

Ch 32: Our Story Isn't Over

Open Field

Ivaan's voice was low but deadly serious.

“If I move... it will blast.”

Jharna froze. Her heart skipped a beat. Tears instantly welled in her eyes, blurring the figure of the man she loved. Fear gripped her chest, squeezing until she could barely breathe.

In a heartbeat, every memory of him came rushing in—
Their first meeting.

The moment he saved her.

His proposal.

Their wedding.

Every laugh, every fight, every embrace.

All of it playing in her mind like a cruel reminder of what she could lose in the next second.

A tear slid down her cheek. And then... without even realizing it, her feet began moving.

“Jharna, stop!” Ivaan barked.

But her body wasn't listening—her heart was in control. She kept walking toward him, her eyes locked on his.

“I said stop!” His voice was harsher now, edged with panic.

Still, she moved closer. And then... she felt it.

A strange, solid pressure under her foot.

Her breath caught. Slowly, she looked down.

Her stomach dropped.

A landmine.

Tears spilled freely now. She looked back at Ivaan, fear mirroring in both their eyes.

Ivaan's heart thundered. He wasn't scared for himself anymore—he was terrified for her. In that split second, he remembered something.

When I threw my phone earlier... the mine didn't go off immediately. It took a few seconds.

He calculated his chances. There was no time to think—only act.

Without warning, he sprinted toward her.

“Ivaan!” she gasped, shocked.

He reached her, wrapping his arms around her in a fierce embrace—just as the mine detonated beneath them.

BOOM!

The ground shook violently. A second explosion followed, throwing up clouds of dust. Heat licked across his arm, burning his skin slightly, but he didn't loosen his grip.

When the dust began to settle, Jharna pulled back, her hands frantically scanning him for injuries.

“You... you're okay? You're not hurt, right? You knew that there was a bomb—why did you have to play the hero?!”

His jaw tightened, anger flashing in his eyes.

“Play the hero? Who told you to come here in the first place?! I was shouting—screaming—for you not to step into the minefield, but no!

Jharna Madam has sworn an oath to never listen to me!”

Her lip trembled. His anger was justified, but her eyes were still full of fear and love.

“Why did you come here?” he asked.

“Because...” she swallowed hard, “...I couldn't leave you alone.”

Their eyes locked. For a fleeting moment, the world faded. She cupped his face gently, her touch trembling.

But he removed her hands—his expression darkening. The sting of betrayal was still fresh.

“I know you're angry,” she whispered. “I—”

“Angry?” he cut her off. His voice was low but sharp.

“Why would I be angry, Jharna? I'm nobody to you, right? You could tell

Aashiya the truth, but not me. Why? Because I'm not your person. You don't trust me."

His words spilling like open wounds.

"In your life, there's only Miransh, Meera, and now even Aashiya. They're the ones you trust. Not me."

A bitter smile tugged at his lips.

"And why should I expect anything? You didn't even choose this relationship—it was me who forced it. Me who tied you to me. Me who..." he stopped, his voice breaking, "...loved you."

His eyes softened for a fraction of a second, then clouded again.

"I don't even know why it hurts this much. Was I really so unimportant to you that you couldn't share your truth? Am I really that bad?"

"Ivaan—" she held his collar, but he wasn't listening. His voice rose again, heavy with pain.

And then...

She kissed him.

It wasn't gentle. It was sudden, desperate, and full of everything she couldn't put into words.

His eyes widened in shock. For a heartbeat, the explosions, the fear, the betrayal—everything—vanished.

When she pulled back, his gaze searched hers for answers.

"I love you," she said, her voice breaking. "I love you, Ivaan."

He stood frozen.

She repeated, firmer this time, "Did you hear me? I said I love you. And now you are not allowed to say anything bad about my husband ever again. My husband is the best husband in the world. The best."

Her eyes glistened, but her chin was held high—as if daring him to argue.

Jharna's Apartment

Meera was pounding on the door, her voice breaking as she cried and begged.

“Miransh... please, baby, open the door.”

Her knuckles ached from knocking, but she didn’t stop.

The doorbell rang suddenly.

She quickly wiped her tears, hope flaring in her chest. She rushed to open the door, praying it was Jharna.

It wasn’t.

It was Aashiya and Amaan.

