

Football God 331

Chapter 331 A 10/10 performance

FWEEE!

The referee's whistle blasted loudly, briefly cutting through the noise that drowned this stadium.

Victor Osimhen, the Nigerian striker was the one who was tripped just outside the Benin Republic 18-yard box, winning the freekick in a dangerous position.

In the Nigerian squad, for a long time now, they didn't have a dangerous dead ball specialist which meant Sam had no significant challenge for the role.

Besides, having scored freekicks a few times while playing for Fulham and in training already, the Nigerian head coach, Eric Chelle already passed on the freekick taking responsibility to the young prodigy.

This was why as soon as Victor Osimhen won the penalty, he rose up, bumped fists with his nearest teammates before picking the ball and throwing it to Sam.

Sam caught the ball, grinning at him.

And then, placing the ball down on the position where the referee indicated, Sam got ready to take the freekick even as Benin Republic set up their wall.

"It's Sam standing over the ball," the commentators said. "Does he have more magic to pull in this game?"

"He's been absolutely electric today".

"After leading Nigeria halfway through their qualification journey by his injury time heroics against Lesotho, he's done it again today against Benin Republic, in front of home fans".

"If they never knew him before, after this game, I'm pretty sure that no Nigerian would not know the name Samuel Moses".

"Even the little kids on the streets, they'll all know him after today".

"1 goal and 1 assist, Sam has provided the world with another vintage Sam masterpiece performance and it's not even just about the numbers".

"My God, he was given the eye test and boy did he pass it with flying colors!"

"The silky dribbling, the composure, the endless running, flexing his stamina, this boy is just made for the very top!"

"FC Barcelona signed a quality, quality player".

"When the Catalan club pulled out all stops to fork out 80 million Euros for his signature despite still being deep in debt, a lot of people thought they were crazy but after this game, I think I finally see what the Catalan club saw".

"Sam is worth every single penny that Barca paid for him".

"He is worth the hype".

"Can he create another album in the Sam collection? Another unforgettable moment in the memories of Nigerian supporters worldwide".

While the commentators raved on, all of it was already abstracted out of Sam's head as the only thing that remained in his mind was himself, the ball, the wall of opposition players, the goalkeeper, and the net.

Bzzz!

He was already in that zone state where his brain was moving on overdrive again, filled with rampaging electrons, evident of his excited state.

The only skill that Sam had at the Perfection mastery level was his freekick technique. When it came to taking freekicks, he was absolutely confident.

It was just that he was yet to encounter a freekick in an FC Barcelona jersey.

But now, he did, in a Nigerian jersey.

FWEEE!

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded again, giving the go ahead, Sam took a deep breath before going on a practiced angled run. After a short run, bending his body, he swung his right leg and wrapped it around the ball, and...

Bam!

Sam hit the ball with perfect technique, sending it curling just beyond the reach of the wall of Benin Republic players, and straight towards the net.

Reacting, the Benin Republic goalkeeper took a step and dived.

The goalkeeper's hand grazed the ball but the force was not enough to stop the momentum that carried the ball. The ball snuck through, into the top right corner and immediately, this stadium erupted again.

BOOM!

The fans in green and white erupted in ecstasy.

"AND HE'S DONE IT!" The commentator screamed.

"What a perfect freekick it was!"

"Hit with optimum technique and confidence, executed with the swagger of a veteran, or should I say swagger of a prodigy?"

"This boy..., he's too good!"

"He's just too good, too good to be true!"

While the commentators raved, while the fans roared in ecstasy, the person in question charged towards the corner flag in celebration.

Sam slid on his knees even as the fans chanted his name again.

"Sam!" "Sam!" "Sam!"

His teammates slid after him in celebration.

When he finally rose back up on the pitch, he did the Jude Bellingham celebration, spreading his arms and acknowledging the respect of the fans.

This moment... was iconic.

Nigeria supporters would not forget it in a hurry.

"What a bond he already has with the fans!" The commentators continued.

"He's just 19 but plays with the swagger and confidence of a 29-year-old, he's far more mature than his age suggests".

"Singlehandedly, he's rescued the fate of a nation".

"He's rescued the Giant of Africa!"

"They prayed for miracles, God answered in the form of Samuel Moses".

"With the way things are currently poised, Nigeria are on their way to the 2026 FIFA World Cup in U.S.A and Canada!"

"What a turnaround!"

