

LEGENDS 251

Chapter 251: Young Talent Joins the Team

“Ah... I forgot the mask,” Jason muttered in realization as he felt the skin of his cheek under his fingers.

Looking into the eyes of the people staring at him, Jason managed to discern that none of them looked like they recognized him, so he quickly began moving.

Pulling his card out of his pocket to pay, Jason walked to the counter to pay.

The female checkout clerk at the counter somehow managed to operate the computer and enter in Jason’s purchase before swiping his card.

“Approved,” she muttered and handed Jason back his card and bag which Jason put his former clothes in.

Putting his mask back on before he grabbed the bag, Jason walked out of the store.

He had just escaped from 14 days of boredom hell called quarantine and wasn’t willing to go back for any reason even though it was stifling to put on the mask after having his face free from the mask for a while.

After acquiring a change of clothes, he didn’t have anything else he was looking for and headed back but on his way back he branched to a store that sold food.

As Jason picked up a gummy bear pack and some chocolate he suddenly remembered,

“Should I get souvenirs?” He muttered as he glanced at some lebkuchen that were a bit excessively packaged.

Lebkuchen was a soft gingerbread that was acknowledged as a German version of a cookie and it was usually flavored with spices like cinnamon, cardamom, and mace.

They looked especially delicious from where Jason stood, but they were packaged a bit too exotically for something that people would buy and eat on the go, hence Jason's conjecture.

"Well, no one would say no to food," He muttered as he picked a few pieces.

He also picked a few packs of chocolate, gummy bears, cheese, and a few spices that he hoped to try in his future kitchen adventures.

After buying quite a bit, Jason paid and left the store now holding two bags in his right hand.

It was beginning to get heavy so he immediately headed out of the mall resisting the temptation to visit any other stores as he didn't have the capacity to carry anything else.

As he headed out, he had called Joshua to bring the car around so luckily for him the car was right in front of the doors of the mall with Joshua waiting outside to open the door for him.

This gesture which would normally feel a bit extra to Jason now felt very helpful because Jason couldn't spare another hand with one injured and the other holding bags.

Once again, this scenery attracted attention, but Jason and Joshua remained just as unperturbed as before and smoothly finished their actions and the car drove out of the mall less than a minute later.

The car immediately headed to the airport at a respectable pace while Jason in the backseat opened a pack of lebkuchen, wanting to stave off the pangs of hunger that had begun to disturb him.

"Hmmm?" Jason's eyes widened slightly as he began eating one of the soft, deliciously-smelling softbread cookies.

'That tastes a lot better than I remember,' He acknowledged internally with some surprise.

This was not his first experience with the German shortbread cookies as he had eaten them in his past life when he played for SV Elversberg in the 2. Bundesliga.

That period would have been one of the peaks of his previous life's football career, but he was merely a reserve member of the team and didn't play more than 7 games in the two seasons he had spent in Germany in his previous life.

He had ended up looking for greener pastures so apart from learning the language and experiencing the culture in Germany, he hadn't gained much from his move to Germany in his previous life.

Anyway, the past was past, but Jason was more than surprised to find out that the cookies tasted a lot better than he remembered them to be.

'Yeah, no more lebkuchen for Sofia, she'll manage the chocolate and gummy bears,' he instantly made a decision in his head.

As he munched on the cookies, the car finally arrived at the airport and Jason got out holding the bags he got from the mall while Joshua helped him hold his suitcase and other bag.

Since he already had a COVID test done on him just barely two hours ago while he was still at the health center, there was no hassle with checking in and getting on the plane though it was a bit difficult to handle all the bag but Jason managed somehow and found his seat after boarding the plane.

Taking his seat after struggling with his bags for a while, he reclined in his seat and pulled out his phone.

As he scrolled through his phone to check for missed messages, he saw a message from Mylo that said,

"See you on the field soon".

"What's this idiot talking about now?" Jason wondered to himself as he went to check his emails and it was there he saw a notification from the club that was meant to notify him about an addition to the team.

Due to the team's current shortage of first-team strikers at the club especially considering the club's predominantly used formation, the head manager who had already been looking for strikers outside to fill in the empty space had also decided to look inside and this was a boon for the players in the second team and the junior team.

After a lot of deliberations and tests in the club, Sergio Conceicao had chosen the first player that he would be promoting to the first team for the 2020/21 season, and this player happened to be Jason's former roommate.

Addition of a new member to the team: Mylo Baumgartner

Jason stared at the title of the mail for almost a full minute before a small smile broke out on his face,

"That idiot actually managed to make it to the first team."

Jason had long known that Mylo was actually quite talented and could perform at first-team standard, though he didn't know if he'd be exceptional on the first team, but he had met Jason's criteria the last time they played together and if there was one thing that was accurate, it was Jason's judgment skills.

Jason had thought that as long as Mylo could cut down on his 'habits', then entering the first team wouldn't be far off.

He didn't know if Mylo had actually cut down on his habits because although Mylo was acting a bit mildly before he left the apartment, that didn't mean much and Jason hadn't particularly kept up with him enough to know whether Mylo had gone back to his habits.

At least since there was no news about Mylo being arrested for breaking any safety regulations, that meant he didn't go to any nightclubs at the very least, but that was just about it.

