

Football God 28

Chapter 28: Post-match press conference

"Austin, you're the captain of Enyimba FC. What are your thoughts about your team's performance today?"

The tall 8.2-meter-tall center midfielder faced the female reporter with a smile on his face. "We played a good game, yes, we played well".

"As you likely saw, we dominated the first half, scoring 2 beautiful goals. In the second half, we were not so dominant, especially towards the end of the game after we conceded the goal".

"In those last moments, it was really nervy, it was a close game but that's football for you," this tall captain smiled. "What matters is that we scored the 3rd goal and won the game, claiming all 3 points".

"This season, we are very ambitious, we want to win everything".

The beautiful female reporter smiled on hearing his confidence. "Austin, you were able to scoop up the man of the match award today after an incredible performance where you managed to get a goal and 2 assists, what do you think about your performance?"

Hearing this question, amid his rapid breaths still from the exertion of the game, this sweaty captain smiled sheepishly. "Of course, I'm proud". He chuckled.

But then, his face turned serious again. "I'm the captain of Enyimba FC. I'm always ready to give my all and help the team, no matter which role I'm required to play by the coach".

"If the coach says I should score, I will try my best to score. Of course, I'll always try to assist and even if he tells me to defend, I will defend with my life".

"We scored 3 goals but it's clear that our forward line is not yet firing on all cylinders. It's normal, this is just the first game of the season, we have time to build up our chemistry and fitness".

"Hopefully, in subsequent games, we are able to regain our fluidity in attack". He smiled.

"Talking about fluidity," this female reporter smiled. "What do you think of the rookie's performance today? He assisted your goal".

"Oh, Sam?" This captain grinned. "The boy is definitely destined for great things, getting an assist in your debut game for a storied club like Enyimba FC is not easy, even more so when the player you're replacing is Olisema".

"The pressure on him was massive but he showed up".

"But he caused the only goal against your team though, what do you think of that?"

Austin scratched the back of his head. "That's normal, it's normal to make mistakes in football. Even I am no God, I do make mistakes a lot on the pitch too".

"He's young, he has a lot of time to grow and what excites me most is that he already showed the willingness to listen". He grinned. "I told him to pass the ball and he did pass, that was how I got my first goal of the season".

"I guess I must say," he looked at the camera. "Thanks Sam, for the assist".

The beautiful female reporter chuckled. "Thanks for having me, captain fantastic, do have a great day".

"Thank you".

And with that, Austin Oladapo, the captain of Enyimba FC finally left on his way to meet his teammates who were getting ready to leave.

Once he arrived at the dressing room, Coach Yemi Daniel rounded up his players before leaving.

On their way from the stadium, Austin noticed the boy walk towards him. He patted Sam by the head. "What a pass, boy, thank you".

Sam grinned, it felt nice to be validated by his captain.

They returned straight to the hotel where they would spend the night. They would only enter the road to return to Abia State tomorrow morning.

To reduce expenses, the players were asked to stay in pairs, 2 to a hotel room. Sam had another roommate previously, one of the bench players of the team but after the game today, Austin made a special request to have him as his roommate.

And with that, he got to stay in the same room as the captain of his team.

In the room, after taking their bath in turns, Austin Oladapo fetched his phone, called the boy over before doing something that surprised Sam. Austin opened a replay of the just concluded game on his phone.

Noting his surprise, Austin grinned. "It's a habit of mine, I love to watch games immediately after we play them when the memory is still so fresh".

"That way, I can spot the mistakes I made and what I did best quickly so I can avoid making the same mistakes in next matches".

"It helps me improve," this captain looked at the new midfielder. "It's my first time on the pitch with you, Sam, but with you, I feel something special".

"I believe you're cut out for great things, so I want to impact this on you".

"Oh, thanks". Sam grinned. "I appreciate it".

And with that, relaxed on the bed, the 2 players of Enyimba FC watched the full 90 minutes of the game that they just played again.

When they were finally done, smiling on all ears, Sam did not expect what followed.

"What was your most glaring mistake?"

He paused. "Uh?"

Austin looked at him, an even look on his face. "You just watched the game with me, right? Didn't you observe your gameplay? What was your most glaring mistake in the game?"

Sam gulped. 'Why does this feel like I'm back in the walls of school?'

He chuckled awkwardly. "When I lost the ball close to our 18-yard box and they scored a goal from it?"

"No," Austin shook his head. "Your biggest mistake was your indecisiveness. You see the second time in the same situation? What you did?"

Sam nodded.

Austin continued. "The second time, you were not indecisive, you didn't think first, you acted based on what you observed and your instincts and it ended up leading to a goal".

"That first time, I don't know what you were thinking about but you were indecisive. By the time you finally decided to move the ball, you already gave the opponents enough time to close you down and steal the ball".

"A football game is like war and we are the soldiers. If you hesitate to take the shot, your opponent will shoot and kill you".

"In war, you don't hesitate, you kill".

"Never hesitate in a game. If you feel you can do it, do it, don't think and if you feel you can't, pass the ball".

"Pass the ball, Sam, that's why you have teammates".

By now, the look in Sam's face was so coy like a boy receiving a dressing down from his mom, he nodded timidly. "Yes, captain".

Austin suddenly laughed. "No need to be so serious, I just wanted you to remember it and improve".

"Anyways, I heard this is your first professional game but damn, you already have a good grasp of spatial awareness. That's impressive, honestly".

The conversation continued some more before food arrived from the hotel, drawing the talk to a halt immediately as the 2 football players dove in.

After eating, exhausted, Austin slept.

Sam didn't sleep immediately though. The adrenaline and excitement of the game still coursed through him, keeping him awake.

But most importantly, he had unread system notifications to look at.

Rubbing his palms together excitedly, he opened them.