"Just 1 match ago, it seemed like Nigeria was doomed to miss qualification and just one change, Samuel Moses, and the tides have changed".

"This boy..., he is a changing star, he is Changing Star!"

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.

The goalkeeper stood no chance. He could only watch agonizingly as the ball floated past him and into the top left corner of his net.

"GOALLLLLLL...!!!"

The Moshood Abiola stadium erupted again.

The Nigerian supporters were having the time of their lives.

88 minutes, 5-0 to the Giant of Africa...

Benin Republic were not just beaten, they were humiliated but to save some face for themselves, in injury time, they briefly came alive, playing an incredible team play that enabled them cut through the now complacent Nigerian defense.

They managed to score a consolation goal past Stanley Nwabali, managing to reduce the humiliation.

When the final whistle finally reverberated, the Benin Republic players collectively heaved sighs of relief.

Every additional minute to the game was torture to them.

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.

"You are on a whole other level Sam!"

Sam chuckled, not knowing what to say.

"Internationally, it also makes for impressive reading. After today's game, your international stats are now 3 goals and 2 assists in 4 games".

"If you keep this up, the thought of just what you may potentially achieve in the future as your career grows frightens the living hell out of me". The reporter chuckled.

"I hope to live up to your billing". Sam smiled.

"Another thing Sam," the reporter looked at him. "There's a post that's been garnering attention on social media".

"It's about your ex".

Sam raised his eyebrows. "My ex?"

"Yes, Amaka, your ex". The reporter carefully scrutinized his expression. "After winning the case against her in Spain, her life has been ruined".

"Right now, she's 21, a 4 years sentence means she'll only come out when she's already 25".

"Her life becoming static for 4 years, don't you think that's too harsh?"

"A fan group online are making appeals to you; they want you to speak up for her and help her get a pardon".

"Why?" Sam suddenly asked.

"Huh?"

His eyes now sharp, Sam looked at the reporter. "If she wanted a pardon, she should not have tried to ruin my life in the first place".

"I'm a good person, but I'm no Saint".

"I help those who help me, and I screw those who try to screw me. She tried to screw me up first!"
His voice raised up a crescendo.

"Her life is hers, not my business, it no longer concerns me".

"But..."

"Stop it!" Sam interrupted the reporter. "This should be the last time you ask me about this kind of thing".

"Amaka has her life, Samuel Moses has his life".

"There's nothing in common between both of us, learn to maintain that distinction, got it?"

With that, Sam trudged off.

...

Later in the day, major platforms and football news channels around the world finally gave their rating of Sam's performance today.

It was a no-brainer, Sam put out a perfect 10/10 performance.

Chapter 332 Origin [1]

"Umm..., are you sure you want to follow me out today?"

Kayla stayed down, tying her shoe laces. "What do you mean?"

"I mean, you've never jogged alongside me before. Besides, I don't ever recall seeing you jog, so why the sudden change in heart?"

After tying her shoe laces, Kayla rose up, directing a suspicious gaze at her boyfriend as she leaned towards him intimidatingly.

"..."

Speechlessly, Sam swallowed. "What?!"

"Are you hiding something from me?"

"W-what...? Of course, no".

"Do you have a side chick?"

"Hah, ridiculous! You should know best".

"Hehe," she chuckled. "So why are you shy to let me jog with you?"

"Am I overweight?"

"No".

"Then let's go jog!"

Sam sighed exasperatedly, in the end, he let her follow him.

...

Few minutes later...

Thud! Thud! Thud!

The boyfriend and girlfriend pair strained their lungs as Sam taught her how to control her breathing. Like this, they jogged through the streets of Maitama, Nigeria without stopping.

In the end, Sam was left impressed.

Despite this being the first time that he ever saw his girlfriend jog, Kayla did not complain once as she was able to keep up with him.

In the end, he commended her. "Impressive!"

Kayla grinned. "Now, let's go to the gym. You go to the gym too, right?"

Sam's eyes widened. "You want to go to the gym too?"

"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.

It was one of the reasons why Sam loved visiting the gym, coming here made him feel like a normal human again and not a celebrity.

To think that even this would change.

'Story of my life'. He sighed again.

Well, it was inevitable.

After the last 2 Nigerian international games, and the superhero role that Sam played in lifting his dreary country from doom to the FIFA World Cup 2026, to Nigerians, he truly was a superhero now.