Jason didn't know what criteria the manager had used to judge the players he was going to sign from the junior team and the second team, and neither did he know what had prompted the manager to pick Mylo out of all the available options, but Jason was happy for Mylo.

Now Jason could only hope that Mylo could do well for the team because the striker role that Mylo would be taking up was a position that was a driving force for the team and they needed all they could get from the frontmen if the team wanted to win anything in the coming season.

Of course, Mylo may not actually end up getting many chances on the team if the manager brought in a few good strikers and they performed well enough to keep them on the starting line-up, but that was Mylo's business.

Not bothering to read the rest of the email, Jason went back to reply to Mylo's text.

{Alright, I'll miss the start of the season, but you could pop in a few goals in my absence} he typed into his phone and sent the text.

Moving to Instagram to check for any interesting posts, Jason saw that the official Porto Instagram account had posted about Mylo's signing.

There were pictures of Mylo signing the contract and shaking hands with club officials.

Jason liked the post and was about to scroll past when he suddenly thought of a witty comment and quickly began typing in the comment section.

{Welcome to the team... How may I assist you?} Jason typed and pressed send.

After commenting, he continued scrolling down and viewing other posts, but he soon started receiving notifications that his earlier comment was already receiving a lot of likes.

Before he could check, another notification popped up at the top of his screen and this time it was a message from Mylo.

{A few goals? I'm taking the golden boot home with me!}

{Nothing for you this season apart from the assist ranking}

Mylo had sent two audacious texts and Jason couldn't help but give a wry smile after reading the texts.

{Your stupid a** would be lucky if you managed to join me in celebrating my goals from the bench}
Jason typed in his reply and pressed send with a mocking smile on his face.

{Ouch!}

{I'll prove you wrong though} Mylo replied back.

Chapter 252: Duration of Recovery

The plane soon took off.

Due to being in the first class area and the plane lacking a few passengers, Jason somehow ended up not having anybody seated beside him.

He ended up sleeping throughout the three-hour flight, only waking up just before the plane was about to land.

The plane soon landed and Jason got off, once again battling with his luggage but managing to handle all of it.

After doing all the necessary things, Jason got out of the airport and got a taxi to take him straight to the CTFD Portugaia training center.

As soon as the words 'CTFD Portugaia' came out of Jason's mouth, the driver did a double take and glanced into the rear-view mirror trying to discern which of the Porto players he was carrying and it didn't take him long to recognize Jason's blue eyes that stared right back at him through the mirror.

Luckily, Jason had waited till he had gotten into the car before telling the driver his destination because the driver may have reacted completely differently if he was not behind the wheel of his car.

"Can we go now," Jason asked while continuing to stare right at the driver through the mirror.

"Uh, yeah..."

"Weren't you injured?" The driver asked in surprise as he was a major Porto fan who kept up with the news.

"I still am. You did see me lift like four bags with only one hand right which I wouldn't have done if I had two functional arms," Jason replied with a bit of sarcasm in his tone, wondering why someone would be dumb enough to miss something so obvious.

"Good point..."

"... Can I get an autograph from you, my son would like to have something like that," The driver requested as he began driving.

"Sure, do you have a pen and a jersey?" Jason replied, not seeing any reason why he shouldn't give the driver an autograph despite the question he had asked earlier.

"Ah, I only have a pen here, I left my jersey at home, I'll check for a book," the driver scratched his head with one hand while his other hand stayed on the steering wheel.

"Ah wait a minute," Jason muttered as he pulled open one of his bags and took out a jersey.

It was the jersey he had worn in the match against Inter Milan that they ended up losing and Jason had it with him because he wore it to the health center.

Since there was no point in keeping a stockpile of jerseys at his house, especially when it was a jersey he wore in a match that the team lost, Jason didn't mind giving it away.

"Where's your pen?" Jason asked the driver who didn't know what was going on in the back seat.

“My pen?” The driver repeated the question out of habit and quickly looked around for a pen and handed it to Jason in the back seat.

Jason took the pen, placed the jersey on a bag on his lap, and quickly signed on it before the taxi that was currently at a standstill behind a red light began to move again.

As he finished, he handed the pen back to the driver and then gave the jersey to the driver as well.

“Isn’t this one of your jerseys?” The driver asked in surprise.

“Yeah, I wore this last match, too bad we lost,” Jason sighed.

“You can give it to your son,” he continued as he lay back in the back seat.

“Give it to my son? I’m keeping this...” the driver shot back, amazed.

“...or maybe we can share it, he’s too small to fit into it right now anyway,” the driver began to justify his actions after thinking his earlier words through.

“Just give it to the kid bruh...” Jason laughed, amused by the driver’s reaction to receiving his signed jersey.

He had always heard about things like this back in his previous life, but he never experienced such a thing as nobody would want the signed jersey of a washed-up player in the lowest leveled leagues in the world.

If anyone did, it was likely a ploy of some kind... or maybe the stupid thing called love was tampering with their brain cells.

After receiving Jason’s signed jersey, the taxi driver who was already very animated became even more animated and kept talking all through the trip and Jason was relieved when the training center appeared within view.

The taxi drove up to the gates of the training center and the security guards were about to turn it away when the back window slid down.

