

Greatest 611

Chapter 611 Tension During the Final Minutes

The final minutes of the UEFA Champions League final between Juventus and Barcelona had everyone on the edge of their seats. As the game resumed with a Barcelona kick-off, tensions skyrocketed, and the excitement was palpable.

But what happened next was beyond anyone's expectations. Both teams seemed to have reached a tacit understanding when Juventus finally scored the equalizing goal. It was as if fatigue had taken over, and they slowed down the game's tempo during the final four minutes before the 90-minute mark.

Despite the game's momentum being on team Juventus' side, they surprisingly played it safe, emphasizing long passes and through balls to break down the opponent while keeping their defense intact.

Their strategy paid off as they created one final chance during the 89th minute when Kingsley Coman connected with a long pass inside the box. However, luck was not on his side, and the Barcelona keeper managed to save his thunderbolt of an effort.

The 90th minute arrived soon enough, and Marc-André Ter Stegen, the Barcelona keeper, did something he hadn't done all game. Probably to play it safe, he tossed his team's standard modus operandi of playing short passes from behind out of the window and signaled for all the Barcelona players to push forward.

His teammates reacted in various ways, with most defenders, like Gerard Piqué and Jordi Alba, trying to discourage him from taking a long goal kick. But Marc-André Ter Stegen firmly shook his head and chased them away before smashing the ball from his box to send it towards the other side of the pitch.

As the ball soared through the air, the fourth official suddenly appeared on the touchline, displaying his glowing red board for all to see. The numbers on the board revealed an additional five minutes of playtime, sending shockwaves through the crowd and causing stress levels to skyrocket even further. It was a nail-biting moment that left everyone on the edge of their seats, wondering what would happen next.

"Listen up, folks! The match officials have just announced the added time," exclaimed Steve Bower, the commentator, as the football action continued with some intense aerial duels between Barcelona and Juventus players to receive the just-taken goal kick.

"We've got five minutes of added time left in this heart-pumping Champions League final," continued Steve, the excitement in his voice palpable over the thunderous cheers in the stadium. "That means if neither team can score a winning goal in the next five minutes, they'll have to battle it out in extra time. And if that still doesn't determine a victor, it's all down to the nail-biting penalties. This is it, folks - the moment we've all been waiting for!"

"I have a strong feeling that the two teams will reach a stalemate during the final thirty minutes of extra time," Conor McNamara, the other commentator, excitedly predicted. "After giving their all on the field for the past 90 minutes, both teams are likely to be exhausted. I anticipate that there won't be any further goals before the added minutes end."

"Hold on a second!" Steve exclaimed as the tension on the pitch reached its peak. "It's an intense moment as Claudio Marchisio and Ivan Rakitić collide mid-air, both players looking injured and in pain. But wait, the referee has made a controversial call, awarding a free-kick to Barcelona and penalizing Marchisio for a foul."

"Barcelona now has a golden opportunity to take the lead," Conor interjected, his voice filled with excitement. "The free-kick is over fifty yards away from the goal, but if they can take advantage of this chance and send their players charging into the box, they could score a last-minute winner to become the European Champions! It's all or nothing now, and the tension couldn't be higher!"

"Juventus could do the same," chuckled Bower. "Barcelona players might miss the free-kick, leaving an opening for Juventus to counterattack. With players like Zachary and Tevez, the Italian giants could win the game before regular time ends."

"Interesting, very interesting," replied McNamara, chuckling. "We've witnessed eight goals in this Champions League final, yet we still don't know who will become the European Champion. This match has been one for the history books."

The atmosphere in the stadium was electric as Barcelona lined up to take the crucial 92nd minute free-kick against Juventus. The fans were on the edge of their seats, their eyes glued to the pitch, praying for their team to score the winning goal.

The tension was palpable, the air thick with anticipation as Luis Enrique, the Barcelona coach, made two daring substitutions before the kick.

Andrés Iniesta, who looked exhausted, was replaced by Xavi, a midfielder, but surprisingly, Luis Suárez, a striker, was also taken off and replaced by Pedro, a winger. The move was seen as risky, as Barcelona had lost two key players, one from the midfield and the other from the striking line. But the time had come, and the referee blew the whistle, signaling the restart of the action.

Xavi, who had just stepped onto the pitch, took the free-kick, sending the ball hurtling towards the box on a lofted and curling trajectory.

The anxieties of the supporters, players, and coaches crescendoed. A momentary lull seemed to descend upon the stadium, and some fans could be seen praying to their gods, ancestors, or whatever higher power as the ball began its descent.

But all that was just background bluster as the crucial happenings were on the field of play at the edge of Juventus' box.

The players of both teams acted to meet the incoming ball, with the Barcelona players doing their utmost to escape their markers while the Juventus men did everything possible to stop them. Mêlées that involved shirt grabs, arm locks, body blocks, and other tactics to outwit opponents happened all along Juventus' defensive line as every player tried to connect with the free-kick ball at the edge of the box.

At the end of it all, Leonardo Bonucci came out on top. The Juventus defender towered over everyone at the edge of the box and headed the ball away, sending it towards the right wing.

However, before the Juventus players and fans could sigh with relief, Pedro, the substitute who had just stepped onto the pitch, collected the ball. The Spanish winger didn't waste a second before feeding a cross back towards Juventus' box.

Chapter 612 The Victors and the Defeated

The pressure on Juventus' defense immediately skyrocketed as the ball they had just cleared came back flying towards the box within seconds. Chaos descended, and a few players, like the already-exhausted Stephan Lichtsteiner and Roberto Pereyra, lost the players they were marking.

The lurking and never-tiring Javier Mascherano took advantage of the situation after escaping the harassment of Pereyra. The Argentine timed his run well and met the incoming cross with a thunderous header.

Buffon read the Argentine like an open book and dived the right way. He got his fingertips on the ball, sending it slightly off its trajectory. It pounded off the goalpost and headed towards the left side of the box.

Jordi Alba picked up the pieces and resumed Barcelona's wave of attack. He collected the ball at the edge of the box and squared it back into the area. He sent it on a grounded trajectory across the mouth of the goal, where many Barcelona players were still lurking.

More havoc occurred within Juventus' box as players of both teams pounded forward, heads, chests, hips, or legs first—to connect with the ball. But eventually, Lionel Messi, the Argentine magician, outwitted everyone with his timed run.

Messi abruptly lunged forward and slid in front of one of the Juventus defenders before meeting the cross with an outstretched boot. He skillfully tapped home, using the ball's momentum to ease it past Buffon's outstretched hand and score Barcelona's fifth goal for the night.

"GOOOOOAAAL!" shouted Steve Bower, the commentator, as Messi's strike rippled the net. "Unbelievable! Absolutely unbelievable! Juventus had fought tooth and nail to come back from a three-goal deficit and level the score at 4-4. But just when the game seemed to be heading towards extra time, Messi produced a moment of magic in the 93rd minute to put Barcelona 5-4 ahead! Listen to the noise! With only two minutes of added time left on the clock, the stadium has erupted into a frenzy of excitement and celebration as Messi's goal might have most likely sealed the victory for Barcelona!"

"Wow, I still can't believe it?!" yelled Conor McNamara, the other commentator. "Barcelona has taken the lead with a score of 5 to 4! Juventus put up a great fight, playing some aggressive football, and nearly had Barcelona on the ropes. But then, the legend himself, Lionel Messi, came to the rescue and scored the fifth goal for Barcelona. What a thrilling game!"

"Conor! I have to say that this has been a Champions League final, no - the Champions League finale for the ages," chuckled Bower. "It has had all the tactics, the moments of suspense, the goals, and it's yet to end. Who knows? Maybe Juventus can score the fifth, and the game can head into extra time."