Aashiya didn’t say a word—she immediately wrapped her arms around Meera in a brief, tight hug.

“Aashiya... Miransh isn’t opening the door,” Meera said, her voice trembling.

“What?!” both Aashiya and Amaan exclaimed at the same time.

“Where are Boss and Jharna ma’am?” Amaan asked urgently.

“Both are in danger,” Meera said, panic lacing her voice. “Jharna got a call... she went to save Ivaan.”

“Where did she go?” Amaan pressed.

“I don’t know. She received a location on her phone... and she left.”

They exchanged worried glances.

Just then, a faint noise came from inside the locked room. The sound made all three of them tense. They rushed to the door and knocked again.

“Miransh! It’s Aashiya! Your pretty aunty. Please baby open the door.”

Aashiya called. But there was no answer.

Amaan stepped forward. “Stand back. I’m breaking it.”

The women moved aside. With one forceful kick, the door burst open.

They hurried inside, scanning the room—empty.

Then Meera’s gaze fell on the half-open cupboard. She stepped toward it slowly. The sound of muffled sobs reached her ears.

“Miransh...” she whispered.

The moment she reached for him, he bolted out and ran straight to Amaan, wrapping his little arms around him. His voice shook.

“Uncle... where’s my momma? Where’s my superhero?”

Amaan crouched, pulling him into his arms. “First, little man, you have to stop crying.”

“I want my momma and my superhero!” Miransh cried harder, clinging to him.

Meera’s chest tightened painfully. Seeing him like this, she silently cursed herself for ever stepping into his life.

Open Field

Jharna’s hands gripped Ivaan’s collar, her voice breaking.

“How can you say you’re unimportant to me, Ivaan? If you weren’t important, why would I be here? Why would I risk this?”

He didn’t answer, his eyes locked on hers.

She pressed on, her voice trembling but firm.

“I didn’t tell you the truth at first because... I didn’t think it mattered. Back then, Ansh was my son—completely mine. I had accepted that. Then... when Meera di came back, I lost the courage to tell you. I was terrified you’d pull away from me. I’ve already lost everything—I lost Mumma, Papa, Meera di. When I had nothing... only Ansh was left. I devoted my entire life to him. I never imagined this day would come.” Her breath hitched, tears threatening to spill again.

“Hiding the truth wasn’t about not trusting you—it was about my fear. Fear of losing you. Fear of losing Ansh. And if that happened, Ivaan... I swear, I wouldn’t have survived—”

Ivaan pressed a finger to her lips.

“Shut up.”

He pulled her into his arms, holding her as if she might vanish if he let go.

Her voice was rough, “I don’t know when I started loving you so much... that I wasn’t even afraid to die for you.”

He pulled back slightly, looking into her eyes.

“Did you even think about Miransh? If something happened to you, what would become of him?”

Her lips trembled. “That used to be my biggest fear. But now... Meera di will take care of him. After all... she’s his real mother.”

They stood there in silence, finding an odd sense of peace in each other’s arms despite the danger around them.

But Jharna’s voice broke through the quiet.

“Is this... how our story ends?”

Ivaan’s eyes snapped open. As they separated slightly, he noticed the landmine still beneath her foot.

He scanned the open field around them.

“Even if we tried to run, we can’t cross this field safely. We don’t know where the other landmines are.”

“And there’s no phone network here,” Jharna added. “We can’t even call for help.”

She rested her head against his chest again, closing her eyes.

“I wish I had magical powers. I’d fix everything. We’d never be stuck here. We’d always be together—you, me, Ansh... and our little baby girl, Ivana. Our family would be complete. And so would our love story.”

Every word pierced him deeply. He closed his eyes, thinking, I’ve never believed in wishes or magic... but today, I want to try. I wish... I manifest... that something—anything—saves us.

And then, as if the universe was listening—

“Momma...”

Both their eyes flew open.

Miransh was standing at the edge of the field, smiling.

Shock rippled through them. Behind him, Amaan and Meera appeared.