Jason explained to the security guards that he needed the taxi driver to take him and his luggage to where his car was.

After securing permission for the taxi to drive inside the training center, the taxi driver followed Jason's instructions and soon parked beside Jason's car which was still at the training center.

Jason took out his keys and put his stuff into his car with the help of the driver before paying the driver before he drove off despite the insistence of the driver to make the ride free.

With his stuff safely secured into his car, Jason locked the doors of his car once again and headed to the medical center on the training grounds for his appointment with the team doctor.

There wasn't much for that needed to be done apart from a scan to check how his recovery was going.

Glancing at the results of the scan, Luis Pinto gave Jason a verdict.

His shoulder was already recovering but a full recovery was still a distance away.

The dislocation wasn't too severe but it would still take at least another four weeks of recovery before he could once begin physical therapy for at least two weeks and even then he wasn't fully recovered and would have to keep wearing a brace to protect his shoulder for a few more weeks after that even if he could begin featuring in matches again.

Thus earliest Jason could get back on the pitch was six weeks from then and depending on the manager, Jason could end up in recovery for a longer period, but Jason hoped not.

Unfortunately, there was nothing he could do but wait patiently while preparing himself for his return to first-team football.

Luckily, he had gotten injured just before the end of the season so by the time he recovered, he wouldn't have missed any important matches.

The only things he would be missing were the first few matches of the season and a few friendly games before that.

That was the only thing that served as a consolation for Jason.

After getting the results of his test and finding out his recovery period, he got a prescription for a few painkillers as his shoulder still hurt like a motherfu**er.

Taking the prescription, Jason bid goodbye to the doctor, walked back to the car, and turned on the engine before glancing at the time being displayed digitally on the car's dashboard.

2:15 pm

"Was it 196 miles?" Jason wondered as he tried to remember the distance between Porto and Lisbon by road.

"I guess I should be able to make it there by 4," he muttered as he began driving out of the training center and onto the streets of Porto, his speed gradually rising until he was just below the speed limit as he sped through the streets of Porto.

He soon made it out of the areas with high traffic and the needle that measured his speed began rising once again until it was over 90 degrees.

A blue BMW i8 tore down the road between Porto and Lisbon, somehow managing to evade every car in its path despite the dangerous speeds it was achieving velocity at.

Inside the car, Jason somehow managed to keep the car under control despite only driving with one hand, anyone who saw what he was doing would think that he was cutting things a bit too close with

how recklessly he was driving, but Jason thought differently and wished he was able to achieve higher speeds.

Unfortunately, the electrical limitations of the BMW i8 wouldn't let him achieve this and as Jason drove, he was already considering adding another car to his collection.

He had already been planning to buy a car for comfortability and blending in, but now he was thinking of making an extra order and bringing along a car that brought to light the terms "dangerously fast".

'Maybe an AMG... or should I go full psycho and get one of those supercars, maybe a Lambo... or a Ferrari...'

'They're a bit above my pay grade for the time being though,' Jason continued his internal deliberation that would have his previous reality's self squeaking in jealousy.

His previous reality self had quite the experience with cars and that was why Jason was able to handle a car going at speeds over 100 miles per hour with just one hand.

In his previous reality, due to not having a good relationship with his aunt Daphne, he had had a few financial problems and he had found a solution to it by doing illegal street racing.

He never owned cars though, he just lent them from their owners and raced with them, and he had to give more than half of his earnings to the owner of the cars he used whenever he raced.

It wasn't a fair deal, but Jason was more than happy to take it, especially since he didn't own the cars.

After all, the cops couldn't arrest him for illegal street racing if he didn't even have a car to race with, could they?

Chapter 253: University Once Again...

Jason had used the funds he managed to raise from his racing outings to survive while once again trying to start professional football.

Eventually, his efforts paid off, but due to his less-than-average skills at the professional level, he always had financial issues so racing had been something he had stuck to doing for most of his life even as he traveled to different places around the world.

He had to make ends meet and anything past street racing was way too illegal and dangerous for Jason.

He could have used his martial arts skills to join underground fighting rings, but doing that was very dangerous and he could end up sustaining serious injuries.

It was also not something he could hide as easily as his involvement in street racing, so he had avoided it.

Racing wasn't as easy to learn for Jason as martial arts, but luckily, he managed to win enough times to not enter debt and over the years he got better and more comfortable behind the steering wheel.

That was why he was able to keep his car under control with one hand at speeds over a hundred miles an hour.

For him, it was easy to do this much, after all, with all of his experience, only at speeds of about 200 miles per hour could be termed as speeding.

However, going above his current speed would be cutting it close, even for him with all his experience behind the wheel.

Luckily, the speed at which he was moving allowed him to reach Lisbon in under two hours just like he had intended to.

Driving through the foreign roads, Jason followed the map that was leading him to the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Lisbon.

Sofia was studying to be a nurse so it only stood to reason that she had to be at the Faculty of Medicine of the University.

Also, considering the kind of workload that students involved in anything that had to do with medicine were subjected to, then Jason was almost sure that she would probably still be at class at 4 pm.

Normally, there shouldn't have been a reason for all this speculation, but Jason hadn't exactly told Sofia that he was coming and these were the consequences of his actions.

