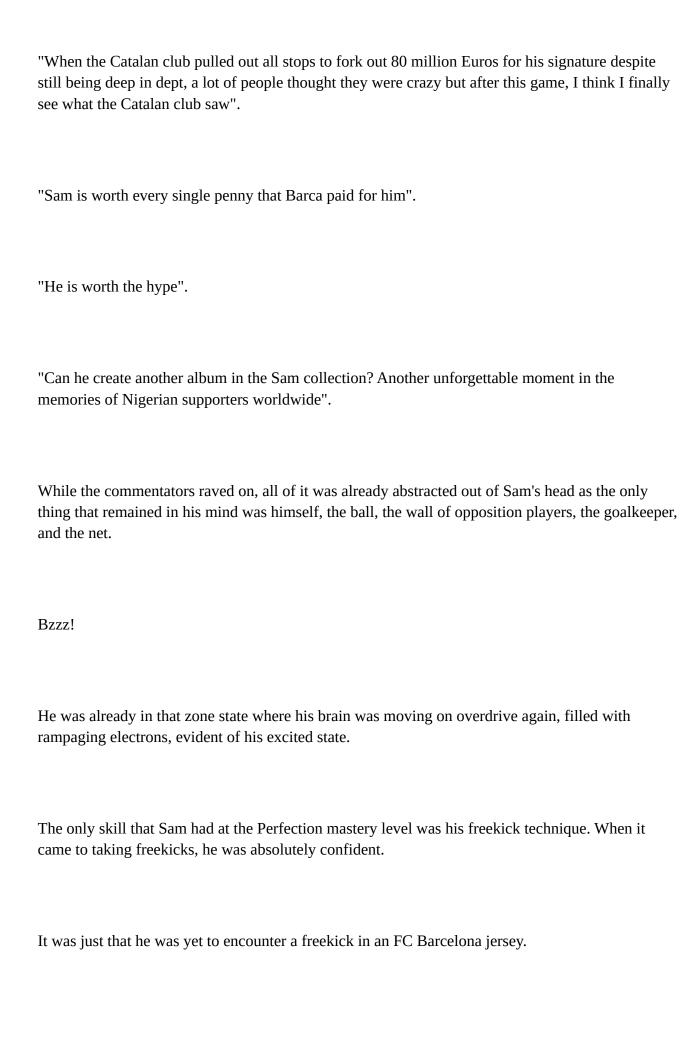
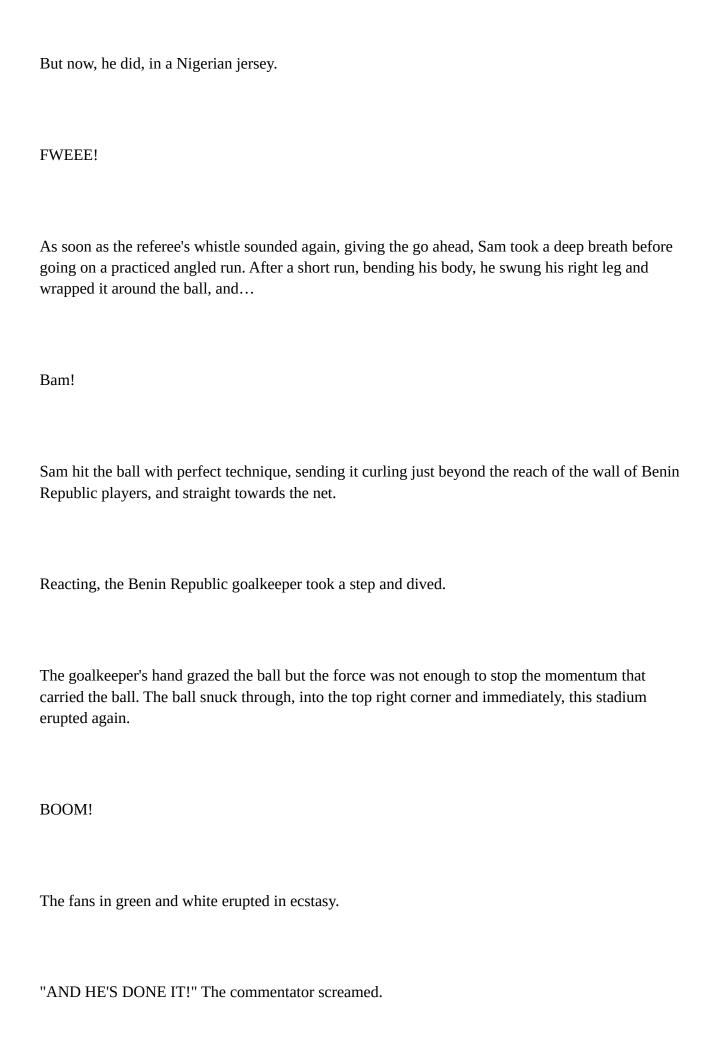
Football God 331

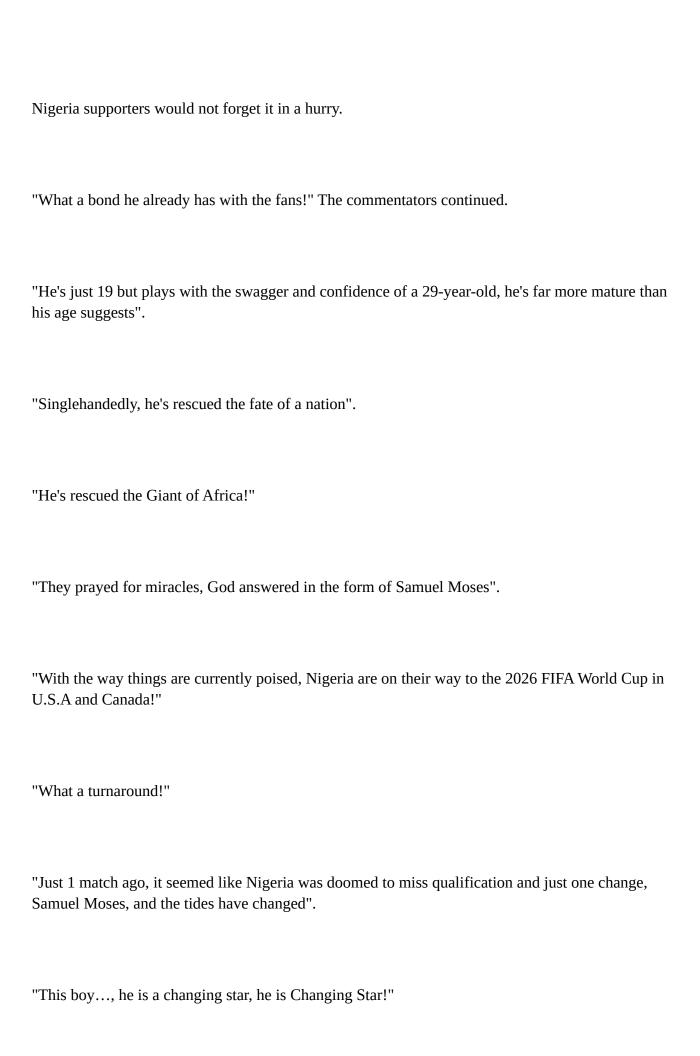












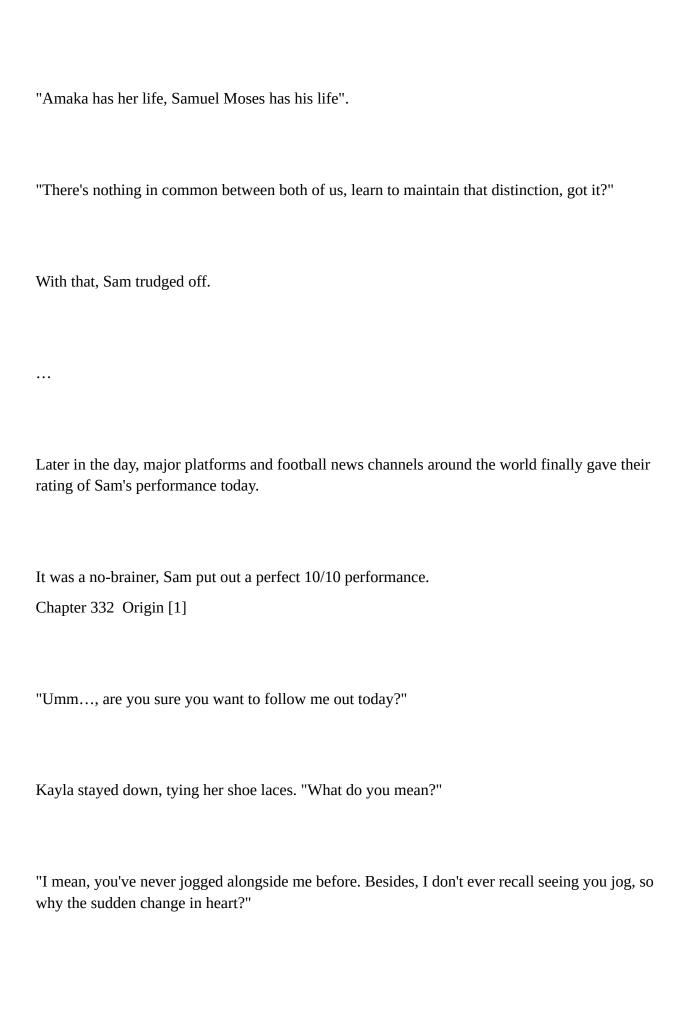
The referee's whistle sounded to continue the game and Sam showed the home supporters that he still had much more to give even at 4-0, even after the 74th minute, even after the Benin Republic players already gave up.
Sam showed that he still wanted more even after his teammates already relaxed, accepting that they've already won.
Even as the level and intensity of this game reduced after 4-0, Sam remained the one constant that kept on being a thorn in Benin Republic's side.
He kept on torturing the living hells out of them with his silky dribbling skills.
Not satisfied yet, in the 88th minute, Sam did it one more time, adding the final nail to the coffin as exchanging one-two passes with Moses Simon, he dribbled towards the right where he floated a dangerous cross into the box.
Rising highest above every other player, the incredible Victor Osimhen got to the ball first, eager to get his name on the scoresheet.
BAM!
The striker directed a powerful header in.