Before either of them could react, Miransh started running toward them. “NO!” Jharna and Ivaan shouted at once. He stopped in his tracks, startled. “Meera di! Stop him—there are landmines!” Jharna yelled. Meera’s instincts kicked in. She ran forward and grabbed Miransh, yanking him back to safety. Ivaan and Jharna both exhaled heavily in relief. But Miransh struggled against her hold, crying, “Let me go! I want to go to my momma! You’re not my momma—let me go!” “Ansh,” Jharna called softly. “Please calm down. Stay right there—it’s not safe here. Please.” But he kept crying, twisting in Meera’s arms. Until Meera’s voice thundered, her eyes blazing red. “Stop it! If you move even an inch, I’ll lock you inside the car!” Her tone froze him instantly. He stared at her, his little face filled with hurt and anger. Ivaan called out, “How did you two get here?” Amaan replied, “Jharna ma’am’s phone chats were still on her laptop. We found the location there.” Jharna and Ivaan shared a brief glance of relief. “Don’t worry,” Amaan added. “I’ve already called the bomb squad. They’ll be here any minute. You’re both going to be fine.” Ivaan nodded, then turned to Jharna. His voice was steady. “Our story isn’t ending here.” Jharna met his gaze and smiled.

Maurya Mansion

Tia—Sagarika—stepped in, her eyes sweeping over each face. A polite, almost warm smile appeared, but it flickered out the moment her gaze

landed on Vihaan. She walked toward him without hesitation.

“Vihaan,” she said softly, her tone carrying just the right amount of worry.

He immediately pulled her into a quick, tense hug.

“Sagarika... Ivaan bhai and Jharna bhabhi aren’t answering their phones. God knows where they are.”

Her lips pressed together as if in concern, but before she could speak, another familiar voice cut through the heavy silence.

“Aashiya!” someone called.

Heads turned as Aashiya stepped inside.

“Don’t worry,” Aashiya said quickly. “Amaan sir and Meera di have reached them. They’ve found Ivaan sir and Jharna... but they’re trapped in a place with no network.”

Gasps rippled across the room.

“What on earth is happening now?” Shikha exclaimed.

Deepa shook her head sharply. “Exactly! First that video gets leaked, and now Ivaan and Jharna are stuck somewhere dangerous?”

Abhimaan’s voice was low, laced with suspicion. “This isn’t coincidence. It’s a planned move.”

Sagarika’s heart gave a sharp, excited thump at his words—though she kept her expression carefully schooled into concern. Smart man... but still a step too far from the truth.

Adhik frowned. “Hold on—if there’s no network, how did you even find out? How do you know Amaan and Meera have reached them?”

Without missing a beat, Aashiya replied, “Amaan sir had a satellite phone.”

Sagarika let out a small, convincing sigh and rolled her eyes faintly, as though the tension was exhausting her.

Most seemed satisfied with the explanation—most, but not Shikha. Her eyes lingered on Aashiya, sharp and searching. She stepped forward.

“You’re not telling us everything, are you?”

Aashiya's shoulders stiffened. She swallowed hard.

Abhimaan joined in, his tone steady but commanding.

“Tell us the whole truth. If there's trouble, we'll deal with it together.”

Finally, Aashiya spoke.

“Actually... the field they're in—it's full of landmines.”

“What?!” The cry was unanimous, the air thickening with shock.

“But—listen—” Aashiya added quickly, “Amaan sir has already called the bomb squad. They'll be there any moment. There's no need to panic.”

The tension in the room loosened just slightly. People exhaled. Shoulders dropped.

All except Sagarika.

Her mind was a storm behind her composed expression. She kept her gaze lowered, hiding the glint in her eyes.

Landmines... perfect. But if the bomb squad reaches in time, everything I've set in motion will crumble. No... I can't let that happen. Not when I'm this close.

She lifted her head, wearing the mask of a concerned friend once again, while inside, her mind was already calculating the next move.

Sitara's Note

This chapter was intense to write.

The open field scene between Jharna and Ivaan is one of those moments where love, fear, and betrayal crash together in a storm. Ivaan's anger isn't just about the truth—it's about the walls Jharna unknowingly built between them. And Jharna's fear isn't only of the landmines—it's of losing the only man she's ever truly loved. Meanwhile, the tension shifts across locations—Meera's desperate knocking, Miransh's innocence, and the quiet but dangerous plotting of Sagarika.

This is the kind of chapter where the story breathes in danger and exhales emotions.

The stakes are higher now. The question is—will love survive the blast, or will it get buried under it?

Stay tuned

— Sitara Chandria