He was doing exactly what Sofia had done fourteen days ago, but in his case, he already knew that Sofia could not be out of town for any reason.

He had also sneakily confirmed her location by asking questions like,

"Aren't you going to class tomorrow, you should be sleeping by now?", "Did it rain at your place?" e.t.c., the day before.

They had spoken a bit after that day and Sofia's responses had first been a little guarded and it became clear that she was particularly annoyed at having her surprise visit go completely wrong and that was why Jason had thought to return the gesture because despite her talking more the last few days, Jason felt there was something off about her lately.

Thinking that maybe she was still peeved was what had prompted Jason to head straight to Lisbon after his arrival in Portugal despite his condition because even though he had purposely been putting the brakes on what was going on between them, he didn't want to lose what they had.

Thinking that maybe it was time to take the next step in their relationship, Jason had decided to move fast before he managed to change his own mind again.

This led to the current situation where a Blue BMW i8 with its colors especially pronounced in the light drove into the Cidade Universitaria, making its way to the Hospital de Santa Maria where the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Lisbon was located, attracting eyes as it moved through the grounds of the educational facility and came to a stop at a car park outside the Hospital de Santa Maria.

Bringing down the windows of the car before turning off the car's engine, Jason pulled out his phone.

{Are you still in class?} He typed in and pressed send.

If Sofia was having a class, then she might not see the message until later, but if she by some luck wasn't having a class then she would respond soon enough.

Either way, Jason planned to get some fresh air while he waited for her response.

Taking dark-colored sunglasses from the safe at the passenger's side of the car that he wore to cover his eyes and putting on his nose mask as well, Jason pushed the button to open the doors and stepped out.

After stepping out of the car, he went to go sit on the front of the car, thankful that the engine of the car was on the back and not in front, otherwise he'd have burned his ass off.

Making a mental note to fill up his gas soon, he took a deep breath and just stared at the surroundings while waiting.

He was so focused on just staring at the surroundings that he failed to notice the sounds of footsteps that slowly approached behind him.

The footsteps seemed a bit out of sync for a person walking or running and sounded more like sneaking around, but Jason failed to notice and he only managed to react when two hands just appeared from behind him and covered his eyes.

At the moment when the two palms had appeared in front of his eyes, Jason's instinct flared up and he almost instinctively struck backward to counter the sneak attack, but he managed to catch himself in time.

His right hand instinctively rose towards his face to pull away the hands covering his eyes, but before his hands reached his face a scent that he recognized assaulted his nostrils.

“You know, when I left Porto to travel all the way to Lisbon, it was to surprise someone, why am I the one being surprised?” Jason said as he pulled off the pair of hands that covered his eyes and turned to face Sofia.

Chapter 254: Operation Cupid Bloom

Sigh

Jason sighed heavily as he lay on the bed of the hotel room he had booked for his stay in Lisbon for the time being.

As for how long he would be staying in Lisbon, Jason no longer knew.

He had originally planned to leave the following day, but certain situations had arisen that Jason wasn't able to ignore and were the cause of his “indefinite till further notice” stay in Lisbon.

As for what the ‘certain situations’ were... what could they be other than relationship issues?

Despite his lack of understanding of certain emotions due to having no experience, Jason's judgment skills had always been top notch and he was able to read people quite easily... or at least he was able to read what was being shown, he was no match for skilled actors.

Thanks to this certain trait, he had noticed that apart from the initial excitement that Sofia had shown when she had snuck up on him from behind, the usual exuberance around her that he was so used to had dulled considerably.

At first, Jason had ignored it, coining it to exhaustion from her schedule, and considering the situation, his initial guess wasn't far-fetched, but he soon had to set aside his first guess.

Sofia had seemed distracted almost throughout the time they were together and most of the time it felt like Jason was talking to himself.

There was also a weird feeling of a wall between them that Jason couldn't quite put his finger on.

He didn't know what was happening, neither did he know the cause of what was happening, but he knew that it definitely wasn't a good thing in this kind of relationship... though their relationship was already kind of weird and ambiguous since the whole situation between them was unclear.

The situation with the relationship between him and Sofia was Jason's fault and he knew that... but it couldn't be helped so far and now that he finally decided to take the much-needed step to progress their relationship, this was happening.

Internally, Jason had made a decision that he would stay in Lisbon until whatever was happening with Sofia blew over and while he was at it, he would also work on progressing their relationship past the realm of confusion they were in.

That was what led to the current situation.

Luckily, this mission that he had undertaken would not affect his football career in any way.

He was injured and didn't have to go to training for a while.

Of course, he had scheduled consultations with the team doctor to check the progress of his recovery, but those weren't a problem since they weren't a daily thing.

With nothing in the way of operation "Cupid Bloom", Jason began doing research about the topic called Romanticism.

He knew his capabilities and knew that if all he needed to do to progress his relationship with Sofia was to have a genital meet and greet with her, then he'd have accomplished this long ago, but that wasn't what Jason was looking for.

In his previous life, sex was nothing more than a way to cure his boredom and curiosity concerning the topic and it didn't mean much to Jason.

For him back then, it wasn't even qualified to be something he did to relieve tension or stress, but rather it felt like doing an assignment because he was unable to feel any of those connections that people always spoke about.