His fame in the country hit an all-time high and now, even these guys in the gym wanted a piece of him.

Not just the men, the women too.

And this was the true reason why Kayla followed her boyfriend out.

After the game against Benin Republic, as his social media handler, she knew exactly how much his fame increased in Nigeria, including how desperate Nigerian girls suddenly became to steal her boyfriend.

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!]

~----~

"..."

"..."

".....!"

Sam's eyes grew so wide that they almost seemed like saucers.

"Hey, are you ok?" Kayla asked in concern on noticing his strange reaction.

"Me? Oh, I'm ok". Sam lied.

After they were done at the gym, they left but not after the gym instructor secretly asked for an autograph and a picture which Sam obliged.

Without a doubt, this guy was going to use that picture as publicity for his gym. The caption will be something like; this is a gym that even the great Samuel Moses comes to work out, what are you waiting for?

You want to be like Samuel Moses? Register now!

Sam cringed at the idea but he chuckled and quickly forgot about it.

He and his girlfriend strolled back home, enjoying the morning breeze and conversing about different topics as they used the opportunity to bond.

Despite their conversations though, Kayla could not help but notice something about her boyfriend. The casual person would not notice but having spent so much time with him already, she knew.

"Is something on your mind?"

"No, of course not".

She sighed, shaking her head. "Every time that you lie, you rush to say something. You just rushed to say this". She looked at him.

"Ah..."

"It's fine if you don't want to tell me," she waved her hand dismissively. "You have your own considerations and I respect it".

"Anyways," she suddenly looked at him with cute puppy eyes, making Sam flinch back in surprise.

"What? Are you saying you can't piggy ride your girlfriend?"

"What? I don't like those eyes".

Kayla chuckled. "Come on babe, it's nothing, I just want you to piggy ride me".

"..." Sam stared speechlessly at his girlfriend.

"What? Are you saying you can't piggy ride your girlfriend?"

"..."

"Babe please! My legs are tired and wobbly".

"Hahahaha!" Sam burst out laughing the next moment, making Kayla punch him playfully in grievance.

In the end, he obliged after mocking her some more.

Picking her up effortlessly and letting her mount his back, Sam started jogging again, this time with his girlfriend.

"Wow, you really are strong!" She exclaimed.

"Are you just knowing?" He chuckled.

With Kayla on his back, jogging, they no longer spoke as she didn't want him to run out of breath. Sam finally used this opportunity to start thinking.

'The origin of the system?'

'Was that message for real or was it a glitch?'

For the longest time now, Sam had worried about the origin of his system. And he was not the only one who worried, his father was also worried, concerned that rising so fast with the help of the system had side effects.

At the moment, both of them, father and son were looking for ways to explain the existence of the system.

Sam never expected that the system would decide to reveal its origin to him one day, he could not wait.

He could not wait to access the secrets and origin of the system!

Increasing his pace, he quickly jogged home and took his bath alongside his girlfriend. As soon as they ate and returned back to the bedroom, Kayla fell asleep on his lap immediately, giving him some much-needed privacy.

With his girlfriend sleeping soundly in his lap, Sam finally focused on his system.

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 that moment, a familiar interface appeared before Sam.

~-----~

*Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519)

*Peak Period: 1480s – 1519 (40 years)

*Genius Areas: Art, engineering, anatomy, invention

[Identity: First carrier of the system...]

Chapter 333 Origin [2]

~-----~

*Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519)

*Peak Period: 1480s – 1519 (40 years)

*Genius Areas: Art, engineering, anatomy, invention

[Identity: First carrier of the system; First progenitor]

~----~

"...!"

Sam's eyes widened.

'This..., this..., is this the real Leonardo da Vinci?' He looked at the man that was in this memory.
'That Leonardo da Vinci?!'

'Holy sh*t, what am I doing here?'

'How did I get here?!'

In that moment, Sam heard a voice reverberate in his head.

"Leonardo da Vinci was a true Renaissance man who excelled in many fields, including painting, science, and innovation".

"He is best known for his paintings, but his work as a scientist and inventor is also world-renowned".

"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 identify 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)

*Peak Period: 1665 – 1727 (60 years)

*Genius Areas: Physics, mathematics, astronomy

[Identity: Carrier of the system]

~----~

"This guy..., this is Isaac Newton?! Damn!"

The familiar voice spoke again. "Isaac Newton is primarily recognized for his work in the field of physics, most notably for his development of the laws of motion and the theory of universal gravitation".

