



A New York Times  
Bestseller

# The Pride Empire

Story & Illustrations by:

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*Special thanks to my brother Manan,  
who patiently listened to my ideas and  
storyline..... and my parents who  
proof read the story!*

*- Vihaan*

# CHAPTER 1

## THE PRIDE EMPIRE

I, Gilbert Macintosh, the brain of one of the greatest detective agencies in the world, “The Pride Empire” with my trusted colleagues and very close friends, Lee Herbrew-the muscle, Brian Scourge – the observer and Jackson Cooper- the pro, are proud to be in The Pride Empire. Our headquarters [HQ] is too well



hidden to find (read on to know where it is). The Pride Empire has prevented numerous murder attempts and sensational robberies.

Today’s morning was like no other. I woke up early in the morning to watch the golden sunrise, the canary like golden rays gleaming upon my windows. I had a light, filling breakfast, greeted my neighbour while heading out to the park for a

walk. I then had lunch, and headed off to the HQ of our detective agency.

## CHAPTER 2

### IT ALL STARTS

At the drop of a hat, I reached a building. A green mat of grass was surrounding it. I walked into it casually with a case and stepped onto an elevator. Making sure no one was near me, I started saying stuff that would have sounded like random numbers, but just that they were in uniform.



“Password Accepted” said a cool female voice and the elevator shot up. Once it reached to the 24th floor (the top floor) the back, glass wall of the elevator opened. I went inside the wall and saw myself standing upon a massive dome shaped building with no windows but many watch towers, lasers and all other types of security systems you could imagine.



A classified voice scanned my ID card and the doors skid open. I walked in to see a few police officers all hovering over a man named Cornigal Smith. Cornigal Smith was tall, broad and extremely strong. He had a serious face and a short brown beard.

It was a hustle and bustle. All of a sudden he shook off the policemen vigorously, gave a glare at us, the detectives, and escaped the police.

Lee Herbrew was agile with his moves, he signalled us to go after him. I handed out micro earphones to Brian, Jackson and Herbrew as they gushed in different directions. I knew what I had to do, so I rushed towards the watchtower and spotted Cornigal running towards the woods. I focussed a powerful torch at him (because it was already dark) and whispered through the micro

earphones that where exactly he was. Then all of our security systems aimed at him.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE ESCAPE

Cornigal, sensing danger, ran aback to our electrical system which also housed the security system. He gave a big blow to the red button that was marked as security system and another humongous blow to the one which was marked as electricity.

With this, all our security forces stopped immediately including our microphones and all of our lights too went dark. Being pitch dark, my torch was one of the only sources of light we could get.

I saw Brian near me and signalled him to come. I was then informed that Jackson and Herbrew were going towards Cornigal together. “Things could get ugly now” whispered Brian, but I disagreed.

Meanwhile, Jackson and Herbrew were creeping closely to Cornigal. ‘You thought you could catch



me, did ya?’ he said in a low voice ‘You and your stupid detective game could never stop me!’ Cornigal shouted and then darted forward to hide behind a bush. But when they went towards the bush no one was there.

A thunder of fury rose in our heads, we had only just let the most wanted criminal in the world escape from our hands. Though we were all relieved that no one got hurt. That night was the worst night for us detectives. A dark cloud of sorrow was saddening everyone. We were sure that Cornigal was plotting something that very moment.

## CHAPTER 4



### BREAKING NEWS!

As no breakthrough happened, we all decided to take the day off and spend it on the beach to watch the dancing waves crashing on the shore.

I noticed that Lee Herbrew was worrying about Cornigal and I assured him that Cornigal would be found in no time, too scared to admit the truth.

Later when we were surfing, Jackson received a call from the inspector who informed him to come to the Head Quarter (HQ) as fast as

possible. We changed and went as soon as we could to the HQ.

Once we reached our HQ, I was surprised to know that the flora Garden landscape, a gorgeous and expensive painting was stolen yesterday!