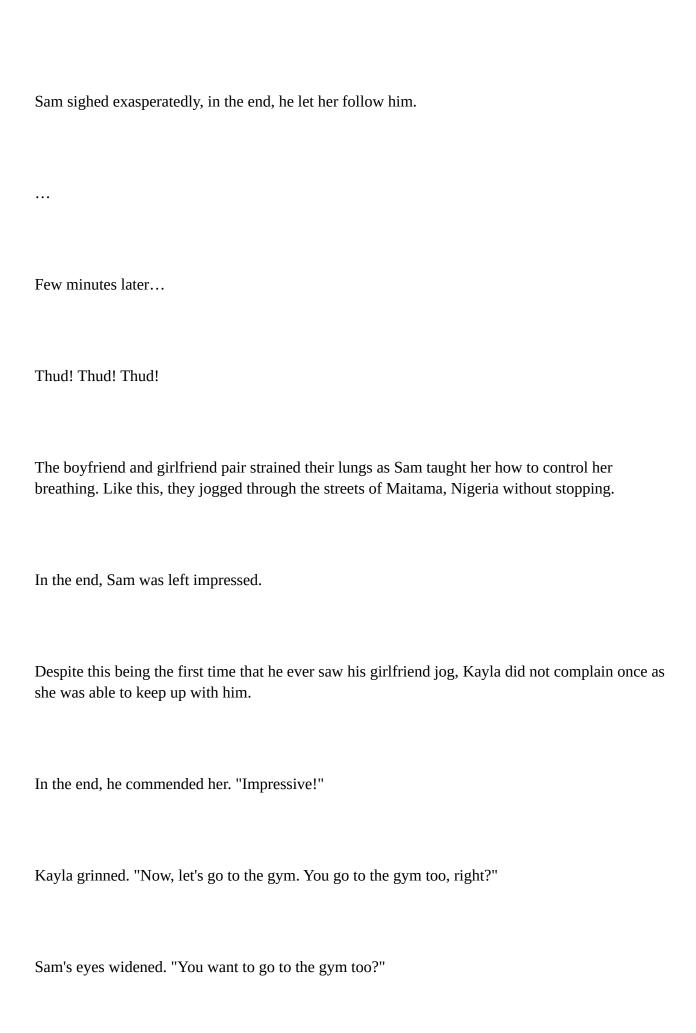
After the final whistle, while wild celebrations by the Nigerian fans and players started right there on the pitch, the Benin Republic players went straight to their dressing rooms, eager to move away from the spotlight.
It was too humiliating to stay in the spotlight after such a humbling loss.
For the 2nd straight game for Nigeria, Sam won the man of the match award so of course, he attended the post-match interview again.
"Sam, you're a man of your words, you actually kept to your words and did it, leading Nigeria to the FIFA World Cup 2026".
"Congratulations Sam, you are amazing!"
Sam smiled bashfully. "Thanks, my teammates helped a lot. Alone, I would have never been able to do it and for that, I'm grateful to them".
"You're too humble," the reporter smiled. "By the way, Sam, after today's performance, you've truly ramped your numbers for the season up".
"Really?"
"Yeah," the reporter nodded, smiling. "For the season, that takes your tally to 8 goals and 4 assists in just 7 games, 12 goal contributions!" The reporter raved.









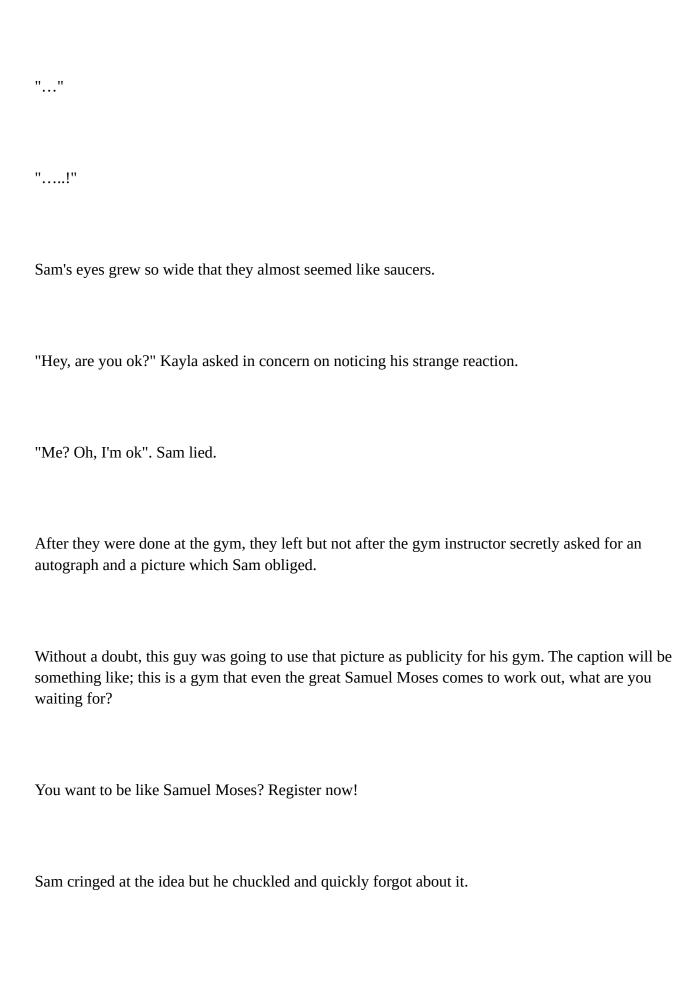


"Of course," she grinned smugly. "I'm following you everywhere today".
A few minutes later, when they entered the gym in Maitama, Sam and his girlfriend's entrance caused a frenzy in the state-of-the-art gym.
Maitama was one of the biggest districts in Nigeria where the richest Nigerians and foreign delegates reside. But even here, due to Sam's recent status, his mere entrance was able to turn this gym into a bubble of excitement.
Both white and black men in the gym, none discriminated as they swarmed him, asking for pictures and autographs.
'Even here?' Sam sighed.
This was not his first time coming to this gym.
After buying a mansion here in Maitama for his parents, he paid for the gym's yearly registration, giving him free pass to the gym for 1 straight year.
Anytime he visited Nigeria, this gym was where he completed his daily system quest and then, despite the fact that he was already famous, the people at the gym were no country bums so they only greeted him haphazardly.
They never saw him as someone that was overly special.



This was why she followed him out today as a safeguard.
Right there at the gym, the girls tried to flock over him, trying to rub their huge breasts all over him but one glare from Kayla and Sam regained his senses.
Politely, he pushed them away, emphasizing the need to respect his privacy.
Kayla nodded, satisfied. "Good boy".
And like that, she also registered for the gym alongside her boyfriend as together, they went through the motions, working out.
Dozens of minutes later, drenched in sweat, Kayla chugged down a bottle of water with a bright smile on her face. "Working out once in a while is not so bad".
"I feel light".
Sam nodded. "That's why I love working out".
At that moment, his system finally lit up with a notification.
~~

[You have completed Daily System Quest: Mentality Monster!]
[You have received a low-grade physical conditioning elixir!]
But to Sam's surprise, the notification did not stop at that.
More notifications followed with content that surprised him.
•••
[Congratulations! You have completed a hidden system mission: I am ready!]
[You have met the requirements to receive the inheritance, 'Origin']
[Click the heart-shaped orb to learn the 'Origin' of the system!]
~~
шп



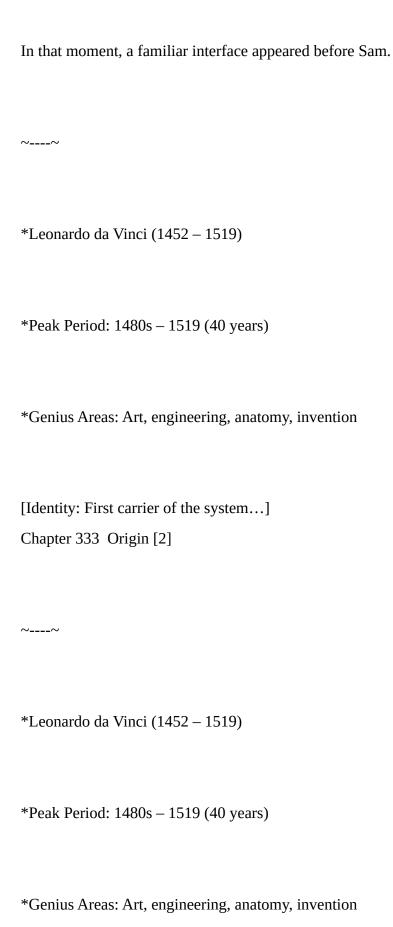


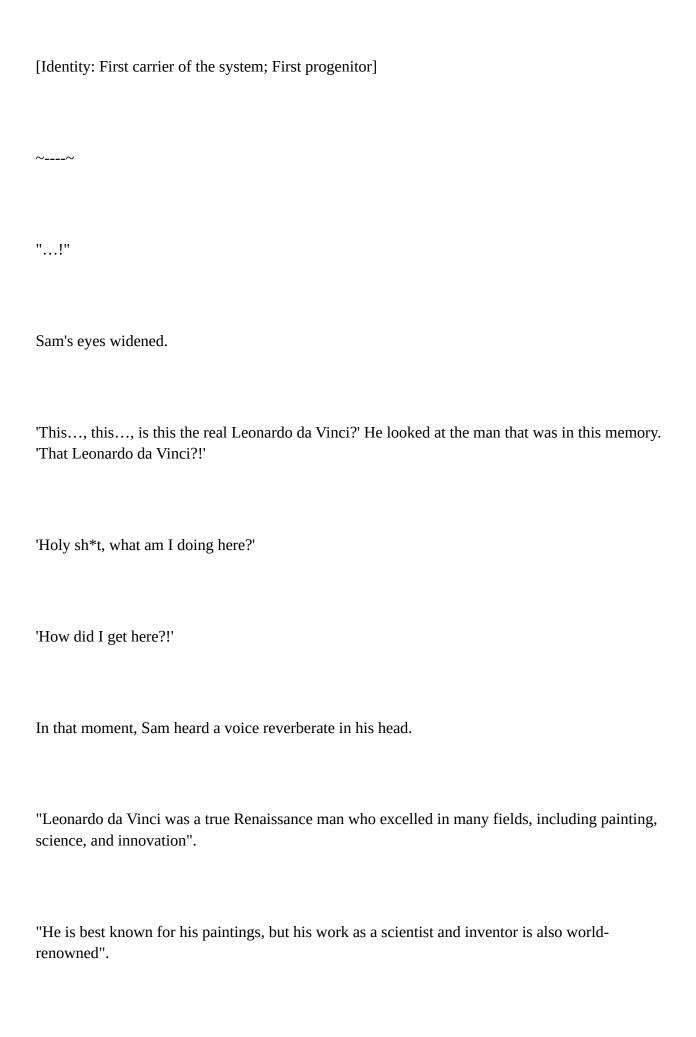




At this moment, opening the system, he saw a green heart-shaped orb hovering before him in place of the interface.
After taking a deep breath, Sam clicked on the heart-shaped orb, and then
BZZZ!
His consciousness left his body.
Blink!
Sam's consciousness woke up inside an unfamiliar world.
At this moment, he seemed to be hovering in the air like a ghost, looking down on what seemed like an office room set in the Victorian era.
This office was a masterful blend of chaos and genius, more of a workshop-laboratory than a traditional office.
The space was dimly lit, illuminated by oil lamps and sunlight filtering through a small window, casting flickering shadows on the stone walls.

