

THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME

Chapter 2 - The G.O.A.T System

Zachary blinked as his eyes adjusted. He gazed at the translucent blue book, wide-eyed, mouth agape, and face frozen in wonderment.

Zachary had read many system-tagged web novels before he'd returned to his past. He could instantly comprehend what was happening. He was sure that he might be acquiring a 'leveling-up system' like all those protagonists in the novels. That was the dream cheat for any passionate fan of web novels.

The system could help him level up his soccer skills and make him a star player within a few years if it was anything like in those novels.

Since he was injured, this was the first time Zachary felt optimistic about pursuing his dream of becoming an internationally recognized soccer player.

With a system, he could become one of the best players in Africa or even in the whole world.

He could then easily acquire mansions, posh cars, supermodels, and big money without ever resorting to robbery and selling drugs like in his past life.

Above all, he could secure a better future for his grandmother that was still suffering in poverty in a remote village in Bukavu.

The sky was the only limit.

[Am I really awake?] Zachary wondered before once again pinching his skin. This time, he chose one of the more sensitive areas on his body to dispel all the doubts in his mind.

"Damn, that hurt," he yelped.

The pain he felt was as real as it could be.

If he was asleep, then this dreamworld or fantasy had become his new reality.
And that wasn't a bad thing.

He was glad to accept it.

Zachary calmed his mind and once again refocused on the contents of the virtual book before him.

SPACE-TIME TUNNELING SUCCESSFUL

G.O.A.T SYSTEM INITIALIZING

"DING" Discover new chapters on *n0ve(l)bin(.)com*

NEW USER DETECTED...

MATCHING BRAINWAVES...

ANALYZING BODY DATA...

ORIENTING TO NEW USER...

ACTIVATION SUCCESSFUL

"DING"

Please select your desired profession to start your journey on the path to becoming a G.O.A.T

- a) Musician
- b) Actor
- c) Soccer Player
- d) Basketballer
- e) Other Sports

'NB: The system will aid you on your journey to ascend to the G.O.A.T status in any of the above professions.'

'Please make your choice after careful consideration. The choice is irreversible.'

A smile slowly spread across Zachary's face after reading through the lustrous golden words on the page. He wanted to run, to shout, to tell his grandma what was happening, but he knew he couldn't. He had no way of explaining his circumstances.

Zachary had gone back in time and acquired a freaking system that should've only existed in his fantasies. The system could elevate him to the G.O.A.T status in several professions.

He was deliriously happy, giddy even.

Zachary carefully extended his right forefinger and tapped on choice – C.

"DING"

USER HAS SELECTED SOCCER PROFESSION

'Confirm' 'Cancel'

(**NB: The choice is irreversible after confirmation.)

Zachary did not think twice and just confirmed his choice of the soccer profession. Soccer was his love, obsession, and the only thing he'd ever managed to achieve some positive results in his previous lifetime.

Zachary would never choose to become a singer or an actor. He would embarrass himself if he ever tried singing due to his deep hoarse voice.

On confirming the soccer option, the translucent book instantly dispersed into glittering blue particles before assembling back into a virtual screen with a spinning golden soccer ball at the center. The ball then disappeared into the background before new golden words started appearing on the virtual screen.

"DING"

SOCCER G.O.A.T UI SUCCESSFULLY INITIALIZED

STARTING BOOT PROCESS

IMPLANTING QUANTUM BIO-CODE IN DNA OF USER...

Zachary's head throbbed while his bones tingled with a ticklish feeling. The pain felt like someone had taken a knife to his skull.

He quickly lay down on his bed and rested his head against his pillow. Squeezing his eyes shut, he willed the pain to go away. The rest of the world became detached, and all he could concentrate on was the pain rooted deep in his head and bones.

But soon, he heard another ding sound before the pain receded like a tide. He opened his eyes and noticed that the words on the screen had once again changed.

SOCCER G.O.A.T SYSTEM SUCCESSFULLY BOUND TO NEW USER

POPULATING USER INTERFACE...

UPDATING USER STATS...

UPDATING MISSIONS...

SOCCER G.O.A.T UI SUCCESSFULLY UPDATED

USER CAN ACCESS INFO BY FOLLOWING THE TAB MENUS

The message ended there. The virtual screen once again became blank. But not for long. Shortly, glowing golden tab-menus started populating the screen.