This was one of the reasons why Jason was still a virgin in his current life despite having more opportunities than anyone he knew, to lose his virginity.

He had already experienced sex and didn't feel any pressing need to sleep with anybody.

All that stuff about youthful vigor didn't mean much more to Jason than morning wood for an annoyingly long period of time... there were also the annoying hard-ons at completely random times of the day, but even that didn't mean much to Jason who had every other part of his body apart from his dick under control.

If the previous him had felt the emotions he was currently feeling, he wouldn't have recognized what it was and would have avoided it as the previous him didn't like anything that clouded his thinking and prevented him from being objective.

Now that Jason thought about it, his previous self would be disgusted by his current self whose thinking was clouded by the emotions that he was trying to build up with Sofia.

The old him would have prevented further loss of any brain cells by backing out the moment he realized that what he was feeling for Sofia was preventing objective thinking.

This was what was the scariest part of his previous mentality... all he cared about was football.

Because of this, anything that would interfere with his objective thinking was avoided or destroyed as long as it would not benefit his football skills.

He might not have known back then, but he was already blurring the thin line between mentally numb and sociopath back then, but luckily his efforts to change in this new life had helped him change his perspective.

With all that said, Jason continued his research as he knew next to nothing about the topic of romance and he didn't think the romance in those shows that his aunt always watched was what he should be aiming for as those shows were a riot of emotions in itself.

Jason was merely a beginner and shows like 'Boys over Flowers' were not helping his romantic dilemma.

Hopefully, he could find something a bit milder than all of that, he thought to himself as he began looking for romance movies, shows, and books that could help him in his plans, but by the time Jason opened up a few sites and saw the huge volumes of romance movies and novels that endlessly filled the screen, he knew that he was in trouble.

"Sh*t..." he muttered to himself in agony and dived in, already committing himself to an almost sleepless night.

Chapter 255: 2020/21 First Pre-Season Friendly I

****29th August 2020****

1:52 pm

Inside the Campo Pequeno Shopping mall, Jason sat at one of the seats at the food court and pulled out a whooper burger that he had bought from a Burger King outlet near the mall.

He had come to the mall to secure a few things that he would be using now that it was confirmed that he would be having a prolonged stay in Lisbon.

Taking off the nose mask on the lower half of his face, he bit into the burger with relish especially since it was his first meal of the day.

He had been up for most of the night reading romance novels and apart from a few bits of information, it felt like a waste of time, but even then, he had only gotten to go to sleep at almost 4 am in the morning.

With him sleeping that late, he didn't wake up until past 11 am and only after lounging in bed for another hour did he finally get up.

Realizing that he needed a few things if he was going to be in Lisbon for a while, he had decided to visit the mall, but before getting to the mall, he had branched at Burger King to get something to eat.

He had then gone to the mall to buy the things he needed, but he decided to eat first before he went shopping.

Halfway through his burger, his eyes fell on one of the televisions in the food court.

"Eh?" his eyes widened in surprise as he saw Mylo on the TV in Porto's warm-up kit as he ran across the field, shuttling between cones that were specifically arranged.

Jason had known that Porto had a match today.

Specifically a pre-season friendly against Rio Ave, but he hadn't known the time of the match so he was a bit surprised to see the teams already warming up on the TV, but most of his surprise wasn't from seeing the match already about to hold.

One of the reasons for his surprise was that knowing that there was no love lost between Porto and Benfica, he was more than a bit surprised to see a Porto match being shown in a public place in Lisbon.

That wasn't a normal thing, but who knew what the people who put the TV in the food court were thinking?

For all he knew, maybe this was some sort of "hate-watching" thing that people in Lisbon did.

That was by the side though... in reality, the biggest reason for Jason's surprise was seeing Mylo in a get-up that suggested that he was going to be starting the match.

Sure it was a pre-season friendly, but even then...

Jason couldn't help but have a wry smile on his face as he watched the Porto team continue to warm up in preparation for their upcoming match.

When he had joined the team halfway through the last season, the manager had left him on the training ground for weeks before finally adding him to the team line-up but even then, he was just a bench player for a few games before he finally got a chance to play, but Mylo who had just been signed to the senior team just yesterday was already chosen by the manager to start the match.

He understood that the team currently didn't have strikers and they needed people to fill in the vacant space, moreover, it was a good chance for the manager to see what Mylo could do on the pitch since it was a friendly game, but knowing that it was a logical choice didn't help and Jason couldn't help but feel a slight annoyance, yet he quickly let it blow over.

There was nothing he could do about it anyway, especially now that he was injured and wasn't involved with the team for the time being.

He went back to eating, but while he ate, the two teams finished their warm-ups, went for a last-minute tactical meeting with their managers, and began arranging themselves on the field.

Before Jason could finish his meal, the match started and Jason involuntarily began watching the game, and his eating speed which was already slow, slowed down even more considerably.

Porto arranged themselves in their usual 4-4-2 holding formation and the line-up consisted of;

GK: Diogo Costa,

LB: Zaidu Sanusi,

RB: Mattheus Uribe,

CBs: Diogo Leite, Chancel Mbemba,

CMFs: Romario Baro, Joao Mario,

LMF: Luis Diaz,

RMF: Fabio Viera,

CFs: Moussa Marega, Mylo Baumgartner.