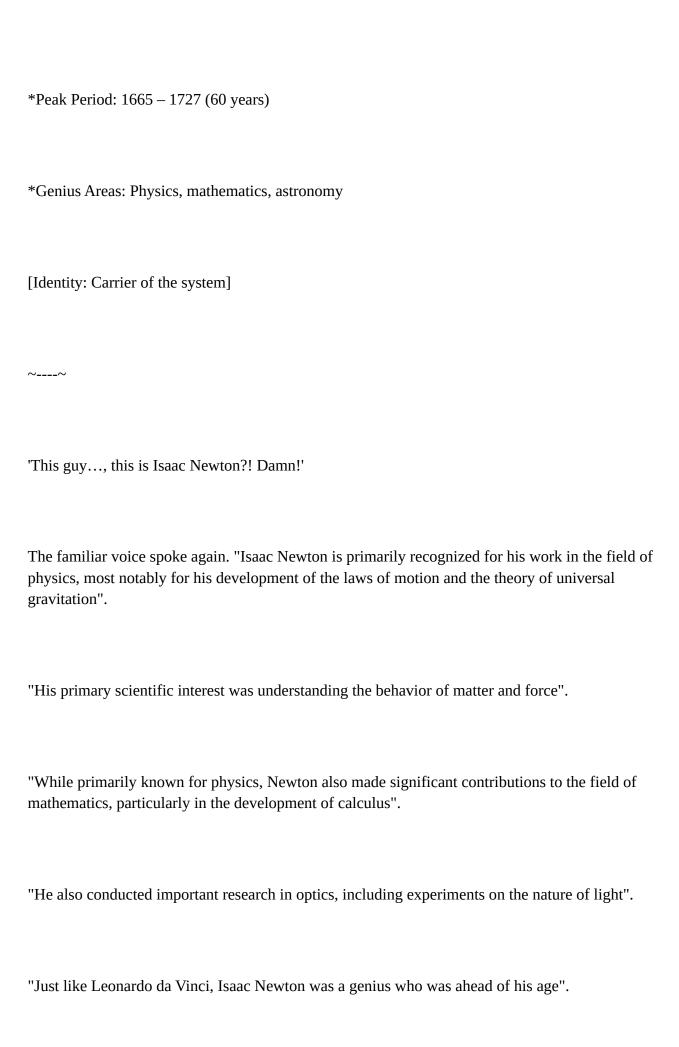
The air carried the scent of parchment, ink, oil, and metallic tangs from what seemed like engineering experiments.
At the center, a large wooden worktable was cluttered with sketches, anatomical drawings, and architectural plans. Stacks of parchment filled with mirror-written notes were scattered among open books on mathematics, engineering, and philosophy.
A quill and inkwell sat nearby, next to a small glass vials of pigments.
Against one wall, wooden shelves overflowed with reference texts and hand-bound notebooks, their pages brimming with notes on flight, hydraulics, and anatomy.
Another corner housed anatomical models, a partially dissected cadaver under a cloth!
Sam shuddered. 'Where is this?'
'Where am I?'
'Who is that?!'
He finally looked at the middle-aged man who was seated, reading one of the books with the illumination of the oil lamps.

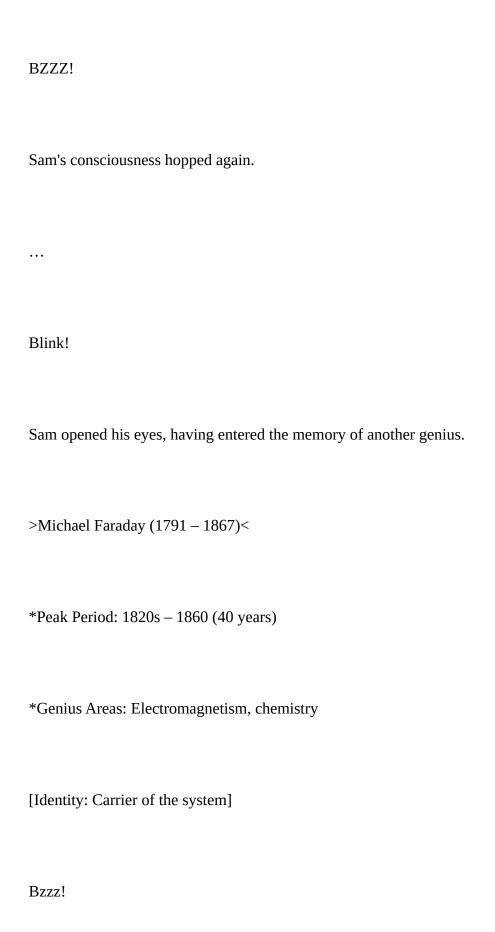




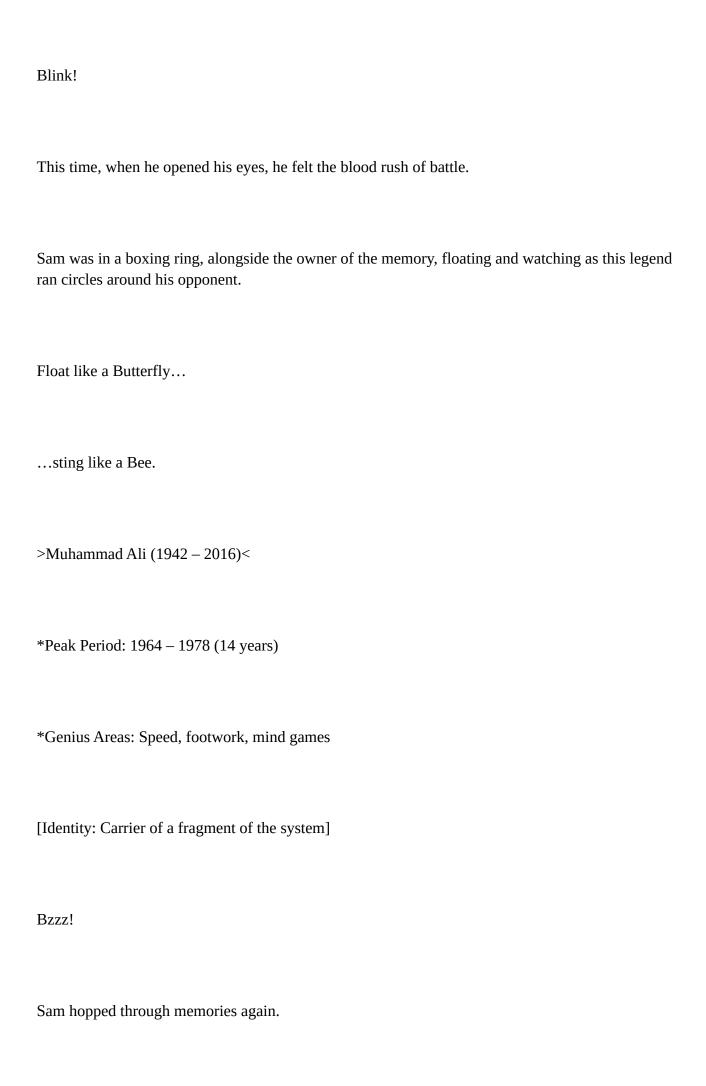
"In the field of painting, Da Vinci is famous for his works, including Mona Lisa, The Last Supper, and Virgin of the Rocks. His work is known for its innovative techniques, detailed knowledge of anatomy, and use of colors".
"In the field of science, Da Vinci's scientific work includes dissecting many bodies to study human anatomy".
"He was one of the first to identity how the heart pumps. His notebooks contain scientific diagrams that predict future inventions like the parachute, helicopter, and military tank".
"In the field of invention, Da Vinci's inventions include designs for architectural projects, such as a 32-mile waterway linking Milan and Lake Como".
"While most famous for his paintings such as the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper, Leonardo is also renowned in the fields of civil engineering, chemistry, geology, geometry, hydrodynamics, mathematics, mechanical engineering, optics, physics, pyrotechnics, and zoology".
"In essence, Leonardo Da Vinci was a genius, a genius who was far ahead of his era".
BZZZ!
Sam's consciousness moved again

Blink!
Sam opened his eyes to see himself in another room.
It was similar to the first one he saw Leonardo Da Vinci in, clearly set in the Victorian era too though there seemed to be some developments from earlier, likely hinting to the fact that this was an era after Da Vinci's era.
Inside a dimly lit chamber illuminated by candlelight and sunlight filtering through small leaded-glass windows, a man stood, looking through a brass telescope that was propped near the window, pointing toward the heavens.
Glass beakers, pewter weights, and pendulums were scattered around, evidence of motion and gravity experiments.
'This guy is definitely related to physics!'
'So, who is it?'
In that moment, his system lit up with new notifications.
~~
*Isaac Newton (1643 – 1727)