SOCCER G.O.A.T SYSTEM

SYSTEM LEVEL: 1 (0/100 juju points to level-up)

USER: Zachary Bemba

AGE: 15 years

TALENT ASSESSMENT: Grade-D

JUJU-POINTS: 0

(Evaluation: A pitiful boy far from becoming a professional soccer player)

USER MENU

*USER STATS

*G.O.A.T MISSIONS

*SYSTEM SHOP (locked)

*SYSTEM LOTTERY (locked)

*SNOOPING TOOL (locked)

NB: Please level up the system to unlock more functions.

Zachary could instantly understand the contents of the system User-Interface after taking a single glance.

It was like a User Interface of a simple android mobile game that the user could use to navigate the game menus.

But Zachary was perturbed by the system's assessment of his talent.

He had been playing soccer since he was eight years and felt like he was good at it. But the system was assessing his talent at only Grade-D.

The grading was different from Zachary's expectations. So, he tapped on the 'USER STATS' button to understand why.

Another list populated the virtual page as soon as his finger left the virtual button.

*USER STATS

- >Physical Fitness: D+
- >Soccer Technique: C+
- >Game Intelligence: C+
- >Mental Ability and Mindset: D-
- >X-Factors: F
- >G.O.A.T Skills: NONE

"Really!" Zachary exclaimed. "How can my mental ability be only at 'D-'? My grading should be higher than this."

Although Zachary was a failure in his previous lifetime, he had always thought of himself to have a strong mental fortitude that could endure any hardship. But the system's assessment of him was different from his expectations.

For a moment, he was distressed. But then, he remembered that he had a second chance at achieving his goals—an opportunity at ascending to become a 'great' in sports.

[With this G.O.A.T system, what is there to fear?]

[I will work harder and become a Grade-S talent as soon as possible.] He resolved while tapping on the physical fitness tab.

USER STATS

- >Physical Fitness (Av. Rating: D+)
- Balance and Coordination: E
- Agility: E

Strength: C-

Stamina: C+

Endurance Points: 990/1000 (C+)

NB: For detailed numerical data, follow the attribute tabs.

Zachary did not bother to continue assessing his stats. More info would confuse his head. He was never good with numbers.

But he could still understand his skills rating.

His highest attributes were his strength, stamina, and endurance at the moment. They seemed to be above average if the top rating was grade-S.

Zachary was still not satisfied with his data.

[I hope this system has a way to enhance my attributes and heal my injury in a short time.]

[I have to be part of that trial that should be taking place in about a month.] He thought while glancing at his Asahi digital watch beside his pillow.

He had moved fifteen years back to the past. The date today was June 12, the year 2010. He had started to recall some events that were about to happen in the local soccer scene.

A month later, a few scouts from France would be in attendance at the regional football trials in Lubumbashi City. They were officials of a humanitarian organization aiming at promoting soccer in war-torn areas like DR. Congo.

In his previous life, a few Congolese young players were lucky to be selected by the scouts. Shortly after, they joined illustrious high-performance soccer academies in France and ascended to the skies in a single leap.

The other young soccer players (including Zachary) that were not part of the trial wallowed in endless regret about the missed opportunity for years.

Zachary rubbed his palms together—in anticipation as he was determined to participate and succeed that time around. Thus, without any dilly-dallying, he clicked the 'G.O.A.T Missions' tab on the system interface. If the system had a method to increase his powers and heal him, it had to be through a mission. That was a no-brainer for anyone who had ever read a system-tagged novel.

The tab was already blinking with a red light showing that there was already a mission awaiting Zachary to complete.

G.O.A.T MISSIONS

#NEW MISSION: Preparations to become a soccer G.O.A.T

*Task 1: Run 70 miles within a week.

*Task 2: Complete 100 seat-ups daily for a week.

*Task 3: Complete 50 press-ups daily for a week.

*Task 4: Complete four rounds of half a dozen Hatha-Yoga poses daily for a week.

*Rewards:

->B-grade vitality enhancing elixir (Heals all injuries and strengthens the body. Has a chance of increasing talent.)

->A random G.O.A.T Skill.

->5 juju-points

*Punishment in case the mission is still incomplete after the stipulated time.

->Loss of G.O.A.T system.

->The left leg of the user will be permanently crippled (No compromise).

*Remarks: A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. And that step must be taken now.

"Now!" Zachary exclaimed, his eyes widening. Since he'd been through a lot in the past few hours, he was tired and spent out.

So, he was just about to go out and relax by taking a walk around his old neighborhood. But the system swatted his plans.

He hurriedly put on his oversized tracksuit, ate a quick breakfast, and rushed out of the house after saluting his grandmother.

He could only relax after finishing the daily tasks imposed on him by the system. He would never allow himself to lose his leg if he had an opportunity to do something about it.