

## Cricket 24

### Chapter 24

The cool September breeze drifted in through the open window as Aarav sat cross-legged on his bed, gazing out at the darkening sky. He leaned back against the headboard, his diary resting on his lap, and let out a long breath. It was February 7, 2015, a date etched in his mind not because of an event but because it marked a reflective pause. This year had been transformative—a whirlwind of growth, surprises, and milestones that seemed to have passed in the blink of an eye. The Vijay Merchant Trophy loomed just weeks away, scheduled to begin on February 23, and the anticipation thrummed through his veins.

The fixtures for all the teams had been released. Mumbai was grouped in the West Zone, alongside Maharashtra U-16, Gujarat U-16, Saurashtra U-16, Goa U-16, and Baroda U-16.. Each name carried weight, each team a formidable opponent. "This is not going to be easy," Aarav muttered to himself, scratching his head as he imagined the challenges ahead.

His thoughts were interrupted by his mother's voice echoing from downstairs. "Aarav, dinner is ready! Come down before it gets cold!"

"Coming, Maa!" he called back, but he didn't move immediately. Instead, his mind drifted to his father's ventures. Their family business had seen a meteoric rise, thanks to some strategic investments. Apple, NVIDIA, and Bitcoin—all had yielded positive results. He remembered the brief plummet of Bitcoin's value earlier this year, dropping to 7,100 rupees from 21,000. Rather than despair, his father had doubled down, buying more Bitcoin on Aarav's suggestion.

"Long-term investments always pay off," Aarav mused, recalling his past life's knowledge. He knew the 2020s would see Bitcoin's explosion, and it felt surreal to witness the seeds being sown.

Then there was his father's political strategy. Having supported the BJP since 2013, his father's ties with the party had strengthened considerably. Aarav's rebirth in 2024 had given him insight into the political climate, and he knew aligning with the BJP would yield benefits for their business. His father's foresight had proven invaluable, as connections with influential leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, were paving the way for new opportunities.

The family's food chain, Pat Culinaria, had expanded across India, boasting at least three outlets in every state. This year alone, his father had ventured into vertical integration, acquiring Campa Cola and a juice brand, Froot Mango. Combining them under their umbrella, they launched new Indian-inspired flavors, making waves in the market with innovative deals like unlimited drinks for a minimum order of 99 rupees. The strategy had struck gold, especially among students.

"And then there's the theater collaboration," Aarav muttered, thinking about how his father had contracted with major film chains to include their restaurants in theaters. Plans were already in place to bring their drinks to the broader market, competing with established beverage brands.

"Aarav! Are you coming down or not?" his mother's voice carried a sharper edge this time, pulling him out of his reverie.

"Coming, Maa!" he called back, scrambling off the bed. He rushed downstairs, the aroma of freshly cooked food making his stomach growl.

The dining table was already set, the aroma of dal tadka and freshly made chapatis wafting through the air. His mother, clad in a simple yet elegant kurta, was busy serving rice while his father read the newspaper.

"Finally," his mother said, placing a steaming bowl of dal on the table. "You'd think I was calling a prince down from his throne."

"Sorry, Maa," Aarav said sheepishly, taking his seat. His father looked up from his plate, an amused glint in his eyes.

His father looked up, folding the newspaper neatly. "Caught up planning how to smash Gujarat in the first match?" he teased, a rare smile playing on his lips.

Aarav grinned. "Something like that. They're a tough team, though. It'll be a good challenge."

"Well, challenges are what make victories sweeter," his father said, nodding approvingly. "Speaking of victories, our Mumbai franchise broke its monthly sales record. And guess what? Campa Cola's new mango flavor is already trending on the market and our tv advertisement is also bringing great response."

"That's amazing, Papa!" Aarav said genuinely. "Looks like your idea of unlimited drinks is a hit."

"Not just that," his mother chimed in, a proud smile lighting up her face. "Your father's tie-up with PepsiCo is going to take this to the next level. Soon, Campa Cola will be everywhere."

Listening to this, I remember that in 2014, everything changed. My dad saw PepsiCo's entry into India as the perfect opportunity, and he moved fast. He used his Political Connection and business skills and won the production and distribution rights of PepsiCo in India. He set up True Taste, a company specifically to handle Pepsi's distribution and production in India. But the real brilliance came in how he used Pepsi's investment. We already had the Campa Cola factory, which produced drinks like Sprint and Aqua, and with the cash from Pepsi, we didn't just expand our distribution—we expanded our factory too. Now, we were producing both Pepsi and Campa right here in India.

Dad didn't just want to be the local partner for PepsiCo—he wanted to turn Campa into its rival. Pepsi was big, but Campa had local roots, a brand recognition of its own. We were ready to flood the market, pushing both Pepsi and Campa into every corner of the country, from Tier 1 cities to the smallest towns.

It was genius. PepsiCo's investment allowed us to scale quickly, but the real play was making Campa a contender to Pepsi. In this one move, we were poised to dominate the market, creating a two-brand powerhouse under the same venture—True Taste. It wasn't just about profit; it was about owning the market."

"Maa's YouTube channel isn't far behind," Aarav said, winking at her. "100,000 subscribers! That's incredible."

"It's nothing compared to what Pat Culinaria has achieved," she replied modestly, though the sparkle in her eyes betrayed her pride. "But I have to admit, it feels good to know people enjoy my vlogs."

Listening to her, Aarav continued, "Mom, you earned your online one-year diploma in fashion design this month. You followed your passion and achieved this at your age—so what are you planning to do with it?"

His mother smiled softly. "Nothing much, just followed my passion. I don't expect anything out of it."

Aarav nodded, then changed the subject.

The family shared a laugh, the warmth of their camaraderie filling the room. As dinner progressed, Aarav couldn't help but marvel at how far they'd come. His father's business acumen, his mother's creative pursuits—it all seemed to weave together into a tapestry of success and aspiration. After dinner, Aarav helped clear the table, earning an appreciative pat on the back from his mother. "Good boy," she said. "Now go get some rest. Big day tomorrow—training camp, right?"

"Yes, Maa," Aarav said, stifling a yawn. "Goodnight, everyone."

"Goodnight," his family echoed as he climbed the stairs back to his room.

Settling into bed, Aarav couldn't help but replay the day's conversations in his mind. His family's achievements, his father's bold moves in business, his mother's creative growth—all of it inspired him. And then there was his own journey, one that had only just begun but already promised greatness.

As he turned off the bedside lamp, the darkness wrapped around him like a comforting cocoon. He closed his eyes, the thought of the Vijay Merchant Trophy stirring his competitive spirit. Tomorrow would bring new challenges, but for now, he allowed himself the luxury of rest, his dreams filled with the promise of a future that glimmered just on the horizon.

Author's Note:- well well Here we have it, ~1300 words chapter. and a much awaited time-skip. in next chapter we would focus on his cricket. some things are different in this world, as this is an Alternate world or universe where something could be different from our own world according to my liking and do you like these business related chapters. i am making mc rich for future so that he could maintain his luxury lifestyle.

do you like these kind of chapters where mc tell about his family business or some other aspect other than cricket. next chapter would be his cricket 1 year progress and after than we would start Vijay Merchant trophy.

do you want this slow paced or fast forward to u19 or direct international debut. tell me in the comment in this line only i.e. u19 or international.

Also in this Chapter i also added a future Company or business idea. guess what is it!!