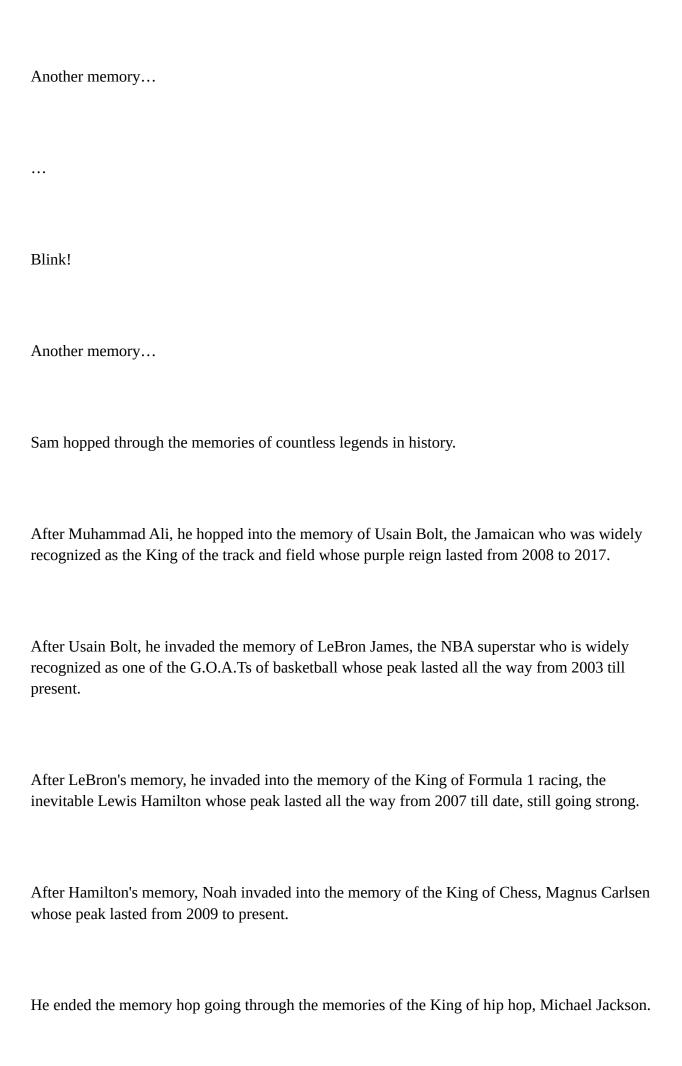




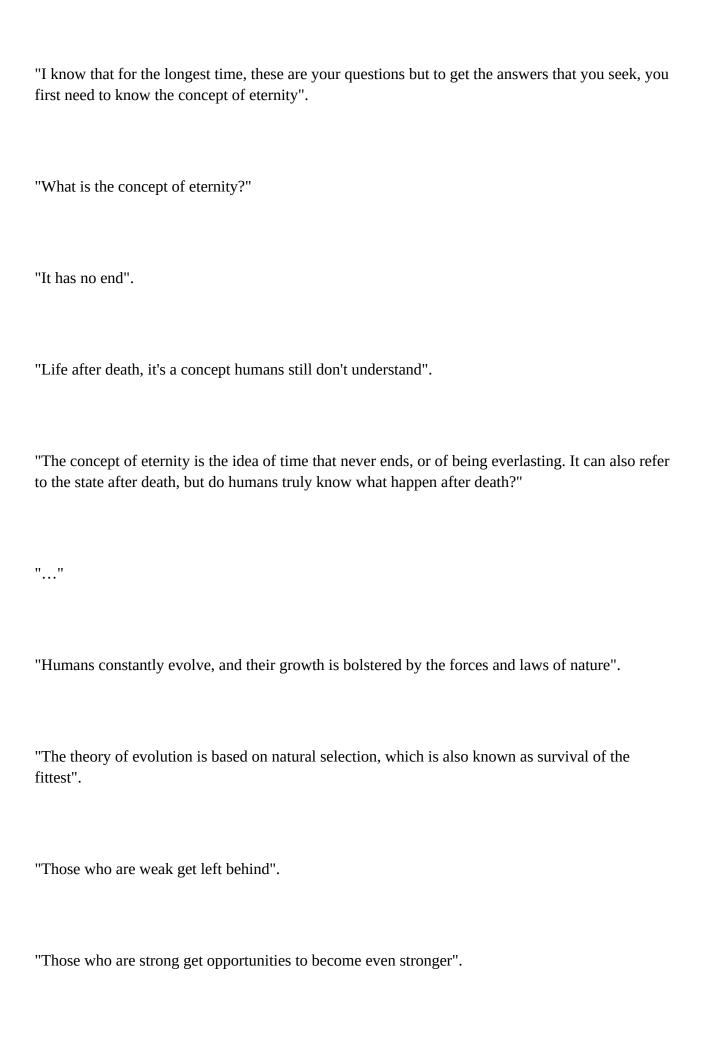




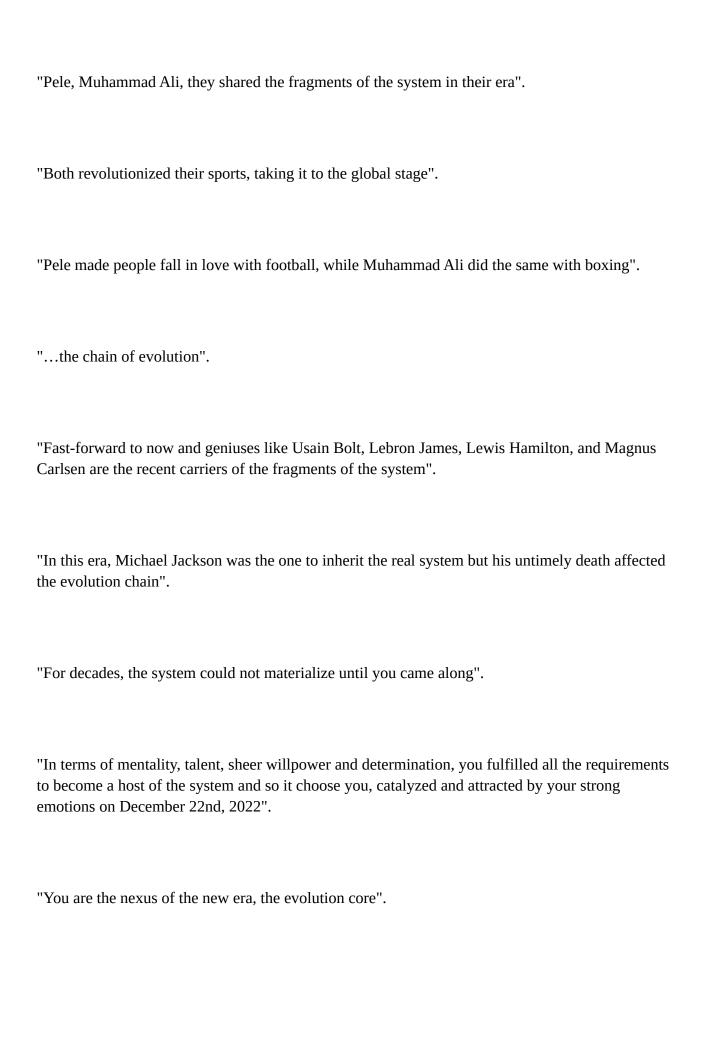
•••
[Identity: Carrier of a fragment of the system]
Bzzz!
Sam hopped through memories again.
···
Blink!
Another memory
•••
Blink!



Through every hop, that voice did not disappoint, listing the biggest achievements of every single one of these geniuses and legends to Sam including one recurring theme that they all shared, persistence.
Most of them were born with heaven defying talents, but their careers were not defined by their talents, rather, it was their perseverance that defined it.
Thomas Edison was recorded to have failed 99 times before finally succeeding in creating the filament bulb.
That was the key to success, persistence, defiance in the face of failure.
After Michaeal Jackson's memory, Noah stopped hopping through memories.
Instead, suddenly stuck in a white void, he heard the familiar voice explain everything that he just experienced.
"The system, what is it?"
"Where did it come from?"
"Who created it?"





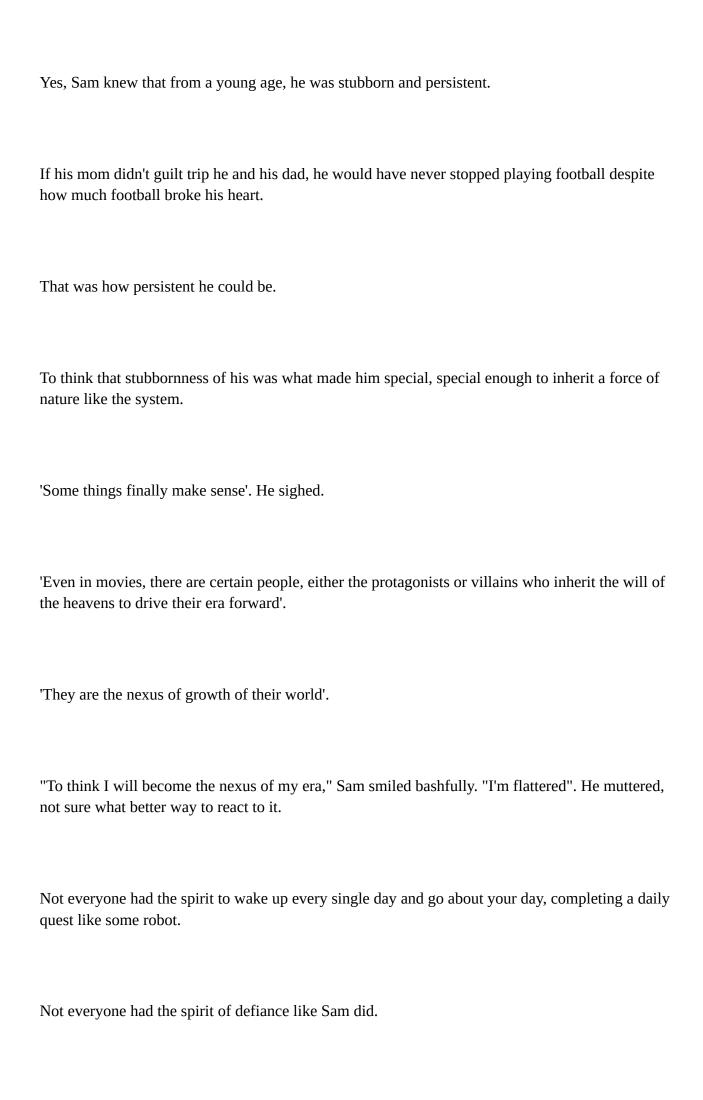


"Over the centuries, hosts of the system have proven that humans can move humanity forward through different ways, sports being one of them".
"In your era, even without the help of the system, 2 in your profession have been doing your work on your behalf".
Sam's eyes widened. 'Messi and Ronaldo!'
"Their time is up, and here you are".
"Your time is now".
"Carry on the legacy of your predecessors, learn from their mistakes and don't lose the system".
"If you failed a mission with a penalty of losing the system, it's no bluff, you will LOSE THE SYSTEM!"
Sam shuddered.
"Be the evolution nexus of this century!"
II II





Despite the fact that this was not the first time that the system literally bent rules of reality for his sake, still, Sam could not help being spooked by the experience that he just had.
Afterall, back when he still just played for Enyimba, the system literally influenced the CAF champions league organizers and Nigerian FA to tweak the rules to enable his club participate in the competition.
All that was to facilitate his goal.
And when he got the memory orb that contained all the memories of Lionel Messi practicing his body feint skill, Noah's guess was that the orb was definitely not technology-driven.
The idea of some technological device that could enable you live through the memories of another human so thoroughly frightened Sam.
In the end, he concluded that it was some mysterious power.
But now, after the experience that he just had, Sam finally arrived at his conclusion. 'So, the system is really some force of nature'.
Sitting on his bed, Sam felt melancholic. 'Do you mean out of over 7 billion people in the world, I was the one who was chosen to inherit this?'
'Wait, am I really special?'



Sam's guess was that these traits were what the system looked for, and not just talent. In terms of talent, countless others were ahead of him.
By making all these realizations, Sam got a new identity.
His new identity was that of a trailblazer.
He was to wear the mantle of change and become a star that would drive this era into an unprecedented level of success.
It was just like Messi and Ronaldo.
Due to their sustained excellence and dominance for such a long time, they did the job in his stead, inspiring a whole generation of footballers and people.
They made most young boys want to train hard and become wingers just like them, and even outside of football, they inspired people.
A lot of people tell their success stories and mention Cristiano Ronaldo, that his unrelenting work rate and defiant determination was what kept them pushing and striving in their lowest and darkest moments.
Thinking of Messi and Ronaldo, Sam sighed. "To think they both did it even without a fragment of the system".



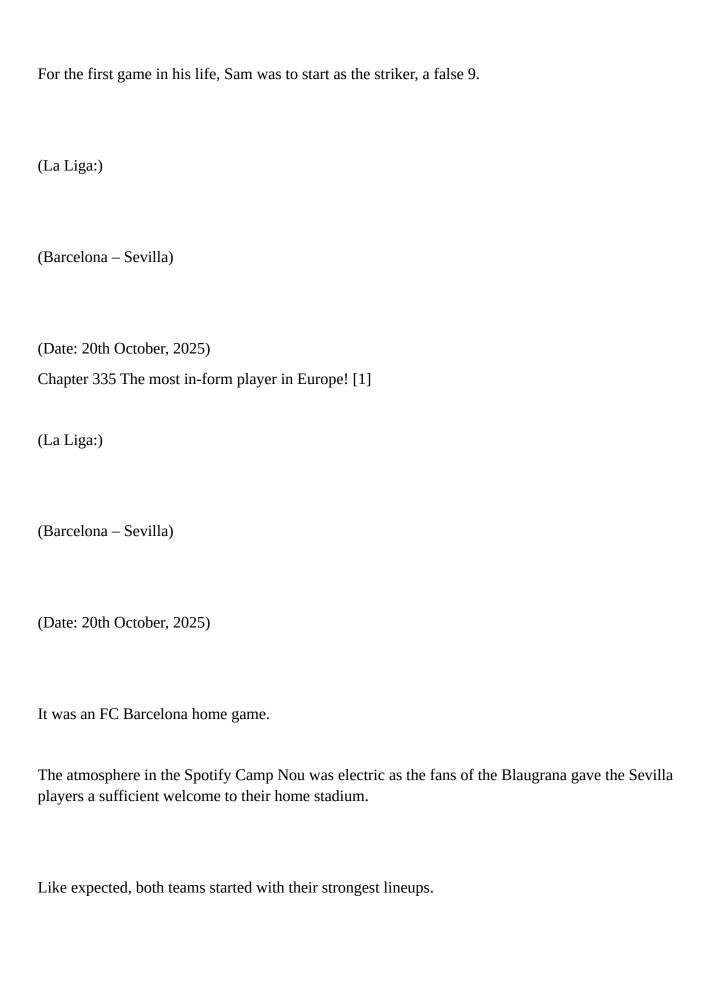
Sam smiled before hugging his father. "Thank you dad, for everything".
That morning, after eating general breakfast with his family, Sam finally left with his girlfriend, taking the next trip to Spain.
On air, Sam reflected about what his dad told him.
While they discussed, Sam asked. "Dad, should I tell Ian about the origin of the system too?"
"Yes, you have to".
"He may have not said it to you yet but he's worried about you too, about the origin of the system. I believe he's searching for precedents in England even as he's focused on his medical studies".
Mr. Moses smiled. "Sam, you have a good friend, don't let go of him".
"Keep him close". The middle-aged man sighed. "Son, sometimes in our worst moments, close friends are the only ones who keep us believing in life".
Hours later, after arriving at Spain, Sam put a call to his bestfriend.
Click!