"His primary scientific interest was understanding the behavior of matter and force".

"While primarily known for physics, Newton also made significant contributions to the field of mathematics, particularly in the development of calculus".

"He also conducted important research in optics, including experiments on the nature of light".

"Just like Leonardo da Vinci, Isaac Newton was a genius who was ahead of his age".

BZZZ!

Sam's consciousness hopped again.

...

Blink!

Sam opened his eyes, having entered the memory of another genius.

>Michael Faraday (1791 – 1867)<

*Peak Period: 1820s – 1860 (40 years)

*Genius Areas: Electromagnetism, chemistry

[Identity: Carrier of the system]

Bzzz!

His consciousness hopped again to the next.

...

Blink!

Sam entered another memory.

And this time, the memory hit closer to home.

Starting in the streets of Sao Paulo, Brazil, Sam lived the memory of one of the biggest football legends ever in the G.O.A.T conversation.

Edson Arantes do Nascimento, popularly known as Pele, Sam lived the memory of the Brazilian football king.

>Pele (1940 – 2022)<

*Peak Period: 1958 – 1974 (16 years)

*Genius Areas: Football- Goalscoring, dribbling, playmaking

Blink!

This time, when he opened his eyes, he felt the blood rush of battle.

Sam was in a boxing ring, alongside the owner of the memory, floating and watching as this legend ran circles around his opponent.

Float like a Butterfly...

...sting like a Bee.

>Muhammad Ali (1942 – 2016)<

*Peak Period: 1964 – 1978 (14 years)

*Genius Areas: Speed, footwork, mind games

[Identity: Carrier of a fragment of the system]

Bzzz!

Sam hopped through memories again.

...

...

[Identity: Carrier of a fragment of the system]

Bzzz!

Sam hopped through memories again.

...

Blink!

Another memory...

...

Blink!

Another memory...

...

Blink!

Another memory...

Sam hopped through the memories of countless legends in history.

After Muhammad Ali, he hopped into the memory of Usain Bolt, the Jamaican who was widely recognized as the King of the track and field whose purple reign lasted from 2008 to 2017.

After Usain Bolt, he invaded the memory of LeBron James, the NBA superstar who is widely recognized as one of the G.O.A.Ts of basketball whose peak lasted all the way from 2003 till present.

After LeBron's memory, he invaded into the memory of the King of Formula 1 racing, the inevitable Lewis Hamilton whose peak lasted all the way from 2007 till date, still going strong.

After Hamilton's memory, Noah invaded into the memory of the King of Chess, Magnus Carlsen whose peak lasted from 2009 to present.

He ended the memory hop going through the memories of the King of hip hop, Michael Jackson.

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 Michael 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?"

"I know that for the longest time, these are your questions but to get the answers that you seek, you first need to know the concept of eternity".

"What is the concept of eternity?"

"It has no end".

"Life after death, it's a concept humans still don't understand".

"The concept of eternity is the idea of time that never ends, or of being everlasting. It can also refer to the state after death, but do humans truly know what happen after death?"

"..."

"Humans constantly evolve, and their growth is bolstered by the forces and laws of nature".

"The theory of evolution is based on natural selection, which is also known as survival of the fittest".

"Those who are weak get left behind".

"Those who are strong get opportunities to become even stronger".

"This is the theory that is behind the system".

"The system is a tangible manifestation of the forces and laws of nature governing humanity, pushing them on the path of evolution".

"Back in 1452, a genius was born, Leonardo da Vinci, the first carrier of the system. System hosts are trail blazers of their era, whatever era it is".

"The system has certain criteria to choosing its host each generation, and the main goal is to push humanity to evolution, to usher in a new era in the history of humanity".

"No unworthy host ever gets the system, or keeps it for long. Afterall, it is the tangible manifestation of the natural law of survival of the fittest".

"Leonardo da Vinci inheriting the system pushed humanity forward in the fields of painting, engineering, and invention".

"Michael Faraday inheriting the system pushed humanity forward again in the fields of electromagnetism and chemistry".

"The same thing for Isaac Newton in his field".

"During Pele's era, he didn't inherit the full system, rather only sharing its fragments alongside others of his era".

"Pele, Muhammad Ali, they shared the fragments of the system in their era".

"Both revolutionized their sports, taking it to the global stage".