"Wow, that would be absolutely epic - I mean, the kind of thing that becomes the stuff of legends," Conor exclaimed. "Anyway, let's get back to the live action. The Juventus players are about to restart the game. From the looks on their faces and their body language, it's obvious that they haven't given up yet. They still believe they can score within the remaining two minutes and ultimately win the final."

The game resumed, with all the Barcelona players, including Messi, falling back to their half to defend for dear life. The Catalans played like never before and parked the bus before their goal to squash any chances of their unrelenting opponents scoring an equalizing fifth goal.

As for the Juventus players, they all did the opposite. They put their every skill and every ounce of determination on the field of play, hoping to score an equalizer during the remaining one minute or two. They played sharp football that relied on long balls from Pirlo and wing play ending in crosses to bombard Barcelona's box.

But that was not all. The other Juventus midfielders and defenders, like Zachary, Claudio Marchisio, Patrice Evra, and Leonardo Bonucci, also did their part. They all tossed their defensive and midfield duties out of the window and pushed forward like a pack of hunting wolves, hoping to score in those final few minutes.

Zachary, in particular, took his game to another level. He floated out of the crowded midfield and overloaded the left wing. His tactical switch soon paid off during the 96th minute when a just-cleared ball came his way.

He advanced carefully while fully knowing that the chance could be the last for Juventus. Heart racing, he worked with Kingsley Coman in an excellent display of snappy one-twos to cut from the wing and arrive around the edge of the box.

Bracing himself and skipping past Neymar, who was surprisingly in defense, he pulled the trigger. He swung his leg masterfully and smashed the ball, sending it flying towards Barcelona's goal with all the strength he could muster.

'Please, go in!'

Zachary tightened his fists and watched his shot heading towards the top corner. But just then, he noticed a gloved fist suddenly appearing in the ball's trajectory before sending it out of play for a corner kick. It was, of course, Marc-André Ter Stegen, the Barcelona keeper, who had acted. And he had saved his team from conceding a goal again.

"Damn it!" Zachary let out a frustrated exclamation.

Despite the setback, he refused to give up hope and dashed towards the corner, aiming to take the corner kick swiftly. However, just as he was closing in, the referee's whistle blared loudly, causing him to freeze in his tracks.

The sound echoed throughout the stadium, sending shivers down his spine. He turned around, and his worst fears were confirmed.

The Barcelona players were ecstatic, cheering, hugging each other, and raising their arms in triumph, while his teammates slumped to the ground, their faces etched with disappointment.

The referee had obviously ended the game, and Barcelona had claimed the 2015 Champions League title once again, crushing his dreams.

Zachary was devastated as he turned to look at the jumbotron of the Olympiastadion. As he read the glaring red letters that showed Barcelona had emerged victorious over Juventus with a score of 5:4, he couldn't help but feel a sense of disappointment.

The once vibrant world around him seemed to have turned dull, and he felt an overwhelming wave of sadness wash over him, leaving him with no constructive thoughts. The weight of the loss was too heavy to bear, and he sank to his knees on the pitch, staring at the final score listlessly. A single tear streamed down his cheek as he grieved over the loss.

As he knelt there, lost in his own thoughts, his emotions were all over the place. But just then, he felt a comforting hand patting his shoulder.

When he looked up, he saw some of his coaches standing behind him, including the likes of Max Allegri and Maurizio Trombetta. Even though they looked crestfallen after losing in the final, their eyes were focused on him, filled with concern and empathy.

Coach Allegri nodded at Zachary with a warm smile and another reassuring pat on the shoulder. "Great job, Zachary!" he exclaimed. "You and your teammates played your hearts out today, and it showed. Although we didn't come out victorious, I want you to remember that you gave it your all out there. Your hard work and determination were clearly evident in your performance today."

He continued, "Let's not let this defeat bring us down. Instead, let's use it as motivation to achieve even greater victories in the future. Remember, every loss is just another opportunity to come back stronger. Keep pushing forward, Zachary."

Zachary nodded in agreement, feeling slightly dejected but also proud of his team's effort. He exchanged a few words with Coach Allegri and the other coach before slowly walking toward the sidelines to join his teammates. Despite the loss, he knew they had all given it their best shot, and they would come back even stronger next time.

The rest of the evening was a blur for Zachary. He mechanically went through the motions while receiving his loser's medal and Champions League golden boot.

Despite countless congratulatory and consolation messages from his teammates and opponents, he was still dejected as he watched Barcelona lift the coveted trophy. He knew that he had lost the game, but he was determined to use this defeat as a driving force to further his career.

As he clutched his golden boot and match ball, which he had earned by scoring a hat trick, Zachary walked towards the dressing room, lost in deep thought.

The stadium was still buzzing with noise, but his mind was elsewhere. He knew that he would never forget this moment, but he swore to use it as a motivation to work harder and win the Champions League trophy for his team.

Chapter 613 After the Champions League Final

It was a warm, sunny Sunday morning, and the world was already basking in a refreshing radiance. A gentle breeze was blowing through the streets of Berlin, making it the perfect day for sports enthusiasts to get out and play.

But for Emily Anderson, the brilliant agent who managed superstar football player Zachary Bemba, the Sunday was about one thing: the much-awaited ESPN sports show.

Fans from all around the world were eagerly waiting for the latest updates and insights on their favorite teams and athletes. For them, the show was the perfect platform to conclude another week of thrilling games and matches. And Emily was no exception.

Her beautiful blue eyes were glued to the TV screen in her dimly lit hotel room, watching highlights of the epic Champions League final from the night before. The morning rays streaming in through the opposite window highlighted her listless facial expression. She was having one of those mornings. She was tired, at a loss, and feeling down.

Emily had stayed up way past her bedtime to support Zachary's team in their highly anticipated match against Barcelona: the UEFA Champions League final. Despite all the hard work and dedication that Zachary and his team had invested in the game, they faced a crushing defeat, which left Emily feeling heartbroken and frustrated. She couldn't shake off the overwhelming sense of regret she felt for them. Witnessing their loss had left her dazzled with feelings of loss and disappointment.

Narrowing her eyes with tiredness, Emily noticed the post-highlights ads ending and the ESPN sports show commencing. She pushed all the irrelevant worries out of her mind and focused on the large flat screen in her hotel room.

The charming Emilia Vasquez was the host, and she was joined by her panel of experts, including Alessandro Costacurta, Joshua Morales, and Charles Adams. With an infectious smile etched on her face, Emilia introduced the pundits one by one, building up the anticipation for the main content of the show.

And then, the moment everyone had all been waiting for arrived. "Our dear viewers!" Emilia exclaimed, her voice oozing with excitement. "Last night, we witnessed the most exhilarating Champions League final in recent memory. In a heart-stopping match that ended in a spectacular nine-goal thriller, Barcelona triumphed over Juventus with a score of 5-4 at the Olympiastadion of Berlin, winning the

2014–15 UEFA Champions of Europe title. Lionel Messi's late goal in the 93rd minute sealed the deal and propelled the Catalans to a treble this season."

The energy in the studio was electric as Emilia turned to her pundits with a delightful chuckle. "Gentlemen!" she exclaimed. "Let's dive straight into it. What are your thoughts on Barcelona's stunning victory yesterday?"

Alessandro Costacurta let out a hearty chuckle. "All I can say was that the Champions League final was beyond epic. The two teams played their hearts out, electrifying all the fans with a match for the history books. The game could have gone either way, especially during those heart-pumping minutes between the 60th and 72nd minute. But in any football game, there's always a winner and a loser. This time, Barcelona came out on top. But had luck not been on their side, they could have lost."

