

The Doctrine in the Hand

The Twelve Field Cards

THE ENCOUNTER AT THE COUNTER

CARD 1 · The Station Dignity Audit

Chapter Seven read the furniture of a station as a philosophy — the high chair and its towel, the vast desk, the low stool: an architecture of supplication. The audit dismantles it.

Offer the citizen a seat the equal of the officer's. Clear the towel and the oversized desk. Provide a seated waiting area, water and a clean toilet. Post who is responsible for what, and by when. Staff a desk an officer is trained to receive a woman at. Have the duty officer greet, not interrogate.

A building tells the citizen what she is before a word is spoken.

CARD 2 · The Manner of the Encounter — the Four A's

Chapter Seven distilled trust into four things a citizen registers within seconds — voice, neutrality, respect, trustworthiness. Because they are behaviours, they can be trained; Chapter Fifteen called the practice friction-free policing.

- Apologise — open with a word for the inconvenience.
- Aim — at the likely offender, not the random citizen.
- Assist — help, don't humiliate — the drunk into a taxi, not a fight.
- Acknowledge — close with thanks for the cooperation.

Manner is what the public remembers, and trust is built or broken on it.

CARD 3 · The Seven-Day Complainant Protocol — seven days, four endings

Chapter One named the state's deepest duty — to be the lawful alternative that actually works on the day the citizen, having done everything right, walks up to the counter.

- 1 — Cognisable offence — register the case.
- 2 — Another department's — re-route it, and tell the complainant where it went.
- 3 — Demonstrably false — file it, with the reason recorded.
- 4 — None of these within seven days — the officer appears before the complainant, in person.

A right the citizen cannot enforce is only a favour.

THE FOCUSED FORCE

CARD 4 · The Offender Demerit List — 5-4-4-3-2-1

The essay from which the book grew proposed mapping offenders by score and committing a tenth to a fifth of strength against the highest. The diagnosis confirmed it: a small 'power few' drive a wildly disproportionate share of harm.

Score each violent or property offender from zero to five on each measure, multiply by its weight, and rank by the total: propensity for violence (×5), dependence on crime proceeds (×4), gang affiliation (×4), number of offences (×3), geographic range (×2), age (×1).

The list directs the force — and, kept honest, shields the officer from the charge of profiling.

CARD 5 · The Conviction, Not the Encounter — the Five D's

Chapter Seventeen named the choice the book presses on the reader — the slow machinery against organised crime over the spectacle the screen rewards; Chapter Eight added the move the syndicate most fears: taking its money.

- Detain — preventive detention that actually holds.
- Disrupt — the network, not just one name.
- Deprive — forfeit the criminal wealth — follow the money.
- Depose — key witnesses early, and protect them for real.
- Deliver — a fast-tracked conviction that will stand.

The encounter leaves the network intact; the conviction ends it.

POLICE FOR THE PEOPLE

CARD 6 · The 50×20 Community Web

Chapter Six described order manufactured in plain sight — a district marathon of fifty thousand, and beneath it a quieter design.

Each station house officer builds a working tie to some twenty young people of the beat — a reach into a thousand homes. First contact is civic, never transactional. The tie is logged and kept warm, and activated only for legitimate ends: early warning, rumour control, steadying a tense crowd.

Cooperation built across a hundred quiet months is what steadies the one angry hour.

CARD 7 · The Family Police Officer

Chapter Fifteen proposed remaking the beat officer as a family police officer — known, proactive, useful, rather than an episodic threat.

A set number of household visits a week, by appointment, advising on safety. Routine papers — challans, FIR copies, verifications — carried to the door. A standing check on the elderly-alone, women living single, and recent migrants.

The FIR carried to the door is dignity and deterrence in a single short walk.

CARD 8 · The Community Listening Session

Chapter Fifteen held that deployment can be opened to the people, whose sense of where danger lies is often sharper than the map's.

Invite a true cross-section — including the most vulnerable — to a neutral venue. Open with one question: where and when do you feel least safe, and why? Record every input; do not defend in the room. Convert what you can into deployment within a fortnight, and report back. Guard against capture by the dominant.

A say in how a place is policed is itself a form of security.

CARD 9 · The Visibility Deployment Map

The arithmetic of Part One is unforgiving: the police are vastly outnumbered, so presence cannot come from numbers. It must come from placement.

Map anxiety by place and hour — women's commute corridors, market crossings, school zones, arterial roads, known hot spots — and put marked, recognisable presence into the high-anxiety cells first. The same corner, the same hour, the same constable.

Visible and predictable presence is the cheapest assurance a thin force can give.

NARRATIVE AND COMMAND

CARD 10 · The Three-Part Directive, Made Public — what · how · why · publish

The prologue described a letter returned; Chapter Ten made narrative a domain of security. An order shared becomes a standard the public can hold you to.

- What — the exact, measurable action — clear enough for a constable in a remote thana.
- How — the method and the timeline; no ‘agreed in principle.’
- Why — the reason it matters, so it outlasts the officer who issued it.
- Publish — strip the sensitive detail, release it, and state what the citizen may now expect.

Transparency is not a flourish; it is the contract — and the honest officer’s cover.

CARD 11 · The First 48 Hours — see · signal · open

Tenures are short and uncertain; the change from a police to our police begins not with a five-year plan but with the officer’s first morning.

- See — walk the reception as a citizen sees it; read a month of complaints yourself; pull the offender list; note the response-time baseline.
- Signal — hold a roll call and say plainly what you expect; visit stations unannounced; meet the head constables who run them; draft the first directive.
- Open — meet the loudest critic and listen; fix a daily review hour; publish the directive; announce one visible improvement for the week.

Momentum built in two days outlasts plans drafted over two months.

CARD 12 · The Flag — believe · ask · check · act

The safety of women and the vulnerable is close to the centre of Indian security, and it is the test on which the public most sharply judges whether the compact holds.

- Believe — take the first telling seriously; never counsel her to adjust or compromise.
- Ask — the three that predict the worst: has it happened before, is it escalating, has he threatened to kill?
- Check — access — to her, to weapons, and to who else is exposed (children; in honour cases, the wider family).
- Act — record it, refer to the women’s desk or shelter, fix a named follow-up; never close on ‘settled.’

The complaint downgraded today is the FIR regretted tomorrow.