

Cricket 92

Chapter 92

I woke up the next morning around 11, feeling refreshed after the long night drive through Auckland. The curtains in my hotel room were slightly open, letting in soft rays of sunlight that warmed the space. I stretched lazily, staring at the ceiling for a moment, letting my thoughts settle. Today felt like a day to slow down, to just enjoy the little things.

After a few more minutes of lazing around, I finally got up and freshened up in the luxurious bathroom. The warm water felt amazing against my skin, washing away any remnants of tiredness. Once I was done, I wrapped myself in a cozy robe and decided to indulge in a sauna session. The spa area of the hotel was serene, with soft music playing in the background and a mild aroma of essential oils filling the air. Sitting inside the sauna, I closed my eyes, letting the warmth relax my muscles. It was moments like these that reminded me how important it was to take a break and just breathe.

After about thirty minutes in the sauna, I returned to my room, feeling rejuvenated. I made myself a mug of coffee and sat by the window with my laptop, watching the beautiful Auckland skyline while going through some emails and work-related tasks. Sipping on my coffee, I skimmed through the news, responded to a few messages, and even spent some time organizing my travel photos from the night before. The pictures turned out stunning—the coastline, the bridge, and the mesmerizing Sky Tower glowing in the dark. I smiled, proud of my little photography skills.

Hours passed by quickly, and before I knew it, it was already 4 PM. I decided it was time to step outside and enjoy the day. I put on a casual outfit, grabbed my camera, and walked out of the hotel, eager to explore Auckland in the daylight. The weather was perfect—pleasant with a gentle breeze, and the city was bustling with life.

As I walked through the lively streets, I observed people going about their day—some rushing to work, tourists clicking photos, and kids playing in the parks. I found a charming little street lined with cafes and boutiques and decided to explore it. I stepped into a local café, ordered a refreshing iced tea, and sat by the window, people-watching for a while. There was something so peaceful about blending into the crowd, just observing the world around me without any rush.

After finishing my drink, I continued walking and soon stumbled upon a beautiful temple nestled between modern buildings. Its intricate architecture and peaceful ambiance drew me in. I stepped inside, feeling an instant sense of calm as the scent of incense filled the air. I offered a silent prayer, taking a moment to express my gratitude for everything—my career, my family, and the opportunities life had given me. As I looked around, I noticed a few locals lighting candles and offering flowers, their faces filled with devotion. It was a beautiful sight, and I took a few pictures of the temple's stunning carvings and the serene surroundings.

As the sun began to set, I made my way back to the hotel, arriving just in time for dinner with Virat Bhaiya and Dhoni Bhaiya's families. The dining area was buzzing with conversation and laughter, the aroma of delicious food filling the air. I greeted everyone and took my seat beside Virat Bhaiya, who was already halfway through his meal.

"Finally decided to join us, huh?" he teased with a smirk.

I chuckled. "Had a good day out, Bhaiya. Needed to explore a bit."

Anushka Bhabhi smiled. "Where did you go?"

"I took a walk around the city, visited a temple, clicked some photos... just a relaxing day," I replied, taking a bite of the delicious paneer tikka in front of me.

Sakshi Bhabhi, cutting a piece of her dessert, added, "Sounds peaceful. Sometimes, it's nice to just take a step back and enjoy life without the chaos, right?"

I nodded, "Exactly, Bhabhi. Auckland is such a beautiful place, and I wanted to soak it all "

After dinner, as everyone relaxed, Ziva came running up to me, her eyes wide with excitement. "Bhaiya! Let's play!" she demanded, tugging at my hand.

I laughed and got up, "Alright, what do you want to play?"

"Hide and seek!" she exclaimed.

Virat Bhaiya leaned back in his chair, smirking. "Good luck keeping up with her energy, Aarav."

I shrugged playfully. "I'm ready for the challenge!"

The next hour was filled with laughter and fun as Ziva and I played around the hotel lounge, hiding behind chairs and running through corridors. She was quick, always finding the best spots, and her giggles echoed through the place. At one point, I pretended not to see her, walking past her obvious hiding spot, and she burst out laughing.

"You can't find me, Bhaiya!" she said triumphantly, peeking out from behind a large plant.

I shook my head, "You're too smart for me, Ziva!"

Eventually, her energy started to fade, and Sakshi Bhabhi called her over. "Come on, Ziva, it's bedtime. You have a long day tomorrow."

Ziva pouted but gave me a tight hug. "Goodnight, Bhaiya! We'll play again soon!"

I ruffled her hair. "Of course, champ. Sweet dreams."

After saying goodnight to everyone, I headed to my room. I checked my phone for a while, making a mental checklist for tomorrow's plans. Something exciting was in store, and I wanted to be well-rested for it.