Emilia Vasquez beamed while eyeing the pundit. "Alessandro! Are you implying that the game result was mostly because of Barcelona's luck but not their tactics?"

"Emilia! Don't get me wrong!" said Alessandro with a refined shake of his head. "The Catalans employed great tactics, especially during the first half. They outplayed Barcelona and scored those opening three goals that eventually meant everything during the game's late stages. But had they missed those chances or had Juventus woken up earlier, we could have had an entirely different result."

"I couldn't agree more with Alessandro," added Joshua Morales, the other pundit. "Looking back at the first half, Juventus lacked the courage and spirit in their playing style and tactics. They sat back and defended without applying any pressure on Barcelona. It was like they were asking for trouble! They allowed Barcelona to dominate the possession, dictate the tempo, and send countless balls into their box. As a result, they conceded three goals in the first half, which almost ended the game."

"However, things changed dramatically in the second half," stated Morales after a brief pause. "The Italian giants emerged from the tunnel with a newfound energy and began attacking with much greater intensity. They made some smart substitutions, bringing on Pirlo and Kingsley, who could have – maybe – been introduced earlier in the game. Consequently, their whole team began to play like they were genuinely determined to win the final."

"They gave Barcelona a tough time throughout the second half, and at some point, it seemed like they might even come out on top. Unfortunately, luck wasn't on their side, and they conceded a crucial free-kick during injury time. This allowed Barcelona to push forward and ultimately secure their victory."

"That sums about everything, I guess! Thanks, Joshua, for your analysis," said Vasquez with her signature smile.

"It's my pleasure, Emilia!" Morales gave her a polite nod.

Vasquez's face lit up with a wide grin as the cameras zoomed in on her. "Alright, folks, let's talk about the real deal here. We all witnessed some top-notch football last night. It was the kind that kept us on the edge of our seats. Neymar, Lionel Messi, Luis Suárez, Dani Alaves, Zachary Bemba, Kingsley Coman, Carlos Tevez, and Stephan Lichtsteiner - they all played their hearts out. But here's the million-dollar question: who among them deserves the crown of excellence?"

"I would say Messi," replied Charles Adams, the last pundit.

"My vote also goes to Messi," said Alessandro with a smile. "The Argentine scored the winning goal. That's why the match officials awarded him the 'man of the match' accolade after the game yesterday night."

"Whoa, hold on a minute, folks!" Morales exclaimed. "Let's take a step back and disregard the game's outcome for a second. Instead, let's examine the post-match statistics to determine which player performed better. Messi played a direct role in three of Barcelona's goals and only scored twice. However, what about Zachary? He had a hand in all four of Juventus' goals and even bagged a hat-trick. Based on the stats alone, who was the superior player?"

"Hello Joshua, while Zachary played exceptionally well and was a tough opponent for Barcelona during the second half, it's important to acknowledge that Barcelona eventually won the final. Messi's winning goal was a crucial moment in the match, and it would be fair to say that he played a significant role in securing Barcelona's victory. In football, it's important to recognize the efforts of all match winners, and on this particular night, Messi's contribution was particularly noteworthy."

"Excuse me, gentlemen," Emilia interjected, "but there's another matter we ought to consider. Does Barcelona's victory in the final have any bearing on the outcome of the upcoming Ballon d'Or awards? I mean, with Messi on the winning team, he's likely to have a significant advantage in winning yet another Ballon d'Or award. Isn't he?"

"I think he will have an advantage," replied Alessandro. "He scored the winning goal in the Champions League final and helped his team win a trophy. I think he will win the accolade again."

"Absolutely," nodded Morales, "I've always held Zachary in high regard. He's an exceptional player who's led his team to new heights with his impressive tally of 64 goals in a single season, including 19 in the Champions League, breaking the record for the most goals scored in a single football year. But the reality is that winning the trophy is what counts. So, I wouldn't be surprised if those journalists vote for Messi instead."

Emily had been glued to the TV, watching the show with rapt attention. But as soon as she heard Morales' latest analysis, her face fell, and she sighed heavily.

Morales' words were logical and well thought-out, but Emily couldn't bear to hear them, not when the memory of yesterday's Champions League final was still so raw and painful. Without hesitation, she reached for the remote and switched off the TV, knowing she needed time to process her emotions.

Chapter 614 Zachary's Plans

Emily slowly rose from the bed and stretched her arms above her head before making her way to the bathroom. She turned on the shower and waited for the water to warm up before stepping in. The warm water cascaded down her body, instantly relaxing her tense muscles. She lathered up her body and washed her hair, taking her time to enjoy the peaceful moment.

After about thirty minutes, she turned off the shower and stepped out, wrapping herself in a soft towel. She looked at her reflection in the mirror and started applying her makeup. She carefully applied foundation, blush, eyeshadow, and mascara, taking care to enhance her natural beauty.

Just as she was finishing up, her phone started vibrating loudly on the bedside table. Irritated at the interruption, she walked over and picked it up, glancing at the screen. Her expression softened as she saw that the caller was Zachary, the client she hadn't spoken to since the game.

"Hi, Zachary!" Emily spoke after placing the accept button and holding the phone against her ear. "I'm glad you called, and I hope you're doing well. How are you feeling today, and how has your morning been so far?"

"I'm doing okay," he replied, but he didn't sound okay.

Emily detected a lack of liveliness in his voice and empathetically inquired, "Are you really okay? Please remember that I am here for you, and you can always confide in me."

He hesitated before speaking again, "Honestly, I feel down. Losing the Champions League final hit me more than I expected. I guess I'm a sore loser." He ended with a self-deprecating laugh.

"I'm so sorry," she said with genuine sympathy. "I can't even begin to imagine what you must be going through. But please don't forget that time is a great healer. Every day that passes, you will feel a little better and closer to your old self. Also, if you focus on the positives, this loss could be a turning point for your football career. It may even give you the extra motivation you need to excel. So, please stay strong and keep pushing forward, Zachary."

"You always know how to make me feel better, Emily," said Zachary. "You're an amazing agent and friend! Thank you!"

"You're welcome," Emily replied cheerfully. "I'm guessing you didn't just call to hear my pep talks!"

"Emily, you know me too well," chuckled Zachary. "I have a proposition for you. Let's speed up all the plans this summer break. Whether it's finalizing and renewing all our endorsement deals or starting up my investment company, I want us to complete everything quickly so that I can refocus on my football career."

"Is that so?" Emily's voice rose up a notch. "How do we go about this?"

"Start by fast-forwarding the talks with the Nike representatives," Zachary said. "If possible, I would like to sign the new agreement before I leave for my vacation. Also, bring Miss Heather Miller on board and let her think of a way to quickly put all my investments under my new company."

"Okay, I'll call Miss Heather and bring her on board," replied Emily. "But we all need to meet and discuss everything in detail, including the capital input for the new company and the new investments you will make."

"That's a must," Zachary said. "We'll meet back at my house in Turin after I return. Let's meet next Wednesday morning. I'll call on Tuesday to confirm everything."

"Okay, I think I'll make it," Emily said. "Zachary! There's a question I must ask."

"Go ahead and shoot. I'm all ears."

"I'm not saying it has happened, but let's say one of the biggest teams in the world showed interest in having you on their squad. And suppose they were to trigger your release clause, what would your thoughts be on the matter?"

"Emily, it doesn't matter which team has made the offer. I'm not leaving Juventus," he said with determination. "I'm happy with my career progress, and don't forget that I have a great chemistry with my teammates. Besides, I want to win the Champions League before I even consider moving."

