

LEGENDS 102

Chapter 102: First Loss

The ball took flight upon contact with Jason's foot and thundered to the bottom left corner of the goal almost in a flash.

Hradecky almost couldn't react, but he had already dived before the shot was taken, but had unfortunately dived in the wrong direction and could only watch from over his shoulder as the ball went past the goal line and slammed into the back of the net.

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For all his worries and uncertainty, the moment the ball slammed into the back of the net, Jason took off towards the sidelines and jumped into a knee slide with his arms spread out as if to hug the world, a big smile on his face as crowd's cheers washed over him, wave after wave.

He wasn't alone in his celebrations as his teammates soon arrived and jumped on him, piling up on him in jubilation while the Porto fans cheered joyously while jumping in their seats, their joy too much to be expressed on their butts.

The commentator also got a word in here and there, but no one in the stadium bothered to listen to the commentator's 'expert' commentary at this moment.

It was merely a round of 32 Europa League match, but the people in the Estadio do Dragao ignored that piece of information and just simply went with the flow and let the joy flow through their bodies as they continued shouting, not caring if their voices were becoming hoarse because of the strain.

Of course, not everyone in the Estadio do Dragao was swept up by happiness and some only had negative emotions coursing through them.

Paulinho wished he could find a hole in the ground to bury himself in as he watched the Porto players and fans celebrate.

He wasn't the only one, rather everyone on the Leverkusen side from the players to the club staff present, and even the fans were not able to hide their negative emotions from showing on their faces.

The way Porto celebrated was too luxurious for a mere round of 32 victory and it instead made them feel like they had lost out on winning the Europa League final match instead.

Jason himself who led the celebrations, did not know why he was celebrating so wildly on a game that couldn't be said to be a "huge" one, but he couldn't stop himself and continued celebrating with the fans.

Maybe it was his Nigerian blood that wanted to quite typically "pepper his enemies," ... or opponents in this case, but he continued his celebrations, using the last of his self-control to stop himself from doing anything more provocative as all sorts of ideas were popping up in his head and he had to do his best to not let himself slip.

The celebrations continued for a few more minutes before the players started heading back to their locker rooms.

Of course, as the one who scored the match-winning penalty, Jason was ambushed by some reporters before he could make it to the tunnel.

"Scoring the match-winning penalty to earn your team a ticket into the next phase of the Europa League tournament despite the pressure on your back was delightful, I'm sure, especially with the way you celebrated," a female reporter from CBS that Jason recognized from the last match said with a chuckle,

"... But how did it feel to take the reigns and earn your team's victory all by yourself?" she asked with a smile.

"Firstly, I want to say that we won as a team and everyone did their part, I was just opportune to be the one that had to take the last penalty which ended as the match-winning penalty,"

"Of course, I also have to say that I did feel quite the pressure and I was a bit shaken by the stakes that hung in the balance, especially when I heard the fans chanting my name, but luckily I was able to keep

enough composure to the ball cleanly, so I feel quite good, very elated actually,” Jason responded, his joy from scoring the match winner still on his face.

“Despite your team earning the ticket to the next round of the Europa League, the actual game ended up as a loss for your team, which if I’m correct is also your first loss with the Porto club, how do you feel about that?” female CBS reporter asked another question.

“Now that you mention it, that’s true, haha,” Jason realized with a little laugh.

“Well, I could say we lost the battle but won the war, but nevertheless the manager would always tell us that a loss is something to be improved upon, so I’m sure we’ll revise what caused our loss in the coming days in training and will learn from our mistakes to make sure that this situation repeats itself as little as possible,” Jason answered intelligently with a motivated voice, earning a nod of respect from the reporters present.

“This has been a match in which you’ve had a major influence in, just like your other three matches since your debut, yet you’ve not yet gotten your hands on a man of the match award yet despite your exhilarating and electrifying performances. Why do you think that is?” A male reporter from ESPN asked Jason with a mic in his face.

A hint of a frown appeared on the corner of Jason’s lips, but it was gone as soon as it appeared,

“... I mean... Sure I’ve played well and have been hitting the targets, but I’m not exactly the only player on the field, and neither am I the one deciding who gets what award so the matter is beyond me and not even something I had any thoughts about,”

“I don’t have any negative feelings for whoever won the awards in previous matches as it was decided by the professionals that the person was the most influential person in the game and I can’t challenge that neither do I want to,” Jason answered, a bit thrown off by the question as it felt like the question was meant to trip him up and make him say something he was not supposed to say.

“Anyway, I have to go,” Jason started to say, but was interrupted,

“One more question!” the ESPN reporter pleaded.

Seeing as he had answered two questions from the female CBS reporter, Jason had an inkling of a thought that it would not be fair if he did not answer the same number of questions from this guy as well, even though his last question was a bit annoying, but Jason was still quite happy from winning the game so he quickly forgave him,

“Ask away,” Jason said after a bit of thought.

“Ok thank you,” the ESPN reporter replied but had a crafty smile on his face that unnerved Jason slightly and made him wonder if he had not made a mistake by allowing this guy to ask another question.

“Despite the difficulty, Porto have managed to stand above the Leverkusen team and are the ones who had the last laugh despite the unexpected occurrences in the second leg of the tie. Do you have words for your defeated opponents or even the Leverkusen fans?” the ESPN reporter asked, unable to keep his crafty smile that anticipated Jason’s answer eagerly.

“Nahhhh... I’m not falling for that,” Jason replied with an amused smile on his face as he realized that this reporter really wanted to trip him up.

Whatever he said here would be misinterpreted and would end up as a controversy and Jason wasn’t going to be falling for it.

“Mhm mm, nope, not today,” Jason said while shaking his head.

“Anyway I have to go, I left my cat in the oven and forgot to feed my bread,” Jason said as he backed away from the reporters, eliciting a laugh from the other reporters.

“Don’t you mean that the other way around?” the ESPN reporter asked, confused.

“However you choose to look at it, you’re correct,” Jason replied, but did not stop walking away.

“Somebody call animal protection services!!!” Somebody shouted behind Jason, but he didn’t look back and headed down the tunnel.