

## Chapter 6: Whispers in the Dark

Darkness had a voice.

Aariz felt it the moment he stepped outside the room. The hallway lights flickered weakly, then died, plunging the house into silence once more. Only the moonlight guided him now, thin and uncertain, like the truth he was chasing.

The whisper returned.

Soft. Broken. Almost pleading.

“You should not have come back.”

Aariz froze. His heart pounded so loudly he feared it might answer the voice. He strained to listen, but the sound melted into the walls, slipping through cracks and shadows.

He moved slowly, each step cautious. The floor groaned beneath him, protesting his presence. The house remembered him—even if it pretended not to.

As he reached the stairwell, the air grew colder. The darkness thickened, wrapping around him like a heavy cloak. Aariz’s breath fogged as he descended, one step at a time, back toward the ground floor.

That was when he heard it again.

This time, closer.

Not a whisper.

A name.

His name.

“Aariz...”

He turned sharply, but there was nothing—only shadows dancing where light should have been. His pulse raced. The voice had carried sorrow, not threat. It sounded like someone trapped between worlds, unable to move on.

In the living room, the curtains swayed though no wind entered. A single candle sat on the table, unlit, waiting. Aariz hesitated, then struck a match. The flame flared to life, casting trembling light across the walls.

The whispers grew louder.

Fragments of sentences brushed against his ears—regret, fear, apologies. Words his parents never spoke aloud. Words buried beneath years of silence.

Aariz clutched his head, overwhelmed.

“Enough,” he whispered.

The room fell silent.

Then, from the far corner, a shadow shifted—slowly taking shape. Not a figure, not a ghost, but a memory given form. Aariz understood then: the darkness was not haunting the house.

It was protecting something.

Or someone.

The candle flickered violently and went out. Darkness rushed back in, deeper than before. Aariz felt a presence pass by him, close enough to steal his breath.

And then it whispered the truth.

The fire was never meant to destroy—it was meant to erase.

Aariz staggered back, the weight of revelation pressing down on him. The whispers faded, retreating into the walls once more, leaving behind a silence heavier than sound.

He stood alone in the dark.

But he was no longer ignorant.

The whispers had chosen him.

And once chosen, there was no escape from the darkness that knew your name.