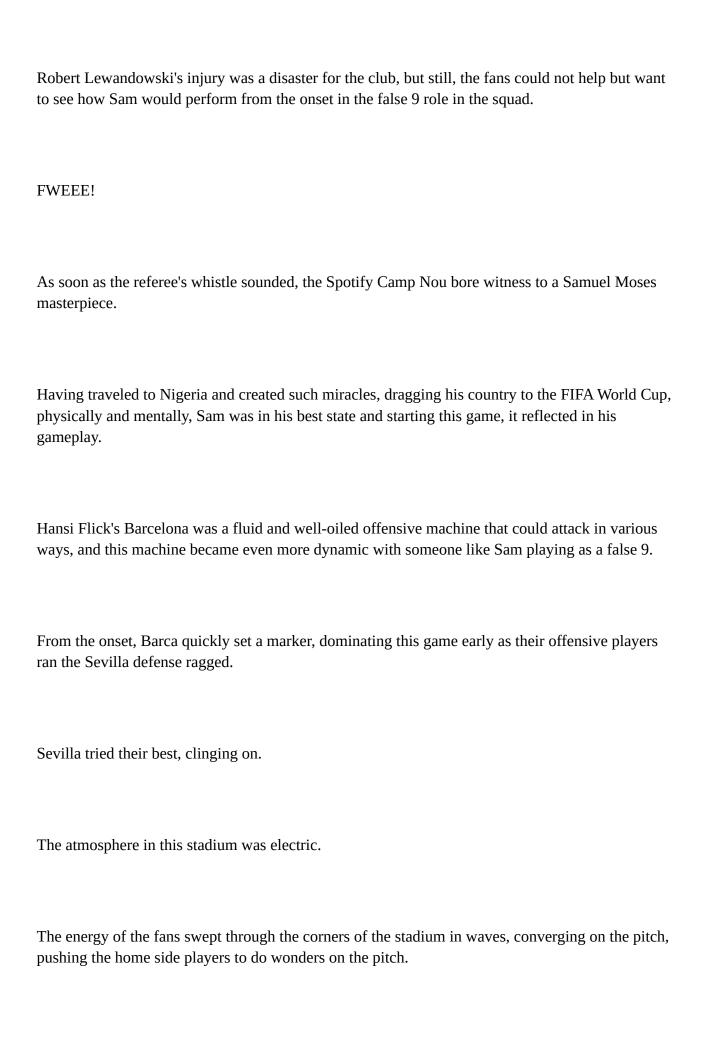




After arriving in Spain, Sam went on an evening date with his girlfriend to different iconic tourist locations in the city of Barcelona.
After that, the next day, he resumed his daily workout activities with his training buddies, Lamine Yamal, Pedri, Gavi, and Alejandro Balde.
The reason why Hansi Flick was desperate to have Sam back in the squad was because in his absence and Lewandowski's absence in the last game due to injury, FC Barcelona ended up playing a goalless draw against Alaves.
The German coach was desperate for his club to bounce back to winning ways, and he believed that Sam was the nexus for it.
After their workout that morning, they did another bet and Sam won, being the first to arrive at the Spotify Camp Nou for team training.
Training with his teammates, Sam's life quickly returned to default settings.
Their next game was a Spanish La Liga game against Sevilla and even as they trained, Hansi Flick trained his squad with their opponents in mind.
After his heroics out during international duty, Sam was in elite physical and mental shape as he was even sharper in training, satisfying his coach.
He was plunged straight to the starting XI for the next game.



For the home side, with Sam back from his international break, he was plunged straight to the lineup, completing Barca's 4-2-3-1 formation.
It was a 4-2-3-1 formation that most FC Barcelona fans were unused to. This was because this time, it was not Lewandowski leading the attack as the striker but rather the young Nigerian prodigy, Samuel Moses.
Marc Andre Ter Stegen started in between the posts as the goalkeeper, while ahead of him was a quadruple defense comprised of Jules Kounde, Ronald Araujo, Inigo Martinez, and Alejandro Balde.
For this game, the German coach made the decision to rest the defensive prodigy that rose from the La Masia academy, Pau Cubarsi.
Ahead of the defense in midfield was a duo of Frankie De Jong and Pedri.
After a while of being sidelined from the starting XI by Marc Casado, the Dutchman, Frankie De Jong finally did enough to convince the coach, restoring his place in the FC Barcelona starting XI in midfield alongside Pedri.
Ahead of the midfield duo was the dynamic quadruple attack.
In this game, a fully fit Dani Olmo started, taking Sam's spot in attacking midfield even as Sam took on his false 9 role, leading the attack.
To his left and right sides were Raphinha and Lamine Yamal respectively.



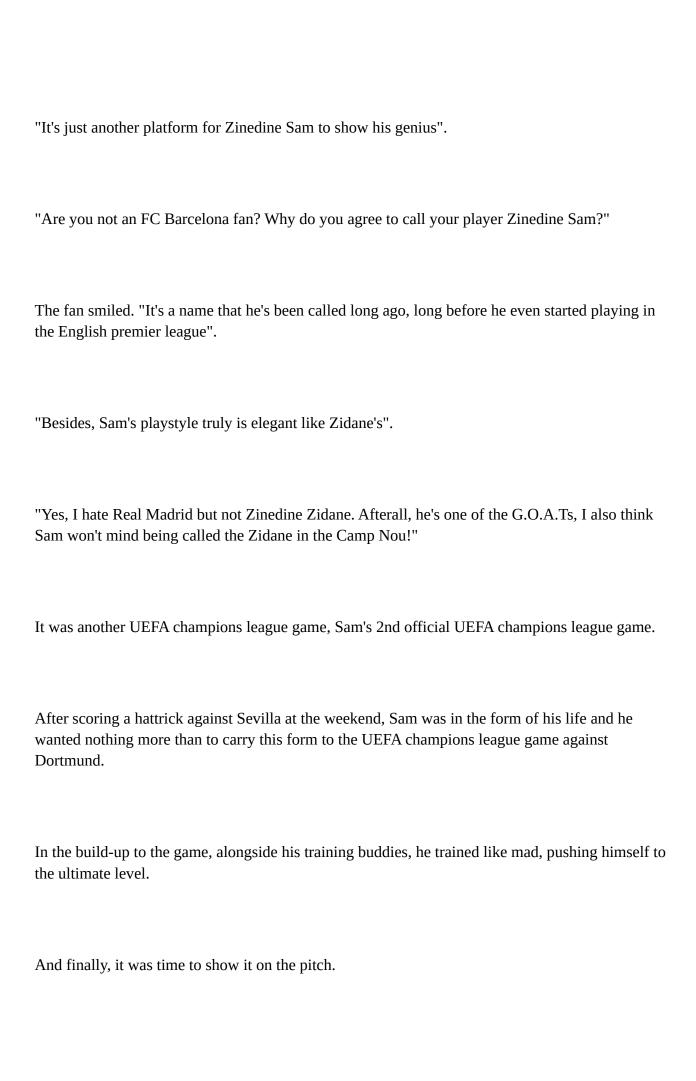
From the attacking midfield spot, FC Barcelona fans have bore witness to the Sam and Yamal partnership before but today, they witnessed it from the striker and left-wing positions, a telepathic chemistry on the pitch.
Playing as a false 9 meant that Sam had the privilege to roam.
He must not stay in the box like a target man, and that was exactly what Sam did, roam about the forward line.
BZZZ!
He was a menace, receiving the ball, dribbling, spraying passes, playing short one-two penetrative passes, his game was fluid and effortlessly natural.
It was almost like he had been playing as a false 9 all his life.
In the 31st minute of this game, Sam's hard work finally bore fruit as after a fluid combination play involving Dani Olmo, Yamal, and Raphinha, the Brazilian played the final pass to him inside the 18-yard box.
'My moment!'
Sam recognized his moment, and he seized it with aplomb.

Bam!
With his first touch, he ditched the imposing Sevilla center back, pushing the ball beyond him even as the defender slipped.
Evading the defender's sprawling arms that tried to grab and drag him back, Sam pounced on the loose ball and then
BAM!
The Sevilla goalkeeper only reacted after the ball nestled into the net as Sam hit it with absolute venom.
"GOALLL!!!"
The Spotify Camp Nou quickly roared to life.
The first half ended 1-0 in Barca's favor. More goals didn't materialize not because Barca's offense was lacking, but because Sevilla defended desperately.
In the 2nd half though, the floodgates opened with Sam leading the charge.
FWEEE!

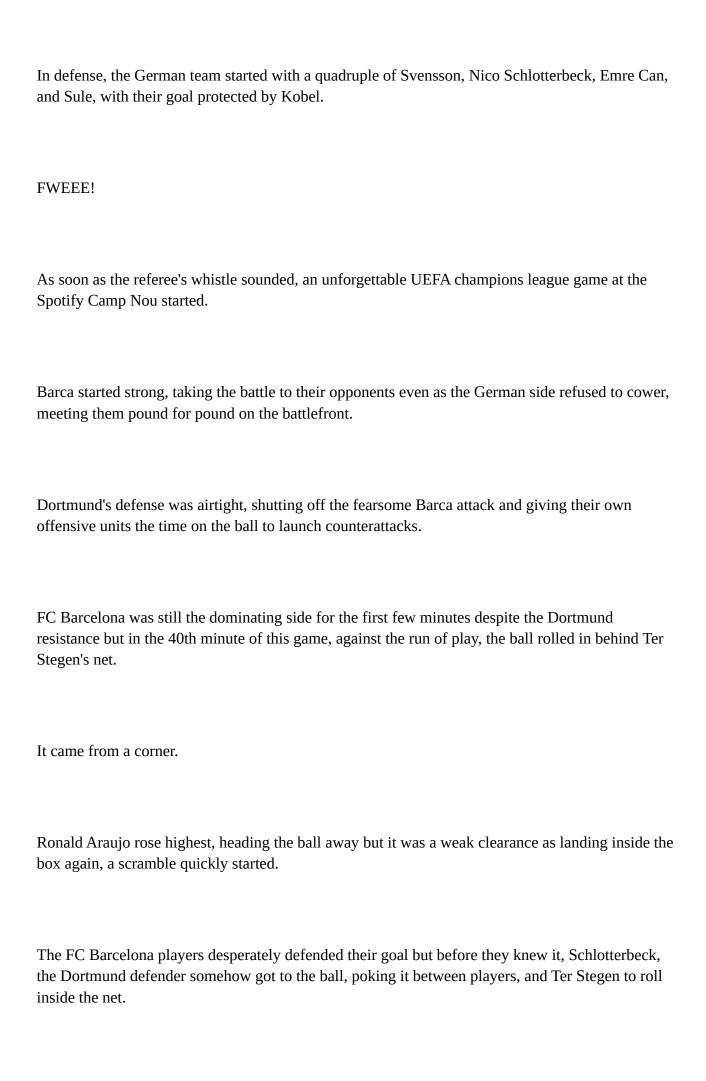
The game barely started after the referee's whistle as Barca kicked off the 2nd half when taking the ball, Sam embarked on a crazy solo run.
With his tall and imposing frame, and his silky footwork, he weaved through Sevilla players, cutting through them like they were not there.
"Oh my God! What is this?!"
"He goes through 1, 2, 3, 4! My God! He's one on one with the goalkeeper! Can he do it?!"
"Yes he DOES!" The commentator screamed.
"He chips it over the goalkeeper and its 2 nil to Barca!"
"Sam, what a player!"
Sam whirled off towards the corner flag in celebration, eliciting loud roars from the home FC Barcelona supporters.
In the 45th minute, just after the start of the 2nd half, Sam got his 2nd goal.