It was obvious that Porto wasn't using their best team, but that was the whole point of pre-season matches as even the Rio Ave team had quite a few players that Jason couldn't recognize from the time he had played against them just a few months earlier.

However, barely five minutes into the game, it became clear that even though this wasn't Porto's strongest line-up, the Rio Ave team was still vastly outmatched against this much weaker line-up and were already on the defensive just five minutes into the game.

The Porto team kept pushing the Rio Ave team back until the only thing they could do whenever they managed to get a foot on the ball was to launch a counter, but even that ended up as a waste before the Porto defense which ended up shutting them down before they could go anywhere.

In the thirteenth minute of the game, the inevitable finally happened.

Luis Diaz received a pass from Joao Mario on the left side of the penalty box and he ran at the box cutting past one Rio Ave defender before sending an inside pass to Romario Baro who was just outside the penalty box.

Romario Baro initially planned to shoot the ball, but a couple of Rio Ave players jumped into his path and he ended up faking a shot before laying off the ball to Mylo inside the penalty box.

Mylo's back was facing the Rio Ave goal as he received the ball, but instead of turning, he simply sent the ball towards the right side of the box where Fabio Viera was running in from.

Fabio Viera hit the ball with the side of his right foot on his first touch, sending the ball across the penalty box back to the left side where Luis Diaz appeared and slotted the ball into the back of the net coolly.

{GOAL!}

{We're off to an early start!}

{Porto looking as sharp as they were last season come up with a beautiful team goal}

{They're already showing off the performances that enabled them to end the previous season as champions} The commentator's voice could be clearly heard in the food court where Jason was watching the match as he finally finished his meal.

Checking his watch to see that he still had time to watch the match, Jason immediately stood up to go buy more food to keep his mouth busy as he watched the match since his stomach still didn't feel full after his earlier meal.

After filling up a tray with just about anything that could be eaten with one hand, Jason headed back to his seat, surprisingly remaining unnoticed by anyone in the food court despite not having a mask on his face because their attention was on the TV.

Porto had just gotten their first goal, but immediately after the Rio Ave team kicked off, the Porto team swarmed them and snatched the ball once again before beginning to push them back, but this time the Rio Ave team managed to push back at the Porto team and launched an attack of their own.

Unfortunately, they couldn't hold off the Porto team for long, and soon Porto unleashed a devastating counter after snatching the ball off the Rio Ave left winger when he tried to initiate an attack.

Mattheus Uribe sent the ball towards Romario Baro in the midfield and Baro took control of the ball and then sent it down the right wing into the path of Fabio Viera without hesitation.

Fabio Viera beat his marker for pace and snatched the ball, pushing it forward and chasing after it with incredible pace, his marker only being able to chase after him from behind.

As he approached the right side of Rio Ave's 18-yard box, Viera sent in a high cross towards Moussa Marega who was just arriving into the box.

Pushing against the Rio Ave players in the box, Marega managed to take to the air and get to the ball with his head, but due to interference from opposing players, he wasn't able to get his head to the ball properly and headed the ball towards the right side of the goal.

The ball looked like it would end up out of play on the right side of the Rio Ave goal when a leg in white socks with a hint of blue appeared out from behind a Rio Ave player and poked the ball, changing its direction and sending it into the back of the net before the Rio Ave goalkeeper could react.

{And Oh! What a goal!}

{Signed yesterday! Scores today! What a player! Mylo Baumgartner stamps his name into the Porto home ground with a spectacular first goal for the club!}

Chapter 256: 2020/21 First Pre-Season Friendly II

{Just four minutes after opening up the game, they've gone ahead and gotten another!}

{This may just be a friendly game, but Porto aren't leaving a way out for their opponents here!} The commentator continued with his commentary as the Porto players celebrated their goal.

The Porto players soon began returning to their halves after their celebrations as the game was still just beginning, but there was a smile of ease on their faces as they walked as compared to the Rio Ave players.

On Mylo's face was an especially big smile as he had just gotten his debut goal for the club and his first professional goal in the senior levels of football.

Of course, it was merely a goal in a friendly game, but if he kept performing like this, then goals in more competitive matches weren't far off because the manager would have no reason to keep him on the bench if he kept performing well.

All those thoughts were swirling around in his mind as he waited for the Rio Ave team to kick off, but immediately the ball began moving, all his thoughts were halted and he immediately chased after the ball, fulfilling his duty as a pressing forward that was to lead the press.

The match once again resumed with the Rio Ave team being more careful on the ball than ever before.

They made careful passes among themselves to avoid losing the ball carelessly and sent the ball back as far as the goalkeeper if it meant they kept the ball.

Of course, even with their efforts, losing possession of the ball every now and then was bound to happen, but whenever they lost possession, the Rio Ave players' off-the-ball movement immediately covered every open space, effectively shutting out the Porto team's chances at starting a counterattack or an attack of any kind.

Thus the two teams were locked in a deadlock for a period of time when the only excitements in the game were the occasional attacks from both sides that often fell short or ended with weak or off-target shots.

Soon enough however, the Rio Ave team's confidence surged as they thought their efforts had been able to keep the Porto team silent so far and they became more open with the ball as they tried to launch attacks hoping to get a goal that could help them get on track to equalizing the game.

