

KING OF CRICKET

Chapter 1: A Second Chance

The final moments of his life replayed in his mind like a tragic movie. The frustration from India's heartbreaking loss in the 2023 Cricket World Cup was still fresh. He had stormed out of the pub in Pune, fuming, yelling about how things could have been different—how he could have made a difference. And then, there it was—a flash of headlights, the deafening screech of tires, and pain so excruciating it snuffed out his consciousness. That was the last he remembered.

Or so he thought.

When he woke up, the searing pain in his body had vanished. Instead, he felt an odd lightness. Groaning, he forced his eyes open, expecting either the fiery gates of hell or the serene expanse of heaven. But what greeted him was neither. It was his room. His old room. The one he hadn't seen in over a decade.

Confused and slightly disoriented, he sat up, his heart pounding. This couldn't be right. His cricket posters were back on the walls, featuring his heroes, Sachin Tendulkar and MS Dhoni. His bat, the one he had begged his parents to buy when he was 10, rested in the corner, still wrapped in the worn grip tape he'd used during countless practice sessions.

He swung his legs off the bed, and that's when he noticed it. His legs felt...normal. Not the weakened, damaged limb he had resigned himself to living with after his injury in 2019. He stood up quickly, almost stumbling in his haste, and ran to the mirror.

The reflection staring back at him was jarring. His face was rounder, his body smaller. He pressed his hands to his cheeks, tugged at his hair, and even pinched himself to ensure he wasn't dreaming. A mixture of disbelief and exhilaration surged through him.

"No way..." he whispered, his voice cracking slightly. He turned and grabbed his phone, the old Nokia model he had used as a teenager. The screen lit up, and his heart nearly stopped. The date read: 1 January 2013.

He staggered back, his mind reeling. He was 12 years old again—12 years and 4 months, to be exact. The realization hit him like a ton of bricks. He was back. Somehow, miraculously, impossibly...he was back.

His initial shock gave way to excitement. He clenched his fists, his mind racing with possibilities. He could finally achieve everything he'd ever dreamed of. The pain of his cricket injury and the loss of his career no longer mattered. He had a second chance to fulfill his dream of becoming the greatest cricketer in the world. He could rewrite his story, surpassing even Virat Kohli, and claim the title of the greatest of all time.

But as his joy bubbled over, another thought struck him, sobering his elation. His parents. He remembered the catastrophic downfall of his family's business and the devastating accident that had left his parents paralyzed. He also remembered the betrayal that had almost wiped out their wealth. This time, he wouldn't let it happen. He had the knowledge, the foresight, and the determination to protect them. He would shield them from the misfortune that had once shattered their lives.

He slumped back onto his bed, overwhelmed yet resolute. This wasn't just a second chance for him to chase his dreams. It was an opportunity to safeguard his family's future, to rebuild their legacy, and to become more than just a cricketer. He would be their protector, their pillar of strength.

As he sat there, plans began to take shape in his mind. First, he needed to relive his teenage years with purpose. He would master cricket all over again, training smarter and harder. He would also prepare for the challenges his family would face in the future. He'd delve into business strategies and learn everything he could about economics and finance, using the knowledge he'd gained in his previous life.

He'd save his family. He'd save himself. And he'd conquer the world.

Taking a deep breath, he stood up, staring at his reflection one more time. The boy in the mirror wasn't just a teenager. He was a man with a mission, armed with memories of the future and a determination to change it.

"This time," he whispered, his voice steady and filled with resolve, "I'll do it right."

The journey had begun. A journey to greatness, redemption, and a life reimagined.