

## Chapter 7: The Turning Point

Morning arrived without warmth.

Aariz stood by the window as pale light crept into the house, revealing what darkness had hidden. The shadows were gone, but their presence lingered, etched into the walls like scars. The whispers had faded, yet their truth remained—unmovable.

The fire was meant to erase the past.

But it failed.

Aariz clenched his fists. For years, he had believed himself to be a victim of fate. Now he understood—someone had chosen this path for him. Someone had decided what truths deserved to survive.

And that was the moment everything changed.

He gathered the journals, the letter, and the confession, stacking them carefully on the table. Pieces of a broken history finally aligned. The fear that once ruled him began to loosen its grip, replaced by something unfamiliar.

Resolve.

The house no longer felt like a prison. It felt like a witness.

As Aariz stepped outside, the air was sharp and cold, but clear. The sun hovered low in the sky, uncertain but present. He inhaled deeply, grounding himself in the moment. The past had spoken. Now it was his turn to respond.

His phone vibrated.

An unknown number.

He hesitated before answering.

“Hello?”

There was a pause. Then a voice—steady, deliberate.

“You found the truth sooner than expected.”

Aariz’s blood ran cold. “Who is this?”

Another pause. A breath.

“Someone who has been waiting for you to remember.”

The call ended.

Aariz stared at the screen, heart pounding. The past was no longer whispering from shadows. It was reaching out—bold, unafraid.

That was the turning point.

He could walk away, bury the truth once more, and let the echoes fade. Or he could confront the lies head-on and uncover what the fire had failed to destroy.

Aariz slipped the phone into his pocket.

He chose to move forward.

Not as a boy haunted by memories—but as someone ready to face them.

The road ahead was uncertain, and danger waited in the unanswered questions. But for the first time, Aariz felt in control.

The past had shaped him.

Now, he would shape what came next.