Unfortunately for them, the Porto team had merely been biding their time and waiting for such a reaction from them, and the moment they left open some space, the Porto team immediately burst through.

#42nd minute...

The Rio Ave team had just lost the ball after trying to break through the Porto defense and failing.

The Porto team had tried to launch a counterattack, but the Rio Ave players had quickly shuttled back and filled up the empty space, putting an end to their efforts, but the Porto team wasn't giving up the attack and Fabio Viera tried to break in from the right wing.

He tried to dribble past a Rio Ave player and he had almost gotten past the player when he was brought down by the no-nonsense Rio Ave defender.

The referee immediately blew for a foul as the Rio Ave player's tackle on Viera had been a bit harsh, but the referee didn't think it was worthy of a card and simply gave the player a warning to let him know that he may have let it slide once, but the next time, a card would come sliding out depending on the recklessness he displayed next.

The players of the two teams quickly arranged themselves inside the Rio Ave penalty box as the position of the free kick was too awkward for a direct shot and the ball would likely be crossed into the box.

Romario Baro stood over the free kick since Porto's Deadball talisman, Alex Telles, was now cruising the streets of Manchester after a successful transfer.

Raising his two hands to convey his intentions for the ball to his teammates, he waited for the referee's whistle.

Fweeeeeeeeeee

Romario Baro ran at the ball and swung his right foot, deftly sending the ball curling into Rio Ave's 18-yard box.

The ball flew unhindered in its flight as it curled outward into the penalty box from the right side.

The players of both teams shuffled against each other and about three players managed to escape from the others and rise to the air to meet the ball, but it was Mylo who got his head to the ball first and gave it a change of direction.

The ball bounced off Mylo's head and flew at the top left corner of the goal while the Rio Ave goalkeeper ran at the projected path of the ball and dived with all his power, trying to interfere with the ball's flight.

Unfortunately for the goalkeeper, his efforts fell short and the ball flew past his outstretched fingers, went past the goal line, and slammed into the back of the net.

{A Header from the Porto man...!!! A GOAL!!!}

{The goalkeeper just couldn't reach!}

{Porto have three and the young striker has two!}

{A brace on his senior team debut! I'm sure the manager can't believe his luck to find yet another uncarved gem!} The commentator erupted in the commentator's box, but his words spread across the country in every place where the match was being displayed.

In the food court where Jason was watching the match while seated comfortably after finishing his second round meal.

His glasses were on his face and his nose mask was once again on his lower face, decisively blurring out almost all distinctive features that would enable anyone to recognize him.

Perhaps because of this, the crowd of people who were seated nearby didn't know the irony Jason was feeling as he listened in on their conversation.

"Can you believe those guys' luck?" A man who looked to be in his late twenties asked his two friends who were seated with him at the table next to Jason.

"Just earlier this year, they signed that Jason guy for free from God knows where and see how that kid absolutely destroys his opponents on the pitch," He continued but was soon interrupted by his friends.

"I know right, once that guy gets on a roll it's almost impossible to stop him," one of his friends cut in.

"Bruh, the number of defenders he's utterly destroyed just kept piling up. I thought I was watching a freestyler at some point," the other guy chimed in.

"Exactly! I'm telling you, bro, they need to fire our scouting staff for real, cuz what were they looking at to allow Porto of all people get that guy on their team!" The first guy took control of the conversation once again, but his agony could be heard clearly in his voice.

"I don't think it was their fault though," the second guy said while laughing at his friend's overly dramatic act.

"Yeah bro, these things happen in football," the third guy said while also laughing.

They were used to their friend being overly dramatic, especially when it came to football, but that did not make it any less funny to see when he acted dramatically.

"These things happen?" the first guy asked, repeating the third guy's earlier statement.

"Yeah man, it happens all the time, I mean we had Joao Felix just like two seasons ago while Sporting had that Rafael Leao guy, so I think they deserve one young talent, you know?" the third guy expressed his opinion, but the first guy wasn't having it.

"One young talent? Are you fu*k*ing kidding me right now?" the first guy asked like he couldn't believe his ears.

"Ignoring that freak of nature called Jason, they have that Fabio Viera guy, then also have that Luis Diaz guy... even though they bought him, and now this guy!?" the guy continued talking while gesturing dramatically at the screen that was showing Mylo's goal.

"This guy just scored a freaking brace in the first half of his senior team debut... and you're telling me they only have one young talent?"

“... Tell me... have you been kicked in the head by a donkey!?” he asked the third guy after all his arguments.

“...” The third guy just looked at him dumbfounded.

“I mean, he does have a point, that Luis Diaz guy was already tearing things up in the first half of last season before that Jason guy came out of nowhere and joined hands with Fabio Viera to absolutely shred the defenses of everyone they played against... and now, there’s this guy...” the second guy gave a simplified version of the first guy’s argument and sighed.

“Righttttt!” the first guy echoed his support for the second guy’s words and he was not the only one.

Other people in the food court who were fans of the Benfica team soon joined in on the conversation and openly displayed their grievances with Porto’s sudden burst of luck in the youth development area.

“By the time the season starts and all those guys come together into one team, especially after that Jason guy is recovered, we might be in trouble comrades,” one of the people who had joined the conversation said.

