

## Chapter 2: Clashing Egos

Jharna changed into fresh clothes, the ones Vinit had brought from home as she had asked. She now wore a pristine white suit paired with a striking red dupatta.

"Vinit must have already set up the stall. I should leave now," she murmured before stepping out of the room.

Upon reaching the stall, she spotted Vinit, who greeted her with a reassuring smile.

"Ma'am, everything is ready. You were worrying for no reason," he said confidently.

Before Jharna could respond, the event manager approached, scanning the stall with a keen eye.

"Hmm... Looks like your preparations are complete," he remarked.

Jharna offered a polite smile. "Yes, sir. Everything is set."

Vinit added enthusiastically, "In fact, two gentlemen have already tasted our cakes and cookies. They were quite impressed!"

The manager smirked. "Seems like I made the right choice appointing you."

With that, he nodded in approval and walked away.

Curious, Jharna turned to Vinit. "Two men?"

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Meanwhile, Vihaan and Adhik were savoring the cookies and cakes.

"Damn, I've never tasted anything this good before," Adhik said, relishing every bite.

Vihaan nodded in agreement.

Across the room, Ivaan stood before a mirror, adjusting his all-black ensemble. As he tightened his tie, he caught sight of his brothers enjoying the cakes and cookies and rolled his eyes.

Adhik walked over, offering him a perfume bottle. "Here, Bhai. Apply this before anyone notices—"

"—that someone splashed dirty water on you," Vihaan finished, bursting into laughter with Adhik.

Ivaan shot them a murderous glare.

Vihaan, still chuckling, nudged him. "Relax, Bhai. Have some cookies. They're insanely good."

Ignoring him, Ivaan turned back to the mirror.

Adhik smirked. "By the way, that girl is still here. You know... at this event."

Vihaan, munching on another cookie, grinned. "Hmm, so that means we can meet her again."

Adhik laughed mischievously. "Hahaha! Bhai, maybe you should wear something waterproof next time, so—"

Ivaan's sharp glare silenced him immediately. Frustrated, he thought to himself, *I swear, I never want to see that girl again.*

At the stall, Vinit was busy double-checking everything while Jharna seemed lost in thought. Noticing her distraction, he called out, "Ma'am?" Snapping out of her reverie, she looked at him.

"You can call Miransh, if you're missing him," Vinit said with a knowing smile.

Jharna chuckled softly and nodded.

"Don't worry, ma'am. I've got things handled here. Go ahead and talk to him," he assured her.

Grateful, Jharna stepped aside and dialed Malini's number.

On the call, Malini answered cheerfully. "Jharna, how's everything going? All good?"

"Yes, aunty. Everything is fine," Jharna replied.

Malini hesitated. "By the way, how did your clothes get ruined?"

At the mention of it, Jharna's mood soured. The incident with Ivaan flashed in her mind. She rolled her eyes.

"Ugh, don't even ask, Aunty. It was because of that arrogant, self-absorbed, ill-mannered brat. Not only did he make the mistake, but he also had the audacity to give me attitude!" she huffed.

Unbeknownst to her, Ivaan was standing right behind her, listening to every word.

Vihaan and Adhik, witnessing the scene, barely contained their laughter before slipping away.

Meanwhile, completely oblivious, Jharna continued, "Anyway, forget about him. I don't want to ruin my mood thinking about that jerk."

"Aww, alright. By the way, Miransh is out playing with his friends right now," Malini informed her.

Jharna sighed. "Oh... I really wanted to talk to him. Never mind, I should get back to work."

She ended the call and turned around—only to lock eyes with Ivaan's intense gaze.

Surprised, she took a step closer, folding her arms. "Don't you have any manners? Eavesdropping on someone's conversation?"

Ivaan's expression remained impassive. "If you talk that loudly, anyone can hear you."

Jharna scoffed. "Then why are you standing here in the first place?"

His lips curled into an arrogant smirk. "The Ivaan Maurya doesn't need permission to stand anywhere. And I'm certainly not answerable to anyone."

Jharna raised a brow. "Well, The Jharna Kashyap doesn't tolerate unnecessary attitude from anyone."

She turned to walk away, but his next words stopped her in her tracks.

"You're just a worker here, and I'm your boss. Remember your place and limits before talking to me like that."

His condescending tone made her blood boil. She spun around, stepping closer until she was staring straight into his eyes.

"First of all, you are not my boss. I am here for catering, not for you. And second, I don't even want to talk to you, let alone stay in any so-called 'limits' of yours," she snapped, her voice laced with cold defiance.

Ivaan clenched his jaw, his frustration evident. "You—!"

Before he could say another word, an announcement about the event's commencement echoed through the hall. He exhaled sharply, reigning in his temper.

Both of them rolled their eyes and turned to walk away—only for Jharna's dupatta to get caught on his blazer's button.

Their gazes met again, lingering for a fleeting moment.

Jharna quickly tugged her dupatta free, breaking the connection. Without another word, they walked away in opposite directions.

But just then—

A familiar figure arrived at the event.

Wait... what?!

Miransh?!

But wasn't he supposed to be playing with his friends?

More importantly... how did he even get here?

Something unexpected was about to unfold.

But don't worry, my dear readers. Sit back and enjoy what's coming next.

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# Sitara's Note

Some people clash like thunder, and others burn quietly like simmering embers. But when two strong egos like Jharna and Ivaan cross paths, sparks are inevitable—and so is the heat. While writing this chapter, I found myself smiling at their sharp exchanges, the boldness in their words, and that stubborn refusal to back down. There's something addictive about two people who can't stand each other.. yet keep colliding in the same space, isn't there?

Behind all the taunts and eye-rolls, there's a hidden layer of emotion that even they aren't ready to accept. But trust me, when hearts begin to shift, even the strongest egos falter.

Thank you for staying with me through every glare, every comeback, and every unexpected turn. If their chemistry made you smirk—or if that dupatta moment made your heart flutter—do drop your thoughts in the comments.

I'm reading. Always.

– Sitara Chandria