Lying in bed, I reflected on the day—the peaceful morning, the walk through the city, the temple visit, and the laughter-filled evening with Ziva. It was a perfect blend of solitude and companionship, and I couldn't have asked for a better day.

With a satisfied sigh, I switched off the lights and closed my eyes, drifting into a peaceful sleep, excited for what tomorrow would bring.

I woke up the next morning feeling a sense of excitement. Today was special—I had booked a ticket to watch a rugby match, the most popular sport in New Zealand. Experiencing the energy of a live rugby

game was something I had been looking forward to since I arrived. The online booking process had been smooth, and I had secured a great seat with a perfect view of the field. As I stretched and got out of bed, I couldn't help but feel a rush of anticipation for the day ahead.

After freshening up and grabbing a quick breakfast in my room, I put on a casual yet sporty outfit and headed downstairs to the hotel lobby. As the elevator doors slid open, I spotted Mahi Bhaiya and his family standing at the reception desk, checking out. Virat Bhaiya was chatting with the hotel staff while Sakshi Bhabhi was ensuring all the luggage was in order. I walked up to them with a smile and greeted, "Good afternoon, Bhaiya, Bhabhi!"

Mahi Bhaiya turned around and grinned, "Good afternoon, Aarav! All set for your plans today?"

Before I could reply, I felt a sudden tight grip around my legs. I looked down and saw Ziva hugging me tightly, her little arms wrapped around me. I bent down and hugged her back with a warm smile. "What happened, champ?" I asked softly.

Ziva looked up at me with big, innocent eyes and said in a sad voice, "Bhaiya, I am going bye-bye... but I don't want to go away from you. I want to play with you more."

I ruffled her hair gently and said, "Oh, don't worry, Ziva. We'll play more in the future for sure. You'll see, we'll have even more fun next time!"

She pouted for a moment but then brightened up as I promised her a playdate in the future. "Promise?" she asked, holding out her tiny pinky finger.

"Promise!" I said, locking my pinky with hers, and she smiled brightly.

Sakshi Bhabhi walked up and said, "She's really going to miss you, Aarav. Thanks for playing with her so much."

"It was my pleasure, Bhabhi. Ziva's the best play partner ever," I replied with a grin.

Soon, the hotel staff helped them load their luggage into the team van that the BCCI had arranged for their airport transfer. I waved at them as they got in, and Ziva kept waving back until the van disappeared from sight. A strange silence settled around me as I stood in the now-empty driveway. Their presence had made my trip even more special, and now I suddenly felt their absence. But I shook off the feeling and reminded myself of the exciting match ahead.

Sliding into the Lamborghini, I revved the engine and set my GPS for the stadium. The powerful roar of the car filled the air as I took off, weaving smoothly through Auckland's streets. The sun was shining brightly, and the breeze flowing through my open-top car added to the thrill. The streets were lively, with people walking around in rugby jerseys, waving flags, and heading in the same direction as me. It was clear that the entire city was gearing up for the match.

As I drove past the picturesque coastline, I couldn't help but marvel at the beauty of Auckland. The sparkling blue waters stretched out endlessly, and the sailboats gently swayed with the waves. It felt like a postcard come to life. I pulled over for a moment to click a few pictures, capturing the moment. The contrast of my green Lamborghini against the serene blue backdrop was something I couldn't resist sharing on social media.

After soaking in the view for a while, I continued driving, the excitement building with every passing minute. The closer I got to the stadium, the denser the crowd became. People were walking in groups, chanting team slogans and waving flags with enthusiasm. The energy was infectious, and I couldn't wait to be a part of it.

Finally, I arrived at the stadium parking lot and found a spot for my car. As I stepped out, the loud cheers and music from inside the stadium hit me. The atmosphere was electric. Vendors were selling team merchandise—scarves, jerseys, and foam fingers in bright team colors. I decided to grab a rugby scarf as a souvenir and draped it around my neck before heading inside.

Inside the stadium, the sheer size and energy of the crowd left me in awe. Fans were filling every corner, their voices echoing through the stands. I made my way to my seat and looked around, taking it all in. The massive LED screens displayed pre-match highlights, and the commentators' voices boomed across the stadium. The sight of the perfectly manicured field, the goalposts towering high, and the players warming up sent a rush of excitement through me.

As I pulled into the stadium parking lot, the excitement in the air was undeniable. Fans were everywhere, dressed in their team colors, waving flags, and chanting slogans. The entire city seemed to have come alive for the big rugby match, and I couldn't wait to experience it firsthand. I parked my Lamborghini and grabbed my premium ticket from the dashboard. This ticket gave me access to an exclusive seating area with only three people sharing the space, ensuring an up-close and luxurious view of the action.

Walking into the stadium, I scanned my ticket at the gate and made my way to the seating section. As I approached, I noticed that I'd be sharing the spot with two others. One of them, a blonde girl, seemed to be a New Zealand native, while the other, with her dark hair and Indian features, caught my attention immediately. She looked at me briefly when I arrived but didn't say anything, turning back to continue her conversation with the other girl.

