

Cricket 45

Chapter 45

Abhishek POV [It is written on the demand in the comment section of previous chapter, and I am Not very Good in this so just read it and tell me how you live this POV, should i do a change or is it fine]

Abhishek's eyes fluttered open to the soft hum of sounds. The suite was eerily silent, save for the occasional snores from his teammates sprawled across the room. He glanced around and realized something was amiss—Aarav wasn't in his bed. Stretching lazily, Abhishek rubbed the sleep from his eyes and got up, noticing the clock read 6:45 AM. He tiptoed past the others and quickly freshened up, deciding to investigate.

Making his way downstairs, he found Aarav in the gym, drenched in sweat, his muscles flexing as he worked through an intense set of pull-ups.

"What are you doing here so early in the morning?" Abhishek asked, breaking the quiet of the gym.

Aarav, panting slightly, grinned. "Burning off the guilt from yesterday's food. Need to balance it out. You know how strict I'm about fitness."

Abhishek chuckled. "Come on, you didn't even eat that much junk. It was me who had extra."

Aarav laughed, stepping off the pull-up bar and grabbing his towel. "Doesn't matter. As captain, I've got to set the example. You should join me—good warm-up for the match."

Abhishek smiled but shook his head. "Your dedication is on another level. I can't match that."

By the time they returned to the suite, the others were stirring awake. Arshdeep groaned dramatically, pulling the blanket over his head, while Yashasvi muttered something incoherent about needing ten more minutes. Aarav, as always, took charge, rallying everyone to get ready for the day.

A few hours later, the entire team was assembled in the dugout area in the stadium. Everyone was buzzing with nervous energy, the adrenaline palpable as they awaited the announcement of the playing XI. Abhishek sat next to Tilak, exchanging quiet jokes to ease the tension.

Coach Rahul Dravid entered the room, his calm demeanor immediately silencing the chatter. Aarav followed close behind, holding a sheet of paper in his hand. He exuded confidence, his expression that of a leader ready to guide his team to victory.

"Good morning, boys," Aarav began, his voice steady. "Today, we start our ODI series against England. After careful consideration, Coach and I have finalized the playing XI. Here's the list:"

As Aarav read out the names, Abhishek felt his heart race. He leaned forward slightly, waiting for his name to be called.

Yashasvi Jaiswal.

Prithvi Shaw (vice-captain).

Aarav (captain).

Tilak Verma.

Shubman Gill.

Dhruv Jurel (wicketkeeper).

Riyan Parag.

Kartik Tyagi.

Arshdeep Singh.

Shivam Mavi.

Ravi Bishnoi.

The list ended, and Abhishek felt a hollow ache in his chest. His name wasn't there. He sat frozen, staring at Aarav, his mind racing. Was this a mistake? Had he misheard?

As the chosen players and the rest left for warm-ups, Abhishek remained seated, staring blankly at the floor. Aarav noticed and walked over, sitting across from him.

"Abhi, I know this isn't what you wanted," Aarav began gently. "But listen to me. The T20s are coming up, and you're going to open for us. Coach and I believe in your ability, but for in ODI, we needed Jaiswal and Prithvi up top. Shubman's experience with the older ball is crucial. Trust me, your time will come."

Abhishek nodded slowly, swallowing the lump in his throat. "I get it, but this chance felt special too."

Aarav placed a reassuring hand on his shoulder. "You know cricket is a team sport, and everyone has their role. Your role is coming up, and when it does, the world will see what you're capable of. Just stay ready, okay?"

Abhishek managed a small smile. "Thanks. I'll be ready."

Two hours later, the toss took place under the bright English sun. Aarav, standing opposite England captain Harry Brook, won the toss and chose to bowl. Abhishek watched from the sidelines as Arshdeep Singh bowled the first over, starting with a maiden. Shivam Mavi followed with another tight over, and together, they kept the English openers in check.

By the ninth over, Aarav decided to bring himself into the attack. His first over was precise, conceding no runs, a display of captaincy at its finest. The others followed suit, with Ravi Bishnoi and Riyan Parag tightening the screws.

As the innings progressed, wickets began to fall. Arshdeep and Shivam picked up crucial breakthroughs, while Aarav and Kartik Tyagi cleaned up in the end overs getting 4 wickets by Aarav and 2 for Kartik. England managed to score 255, a decent total but well within India's reach.

When it was India's turn to bat, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Prithvi Shaw walked out confidently. The duo put on a strong partnership until Jaiswal was dismissed in the twelfth over. Aarav came in at number three, steadying the innings alongside Prithvi.

But a miscommunication during a quick single saw Aarav run out for 42. Abhishek winced from the dugout, feeling the frustration of his captain and friend. Despite the setback, Prithvi and Shubman Gill carried the innings forward. Tilak Verma contributed a vital fifty, and together, the team chased down the target with ease.

As the final runs were scored, the team erupted in celebration. High-fives, hugs, and cheers filled the air. Abhishek clapped along, proud to be part of Team India despite not playing.

Later in the locker room, Aarav approached Abhishek again. "See? We won the first match. Your turn is coming in the T20s, and when it does, I know you'll make it count."

Abhishek grinned, his spirits lifted. "Definitely. When the chance comes, I'll make sure it's unforgettable."

The night ended with a quiet sense of satisfaction. Though Abhishek hadn't played, he felt a renewed sense of purpose, ready to prove himself when his turn came.