"Okay, I get it," Emily let out a sigh. The top teams, such as Barcelona, Real Madrid, Manchester City, and Bayern Munich, had all been calling her non-stop to poach Zachary from Juventus during the upcoming transfer window. However, Zachary had no plans to move, so she would have to turn down all these offers.

"Can you tell me your plans for the summer break?" asked Emily.

"I told Kasongo that we'd go on vacation together during the break," he explained. "But I want to finish setting up the company and signing the new Nike endorsement deal before I take off."

"Wow," exclaimed Emily. "So, our training maniac is finally taking a break. Interesting!"

"Ha ha, you know what they say - vacation doesn't mean taking a break from fitness," Zachary laughed. "I'm actually traveling with my fitness trainer to keep me in shape. We're planning to do some daily workouts so that I don't lose all the progress I've made all these years. It's important to me to stay fit and healthy, even during the summer break!"

"Ah, now that's the Zachary I know," joked Emily over the phone. "For a moment there, I thought someone was impersonating you." She had been feeling down after watching Juventus lose last night, but talking to her client and friend Zachary always seemed to lift her spirits.

Zachary replied with a chuckle, and they continued to catch up about everything that had been going on in their lives. He told her more details about his upcoming plans for his holiday from football, discussing his training schedules and the specifics of his investments and potential new endorsement deals. Emily listened intently, always impressed by Zachary's determination and dedication to everything he did.

As the call went on, Zachary continued to act as the adult, keeping the conversation focused and on track. Emily appreciated his steadiness, which helped to ground her and bring her back to a more positive mindset. By the time they said their goodbyes, Emily was feeling much better than she had before the call started.

She hung up the call and let out a self-deprecating smile. As the agent, her job was to console her client, who had lost a crucial game. However, Zachary had quickly taken over the task and had become the one to comfort her instead.

Chapter 615 UEFA Champions League System Mission Results

The Juventus team had a challenging time in Berlin, where they played against Barcelona in the UEFA Champions League Final. Although they lost the game, the team left the city with their heads held high and their spirits unbroken on Monday morning, knowing they had played their best.

As they stepped off the plane at Turin-Caselle Airport, they were greeted by a heartwarming and unexpected sight: a large crowd of devoted fans waving banners and chanting their names. The supporters had gathered to show their unwavering love for the team despite the disappointment of the defeat.

The players, who were visibly tired and emotionally drained after enduring the intense game, were deeply moved by the passion and energy of the fans. They stopped to take photos and sign autographs for the supporters, who never stopped cheering and applauding them.

Amidst the cheers and applause of their supporters, the players finally boarded the team bus, eager to leave behind the football season and embark on their well-deserved vacations. Their fans' unwavering support had been a constant source of motivation, helping them to keep their spirits high throughout the season. The players were grateful for the loyalty and encouragement they received from their fans.

"Hey Zachary, I'm curious! What exciting plans do you have for this much-awaited vacation?" Patrice Evra asked with a friendly smile as the bus left the airport.

"Nothing much," said Zachary, "just planning to travel while working out with my fitness coach."

"Wow, that's fascinating!" Evra exclaimed. "If you get a chance, you should definitely consider visiting France. I would be happy to host you and take you on a tour of Paris. It's an experience you won't regret."

"Interesting idea," Zachary pondered. "But I need to discuss it with my travel companion first. I'll let you know my decision later."

Evra was about to add something, but the team bus joined a busier road, and more crowds of supporters appeared, cheering and chanting the Juventus team slogans while waving their banners at the passing bus. Zachary gazed out at the enthusiastic fans and sighed, "They're still cheering us, even after we lost the final. Can you imagine how ecstatic they would have been if we had won?"

"I can only imagine," Evra let out a regretful sigh. "If only we had won, we wouldn't hide inside these buses. Instead, we would be up there, on top of the bus, presenting the trophy to this beautiful city while our fans cheered us on. It would have been a magnificent scene."

Zachary slumped back into his seat and muttered, "But we didn't win!" The Champions League final had not gone as planned, and his mood was down in the gutters. However, he took a deep breath and composed himself before continuing his conversation with Evra, who was seated next to him on the bus.

They chatted about everything from the just-concluded season to upcoming international games and even reminisced about Evra's role in Manchester United's 2008 Champions League victory. Their conversation only came to an end when the bus rolled into the parking lot of the Vinovo - Juventus' training center.

As Zachary said his goodbyes to his teammates and coaches, he couldn't wait to get in his sleek black Audi RS7 and head home. Waiting for him was Riccardo Lorenzo, his trusted driver and bodyguard, who greeted him with a warm smile and opened the car door for him.

As they hit the highway, they chatted about the Champions League final and navigated through the bustling Turin traffic. After an hour, they finally arrived at Zachary's stunning mansion in Pinerolo, Piedmont. It was the perfect place to unwind and relax after a long weekend that had been filled with ups and downs.

"There he is!"

"It's the man himself."

As the car came to a halt, Zachary was startled by loud yells from the mansion's front door. He wondered if he had arrived at the wrong place. However, when he exited the car, he was immediately surrounded by a crowd of familiar faces. Kristin Stein, Emily, Bjørn Peters with his wife, Boyd Johansen (his former coach), Kasongo, a few other former teammates, and even the Old Mr. Stein were standing before the front entrance, beaming at him with warmth and affection. It was an unexpected and heartwarming surprise for Zachary.

"What's all this about?" Zachary inquired.

Emily, his agent, stepped forward and gave him a friendly grin. "Come on, don't be a party pooper. We've put together a cozy gathering to welcome you back from Berlin. We only want you to join us in celebrating the amazing opening season you've had with Juventus. Would you do us the honor?"

Zachary's heart swelled with joy as he heard the response. He couldn't wait to chat with his friends and join the festivities. After dropping his luggage off upstairs and taking a refreshing cold shower, he was ready to party! As the day turned into evening, Zachary laughed, danced, and enjoyed himself with his friends, making memories that would last a lifetime.

Most of his visitors, including Emily, Kristin, and Mr. Stein, eventually left the mansion around 9:00 PM. He then excused himself from the still energetic Bjørn Peters and his wife and went upstairs to his bedroom. He was eager to review the recently completed system missions.

"System!" he mumbled. "Bring up the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League Serial Challenge completion details!"

"Command received," the system's indifferent voice echoed in Zachary's mind. "The details of the mission are now available on the interface. Please take a moment to review them."

Zachary nodded and focused on the shimmering, transparent screen that had materialized before him. Without delay, he began to scrutinize the specifics of the completed task.

#5 new messages

CONGRATULATIONS

->You have completed the system mission (2014–15 UEFA Champions League Serial Challenge).

->Mission Summary

*Milestone 1: Play over 75% of the fixtures of the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League for Juventus (Completed; Rating A+; Rewarded 2,000 Juju points).

*Milestone 2: Help Juventus qualify as number one (team with the most points) from the group to the round-of-sixteen stage of the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League tournament (Completed; Rating A+; Rewarded 5,000 Juju points).

*Milestone 3: Help Juventus qualify for the quarter-finals stage of the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League tournament (Completed; Rating A+; Rewarded 10,000 Juju points).

*Milestone 4: Help Juventus qualify for the semi-final stage of the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League tournament (Completed; Rating A+; Rewarded 30,000 Juju points).

*Milestone 5: Help Juventus qualify for the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League finals (Completed; Rating A+; Rewarded 40,000 Juju points).

*Milestone 6: Help Juventus overcome all odds and become the champions of the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League tournament (Failed! No reward).

*Milestone 7: Provide the most assists in the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League tournament while playing for Juventus (Not completed! No reward!).