I settled into my seat and adjusted my scarf, taking in the buzzing atmosphere around me. The stadium was a sea of energy, with thousands of fans chanting and waving their hands in anticipation of the match. The air smelled of popcorn and excitement, and the big LED screens were flashing the pre-game hype. As I focused on the players warming up on the field, I heard a voice next to me.

"Hey, I'm Emma," the blonde girl said with a friendly smile, leaning slightly towards me. "Do you like rugby?"

I turned to her with a confident smile and, in my best New Zealand accent, replied, "Although I respect the game, I don't know much about it. I just searched online for the most famous sport in New Zealand and figured I had to see it live to learn more."

Emma's eyes sparkled with amusement. "Ohh, interesting!" she said with a nod.

Before I could continue, I noticed the Indian girl beside her listening keenly to our conversation. I turned slightly and said, "By the way, I'm Aarav. Nice to meet you!"

At that, she perked up and smiled. "You're Indian?" she asked in a curious tone.

I grinned and replied in Hindi, "Haan, bilkul!" (Yes, absolutely!)

Hearing me speak Hindi seemed to put her at ease, and she chuckled. "That's awesome! I'm Shraddha," she introduced herself with a warm smile.

Emma, looking between us, seemed intrigued. "Wait... your accent, it sounded so natural just now. How do you do that?"

I leaned back and smirked. "Oh, accents? I can do quite a few," I said confidently. "You could say it's one of my many hidden talents."

Shraddha laughed, clearly impressed. "Wow, that's pretty cool! So, what brings you to New Zealand?"

"I'm just exploring," I said casually. "Traveling, experiencing new things, and, well, ticking rugby off my bucket list!"

Emma grinned. "Well, you've definitely picked the right match. Today's going to be insane!"

As the stadium lights dimmed slightly and the teams made their grand entrance onto the field, the crowd erupted into deafening cheers. Emma clapped excitedly, and Shraddha leaned over. "Okay, so since you're new to this, let me give you a quick breakdown," she said, her tone switching into an expert mode.

She pointed at the field. "Basically, each team has fifteen players. The goal is to carry or kick the ball into the opposing team's in-goal area. Simple enough, right?"

I nodded, pretending to follow along. "Yeah, sounds easy."

She smirked. "Trust me, it's a lot rougher than it looks. You'll see!"

As the game kicked off, I was instantly hooked. The sheer intensity, the raw power of the players charging across the field, and the precision in their moves were nothing short of breathtaking. The crowd roared with every tackle and pass, and Emma and Shraddha were just as engrossed in the action.

I found myself getting into the game, shouting along with the fans and cheering when our side made a great play. Emma nudged me at one point and said, "See? You're becoming a rugby fan already!"

I laughed, "I guess I am!"

During halftime, we grabbed some snacks, and the conversation naturally flowed between the three of us.

"So, what do you do, Aarav?" Shraddha asked, sipping her soda.

"I'm free spirit and enjoy my life" I replied. "A bit of everything, really. I love traveling and learning new things."

Emma leaned in. "That's awesome! And Shraddha and I are Medical Students, came here for college trip."

Shraddha nodded. "Yep, this place is amazing though."

"Where in India are you from?" I asked.

"Mumbai," she said with a nostalgic smile. "And you?"

"Same!" I replied with a grin. "Small world, huh?"

She laughed. "It really is."

The second half of the game started, and the energy in the stadium was even more electric. The teams were giving it their all, and I found myself getting more and more into the game, cheering along with Emma and Shraddha.

In a nail-biting finish, the home team clinched the victory, and the stadium exploded in cheers. Fireworks lit up the sky, and the team took a victory lap around the field.

As the crowd started to disperse, I turned to Emma and Shraddha. "So, what's next? Any cool places to check out around here?"

Emma thought for a moment. "Well, you could check out the Sky Tower at night. The view is incredible!"

I smiled. "Well, I already visited there!"

We walked out of the stadium together, chatting and laughing like old friends. The night was young, and the excitement of the match still lingered in the air.

As I got into my car, Emma waved. "See you around, Aarav!"

Shraddha smiled. "Yeah, see you! And thanks for making the game more fun!"

I gave them a thumbs-up. "Likewise! Catch you soon."

Driving back to the hotel, I couldn't help but smile. What had started as a solo trip had turned into an amazing experience with new friends, unforgettable memories, and a newfound love for rugby.

As I reached my room, I flopped onto the bed, exhausted but happy. Today had been one for the books. I scrolled through the photos I had clicked at the stadium and sent a few to my friends back home, captioning it, Rugby fever in NZ! What a game!

With a satisfied sigh, I set my phone aside and closed my eyes, already looking forward to what tomorrow would bring.