The atmosphere at the Spotify Camp Nou today was even more electric than in the Sevilla game, rising to a crescendo as the UEFA champions league anthem started being played.
Both teams started with their strongest lineups.
For the home side, Hansi Flick started with his favored 4-2-3-1 formation with Sam once again leading the line as a false 9 striker.
To his left and right were Raphinha and Lamine Yamal, while behind him in attacking midfield today was Gavi who finally reclaimed his spot in the team.
Behind Gavi in midfield were the duo of Pedri and Frankie De Jong.
Further behind them, Alejandro Balde, Pau Cubarsi, Ronald Araujo, and Jules Kounde started in defense for the Blaugrana even as Marc Andre Ter Stegen remained the last man in defense.
It was a formidable lineup, but Dortmund's lineup was also formidable.
For the German side, starting in a similar 4-2-3 1 formation as the Blaugrana, Sergio Guirassy started as the striker while to his left and right were Gittens and Karim Adeyemi respectively.
Starting in attacking midfield was Brandt, while further behind him in center midfield were GroB and Marcel Sabitzer.



"GOALLLL!" The away stands erupted as the traveling supporters roared in joy, jubilating with their team.
That goal seemed to set coals of fire beneath the asses of the FC Barcelona players as their offensive play became direct and much more urgent.
Sam and Raphinha led the fightback but for the second time, against the run of play, Dortmund scored again!
This time, it was Brandt, their attacking midfielder.
Lashing into the ball just outside the 18-yard box in the 44th minute, the attacking midfielder unleashed a piledriver shot that beat Marc Andre Ter Stegen.
"!"
The Spotify Camp Nou became as silent as a church even as the Dortmund players and their fans celebrated.
Right before the eyes of their fans, FC Barcelona was being unraveled.
The first half came to an end with the Blaugrana losing 0-2.

During halftime, Hansi Flick raged at his players, criticizing multiple aspects of their game and in the end, he told them just one thing.
"Let's go out there and seize what is ours, the victory!"
"I want nothing less than victory!"
When the FC Barcelona players entered the pitch again in the 2nd half, it was clear that something was different. The look in their eyes was that of men who were ready to kill.
FWEEE!
The war started!
Offense after offense, run after run, play after play, FC Barcelona pressured Dortmund and 13 minutes after the restart, they got fruit for their labor.
Having dropped back when his team was out of possession, Sam managed to win the ball back just outside the Dortmund 18-yard box and then quickly spotting Raphinha's run, he raised the ball over the defense.
Raphinha didn't think
POW!

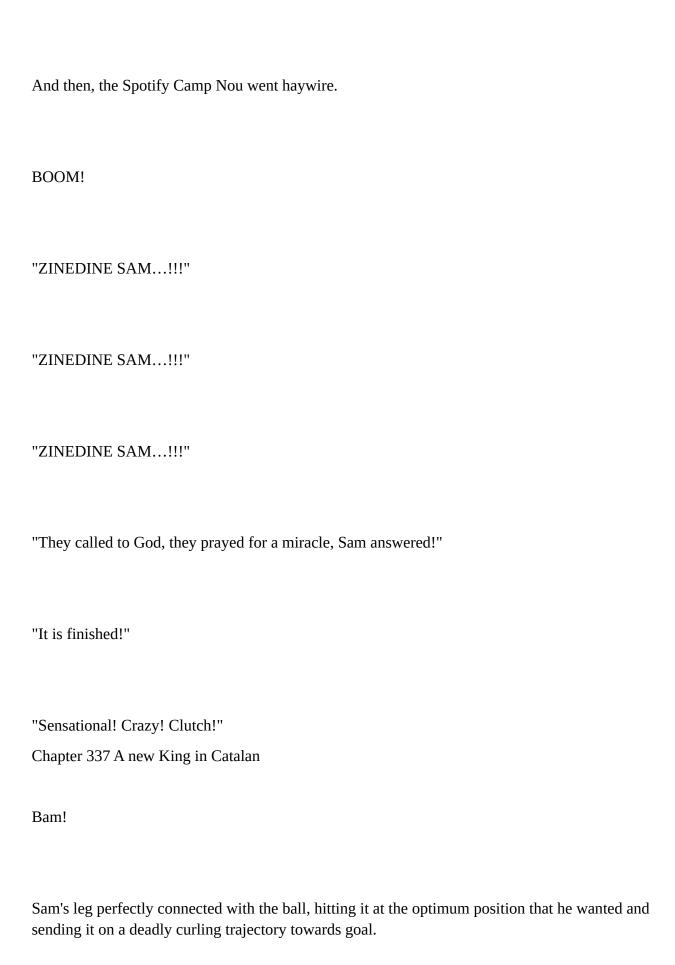
With his left foot, he volleyed the ball into the bottom right corner!
Kobel stood no chance, only watching the ball flash past him like a rocket, driving into the net.
"GOALLLL!!!" Raphinha pumped a fist aggressively, not celebrating too much as he rushed into the net, picking the ball to resume play.
57 minutes, 1-2
FWEEEE!
FC Barcelona continued their offense, and now, the Dortmund coach made changes, changing his team into a more defensive shape.
Attack after attack, but Dortmund held
It was almost like a siege battle but the opponent was the Ancient Wall of China, stalwart, unyielding in the face of the besiege.
60 minutes passed
70 minutes passed

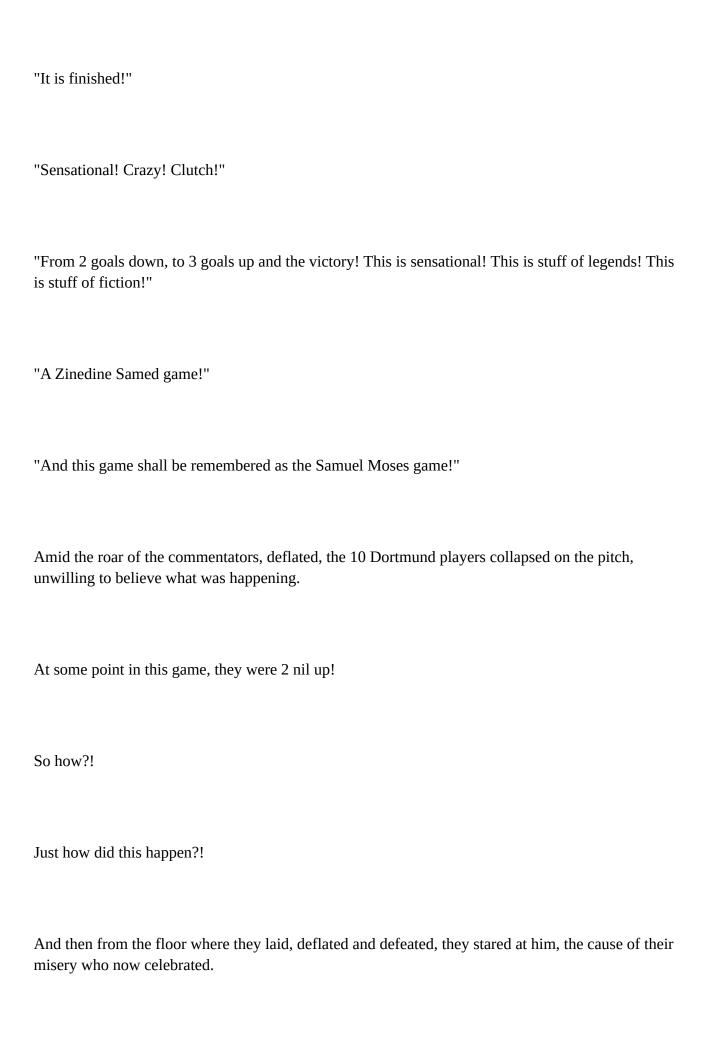
80 minutes passed
85 minutes passed
But then in the 86th minute, FC Barcelona won a penalty after Lamine Yamal was tripped in the box.
"YEAHHHH!" The FC Barcelona fans roared loudly like they already won.
With Lewandowski injured, Raphinha was supposed to be the next in line penalty taker but for some reason, the Brazilian surrendered the duty to Sam.
Sam was not polite, confidently taking the ball and placing it down.
FWEEEE!
As soon as the referee's whistle sounded, he took a confident run, then
Bam!
With audacious swagger, in this tense moment, Sam played a Panenka penalty, sending the ball down the middle of the net and sending the goalkeeper to no man's land.



FWEEEE!
The referee gave the Dortmund player a 2nd yellow card, upgrading it to a red even as he awarded a freekick to FC Barcelona.
The Dortmund player showed no signs of remorse as he walked out of the pitch. Afterall, he saved his team from a likely goal that would have made them lose the game.
As soon as the freekick was awarded, Sam took the ball, spreading his arms even as his eyes narrowed in focus as he looked at the goalpost.
The position of the ball was not too optimal.
Sam was hesitant. In the end, despite being confident in his freekick taking skills, he decided not to leave it to chance.
~~
[You have accessed ability card: Bend it like Beckham!]
[Card Effects:]
>This card can only be used during a set-piece. Once used, for 10 minutes, for every freekick that your team gets, you gain the ability and technique of a prime David Beckham, giving you a +80% scoring buff when taking a free-kick<

•••
[You have made use of ability card: Bend it like Beckham!]
~~
A perfection mastery freekick technique plus the Bend it like Beckham card was a recipe for a masterpiece!
As soon as the referee's whistle sounded again, Sam calmly jogged towards the ball and then, raising his right leg up for a swing, he hit the ball.
Bam!
The ball rose, curling, over the wall of players, towards the goal
The goalkeeper reacted, taking a step and another before diving but the curvature of the ball was just too acute, taking it away from his grasp.
Whoosh!
The ball went past him, into the net as it rippled.





The Spotify Camp Nou was a cauldron of noise as the FC Barcelona fans paid homage to his performance, to the miracle that he just performed.
And riding the energy generated by the noise, including the familiar "Sam" chants, he charged towards the corner flag, sliding on his knees in celebration and this riled them up even more, taking the noise through the roof.
BOOM!
Sam's teammates swarmed all over him as they also celebrated.
"Bastardo!" Behind him, Gavi roared, pushing him, shoving him excitedly.
Lamine Yamal, Raphinha, all the FC Barcelona players swarmed Sam, celebrating with him excitedly.
This goal came at just the right moment, in additional time.
Now, Dortmund had less than 1% chance of actually getting back on the game. It was virtually over.
When his teammates finally gave him some space, Sam removed his jersey, showing it to the FC Barcelona fans, including his number that was attached to the back of the jersey.
[Samuel Moses]

[No. 40]
It was the no. 40 that was at the back of his jersey but at this moment, looking at him, the FC Barcelona fans seemed to see the no. 10 jersey.
They were too emotional, their emotions quickly cascading as they could not hold it in any longer.
"Sam!"
"Sam!"
"Sam!"
The whole stadium chanted.
"I feel like I'm bearing witness to history". One of the commentators chuckled. "This 'Sam' chant, I think it's something that's going to quickly become iconic and a staple of the Spotify Camp Nou".
"This Sam boy, he really is the deal".
"Barcelona struck it big with him. As an attacking midfielder, he's already a menace, to think he can also be this good as a false 9".