*Milestone 8: Become the top scorer of the 2014–15 UEFA Champions League tournament while playing for Juventus (Completed; Rating S+; Rewarded 100,000 Juju points).

*Milestone 9: Score eighteen or more goals to break the individual goal-scoring record in a single UEFA Champions League season convincingly (Completed; Rating S+; Rewarded a dosage of an SS-grade vitality-enhancing elixir).

->Mission completed rating: Subpar!

Overall Mission Rating: B

->Mission Rewards

1) A total of 157,000 Juju-points

2) A dosage of an SS-grade vitality-enhancing elixir.

->No Bonus Rewards!

Chapter 616 Swallowing Elixirs Like There's No Tomorrow

Zachary couldn't help but let out a heavy sigh as he meticulously reviewed the completion details for the UEFA Champions League mission. A wave of melancholy washed over him as he realized this was the first time he had received a subpar mission rating since acquiring the system.

He had been on the cusp of winning the Champions League and reaching the pinnacle of his football career. However, the depressing one-goal difference that led to his team's loss against Barcelona in the Champions League final had shattered his dreams of glory.

"I'll do better next time," he promised himself as he settled back on his bed. The football season had already ended. What he had to do now was to focus on improving his skills so that he could become an unbeatable force that could crush all obstacles that stood in the way of his football dream.

He pushed the distracting thoughts aside and focused on the rewards he had earned by completing various system mission details for the season.

First off, he scored over 200,000 Juju points from these missions. However, he was still far from the one million needed to 'level up' the system to level six.

On top of that, he got his hands on three potent elixirs that could take his fitness to new heights. These included the top-tier S-grade and SS-grade Vitality enhancing elixirs, which were his rewards for helping Juventus achieve a season unbeaten run in the Serie A and breaking the individual goal-scoring record for a single season in the Champions League.

As if that wasn't enough, he also snagged the S-grade random effect elixir, which could boost one of his attributes, including Balance and Coordination, Agility, Strength, Stamina, or Endurance, by an entire grade. As long as he could consume them, he would become an unstoppable force that could crash all opponents on the football field.

"Time waits for no man," Zachary muttered. "I should begin consuming the elixirs."

He didn't have football matches or training sessions scheduled in the coming weeks. This meant he could focus on consuming all the elixirs to boost his fitness to a whole new level. Then, during the summer break, he planned to devote his time to training and perfecting his improved physique.

But first, he exited his room and informed Bjørn Peters that he didn't wish to be disturbed. Then, he returned to his room and settled on his bed before summoning the S-grade vitality-enhancing elixir from the system inventory.

The elixir looked like a tiny banana, similar to its lower-quality versions. Without hesitation, Zachary swallowed it in two quick bites.

A rush of coolness and a tingling sensation swept over his entire body as the elixir began to take effect. Due to his already top-notch SS-grade fitness, the discomfort was brief, and soon, he felt a surge of limitless energy coursing through him.

His eyes glinted with boundless determination as he felt the slight changes. After noting that his body and mind were at their peak, he immediately summoned the SS-grade version of the vitality-enhancing elixir, which was his reward for breaking the individual goal-scoring record for a single Champions League season.

Zachary quickly glanced at the small banana-shaped elixir before swallowing it in two swift gulps. This SS-grade elixir packed a much more powerful punch than its S-grade counterpart. As the elixir took effect, he was overwhelmed by waves of excruciating pain.

The agony persisted for about an hour before a refreshing sensation washed over him in waves. At that moment, he felt rejuvenated and sure that he had fully absorbed the elixir. His body pulsed with limitless energy, and his muscles seemed to ripple with newfound strength. For a fleeting instant, he felt capable of kicking down a wall.

"Sweet," Zachary murmured as he clenched and unclenched his fists. He rose from his bed and ran through a few yoga sets until he felt more in tune with his improved body. Then, after resting for a short while, he settled back on his bed and summoned the S-grade Random effect elixir from the system inventory.

Zachary braced himself, taking a deep breath before downing the grape-shaped elixir in one swift gulp. But before he could savor its flavor, a powerful tremor surged through his body, sending shockwaves through his limbs and spine before engulfing his mind.

Time seemed to come to a standstill as his mind went totally blank. Maybe a moment or hours passed without him knowing, but he eventually regained consciousness, and his perception of his surroundings returned.

On opening his eyes, everything around him seemed different. The swaying of his bedroom's curtain in the night breeze passing through the open window seemed more sluggish than usual, while the sounds picked up by his ears were longer and more drawn out. It was a bizarre sensation that made him feel like the world was in slow motion.

Fortunately, the abnormal feeling passed quickly, and his perception normalized. He took a deep breath before calling out to the system.

"System," he said, his heart racing with anticipation. "Please bring up my current physical fitness and technique attributes."

"Command received," the apathetic voice of the System AI immediately sounded in his mind. "The user's fitness and technique attributes will be coming up on the interface shortly."

As the voice ceased, a translucent crystal-like display that was the system interface manifested before his eyes. He calmed his mind and started reviewing the information displayed by the system.

*USER STATS

->Physical Fitness (Av. Rating: SS+)

Balance and Coordination: SS

Agility: SSS

Strength: SS

Stamina: SS+

Endurance Points: 2,300/72,000 -> SS+

->Soccer Technique: [Av. Rating: S+ (SS)]

Ball Control: S+ (SS)

Dribbling Skills: S+ (SS)

Passing Accuracy: S+ (SS)

Body Control: S+ (SS)

Note: The grades in the brackets are the base stats of the use without the side effects of the elixirs. The user should work hard to master his improved body and overcome the elixir's side effects.

"Wow, this is incredible," Zachary exclaimed with a wide grin. The elixirs had sparked a remarkable transformation, taking his physical prowess to new heights and leaving him absolutely thrilled.

Not only did the vitality-enhancing elixirs boost his stamina and endurance from SS to SS+, but the Random-Effect Elixir also worked wonders, elevating his agility from SS to SSS. This unprecedented achievement filled him with boundless joy and a sense of exhilaration.

Zachary routinely used the system's snooping tool to check out other football superstars, but he'd never seen anyone with stats higher than SS+. Not even Cristiano Ronaldo or Messi had surpassed those stats. This meant that with his newly acquired SSS grade agility, Zachary had the potential to dominate the football world if he could learn to use it effectively on the field.

"One step at a time," mumbled Zachary as he took a deep breath to steady himself. After glancing at the system interface again, he discovered the anticipated side effects of imbibing three potent elixirs. All his technique stats, from Ball Control and Dribbling Skills to Passing Accuracy and Body Control, had plummeted from SS to S+ grading.

Zachary wasn't too concerned, though. With two months of summer break ahead, he was ready to put in the work with Bjørn Peters, his personal fitness trainer. His goal was to return to peak performance before joining his Juventus teammates for the upcoming season, where they would continue aiming for both domestic and European glory.

Chapter 617 End-of-Season Dinner Party

VOLUME 005: THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME

Saturday, June 2nd, 2018

Turin, Italy

The sun was setting over Turin, painting the sky with a breathtaking shade of black. Anticipation was in the air as something big was about to happen at the J|Hotel, the luxurious five-star accommodation owned by Juventus, the revered Italian football team.

As the highly anticipated end-of-season Juventus team dinner drew near, the hotel entrance was abuzz with excitement and media attention. Fans anxiously awaited a glimpse of their favorite players while paparazzi held their cameras, constantly searching for the perfect shot.

Soon enough, the excitement became palpable as the star players of Juventus began arriving in style, each stepping out of their sleek Porsche vehicles and onto the red carpet with an air of boundless grace.

