

Rise of a Football God

#Chapter 19: Signing first professional contract - Read Rise of a Football God Chapter 19: Signing first professional contract

"Congratulations Sam, on behalf of Enyimba FC, I want to give you a professional contract to be a part of my team as a professional football player".

"..."

"..."

".....!"

Sam was floored.

For a few moments, his head went completely blank as he could not process the words that this middle-aged coach just said to him.

'Me? A professional football contract?'

'F*ck! Am I dreaming?'

He stealthily pinched himself and once he felt the pain, his eyes widened as the gravitas of this moment finally settled in his head.

Sam could not hold it in, immediately, he broke down in tears.

"Hey!" Coach James was startled.

Coach Yemi Daniel waved him to stay put. "Let the young man be, it's normal to react like this, it's a dream come true to get a professional contract".

It took a few minutes, but Sam was finally able to calm down. He felt embarrassed when he thought of what just happened. "Umm, sorry".

"It's fine, Sam, it's perfectly fine," the middle-aged coach smiled. "So?"

Sam finally looked this coach in the eye. "I'm very honored by this opportunity, Coach Yemi, but I can't make this decision alone".

"First, I need to speak with my dad". He smiled. "Coincidentally, my dad is here, he also watched the match".

"Oh, really?" The middle-aged coach smiled. "I'll also speak with him when you're done, I'll give you guys some privacy in the meantime".

"Thank you, sir".

With that, Sam ran off excitedly to meet his dad.

As soon as the boy left, Coach James looked at the older man, a baffled look on his face. "Sir, with all due respect, this is unlike you, what motivated you to give a contract to a player you just saw today play after just one game?"

This older man didn't look at his younger counterpart. "That's what youngsters like you fail to see, you fail to look beyond the obvious".

He looked at James. "You think I'm a fool?"

"No sir". James said immediately.

"Good," the older man nodded. "That boy, he's talented," he paused, "he's too good for your ramshackle football team".

James didn't take offense; this man was one of the few people in the country who had the right to call his football team ramshackle.

"You may not have noticed but I did. You watched him and you thought, this boy is good. You heard his age and you thought, wow, he's talented".

"I saw beyond that".

"Well, I can confidently tell you that Sam has not played real football in nothing less than 2 years".

"What?!"

Seeing his younger colleague's reaction, Coach Yemi grinned. "That's the crazy thing when you really think about it".

"According to your brother, he started gym last week and his physique was visibly horrible then. At first, I was confused but thinking of it now, I think this boy only started working on getting back in shape a week ago after years of profligacy".

"And it coincides with the world cup final, which makes me believe that somehow, Messi winning was what motivated this boy to kick a football again". He grinned. "Well, now that's just G.O.A.T things from Messi".

He looked at James again. "A not yet fit Sam that is kicking a ball properly for the first time in a long time performed like this," a frenzied look overtook this coach's face. "Now imagine what a fully fit Sam can do!"

"Imagine what a Sam that has been coached by me can do!"

"Damn, this boy is not just talented, he's freakishly talented and I would be a fool not to sign him for my club immediately".

"We're talking Okocha level of talent here".

Hearing that, James' eyes widened as he looked in Sam's general direction. "Wow, I never knew the boy was that scary".

The middle-aged coach grinned again. "Don't worry, for helping me discover this talent, I'll pay you appropriately".

"I just hope my club is able to keep hold of him because with what I'm seeing, he's going to have an even more ridiculous growth trajectory".

James grinned, he had never heard Coach Yemi Daniel praise a player like this before. "I guess I should take Favour on a good treat too, he's the one who discovered Sam after all".

"Hehe, you should do that".

...

"What?!"

"Coach Yemi Daniel offered you a professional contract?!"

Bonk!

Moses bonked Ian on the head, placing a finger to his lips. "Shush, child, you want the whole world to hear about it?" He glanced around.

Ian rubbed his head grievingly. "Sorry dad, I was just, you know, shocked".

"I'm shocked too, did I shout like you did?"

"No". Ian pouted.

"Hehe," Moses finally paid attention to his son again, grinning from ear to ear. "Finally, a coach with a brain has recognized the incredible talents of my son".

"Give me the contract, let me go through it".

Sam did as his dad told him to.

Taking the contract, Mr. Moses wore his glasses before carefully scrutinizing the contract. He stopped after only more than 15 minutes was gone.

And then, he looked at the boys with a big smile on his face.

"And?" An impatient Sam asked.

"Calm down boy, don't be impatient". He smiled smugly. "Well, congratulations my son, you'll soon be receiving a monthly salary of 150,000 naira".

"What?!" Ian almost screamed which turned to a yelp as he saw the glare from Mr. Moses. "That's crazy!" He whispered, dragging his pronunciation for emphasis.

"Anyways, leave it up to your dad". Moses boasted. "150,000 naira is what the lowest earners in the Nigerian professional football league are earning".

"The fact that he offered you a contract immediately after 1 game means that he likely saw something in you that made him take such decisive action".

"Trust your dad, today, I shall be your agent".

"Wait," Sam stopped his dad. "You want to haggle?"

"Not haggle dummy, in the world of football, we call it negotiate". And then, this man arranged his native Ankara attire before matching over to the middle-aged coach who was on the other side.

Sam stayed behind with his friend but thinking of something, he asked. "Dad, where will you start from?"

"What do you take me for? Double of course, 300,000 naira to start with".

Thinking of the fact that his dad only made 350,000 naira monthly from his own job, Sam felt breathless hearing that amount being called so casually.

Well, that evening, he learned to respect his dad even more.

Despite the fact that he could not get his initial target of 300,000 naira, in the end, somehow, Mr. Moses incredibly negotiated a contract worth 250,000 naira monthly for his 17-year-old son.

It was the perfect Christmas gift that Sam could have ever wished for.

Coach Yemi Daniel exchanged contacts with the father and son. "Mr. Moses, I'll chat you up on WhatsApp, let's finalize the minute details there".

"That's ok with me".

And with that, Sam signed his first professional football contract, officially becoming a professional football player.

'This is undoubtedly the best Christmas of my life'. Sam thought.

On his father's car with his best friend, as he returned home triumphantly, he finally paid attention to his new system notifications.