"Pele made people fall in love with football, while Muhammad Ali did the same with boxing".

"...the chain of evolution".

"Fast-forward to now and geniuses like Usain Bolt, Lebron James, Lewis Hamilton, and Magnus Carlsen are the recent carriers of the fragments of the system".

"In this era, Michael Jackson was the one to inherit the real system but his untimely death affected the evolution chain".

"For decades, the system could not materialize until you came along".

"In terms of mentality, talent, sheer willpower and determination, you fulfilled all the requirements to become a host of the system and so it choose you, catalyzed and attracted by your strong emotions on December 22nd, 2022".

"You are the nexus of the new era, the evolution core".

"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!"

"..."

"..."

".....!"

For a long time after the system stopped speaking, Sam could not move.

He was so shocked by all that he learned that he just stared absentmindedly, up to the moment when he started hearing echoing voices.

'Sam...'

'Sam...'

"Sam...!"

"Sam!"

Sam jolted awake.

Chapter 334 A new identity

Sam was jolted awake.

Kayla stared at her boyfriend on the bed, a worried frown on her face. "Are you ok? You've been staring into space for a while like a ghost".

"Erm, really?" He finally inclined his head to look at her.

Looking at her, the first thing that Noah noticed was the golden rays of the morning sun that were now peeking through the contours of the curtain into the room.

His eyes widened. "It's already morning?"

Kayla chuckled. "Ok, tell me the truth, are you drunk?"

"Me? Drunk?" Sam scoffed. "I don't even drink alcohol".

"I know," Kayla sighed. "Then why are you acting drunk?"

About a minute or 2 later, after Sam found a convenient excuse to distract his girlfriend's attention, Kayla finally left to make some food.

With Kayla gone, Sam could finally put his thoughts in order.

'What exactly was that?'

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?'

Yes, Sam knew that from a young age, he was stubborn and persistent.

If his mom didn't guilt trip he and his dad, he would have never stopped playing football despite how much football broke his heart.

That was how persistent he could be.

To think that stubbornness of his was what made him special, special enough to inherit a force of nature like the system.

'Some things finally make sense'. He sighed.

'Even in movies, there are certain people, either the protagonists or villains who inherit the will of the heavens to drive their era forward'.

'They are the nexus of growth of their world'.

"To think I will become the nexus of my era," Sam smiled bashfully. "I'm flattered". He muttered, not sure what better way to react to it.

Not everyone had the spirit to wake up every single day and go about your day, completing a daily quest like some robot.

Not everyone had the spirit of defiance like Sam did.

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".

"They truly are mavericks".

Sam stood up, walking to the window as he looked down at the sprawling city of Abuja before him. "I guess, a new era is dawning". He muttered.

A few minutes later, Kayla finally arrived with breakfast.

After brushing his teeth and eating to his fill, Sam left to meet his dad.

His father already showed concerns about the origin of the system and now that he finally got the answer, he wanted his dad to know.

Meeting his father, Sam did not hide anything from him as he told him everything.

In the end, Mr. Moses chuckled. "I always knew that my son was destined for great things, to think that even nature agrees with me". He grinned.

"You have my blessings son," he patted Sam on the shoulder. "Keep on doing what you do best, take on the world and become the trailblazer that you were meant to be".

"Create your legend".

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!

The call was answered.

"Hmm, calling me today, to what do I owe this honor?"

"Get lost!" Sam laughed. "Hey buddy, how are you doing?"

"I'm good Sam, I just feel like going crazy due to how much I'm learning. Sometimes, I feel that my brain would soon give way and burnout".

Sam chuckled. "It's part of life".

Ian sighed. "You're right. If it was easy, everybody would be a doctor, so will you tell me why you called me now?"

"Come on, can't I just call my best friend?"

Ian scoffed. "A busy bastard like you, nah man, try harder to fool me".

Sam chuckled. "Ok, you're right but in truth, I'm missing you man. I want to tell you something and I can't tell you through the phone".

"If you can, visit me in Spain sometime. I'll tell you when you come".

Ian groaned. "Can't you just tell me now?"

"No".

"Come on!"

"No".

Ian gave up. "Fine then, hope it's important, what you want to tell me".

"Trust me". Sam chuckled. "By the way, how's your girlfriend?"

Cough!

Ian coughed violently, almost choking on his spit but then he chuckled nervously. "Ah, why do you suddenly ask? Sophia is fine of course".