The roar of the ecstatic fans and the flash of cameras quickly filled the air as the players and technical staff slowly made their way into the luxurious J|Hotel, many of them arm in arm with their significant others. Of course, there were also a few lone wolves among the group - those single bastards who walked the red carpet alone, disappearing into the hotel with an air of mystery and intrigue.

The atmosphere was electric, the air thick with anticipation. Suddenly, a sleek black Audi Q7 made its grand entrance, rolling up to the entrance with all the grace of a panther. As the car came to a stop, a tall and enigmatic figure emerged, sending a ripple of excitement through the crowd. The night just got a whole lot more fascinating!

"Zachary! Zachary, we love you..."

"Zachary! An autograph..."

"Zachary..."

The sound of many voices grew louder and louder until it reached its peak. A frenzied atmosphere engulfed the red carpet as the large crowd grew more frantic, eagerly anticipating a glimpse of Zachary, the young football sensation who had become a household name in Turin and Juventus over the last four years. At twenty-three years old, he had already taken the football world by storm, and his arrival was met with sheer enthusiasm.

As he made his way down the carpet, all eyes were on him, and the energy in the air was electric. The atmosphere was positively charged as fans clamored for his attention, their voices rising. Meanwhile, reporters jostled for position, eager to get past security and score an exclusive interview with the superstar.

As Zachary observed the hustle and bustle around him, he experienced a mixture of emotions. The memories of his team's back-to-back defeats in the Champions League finals came rushing back to him. It was a gut-wrenching experience to lose twice in a row, first to Barcelona in 2014-15 and then to Real Madrid in 2015-16. He could still feel the pain of those losses, and the thought of facing the fans had been unbearable.

But Zachary was not one to give up easily. He and his teammates had worked tirelessly to make things right and bring home European football glory for Juventus. And they did just that. Against all odds, they went all the way and defeated Real Madrid in the 2016-17 final to finally clinch the coveted Champions League title.

But they didn't stop there. In the recently concluded 2017-18 season, they showed their dominance again and eventually beat Liverpool in the finals to win a consecutive Champions League title. Zachary couldn't be prouder of his team's achievements, and the joy of finally winning the trophy twice was indescribable.

His face lit up with a wide grin as he reminisced about the unforgettable victories. With his head held high, he walked the red carpet, acknowledging the cheering crowd with a proud wave. Enthusiastic fans eagerly reached out for autographs and handshakes, which he happily obliged before disappearing behind the grand doors of the J|Hotel.

From the moment he crossed the venue threshold, he was transported to a world of sophistication and refinement. A courteous guide led him through the bustling entrance crowd, expertly navigating him to the dinner party.

As he entered the room, he was greeted by a vibrant atmosphere that filled him with anticipation. He was met with a chorus of warm and friendly voices from his Juventus teammates, coaches, and technical staff, all accompanied by their significant others. The soft strains of classical music filled the air, harmonizing with the lively chatter of the guests.

The waiters and waitresses, moving with effortless grace, weaved through the crowd, deftly serving wine and other refreshments, adding to the lively ambiance of the evening. It was evident that everyone was eagerly awaiting the start of the dinner, and the festive excitement was palpable, filling the room with an electric energy.

As Zachary settled into a seat and grabbed a refreshing non-alcoholic mojito from the server, an unmistakable voice caught his attention. "Zachary, you've finally made it!" Coach Max Allegri exclaimed, waving in his direction.

Zachary saw his coach approaching and greeted him with a smile. "Hey coach, it's good to see you," he said. "That black tuxedo looks really sharp on you."

Coach Allegri laughed. "Thanks, Zachary. You're looking pretty sharp yourself. Have you thought about wearing suits more often? You might catch the eye of someone special."

Zachary's face lit up with a grin as he approached the coach. The two engaged in some friendly chitchat, reminiscing about their recent season filled with numerous victories, including clinching the Italian Serie A and the Champions League again.

As the conversation continued, a few more teammates, including Buffon, Giorgio Chiellini, and Stephan Lichtsteiner, joined in, and their lighthearted banter soon turned into a lively affair filled with laughter and jokes. But the sudden appearance of Andrea Agnelli, the chairman of Juventus Club, brought an unexpected interruption to their lively banter.

Without wasting time, Coach Allegri quickly stood up, greeting the chairman with open arms. "Welcome, Chairman!" he exclaimed, setting the tone for the rest of the team.

Andrea Agnelli returned the warm gesture, congratulating the team on another successful football season. He greeted the coach and shook hands with the players, a smile never leaving his face.

"Coach, Zachary!" The chairman interrupted their conversation and asked to speak with them privately after making more small talk. "Could I have a word with you both, in private?" he said.

Coach Allegri glanced at his watch and nodded in agreement after exchanging a glance with Zachary. "Yeah, let's chat in one of the private booths outside," he said. "We should be quick. Or we'll miss the dinner party."

With a boisterous chuckle, the chairman motioned towards the exit and led the way out of the bustling dinner venue. As they strode through the dimly lit hallway, the cacophony of chatter and clinking of silverware gradually dissipated, and the air was filled with an expectant atmosphere. Soon enough, they arrived at a secluded private booth, and the mood shifted abruptly from lighthearted to solemn.

Chapter 618 Farewells

Andrea sighed and calmly asked Zachary, "I was wondering if you have faced any issues with the club since you came to Turin?"

"Absolutely not!" Zachary replied with a smile. "I've had an amazing time at Juventus, and that's a big reason I've been able to accomplish so much during my time here."

"Zachary," Andrea said. "I understand that you're considering your options, but we value your contributions to our team and would like to continue our partnership. We are willing to offer you competitive terms that reflect your value to us, and we are also open to discussing other ways we can support your career goals. That aside, Coach Allegri has expressed his admiration for your leadership potential, and we would be honored to have you as a captain in the future. We hope you will consider extending your contract with us, and we are committed to making you an integral part of our team's success."

"Let's not complicate things, Chairman," Zachary sighed, shaking his head. "Over the past four years, I've given my heart and soul to Juventus. I've fulfilled all the terms of my contract, worked tirelessly with my teammates, and won four consecutive Serie A titles, two Champions League trophies, and a few other awards. However, it's time for us to part ways, and I hope we can do so on good terms. Juventus will always have a special place in my heart."

The chairperson politely turned to Zachary and asked, "Is there any chance you would reconsider? We are willing to offer you a weekly salary of 300,000 Euros plus other favorable benefits."

Zachary shook his head firmly. "Chairman!" he exclaimed, "My decision is not motivated by money or any other benefits from the club. I only want to explore new horizons in my football career outside Italy. Chairman, please allow me to pursue this opportunity."

Andrea let out a sigh and leaned back in his seat. "I see your point," he replied, "So be it. Apart from this, congratulations on the success you have achieved at Juventus. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors."

"Thank you, Mr. Chairman," Zachary replied respectfully.

Andrea nodded and smiled. "You're welcome. You may now return to the dinner party. Let me speak with your coach for a few minutes."

Zachary nodded to both gentlemen before rising from his seat and exiting the private booth.

As soon as Zachary closed the door behind him, an unsettling stillness descended upon the secluded booth. The Juventus coach and chairman looked at each other with expressions of dismay, their silence speaking volumes. For a whole minute, nobody said a word, making the atmosphere feel even more tense and uncomfortable.

"Max," said Andrea, the club chairman, with a hint of disappointment in his voice. "We have suffered a huge loss this time. The entire board is on my case for allowing a talented player like Zachary to leave the club as a free agent. We should have sold him to one of the clubs that were interested in him during the previous transfer window."

"Chairman, I think you're forgetting one thing," said Coach Max Allegri. "Between 120 to 140 million offered for Zachary during the last transfer window and Champions League trophy, which one would you choose as a club president?"

