

# KING OF CRICKET

## Chapter 10: New Beginnings

Aarav lay in bed, the soft glow of the moon streaming through his window. The evening's celebrations had been everything he had hoped for. His parents' pride, the joy of success—it was more than he had imagined. The thought of making it to the academy filled him with exhilaration, but as he lay there, his mind buzzed with excitement.

Suddenly, he heard a soft ding sound. Aarav sat up, his heart quickening. It was the familiar chime that meant Aria was activating. "Aria? Did you make that sound? What's happening?"

"Congratulations, Aarav!" came Aria's cheerful voice. "You've cleared step one on your journey to greatness and earned the title of Best Fielder, with a completion of 15%."

Aarav felt a rush of joy. The feeling was almost overwhelming, like a wave crashing over him, filling him with renewed energy. "Thank you, Aria. This is just the start, isn't it?"

"Indeed," Aria replied. "Here's your next task: get selected for the U-19 team within two years. If you succeed, you'll receive the reward: Dale Steyn's pace technique at 28% completion."

Aarav's eyes widened. Dale Steyn—a legend who had dominated test cricket with his ferocious pace and pinpoint accuracy. The thought of mastering his technique was enough to make Aarav's heart race. "28% completion of Steyn's technique? That's incredible! I'll give it everything I have."

"Be aware," Aria warned, "if you don't make the team, there will be no reward."

Aarav nodded, determination flaring in his eyes. "I won't let that happen, Aria."

Aria's voice turned serious. "I think, with your talent, if you don't get selected, it would be a waste. You have the skills, the drive, but you need to put everything into it."

Aarav sat back against his pillows, considering Aria's words. He wasn't going to let this opportunity pass him by.

"Show me my profile," Aarav requested, a new sense of purpose fueling him.

Name: Aarav Pathak

Age: 12 years (Birthday: 31 August, born 31 August 2000)

Talent Level: SS (Rare)

Skills: Low injury risk, fast recovery, sleep fatigue healing

Talent by System:

KL Rahul Talent: 42.309% (Training Module # – percentage increases with time and effort. Estimated 3-4 years for 100% completion at current

pace.)Bowling Type: Left arm medium paceFielding Skill: Best fielder (15%) +  
Training ModuleHeight: 4'11"

Aarav stared at his profile, a smile spreading across his face. The numbers, the potential—it was all so real now. With a final glance at the ceiling, he lay back and drifted into a deep sleep, the promise of tomorrow filling his dreams.

The next morning, Aarav woke up feeling completely refreshed and ready for the day. He quickly got dressed, grabbed his gear, and made his way to school. The classes passed in a blur as he mentally prepared for the evening ahead. At exactly 3:15 PM, he stepped into Shivaji Park Academy, his heart thumping with anticipation.

As he walked through the grounds, he spotted a familiar face—the player he had seen during the all-rounder test. Aarav approached him, a smile on his face.

"Hey, I'm Aarav Pathak. Nice to meet you," Aarav said, holding out his hand.

The boy looked up and returned the smile. "Hey, I'm Abhishek Sharma. I remember you. You batted and bowled really well during the test."

Aarav felt a slight flush rise in his cheeks. "Thanks, Abhishek. You were great too—those long sixes were impressive."

Abhishek laughed, the sound warm and friendly. "Appreciate it. We're teammates now, so let's make the most of this."

Aarav's heart swelled at the budding friendship. "Absolutely. It's good to have someone to talk to."

They chatted about cricket, school, and their goals for the future, the minutes slipping by as the excitement built. Soon, more players began to trickle in, their faces a mix of determination and nervous energy. Aarav noticed their shared anticipation as the sun began to dip lower in the sky.

At precisely 3:30 PM, the commanding voice of Coach Ashwin cut through the buzz, and he stepped onto the field, followed by several other coaches. His eyes swept over the players, assessing them with an intensity that could make anyone's heart skip a beat.

"Alright, everyone, let's get warmed up!" Coach Ashwin said. His voice was authoritative but carried a certain enthusiasm that lit a fire in the hearts of the young cricketers.

He led them through five rounds of the ground, pushing them to run faster, with more energy. Aarav's legs burned, but he pushed himself harder, remembering his goal and the reward that awaited him. Abhishek ran beside him, their feet pounding the ground in unison.

"Keep it up!" Abhishek shouted, grinning as he looked at Aarav. "We're just getting started."

Aarav nodded, breathless but exhilarated. The bond of friendship, the challenge of the training, and the chance to prove himself—it was all falling into place. He felt alive, ready to take on whatever the academy had in store.

The path ahead was uncertain, but one thing was clear: Aarav was ready for the journey.