"I hope so". Sam growled. "You better make sure she finishes her university course before giving her a 9-months assignment!"

Ian chuckled again nervously. "Of course, of course".

"Good". Sam nodded. "Later then, go focus on your studies".

Thinking of something, Ian complained. "Aren't you just going to Spain now? Why did you and Kayla not just come visit me in England before going there? That way, you'll just tell me what you want to tell me".

Sam chuckled. "I can't".

"Why?"

"You want Hansi Flick to skin me alive?"

"..." Ian was stunned.

Sam laughed. "Yesterday, he was already expecting me back in Spain to train with the team. If I delay any further, he'll truly lose it with me".

"Ah, I get it now," Ian sighed. "Troubles of being such a good player".

"Anyways, Goodluck man, and bye".

With that, the call finally came to an end.

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 first game in his life, Sam was to start as the striker, a false 9.

(La Liga:)

(Barcelona – Sevilla)

(Date: 20th October, 2025)

Chapter 335 The most in-form player in Europe! [1]

(La Liga:)

(Barcelona – Sevilla)

(Date: 20th October, 2025)

It was an FC Barcelona home game.

The atmosphere in the Spotify Camp Nou was electric as the fans of the Blaugrana gave the Sevilla players a sufficient welcome to their home stadium.

Like expected, both teams started with their strongest lineups.

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.

Robert Lewandowski's injury was a disaster for the club, but still, the fans could not help but want to see how Sam would perform from the onset in the false 9 role in the squad.

FWEEE!

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded, the Spotify Camp Nou bore witness to a Samuel Moses masterpiece.

Having traveled to Nigeria and created such miracles, dragging his country to the FIFA World Cup, physically and mentally, Sam was in his best state and starting this game, it reflected in his gameplay.

Hansi Flick's Barcelona was a fluid and well-oiled offensive machine that could attack in various ways, and this machine became even more dynamic with someone like Sam playing as a false 9.

From the onset, Barca quickly set a marker, dominating this game early as their offensive players ran the Sevilla defense ragged.

Sevilla tried their best, clinging on.

The atmosphere in this stadium was electric.

The energy of the fans swept through the corners of the stadium in waves, converging on the pitch, pushing the home side players to do wonders on the pitch.

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.

"GOALLLL...!!!"

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.

7 minutes later, in the 52nd minute, after a flawless series of play with Lamine Yamal, the Spaniard prodigy managed to slip the ball across the face of goal to the other side where Raphinha lurked in the right place at the right time.

Bam!

The Brazilian poked the ball beyond the goalkeeper and into the net.

"GOALLLLLLL...!" The fans roared.

Just like that, 3-0..., FC Barcelona were running away with the victory.

Sevilla tried to make something happen but led by Ronald Araujo, the FC Barcelona defense was like a rock, keeping them out.

They weathered the sudden Sevilla momentum long enough for Sam to put an end to it in the 77th minute, scoring his 3rd goal of this game and making it a hattrick.

This time, it was a pass from Gavi who already replaced Dani Olmo in this game, setting the ball for Sam to volley past the goalkeeper and into the net.

In the 83rd minute, Ronaldo Araujo leaped highest, powering a header beyond the Sevilla goalkeeper from a corner kick to make it 5-0 to the Blaugrana.

By the time the final whistle blew, all that was left of Sevilla were ruins.

The Catalan club literally obliterated them.

Sam got his match ball, and also his man of the match award for this game.

At the end of the game, across soldier media, a certain term began proliferating across football communities around the world.

"The most in-form player in Europe is Samuel Moses!"

Chapter 336 The most in-form player in Europe! [2]

(UEFA Champions League:)

(Barcelona vs Dortmund)

(Date: 23rd October, 2025)

After the game against Sevilla at the Spotify Camp Nou where Sam announced himself to the world as a prolific false 9, a few days later, another game was to be played at the Spotify Camp Nou.

In the build up to the game, reporters did interviews with fans.

"What do you think about this game?"

"It's just another platform for Zinedine Sam to show his genius".

"Are you not an FC Barcelona fan? Why do you agree to call your player Zinedine Sam?"

The fan smiled. "It's a name that he's been called long ago, long before he even started playing in the English premier league".

"Besides, Sam's playstyle truly is elegant like Zidane's".

