of trail. And then there’s the message. It was almost like he was trying to warn someone."

Rajendra considered Clise’s words carefully, his brow furrowed. "You may be right. Something about all of this doesn’t sit right with me either. But we can’t solve it out here in the cold. We need to get to his last known location, or whatever we can find of it, and piece it together from there."

The two men sat in silence for a moment, each lost in thought. The storm outside seemed to intensify, the wind howling more ferociously as though it were alive—an unseen force closing in around them.

It was then that Rajendra noticed a shadow in the distance, moving across the snow in a deliberate, measured way. At first, he thought it was just the wind playing tricks on his tired eyes, but the figure was too distinct, too real. He reached for his flashlight and flicked it on, casting a beam of light into the darkened snow.

Clise followed his gaze, his eyes narrowing. "What the hell…?"

The figure—dark, hunched, and strangely elongated—continued to move, its silhouette growing clearer as it approached. Rajendra’s instincts kicked in, his heart pounding as the figure came closer. It wasn’t human. Not entirely, at least. There was something about the way it moved—unnatural, fluid, and predatory.

"Stay behind me," Rajendra muttered, his voice steady but with a hint of urgency.

Clise didn’t need to be told twice. He quickly stepped back into the shelter of the overhang, watching as Rajendra moved forward, the beam of the flashlight cutting through the storm.

The figure stopped abruptly, as if it had sensed their presence. The wind died down for a brief moment, as though the mountain itself held its breath. For a long, tense second, there was only silence. Then, the figure moved again—closer this time.

"Who’s there?" Rajendra called out, his voice steady but filled with warning.

The figure didn’t respond, but it was no longer moving toward them. Instead, it seemed to be circling, as though assessing them. Rajendra took a cautious step forward, his hand instinctively reaching for the weapon hidden under his jacket.

Suddenly, the figure broke into a run, darting between the trees with astonishing speed. Rajendra hesitated, then turned toward Clise, who was now staring wide-eyed at the disappearing shadow.

"What the hell was that?" Clise whispered, his voice hoarse.

"I don’t know," Rajendra said, his mind racing. "But I’m sure of one thing—we’re not alone up here."

The air seemed to thicken with tension as the wind howled again, sending a shiver down their spines. The storm raged on, but in that moment, the two men understood that the mountain held more than just the cold and snow—it held secrets, deep, ancient ones, and they were beginning to uncover them.

The next morning, the storm subsided, leaving a thick, heavy silence in its wake. Rajendra and Clise continued their trek, moving cautiously through the snow, the events of the previous night hanging over them like a dark cloud. They reached Forshaw’s camp hours later, but what they found there would change everything they thought they knew.

Forshaw’s belongings were scattered around his tent, but there were no signs of struggle. His journal, half-frozen but intact, lay open on the ground. The last entry was cryptic, almost prophetic: “The shadows are closing in. I can hear them in the wind, whispering of the past, of things long buried. They won’t let me go.”

Rajendra looked up, his face grim. "We need to get out of here. There’s something wrong with this place."

But Clise wasn’t listening. He was staring at something in the distance, a figure moving slowly across the snow-covered ridge.

It wasn’t Forshaw.

It was something else. Something worse.