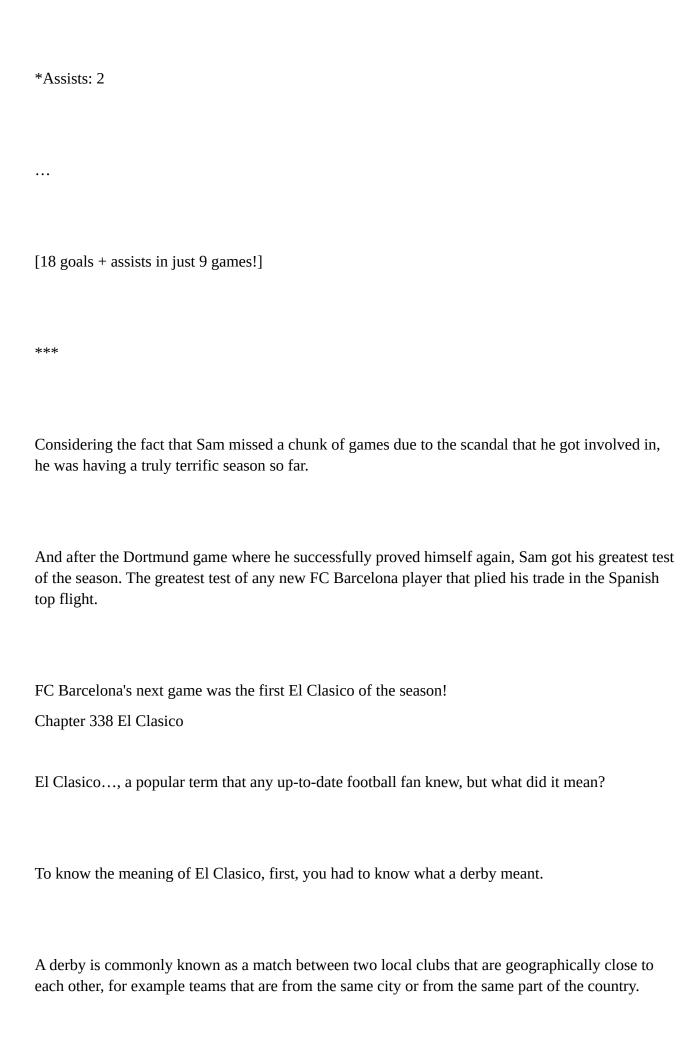
Led by the mercurial Argentine, Messi pushed the boundaries of reality and expectations, setting a new standard for the club with his record-breaking statistics and performances every single season.
Since Messi left, FC Barcelona was never quite the same.
To the fans, the King was gone.
Even the prince was gone too, Neymar Jnr; he was gone far before the King, leaving FC Barcelona fans grasping for straws.
Since Messi left, the expectations of FC Barcelona fans became a bit tempered with season after season of heartbreak. Last season seemed like their best chance of reclaiming their spot as Kings of Europe.
But agonizingly, they lost it against a rampant Liverpool in the semifinal.
To the fans in recent years, it was nothing new, losing it when it seemed like they were perfectly poised to win it.
It only tempered their expectations even more.
A few seasons earlier, the rise of Lamine Yamal made them believe that the Spotify Camp Nou had its new prince.

All they needed was patience, patience for the prince to blossom and mature, metamorphing to become the new King.
To think that the Spotify Camp Nou would get a King even before Yamal fully matured.
After the performance against Dortmund, to many FC Barcelona fans, the Spotify Camp Nou now had its new King.
"Zinedine Sam will lead us to the UEFA champions league trophy!" They bragged and claimed in the streets.
"Sam is unstoppable!"
"Samuel Moses is the most in-form player in Europe!" The FC Barcelona fans claimed and it was not just delusion, they had the statistics to back up the claim.

[Samuel Moses stats in the 2025/2026 season in all competitions:]
*Games: 9
*Goals: 13

[International games- Nigeria:]		
*Games: 4		
*Goals: 3		
*Assists: 2		
[UEFA champions league:]		
*Games: 2		
*Goals: 5		

*Assists: 5



Back in the English premier league when Sam plied his trade for Fulham, he played in West London derby rivalries with Brentford, Chelsea, and Queens Park Rangers.
Manchester United vs Manchester City was another major derby rivalry.
But the El Clasico, it is a rivalry above the normal rivalry. Some referred to it as the derby above derbies.
In simple terms though, El Clasico translates to "The Classic" in English and it is used to refer to football matches between Real Madrid and FC Barcelona.
It is the most famous club football match in the world!
It is also considered one of the fiercest rivalries in sports.
As 2 of the best and biggest clubs in Spain, Real Madrid and FC Barcelona's rivalry dates back, a derby between the Spanish capital and Catalonia, a part of Spain that vied for supremacy and independence.
It was not just a football game; it was a game with a lot of political consequences but none of that concerned the fans and the players.
To the fans and the players, El Clasico is a game of pride and glory.

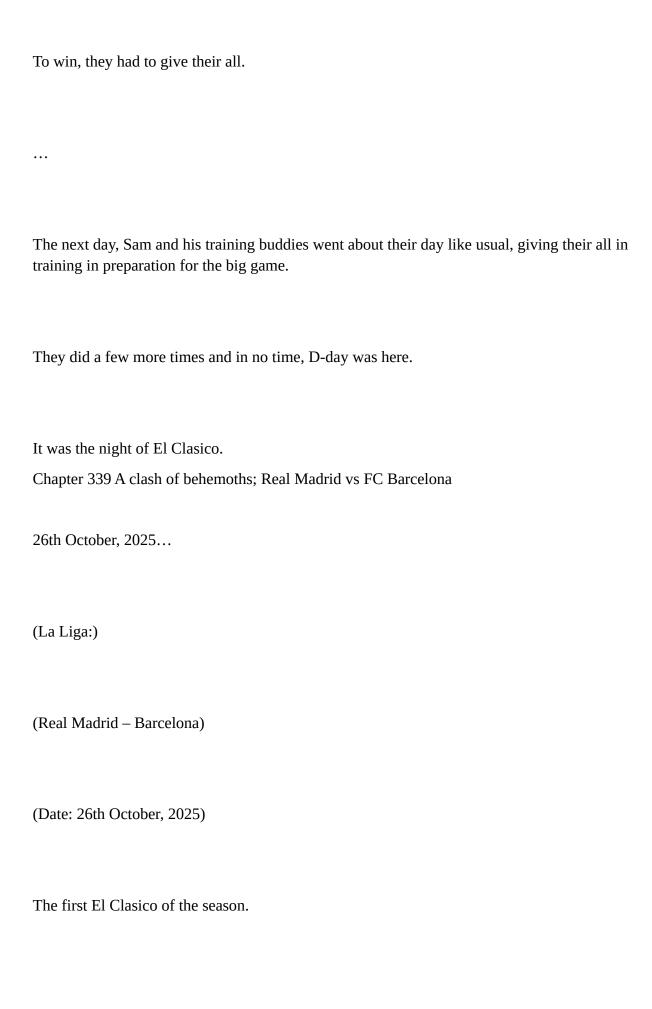
The hate and rivalry between Real Madrid and Barcelona fans transcended borders. They vied and fought at every avenue that they get.
And all of that tense energy clashes on the football pitch on El Clasico day.
Just 3 days after FC Barcelona's UEFA champions league clash against Dortmund, they would be playing their first El Clasico of the season against their eternal rivals, Real Madrid and it was an away game.
(La Liga:)
(Real Madrid – Barcelona)
(Date: 26th October, 2025)
Sam had been an FC Barcelona fan since he was 6, since FC Barcelona was in its peak and had the likes of prime Messi, prime Iniesta and Xavi plying their trade with the club.
Though he was still a boy in most of those epic battles, he had lived through at least 2 epic El Clasico battles every season since he was 6.
He had watched his team succumb to the pressure of their Madrid rivals, and he had watched his team blow them away with shocking victory margins.

He had watched iconic moments between both clubs; the 5-0 victory at the Bernabeu, Messi silencing the Bernabeu in iconic fashion back in 2017 and Ronaldo getting his revenge in the next game.
The iconic battles, the Ramos and Pepe eras, the Dani Alves and Jordi Alba eras, the Marcelo and Carvajal eras, the BBC and MSN eras, the Modric, Kroos, Casemiro and the Xavi, Iniesta, and Busquests eras.
The head-to-head battle between both big clubs till today was still tight.
Sam lived through all these battles, watching as a fan, always cheering the club in red and blue on at every El Clasico night.
And finally, for the first El Clasico in his life, he was not just going to cheer on as a fan, he was going to be playing as a player.
He was going to actively participate in the greatest clash of his club's history.
The next day after the game against Dortmund
Thud! Thud!

Alongside his training buddies in Lamine Yamal, Pedri, Gavi, and Alejandro Balde, Sam jogged through the streets of Barcelona, already starting their preparations for the big game in 2 days.
That morning, the city of Barcelona was no longer as nonchalant to their passage as it was no longer news that they jog every morning.
That morning, as they jogged, FC Barcelona fans came out in droves.
Some jogged after them, others just took pictures, but all of it was motivated by the big game that was coming up in 2 days.
"Sam, we need you at the Bernabeu!"
"You're better than their Mbappe, and Bellinghams, and Vinicius, show them who's boss that day!"
"Yamal, please work your magic!"
"We must win the game!"
The fans said what they wanted, heaping pressure on the jogging players but the players didn't take it that way.
With nonchalant smiles on their faces, they took the fans' words as motivation instead but they didn't pay too much attention to it.

More of their attention was rather on the competition among themselves.
"First to arrive at the Spotify Camp Nou!"
Thud! Thud!
The dug into their reserves, from a jog quickly erupting into a sprint.
They are yards of space with each step, quickly leaving the fans to eat the dust and a few seconds or so later, Sam once again won, arriving first at the big stadium in Barcelona but this time, Alejandro Balde came 2nd, arriving before Gavi.
And again, Pedri came last, Lamine Yamal just edging him in the race.
"F*ck! I came last again!" He cursed in Spanish.
Once again taking on the duty of providing breakfast for them that morning, they quickly entered the gym, going on about their activities.
A few minutes later, they were done.
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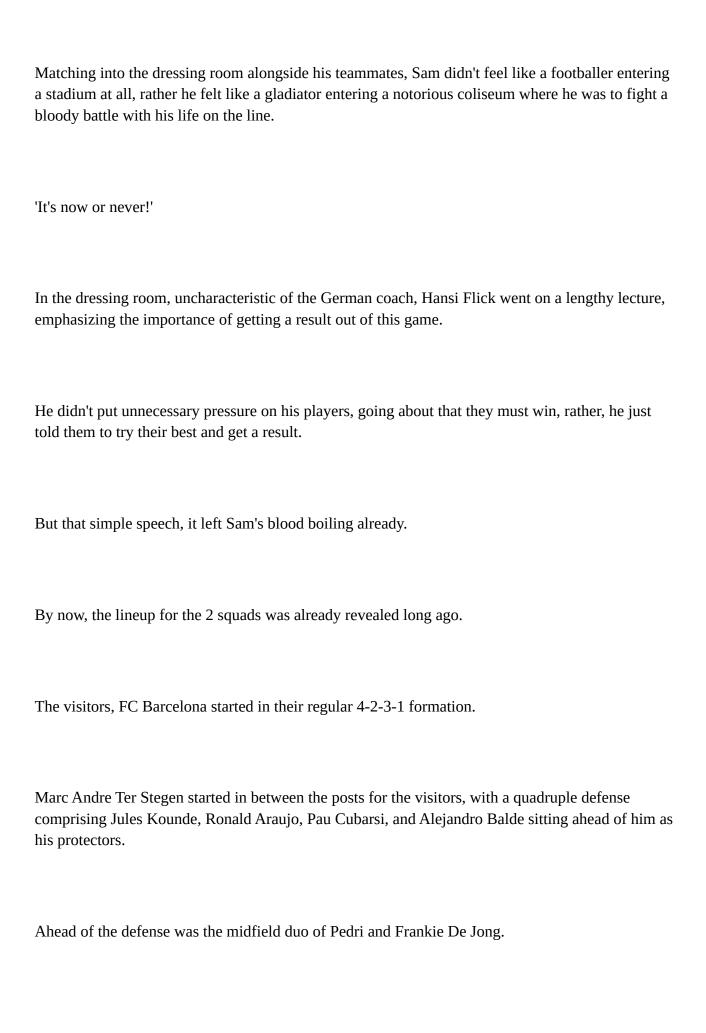
[You have completed Daily System Quest: Mentality Monster!]
[You have been rewarded with low-grade physical conditioning elixir!]
~~
A few dozen minutes later, they got home, got refreshed, dressed up in training clothes and arrived early back at the stadium for team training.
The 5 FC Barcelona players were as diligent as usual, more diligent even in their preparations for the first El Clasico of the season.
Last season, they did it, beating their rivals in all El Clasicos that they played but it was not a guarantee that they could do the same this time around.
Afterall, Real Madrid was not a club to stay stagnant.
They were always getting better, evolving every year.
Afterall, they were a club fielding the likes of Vinicius Jnr, Kylian Mbappe, Jude Bellingham, and Trent Alexander Arnold all in their squad, all major Ballon d'or contenders in the just-concluded season.