"Yes, I hate Real Madrid but not Zinedine Zidane. Afterall, he's one of the G.O.A.Ts, I also think Sam won't mind being called the Zidane in the Camp Nou!"

It was another UEFA champions league game, Sam's 2nd official UEFA champions league game.

After scoring a hattrick against Sevilla at the weekend, Sam was in the form of his life and he wanted nothing more than to carry this form to the UEFA champions league game against Dortmund.

In the build-up to the game, alongside his training buddies, he trained like mad, pushing himself to the ultimate level.

And finally, it was time to show it on the pitch.

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.

In defense, the German team started with a quadruple of Svensson, Nico Schlotterbeck, Emre Can, and Sule, with their goal protected by Kobel.

FWEEE!

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded, an unforgettable UEFA champions league game at the Spotify Camp Nou started.

Barca started strong, taking the battle to their opponents even as the German side refused to cower, meeting them pound for pound on the battlefield.

Dortmund's defense was airtight, shutting off the fearsome Barca attack and giving their own offensive units the time on the ball to launch counterattacks.

FC Barcelona was still the dominating side for the first few minutes despite the Dortmund resistance but in the 40th minute of this game, against the run of play, the ball rolled in behind Ter Stegen's net.

It came from a corner.

Ronald Araujo rose highest, heading the ball away but it was a weak clearance as landing inside the box again, a scramble quickly started.

The FC Barcelona players desperately defended their goal but before they knew it, Schlotterbeck, the Dortmund defender somehow got to the ball, poking it between players, and Ter Stegen to roll inside the net.

"GOALLLLL...!" 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.

"GOALLLLL...!!!" 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.

Sam jogged to the side of the post, doing the Jude Bellingham celebration as he spread his arms, inviting the chants.

"Sam!" "Sam!" "Sam!"

"What a game!" The commentators raved.

"What audacity from Sam! The confidence to even try a Panenka at the 86th minute of this game, this boy's got balls of steel!"

FWEEE!

The game continued, resuming a familiar sequence; Barca attacked, Dortmund defended with 10 men behind the ball!

Shot after shot was blocked...

Shot after shot was saved...

Dortmund was barely clinging on, and it seemed to be working, almost enough until in the 90th minute, Gavi was tripped just outside the 18-yard box.

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.

And then, the Spotify Camp Nou went haywire.

BOOM!

"ZINEDINE SAM...!!!"

"ZINEDINE SAM...!!!"

"ZINEDINE SAM...!!!"

"They called to God, they prayed for a miracle, Sam answered!"

"It is finished!"

"Sensational! Crazy! Clutch!"

Chapter 337 A new King in Catalan

Bam!

Sam's leg perfectly connected with the ball, hitting it at the optimum position that he wanted and sending it on a deadly curling trajectory towards goal.

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.

And then, the Spotify Camp Nou went haywire.

BOOM!

"ZINEDINE SAM...!!!"

"ZINEDINE SAM...!!!"

"ZINEDINE SAM...!!!"

"They called to God, they prayed for a miracle, Sam answered!"

"It is finished!"

"Sensational! Crazy! Clutch!"

"From 2 goals down, to 3 goals up and the victory! This is sensational! This is stuff of legends! This is stuff of fiction!"

"A Zinedine Samed game!"

"And this game shall be remembered as the Samuel Moses game!"

Amid the roar of the commentators, deflated, the 10 Dortmund players collapsed on the pitch, unwilling to believe what was happening.

At some point in this game, they were 2 nil up!

So how?!

Just how did this happen?!

And then from the floor where they laid, deflated and defeated, they stared at him, the cause of their misery who now celebrated.

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".

"Hansi Flick has really unlocked more of Sam!"

FWEEEE!

The referee's whistle sounded, showing a yellow card to Sam before blowing for the game to start even as Sam reacted nonchalantly to the yellow card.

The game continued and like expected, Dortmund could not create anything of note before the referee's whistle sounded again, bringing the game to an end.

Sam got a 2nd consecutive man of the match award in the UEFA champions league. This time though, he didn't get the match ball as he scored only 2 goals, but those 2 goals translated to more 3 points for FC Barcelona.

Well, if Sam was just a high profile signing for FC Barcelona fans previously, after his performance that night against Dortmund at the Spotify Camp Nou, his status changed overnight.

To many fans, they no longer cared about his age, the fact that he was just 19. To them, Sam was the new King in Catalan.

