

Corporate criminal

High profile strategic consultant-turned-author R.V. Raman brings an insider's knowledge to bank fraud in his novel

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THE ASIAN AGE

VIf art imitates life, then we all need to be very worried. R.V. Raman's novel, *Fraudster*, is an insider's account of the less than salubrious side of the corporate world. The former head of KPMG's Consulting Practice and co-head of their Risk Advisory Services, his corporate background brings up the obvious question: How much of the novel, which spans murder, bank fraud and high-profile hack-attacks, is based on true events? "There is no particular event that served as inspiration," says Raman. "Several small cases that one came across contributed to the plot. I am familiar with the working of the finan-

cial sector, so weaving in a fictional plot wasn't tough. I just focused on authenticating the story. It needed to be believable."

Though the 52-year-old is no stranger to writing — he has had two books published by Amazon Digital Services under the pseudonym, Kevan Dinn — he still sees himself as a schoolboy who is learning a new skill. "I do not have the technical knowledge to be a writer, but I have always been a voracious reader. For about 30 years, I have wanted to do a number of things. Writing and teaching are two that I have had the luxury to pick up recently," says Raman, who is visiting faculty for Business Strategy at IIM, Trichy.

Interestingly, white-collar crime wasn't an obvious subject choice for Raman. "I did try to get a fantasy series I wrote published here, but Indian publishers don't see a target audience in the

country for fantasy unless it is mythological. Three publishers did shortlist it, but their sales team, citing marketing difficulties, shot it down. This led me to work backwards. I thought about the kinds of books that do get picked up by publishers."

Raman also thinks that it is more important for the author to be familiar with his subject matter than write about what is topical. "I am lucky white-collar crimes and corporate espionage make for a great read and are also currently topical. However, if it hadn't been topical, I wouldn't have chosen to do something unfamiliar

just to get published," he says.

Though the book has received positive reviews, Raman is not satisfied with his product. "Today, when I read the book, I see places where I think the phrases could have been much better or the situation explained differently," he says, echoing

the angst all writers suffer from.

He has already started work on his next novel, which will be based on the stock market and its players. He is hoping that it will be ready for publication in 2015.



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