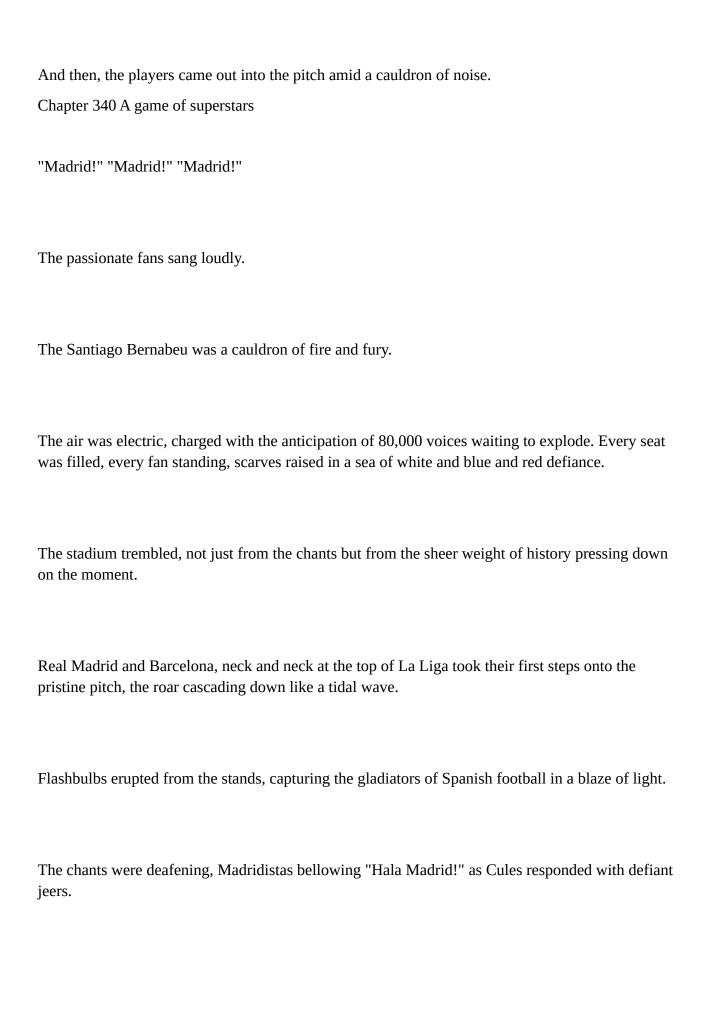
The game was dubbed a clash of behemoths, and for good reason, after all, both clubs were currently in the forms of their life.
After a full season of settling down in the Spanish Capital, Kylian Mbappe already embraced his role as a superstar in Madrid, jointly leading the new Galacticos era alongside his electric teammate, Vinicius Jnr.
This season, just like FC Barcelona, Real Madrid was balling.
Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Jnr. were both having terrific seasons domestically, the former being the current leader in the Pichichi race for the highest goal scorer in the Spanish league come season end while Vinicius led in the most assists race.
Sam was directly behind both superstars in the race but for now, it was the Madrid superstars who had the advantage.
Not just Vinicius and Mbappe either. In the Spanish Capital, other superstars like Jude Bellingham, Rodrygo, Brahim Dias, and Federico Valverde were also having terrific seasons already, making Madrid a formidable side to face this season.
Besides, both of the big 2 clubs fought neck to neck at the top of the table.
FC Barcelona had the lead currently, but they led their eternal rivals by just 1 point, which would undoubtedly evaporate if they lost the upcoming El Clasico match.
It was a game of high stakes and emotion.

Even before the game started, as the blue and red FC Barcelona team bus arrived in Madrid, the Real Madrid fans gave their archenemies a sufficiently hostile welcome as they unveiled banners of Sam painted like a clown.
Not just that, they unveiled banners of Sam edited to look like an Ape, racism!
The Spanish La Liga and football in general frowned at racism but sometimes, the passion of the fans could not be curbed no matter how many rules are put in place to keep them in line.
To win, football fans are ready to do anything, no matter how unethical, no matter how much it would affect their opponents negatively.
In the face of victory in the El Clasico, to them, nothing else mattered.
FC Barcelona was surely going to file a complaint to the league at the end of the game due to the racist-inspired banners, but for now, they had the biggest game of their season so far to play.
In the team bus, staring at the banners, Sam could already feel his blood boiling hot. 'These bastards!'
This was his first time facing racist abuse since his professional career started.
Sam was no stranger to racist abuse, having watched other black professional football players suffer it over the years, including Real Madrid's own Vinicius Jnr. against Valencia that caused a storm in the football world seasons ago.

In the end though, football fans don't care, they'd do anything to help their teams win.
"Don't worry, we're with you". Raphinha said as he noticed his heightened emotions, trying to calm him down.
Sam flashed the Brazilian a smile. "Yeah, I'm fine, thanks".
And in truth, after that, he was fine.
Yes, he still felt some lingering anger but he did not let it affect him anymore.
Rather, he turned it into a smoldering fire that burned in the furnace of his heart, turning into tangible motivation that pushed him to a state of defiance.
'Tonight is my night!'
'Tonight, let's go crazy!'
'Tonight, let's set the Bernabeu on fire!'
'You dare abuse me racially?' He grinned. 'Fine, I'll make sure that you never forget me easily, I'll leave my mark in your goddamn stadium!'



As for the offense ahead, like expected, Sam started as the striker with the role of a false 9 again with Raphinha and Lamin Yamal flanking him from both left and right. Sitting behind him was an energized Gavi.
As for the home side, Real Madrid's starting XI was just as formidable if not even more formidable.
Starting in a 4-3-3 formation, a fully-fit Madrid side had Thibaut Courtois, the Belgian wall in between the posts with the quadruple of Ferland Mendy, David Alaba, Antonio Rudiger, and Trent Alexander Arnold protecting him in defense.
Ahead of the defense was a midfield trio, the new Madrid midfield stars of Jude Bellingham, Eduardo Camavinga, and Federico Valverde.
Further ahead of the midfield trio was the all-star attack comprising the trio of Vinicius Jnr. at the left, Kylian Mbappe through the middle, and Rodrygo through the right flank.
It was a formidable Real Madrid team.
No wonder the game was dubbed a clash of behemoths.
The atmosphere at the Santiago Bernabeu was absolutely electric even as the Real Madrid fans made a lot of noise, trying to unnerve their archrivals.
When the Madrid anthem started being played, the tens of thousands of fans flooding this stadium sang at the top of their lungs, setting the atmosphere for the epic clash that was about to take place in this iconic stadium.



Every touch of the ball in the warm-up was met with a reaction, whistles for the enemy, cheers for the heroes.
The Bernabeu breathe in symphony with the match, its pulse syncing with the drama that was about to unfold.
This was not just any game, it was a game of superstars; Mbappe, Vinicius, Bellingham, Sam, Raphinha, Yamal.
No matter the outcome, it was surely going to a bloodbath at the Bernabeu.
The aroma of freshly cut grass mixed with the lingering scent of flares and adrenaline and for a fleeting second, the world outside did not exist.
The referee's whistle was imminent, the battle for supremacy about to begin, and then
FWEEEE!
Like a knife, the sound of the referee's whistle cut through the battlefield, and immediately, the pitch exploded into action.
Real Madrid kicked off the game, starting the clash of behemoths.
Thud! Thud!

Embodying Hansi Flick's philosophy, the FC Barcelona players quickly swarmed after their counterparts in the white of Madrid, quickly closing them down as they pressed for the ball aggressively.
But keeping their cool, Madrid rotated the ball around in midfield, giving it to Bellingham who held on to possession long enough, perfectly utilizing the la pausa before sending a threading pass to the left where a certain Vinicius Jnr. lurked.
Bam!
As soon as Bellingham hit the pass, Vinicius moved and Jules Kounde who marked him responded.
Bzzz!
Without touching the ball, the Brazilian did his trickery, flickering with his quick feet and dazzling the Frenchman before erupting away in a burst of speed.
Vinicius dazzled Kounde for a moment, but the Frenchman was not totally fooled, dragging at his jersey and quickly following him.
Vinicius was unable to escape, and so, slowing down as he closed down on the touchline, he started his trickery all over with his rapid feet, trying to dribble past Kounde but the Frenchman was not to be fooled.
Bam!

Vinicius passed but Kounde intercepted, sending the ball out for a corner kick.
It was just a corner kick but jumping, Vinicius waved his arms at the home supporters, riling them up as they responded, roaring like sound monsters.
BOOM!
Grinning, the Brazilian trudged off, allowing the corner kick taker to take the ball. The game was just starting, but the drama already started.
Real Madid took their corner kick and Barcelona successfully defended it.
That first action from Vinicius and Kounde was an accurate premise to what was to follow in this game, absolute cinema.
Have you ever seen a battle between 2 monsters?
Both with unimaginable powers, fearsome beyond imagination, the clash of their wills, their skills, their experience and power, it was a sight to behold.
That was the sight that now played out in the Santiago Bernabeu.

The Madrid attacking unit was electric, Vinicius clearly being the stand-out player as he dazzled with his dribbling, repeatedly testing Jules Kounde who struggled to cope with his pace and electric dribbling.
Kylian Mbappe was an explosive monster, the Frenchman exploding to life an interval with his bursting pace and quick feet, having snuck a few shots already that almost resulted in a goal if not for Ter Stegen's quick reactions.
As for Rodrygo, the Brazilian was a magician, keeping the Madrid attack ticking with his consistent and worrying dribbles.
The Madrid midfield was also electric as they dazzled, Valverde shining in particular as the closest moment in this game came from him.
Having received a cut back pass from Vinicius, as the Uruguayan charged towards the ball, about to take his customary power shot, the Santiago Bernabeu came to life as fans in white rose up around the stadium.
POW!
He hit the ball with absolute venom, sending it towards the top right corner but on top of his game, Ter Stegen managed to pull off a crazy save, tipping the ball just over his post and out for a corner.
Camavinga acted as the destroyer this game, playing the Casemiro role as he tried his best to intercept all Barca attacks.
As for their defense, against Barca's attack, they were also as solid as a rock.



With his no-nonsense defending style, the Uruguayan led Pau Cubarsi and the rest of the defense to resist the onslaught of Real Madrid attacks.
To the fans in this stadium, they never got a moment to rest. There was no boring moment as their hearts was kept in their throats throughout.
And finally, in the 23rd minute of this game, the deadlock was broken, by Real Madrid.
Kylian Mbappe struck!