The painting was a slender, serene, passion pink flamingo surrounded by innumerable flowers of



varied vibrant hues. The painting beckons you. The water blue background adds to its original natural site of beauty beyond words.

The stolen painting could mean anything. It was one of the three most important artefacts (only the royals know why). This was a sign to detectives asking them to come and find the culprits.

Jackson suggested to have a look around the museum in which it was kept in. So we booked a taxi and directed the driver to take us to 'The Art & Culture Museum'.



After a few minutes I was staring at a gigantic brown building with many pillars running down. I had never been to this museum before and so I was mesmerised by its beautiful paintings and sculptures. We met a guard and asked him to show us the cameras but it turned out that the robbers had switched off the cameras before the robbery. Boy, these robbers were smart!

## CHAPTER 5

### MISSION CRITICAL

We did a bit of investigation but found nothing. Then Brian had an idea. 'The museum is not open from 9 pm to 7 am every day, so the robbers struck that time since they couldn't strike earlier because they would easily be spotted by the crowd. So all we have to do is to find out who came in and when' he explained. If we give news that the robbers ventured out with the wrong fake painting, (since they will be in a foreign country) 'they'll try to book tickets. To come back here, while we will request the queen to cancel all means of transportations coming here, if a person is doing everything to come here, we have a suspicion'. 'We will cast cameras around the building and hide inside it' I added. But the queen refused as New York was a major tourist spot.

That night was a nervous night for the Pride Empire. We were all given weapons to protect

ourselves. We all settled down behind a large pillar where we were planning to spend the night. 'Culprits caught on tape' explained Jackson while gazing at a small screen attached to his uniform 'They'll come any time now'.

They did come that moonless night but not in the room containing the fake painting, they went straight to the room accommodating the model of gratitude which was the second most important artefact. The pride empire rushed into the room and closed in on them. They were masked so, we did not know who they were. We were just about to unmask them when they pushed me and ran away.

## CHAPTER 6

### WHO? WHAT? WHY?

A few police officers were stationed at hidden places, where was exactly where the culprits ran. Then all the police officers pounced and then handcuffed them.

Time went by quickly and I saw Herbrew unmasking one of the robbers. It was Cornigal! No wonder we hadn't suspected him earlier. He would have ran through the woods straight to the museum and.....but my thoughts were interrupted by the loud gasp by all detectives and officers when they saw who the second robber was. It was Prince Victor, The Queens younger son.

Nobody could believe that Prince Victor the Queens younger son, a charming, young and handsome boy was involved in this. But it all fitted together now. Cornigal would have run through the woods and met Victor while he

was out on as usual evening walk. They then would have sneaked into the museum and stolen the painting. Then asked his mom to not do a lockdown with a lame excuse to fool the old lady that the country tourism is more important than its safety.

Today they were about to steal the model of gratitude (the second most important artefact). The model of gratitude is a beautiful model of King Arthur which is used to greet important people who visit our country like presidents, kings and queens. But now there a few questions hovering above my head. Why did they steal both important artefacts? Where did they keep the painting?

Then I just remembered something! The prince was part of the royal family. He knew what would happen if the 3 things were together. The pair later told us that together all the three materials could make a weapon capable to destroy the world and also gave us back the painting (of course with much threatening persuasion) and so was the end of one of the Pride Empire's greatest adventure.



Signing off....

Gilbert Mackintosh

AKA the brain

## About the Author

Vihaan Maheshwari is an enthusiastic 9-year-old



boy. He loves handling tech gadgets and reading about animals. He aims to be a

zoologist someday. An avid reader, he sketches, and keeps himself fit by playing football. Vihaan lives in Bangalore with his parents and elder brother.



*“Exciting detective story from a 9-year-old.....”*

- Sunday Times, London

*“Fast.... can’t put down till you finish the last sentence”*

- The Guardian, London

New York witnesses a costly painting theft.

No one knows who the thief is.

...and then a dangerous criminal escapes.

Can “The Pride Empire” – the greatest detective agency of all times, solve the mystery?

**Flip through this book to find out the answer.**