Agnelli had a confident grin as he shook his head. "Come on now, choices are for those who lack drive and direction. If you truly want to succeed, you do not choose. You just have to be willing to take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way."

"You have spoken as a businessman," said Allegri. "But in this case, your principles don't apply. If we had sold Zachary before his contract expired last season, we would have missed out on another Champions League victory. For me, that would have been unacceptable."

"I understand your point," responded Andrea. "But the fact remains that we suffered a tremendous loss. We should have negotiated a much longer contract when we signed him from Rosenborg four years ago. By the way, have you found a replacement for him yet?"

"The team has a solid midfield with Dybala, Sami Khedira, Pjanic, and Marchisio," the coach noted. "However, we cannot solely rely on them after Zachary's departure. To remain competitive both domestically and in Europe, we must acquire another world-class creative midfielder."

"Got it," replied the chairman. "I'll relay the message to the scouting department to start their search for a new midfielder. With the World Cup just around the corner, we can only hope that some top-tier talents will emerge during the tournament."

After nodding in agreement, the coach and the president exchanged a few more words in their private booth. They then returned to the dinner party, which was already in full swing.

Back to the dinner party!

Zachary sat down at the exquisitely arranged dining table, feeling a rush of mixed emotions. His heart was pounding in his chest as he took in the beautiful décor and surroundings.

Amidst the company of his cherished teammates and coaches, a lively ambiance of mixed emotions filled the surroundings - a blend of melancholy and felicity. The room was adorned with Juventus flags and banners, and the big screens started displaying Zachary's memorable moments on the field.

As the night wore on, the Juventus players and coaches pulled out all the stops to show Zachary how much he meant to them. They shared heartfelt speeches, warm embraces, and lots of laughter. The air was filled with the aroma of delicious Italian food and the sounds of clinking glasses and chatter.

Zachary's gaze was fixed on his colleagues as the excitement built up. Overwhelmed with emotion, he couldn't help but feel a sense of love and appreciation radiating towards him. Zachary remembered all the times he had fought hard on the field, all the times he had pushed himself to the limit, and all the times he had celebrated with this team.

But the pinnacle of the evening was when Coach Allegri took the stage and listed Zachary's incredible achievements at Juventus. He recounted how Zachary had become a top scorer and the season's best player for the Serie A three seasons in a row. He then highlighted how Zachary helped Juventus win two Champions League trophies before presenting him with another Player of the Season award.

The audience was ecstatic, and the applause was deafening. Zachary was overwhelmed with joyful emotions and could hardly contain his tears as he accepted the award. He was grateful for the love and support shown to him by his teammates and coaches. He felt proud and accomplished, knowing that his hard work had not gone unnoticed.

As the night slowly came to a close, Zachary scanned the room, taking in the warmth and joy that filled the air. He knew this was a night that he would cherish forever - a night that would always hold a special place in his heart. Everyone joined in to celebrate his immense contributions to the team and wished him all the best for his next adventure.

Chapter 619 Living A Dream I

The following day!

Zachary hit the snooze button one too many times, and when he finally woke up, he couldn't believe it was already 9:00 AM. He quickly jumped out of bed and started his morning routine, determined to make up for lost time.

First, he flowed through a few sun salutations in his yoga routine, feeling the tension in his muscles ease away. Next, he hit the shower, washing away the remnants of yesterday's exhaustion. Having cleaned up, he put on his clothes and ventured outside, feeling revitalized and ready to tackle the day ahead.

As he leisurely descended the stairs, he couldn't help but marvel at the exquisite sights that adorned the walls of his opulent mansion. The breathtaking art pieces he had carefully collected over the years breathed an air of sophistication into his abode, making it feel like a true masterpiece.

He let out a deep sigh and shook his head. He couldn't help but feel like his life was too good to be true. He was only twenty-three, but his football career and investments had already soared to incredible heights, earning him a net worth of over a hundred million. What more could he ever want when he already had it all?

"I need a new challenge," he mused to himself. "I crave a fresh environment, maybe a different league, where I can truly feel the exhilaration of striving to win trophies."

For four years, his team, Juventus, had ruled the Italian football scene with an iron fist. They had won every trophy and accolade available in the country and even tasted triumph on the European and World Club stage.

It was an incredible ride, but he knew deep down that he was ready for a new challenge. That's why he made the tough decision to reject an extension of his contract with Juventus and embark on a new adventure in the football world.

"I should focus on the upcoming World Cup in Russia before thinking about my future club," he decided.

Zachary's journey after becoming a citizen of Ivory Coast was nothing short of remarkable. In just four years, he established himself as a key player in their national team, going above and beyond to help them qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

His tenacity and grit were on full display in November 2017 - when he scored a late winner against Morocco, leading Ivory Coast to an unforgettable victory and securing their spot in the prestigious global football tournament.

Zachary's dedication to the team was awe-inspiring and a true-blue reflection of his love for the game. With unwavering commitment, he gave his all to the team and left no stone unturned in his pursuit of excellence. And now, he was all set to join his Ivorian teammates in Russia, where they would take on some of the world's top footballing nations in the World Cup.

Zachary was fully prepared and ready to embark upon this adventurous journey that promised to be an exciting one. He felt enthusiastic and optimistic about giving his best shot and achieving glory.

Upon entering the dining room, Zachary's mind was still overwhelmed with thoughts of his upcoming trip to Russia. Upon reflection, he decided to attend to his most pressing matters in Italy before joining the Ivorian National team.

As he approached the dining table, he was greeted by Bjørn Peters, his fitness trainer, and his wife, who were already enjoying breakfast. They exchanged warm greetings and made some small talk. Bjørn and his wife were curious about the Juventus dinner from the previous night, and Zachary was happy to chat with them about it.

The atmosphere at the table was lively, and the conversation between them was going well until his phone started vibrating, interrupting their flow. He fished it out of his pocket, only to discover that it was Emily Anderson, his agent, calling. A smile crept up on his face, and he politely excused himself from the table to answer the call, wondering what good news she had for him this time.

"Hey there, Emily! Good morning," he cheerfully greeted.

"Good morning to you too, Zachary," she replied. "I'm already here in Turin with Miss Heather Miller. Can we meet up? We need to discuss some important matters regarding the company before you get busy with the World Cup in Russia."

Zachary let out a chuckle. "Funny you mention that. I was just about to give you a call regarding the same matter. Would it be alright if we meet up at my place in Piedmont?"

"Sure," responded Emily. "We'll be there in forty minutes. Looking forward to seeing you then."

Zachary let out a satisfied grunt and ended the call, a grin spreading across his face. He had worked tirelessly for the past three years, pursuing his passion for football and setting up a company to invest in bitcoins, shares, and real estate. Its name was Bemba Holdings Limited, and with the help of brilliant financial advisors like Miss Heather Miller and his knowledge of the future, they had already amassed a fortune worth over a hundred million in just three years.

As he strolled back to the dining table, he couldn't help but wonder what kind of surprise Emily and Miss Heather had in store for him this time. With excitement surging in his chest, he quickly gobbled up his breakfast, eager to find out what they had planned. Once he had finished his meal, he made his way to the living room and eagerly awaited the arrival of the two ladies.

After twenty minutes, they arrived at his mansion's living room. Both ladies looked impeccably professional. Emily had chosen a dark blue suit that hugged her curves and highlighted the blue in her eyes. Miss Heather Miller wore a black suit, which perfectly matched her spectacles and gave her a sophisticated business look.

