

Football 71

Chapter 71 Try-Out (1)

"(huff) That was a lot of fun," I subconsciously said as I ran a towel through my hair wanting to dry them from the shower I took. That's a good thing about the school I guess there are shower stalls in the changing rooms, so we don't have to go back to class reeking of sweat.

"Yeah, I've never tried that hard in PE," Liam next to me exclaimed as he also run a towel through his hair. It took us another five minutes to somewhat dry our hair and even then, it was still damp by the time we left for our next class.

Entering our music class, we both took a seat in front of one of the keyboard's that were set up around the classroom. The teacher wasn't in yet, so we just spent some time talking about random stuff. Just as Liam was telling me about his desire to join the boxing team, I felt someone sit to my left.

Turning around I was met with a pair of blue eyes that looked at me with a hint of amusement. The blue eyes belong to a girl with dirty blond hair who looked vaguely familiar to me. However, no matter how hard I thought about it, I couldn't think of where I could've met her. After all, you would remember meeting a beautiful blonde with wavy hair.

"You forgot me?" She asked me with a look of disbelief as she pointed her index finger towards herself. Seeing that she had seen through my thoughts I could only nod with an apologetic smile.

"Sorry but I think I would remember meeting a cute girl like you," I told her deciding to distract her with a compliment. That seemed to do the trick as a slight blush appeared on her cheeks.

"I see you met Lexi" Liam said from behind me inserting himself into the conversation and breaking the silence that had built up between us.

"Oh, nice to officially meet you the Lexi," I said to her as I stretched out my hand for a handshake to which she subconsciously grabbed it. Her hands are soft but surprisingly she has quite a strong grip.

"Yeah, you too," she said in a daze as she looked into my eyes making no attempts to let go of my hand.

Not wanting to lose in the contest I started inspecting her facial features a little closer. She has tiny freckles on both of her cheeks highlighting her long eyelashes. That coupled with the fact that she has tiny specks of grey in her eyes made her look all the more beautiful.

"Ahem, so when are you two getting married?" I heard Liam say from behind me bringing me out of my daze. I don't know for how long I have been in a daze, but it must have been for quite a while. If those not-so-subtle glances, we were getting from the kids around us are any indication.

Lexi seemed to also notice the glances around us as she quickly let go of my hand and turned away only to be met with the smiling gazes of a group of girls. From the vibe I got from them, I assumed they are her friends. Turning back to Liam I could already tell that he had plenty of questions he wanted to shower me with. Lucky for me though the music teacher walked into the class and hit the drum to get our attention.

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"Alright everyone come in and take a knee we're about to begin this year's training camp," Head Coach Baker called out to us as we quickly gathered around him in a semi-circle. Coach is a bald African

American man in his early forties who gave a serious yet friendly vibe. He's dressed in a black tracksuit in the school's colours with the team logo on his left breast pocket.

Looking around me there are currently kids around the ages of 6 to 11. It seems like this is for the selection of the lowest level of the middle school team and those below it. Starting from middle school the school has three levels of teams for the club with only elementary having one and a development program. The program is mainly for the younger kids who are still developing and struggling to dribble the ball.

There are only around 40 kids here who meet the age criteria which may seem like a lot but in actuality, it's not considering the enormous number of elementary school kids in the school. It can't be helped though the American football team's season runs through most of our season and when its over baseball starts so there's not much hope of this number increasing.

"We will spend the entire week separating you according to your skill level, by putting you all to the test, we have many levels of squads in our school but only those with talent and grit will be able to join them," he started off his speech as he swept his gaze past us making eye contact with me for a second. The slight eye contact confused me as I haven't met the guy before today.

"We will put you through the wringer in order to gauge what level you belong on so don't hold back throughout the training camp, Eagles on there," he finished his speech causing a chain reaction from the kids around me as they jumped up to cheer Eagles on the three counts. This set of actions caught me off guard as I've only seen American football teams do this so far.

"Let's start with something light, run 5 laps to get your blood pumping," he instructed us motioning for us to start running. Although somewhat reluctant the group as a whole started jogging around the pitch.

There were a few who started racing each other but I opted to follow the older kids' example and just kept pace with them. It seems like that was the right idea because as soon as we were done with the five laps, we were asked to do 3 more at seventy-five per cent speed. It wasn't much harder for me as I'm used to running long distances due to my morning runs but those that were racing each other earlier were quickly left behind by the group.

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"Alright, now that you are done with your warm-up routine, we can get started with you actually training. However, I want you all to go through that warm-up every day before training as soon as the clock strikes 18:00 o'clock," coach Baker said to us as we all slowly got up from the ground to go to the next exercise.

The so-called warm-up he was talking about might be a full workout for some track and field teams. After the runs around the pitch, he had one of his assistant coaches take us through a dynamic stretch routine for 15 minutes. After making sure we were stretched out we went straight into agility drills using leaders, small hurdles, poles, and cones for another 15 minutes. His whole warm-up routine took around forty minutes with no breaks as you were allowed to take them in between wait times for your turn.

Moving along we started doing some passing exercises that were more skill focused. We spent the rest of the training going through various drills that focussed on our touch and passing accuracy. The intensity of the whole session was surprisingly quite high for a group of children. It wasn't quite as high as in the Nike camp but there was a different kind of intense atmosphere that I couldn't put my finger on.

"Alright that's enough for today, go and do your cool down bring your swimming clothes tomorrow," Head coach baker instructed us before walking away with his assistant coaches. Following through with his instructions I started going through some slow stretch movements to loosen up my tight muscles. Most of the kids around me did the same but the majority just left after seconds. I continued with my stretch routine until I spotted mums car pull into the parking lot.

"Hey, son how was your first training session?" She asked me as I settled into the passenger seat.

"It was fun I guess a lot more intense than I thought it would be, good thing we didn't go too hard in our morning workout," I answered her as she started driving us home navigating evening traffic. The roads are quite packed at this time of day, especially the highway.

"Where is Emma?" I asked her after a while of talking about random things we did during our day. Apparently, she spent her day managing her new fitness studio that she opened during the summer. The studio was practically her new baby set up in a way to fully accommodate her clients.

"She is going home with May and Jenna since they all tried out for the cheer team," She answered me reminding me that Emma did mention something about their try-out being on the same day. Apparently, the school holds simultaneous try-outs for each club whose season starts in the fall to make sure you are committed to the club you try out for.

"Oh, alright is dinner already ready?" I asked as I haven't really eaten since lunch and after going through that intense training session, I'm quite famished.

"Yeah, Ben is cooking right now so we can eat after you get a shower," she told me as we pulled into our estate passing by some familiar roads.