For a long time, the best part of almost 2 decades, there was a King in Catalan, the Argentine maestro, Lionel Messi.

The Messi era was one of the best eras of FC Barcelona as a club.

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

*Assists: 5

...

[International games- Nigeria:]

*Games: 4

*Goals: 3

*Assists: 2

...

[UEFA champions league:]

*Games: 2

*Goals: 5

*Assists: 2

...

[18 goals + assists in just 9 games!]

Considering the fact that Sam missed a chunk of games due to the scandal that he got involved in, he was having a truly terrific season so far.

And after the Dortmund game where he successfully proved himself again, Sam got his greatest test of the season. The greatest test of any new FC Barcelona player that plied his trade in the Spanish top flight.

FC Barcelona's next game was the first El Clasico of the season!

Chapter 338 El Clasico

El Clasico..., a popular term that any up-to-date football fan knew, but what did it mean?

To know the meaning of El Clasico, first, you had to know what a derby meant.

A derby is commonly known as a match between two local clubs that are geographically close to each other, for example teams that are from the same city or from the same part of the country.

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 Busquets 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 ate 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.

~----~

[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.

To win, they had to give their all.

...

The next day, Sam and his training buddies went about their day like usual, giving their all in training in preparation for the big game.

They did a few more times and in no time, D-day was here.

It was the night of El Clasico.

Chapter 339 A clash of behemoths; Real Madrid vs FC Barcelona

26th October, 2025...

(La Liga:)

(Real Madrid – Barcelona)

(Date: 26th October, 2025)

The first El Clasico of the 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!'

Matching into the dressing room alongside his teammates, Sam didn't feel like a footballer entering a stadium at all, rather he felt like a gladiator entering a notorious coliseum where he was to fight a bloody battle with his life on the line.

'It's now or never!'

In the dressing room, uncharacteristic of the German coach, Hansi Flick went on a lengthy lecture, emphasizing the importance of getting a result out of this game.

He didn't put unnecessary pressure on his players, going about that they must win, rather, he just told them to try their best and get a result.

But that simple speech, it left Sam's blood boiling already.

By now, the lineup for the 2 squads was already revealed long ago.

The visitors, FC Barcelona started in their regular 4-2-3-1 formation.

Marc Andre Ter Stegen started in between the posts for the visitors, with a quadruple defense comprising Jules Kounde, Ronald Araujo, Pau Cubarsi, and Alejandro Balde sitting ahead of him as his protectors.

Ahead of the defense was the midfield duo of Pedri and Frankie De Jong.

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.

And then, the players came out into the pitch amid a cauldron of noise.

Chapter 340 A game of superstars

"Madrid!" "Madrid!" "Madrid!"

The passionate fans sang loudly.

The Santiago Bernabeu was a cauldron of fire and fury.

The air was electric, charged with the anticipation of 80,000 voices waiting to explode. Every seat was filled, every fan standing, scarves raised in a sea of white and blue and red defiance.

The stadium trembled, not just from the chants but from the sheer weight of history pressing down on the moment.

Real Madrid and Barcelona, neck and neck at the top of La Liga took their first steps onto the pristine pitch, the roar cascading down like a tidal wave.

Flashbulbs erupted from the stands, capturing the gladiators of Spanish football in a blaze of light.

The chants were deafening, Madridistas bellowing "Hala Madrid!" as Cules responded with defiant jeers.

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 Madrid 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.

Alaba and Rudiger were absolute rocks, consistently making solid tackles and roaring to celebrate every single one like they just won a battle.

The energy in this game was just transcendent.

It was not all Madrid though.

FC Barcelona took the game to their opponents. Afterall, it was a game of pound to pound, the Catalan giants were not ready to cower before their opponents despite this being their home stadium.

Afterall, it was not a game of predator vs prey, it was a game of monster vs monster.

The Catalans played with lethal intent.

Their attack gelled like a well-oiled machine, Sam fully embracing his role as a false 9 to make the attack tick as Raphinha especially dazzled with his endless energy this game even as Lamine Yamal turned Ferland Mendy inside out.

The midfield was just as solid and steady as usual, Frankie De Jong playing a solid game while Pedri strutted his stuff in the middle of the park.

The defense also did its job led by the Uruguayan wall, Ronald Araujo.

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 were kept in their throats throughout.

And finally, in the 23rd minute of this game, the deadlock was broken..., by Real Madrid.

Kylian Mbappe struck!