As the two women entered the room, Zachary sprang up from his seat, beaming with excitement. "Welcome, ladies!" he exclaimed, enveloping Emily in a warm hug before politely nodding to Miss Heather Miller. "Please, have a seat," he gestured towards the plush chairs, eager to make his guests feel comfortable and at home.

Chapter 620 Living A Dream II

As the ladies made themselves comfortable on the plush sofas, the aroma of freshly brewed tea soon wafted through the air. The attentive maids quickly laid out an array of delectable snacks to nibble on as they engaged in light-hearted small talk. However, as the clock ticked away, it was time to delve into the more pressing issues concerning the company.

"Zachary, I wanted to discuss some of our current investments," Miss Heather, the acting CEO of the company, began. "I'm concerned about our cryptocurrency investments, specifically Ethereum and Bitcoin. As you know, both have decreased significantly in value over the past five months. For instance, Ethereum's worth was at a high of 1100 Euros per coin in January. But now, its value has dropped to approximately 500 Euros per coin.

"Similarly, Bitcoin has also been fluctuating, and it's currently valued at around 5500 Euros, compared to over 9000 Euros in January. As you're aware, the cryptocurrency market is highly volatile and unpredictable. Given our initial investment, which has already yielded hundreds of millions, I strongly suggest we sell all our coins. Doing so will provide us with a secure and stable financial footing."

"Ah, I'm not really worried about the cryptocurrency market fluctuations," Zachary said confidently. He had future knowledge that cryptocurrencies would eventually surge to new heights, so he had to remain patient with his investments, waiting for the right time to cash in. "How much profit have we made so far from our initial cryptocurrency investments?" he asked Miss Heather.

Miss Heather consulted her tablet and informed, "We put 4 million Euros into Bitcoin in November 2015. Its value has increased by about eighteen times and is currently worth around 72 million. Furthermore, we invested 5 million Euros in Ethereum in June 2016, which has grown roughly thirty times and is currently worth about 150 million."

"That's okay, but not good enough," Zachary said with a slight nod. "I'm prepared to take a chance and hold onto the cryptocurrency for an extended period to ensure our profits keep increasing."

"But..." Miss Heather started to say.

"Miss Heather, no need to worry," Zachary interjected. "Our strategy involves taking the long view, so it's best to not stress over minor details. I've already decided, and we'll hold on to the cryptocurrency for a few more years. Speaking of which, how are our shares in Tesla, Netflix, and Leeds United performing?"

"Although there hasn't been a significant change, the situation is steady," Miss Heather responded. "We've seen a 36% increase in the value of our Tesla shares - now worth approximately 2.7 million Euros. Our Netflix shares have grown by approximately 69%, bringing their worth to around 6.8 million Euros from the initial 4 million Euros. Finally, our investment of 4 million Euros in Leeds United shares has grown by about 0.5%, providing returns of approximately 20,000 Euros."

"Looking good," Zachary said with a grin. "We can hold onto the shares and expect a decent profit on our initial investment after a few more years. Are you still equipped with enough funds to support the company? Or should I transfer more money to you?"

Miss Heather responded, "We have sufficient funds already. Additionally, our property investments in Ivory Coast have begun generating decent rental income. Hence, we can utilize that as the operational capital for the company."

"Excellent work," exclaimed Zachary. "I truly appreciate your hard work and dedication to the company. Keep up the great work!"

"Sure thing," Miss Heather replied with a smile. "Regarding the cryptocurrency, have you given it any more thought? It's important to note that virtual currency rates can be highly volatile, and if we're not cautious, we could risk losing all the progress we've made so far."

"Miss Heather, I understand the risks involved, but I'm willing to take the chance," Zachary confidently stated. "Let's leave it at that and move forward with our plan." Zachary had future knowledge about the cryptocurrency market. He knew that Bitcoin and Ethereum would skyrocket in value in 2021. Therefore, he didn't want to sell them before they reached their full potential.

"Alright, I understand," Miss Heather said calmly. "That's all I wanted to share. I'll leave you two to have some privacy and discuss things between yourselves. Emily must have a lot to talk to you about." She then excused herself and left the living room without hesitation.

Emily smiled at Zachary and said, "She does have a point, you know. Investing in cryptocurrency is a risky venture. I don't know why you aren't willing to sell when you have already made over a hundred million Euros from your initial investment."

Zachary smiled mysteriously and spoke lightly, "I have my considerations. By the way, do you have any good news for me?"

"I indeed do," Emily exclaimed, her face lighting up. "I've been busy reaching out to all the top football clubs, and guess what? They're all clamoring to sign you up! You've got many options, from Real Madrid, Barcelona, and Bayern Munich to Atlético Madrid, Manchester City, Manchester United, Chelsea, Liverpool, Arsenal, Tottenham, PSG, and many more. So, where do you see yourself playing next?"

Zachary spoke with confidence. "The English Premier League! That's where I see myself taking my football career to the next level."

Emily's eyes lit up with excitement. "Ah, I had a feeling you'd say that. But which club would be your dream team? Is it Manchester City, Liverpool, or Chelsea? Or perhaps you have your sights set on another team?" she asked curiously. "Tell me all about it!"

"I can go to any team with a competitive edge in the Premier League, aside from Manchester City," Zachary stated. "Just do your best to get me a good contract with one of the promising teams."

Zachary had already familiarized himself with the GOAT System's workings and knew that the bigger the challenge, the greater the rewards. This was why he wasn't interested in joining Manchester City, the team that had dominated the Premier League in his previous life. Instead, he had his sights set on clubs

like Liverpool, Manchester United, and Arsenal, which would put his skills to the test and offer substantial rewards once he had accomplished the system's missions.

"Being open to various options is great," Emily remarked. "However, to make it easier for me to find you a rewarding contract in a promising football club in the Premier League, it would be helpful if you could tell me your first choice. I will make sure to prioritize that from the beginning."

After a moment of thought, Zachary spoke up. "If I had to choose, Liverpool would be my top pick, followed by Arsenal, Tottenham, Chelsea, and Manchester United in that order."

"Sure thing," replied Emily with a grin. "I'll make Liverpool the top priority, but I'll also stay in touch with other promising English Premier League clubs. We will initiate the transfer process after you finish representing Ivory Coast in the World Cup."

"That sounds like a good plan," said Zachary. "I also wish to focus on the World Cup first."

More topics about the upcoming World Cup naturally came up as Emily and Zachary continued chatting. Emily quickly pointed out that Zachary's group was no easy feat, with Spain, Portugal, and Iran all in the mix. She reminded him of the teams' respective FIFA rankings and how challenging it would be for Zachary and his teammates to qualify out of their group.

Zachary listened attentively, nodding his head in agreement. "I know. It's going to be tough," he said with a sigh. "But I'm up for the challenge."

Emily smiled at his determination. "I have no doubt that you'll give it your all," she said with a reassuring hand on his arm. "You've got this."

Zachary grinned, feeling grateful for Emily's support. "Thanks," he said. "I'm hoping for some good results from the World Cup."

As their conversation continued, Emily asked Zachary about his travel plans. He told her he was leaving on Wednesday and had a busy schedule ahead of him. He was set to meet his Ivorian teammates in Edinburgh and play a friendly game against Scotland on June 7th before heading to Russia for the World Cup.

"Wow, that's quite the itinerary," Emily said, impressed. "You must be excited."

"I am," Zachary replied with a smile. "I can't wait to get started."

Emily wished him all the best and promised to watch his games closely. "I'll be rooting for you," she said with a grin.

Zachary thanked her again and watched as she and Miss Heather left. He couldn't help but feel a mix of excitement and nerves as he thought about the challenges ahead. But with his wide array of football skills and boundless determination, he knew he was ready to take on the world.