“One would have thought that after losing so many of their first team players, they would fall into a slump, especially in the attacking department, but who knew that another young dragon would pop up?” a girl who looked to be in her early twenties who had joined the discussion asked Jason who was seated nearby.

In reality, though the girl was also a Benfica fan, her motives for approaching Jason weren’t just because of sports banter.

Even with dark glasses and a nose mask covering most of his features, the little bit that was still exposed was enough to let people know with certainty that handsome features were under the mask, they just would overlook the extent of his handsomeness.

The thirsty youthful girl’s eyes had fallen on Jason’s impressive visage and she quickly wanted to use this opportunity to kick up a rapport with Jason, but how was Jason to know this?

Jason who had been hearing the Benfica fans agonizing over Porto's luck was already feeling scared of this lot and did not want to risk his identity being exposed.

Who knew what these Benfica fans would do to him if they knew that a major subject of their conversation was nearby?

With this thought in mind, Jason replied to the girl's question in very fluent English, reverting from the Portuguese that he usually used when talking to people,

"I don't really know about football you know, I'm more into racing and martial arts... I also play cards and stuff," He said in an unwavering voice.

Chapter 257: Not Friendly

While Jason was caught up in his explanation, the friendly match between Porto and Rio Ave continued at the CTFD Portogaia with Porto already having a 3 – 0 lead in the first half.

With Rio Ave kicking off, they once again began exchanging the ball while trying to get at least one goal back, but their efforts were devoid of the desperation that one would normally see from footballers in a losing match.

It was only natural for such a lack of desperation since the match was just a friendly match with the aim being to get the players back to match fitness, and there wasn't really a huge requirement to win, especially against an opponent like Porto that they would find usually difficult to defeat.

Soon, time ran out in the first half with neither of the two teams being able to disturb the scoreboard operator any further, and the players headed to the tunnel after the referee blew the halftime whistle.

In the Porto team locker room, the moods of the players after such a positive first half for their team was very good and they had smiles on their faces as they listened to the manager's instructions for them in the coming second half.

Even Sergio Conceicao's instructions catered to the current situation as he wanted the players to go further and get even more goals after already scoring three in the first half.

He wasn't planning on leaving a way out for the opponent as he wished to use the pre-season to make a statement to everyone that despite the team losing quite a few of their important players, they weren't adversely affected and still had it in them to become champions in the coming season just as they had done in the previous season.

Rio Ave was just unfortunate to be among the sacrifices for his plan in the pre-season.

The Rio Ave manager did not know Sergio Conceicao's intentions for his team, but he could guess that Porto would not sit back in the second half against an opponent that they had already gotten three past in the first half.

Thus he tailored his instructions for his players to go on the defensive and do their best to prevent the Porto team from racking up their tally against his team.

He didn't want the embarrassment of losing with a higher goal difference between the two teams than the goal difference they already had.

Soon enough, the fifteen minutes given to the players for a half-time break were over and the players were back on the training grounds of the Porto team, CTFD Portogaia, for the second half.

Fweeeeeeee

The referee blew his whistle and the second half began immediately after the blast of the whistle.

Following the instructions of their manager, the Rio Ave team tried to get into a tight defensive formation even though they were in possession of the ball, but the Porto team struck fast before they could react, sweeping past them in a sudden burst of attack.

The Porto players quickly surged into the Rio Ave half of the field and snatched the ball from the Rio Ave players and the ball began moving forward along with the surge of the Porto players.

The ball moved from Mylo to Marega who made a quick back pass to Romario Baro.

Baro quickly sent the ball to Joa Mario who was on his left with a one-touch pass and Joa Mario didn't hesitate to send the ball into the path of Luis Diaz who was running towards Ri Ave's penalty box from the left wing.

Not bothering to trap the ball, Luis Diaz quickly sent a curling cross into the penalty box.

The ball rose above everyone and flew into the middle of Rio Ave's 18-yard box.

Moussa Marega immediately rose to the ball, hoping to catch it off his head and send it past the goalkeeper, but the goalkeeper who had been watching the situation with utmost concentration right from the moment that his teammates lost the ball, quickly reacted.

Running out of his goal line and jumping past Marega to punch the ball out of the box, he hoped to clear the ball, and luckily, he managed to get to the ball first and send it out of the box, the problem of making this decision came right after that.

The ball flew out of the right side of the penalty box and landed close to Fabio Viera who immediately trapped the ball and looked to his left.

Seeing Mattheus Uribe making an inside run after standing by for a while, Viera waited for a bit while holding off his marker before rolling the ball into Uribe's path.

Mattheus Uribe didn't need an invitation and immediately launched his right foot with the fury of a rocket launcher and slammed the ball at the Rio Ave team's goal.

He had intended the shot to be a carpet shot when he had run up to the ball, but with the powerful but slightly clumsy attempt at the shot, the ball involuntarily took off from the ground in a manner similar to the taking off of an airplane and thundered past everyone before slamming into the top right corner of the Rio Ave goal despite the goalkeeper's attempt at keeping the ball out.

{What a shot! What a goal!}

{Barely a minute after the second half whistle and Porto have once again made themselves a nightmare to their opponents!}

{This is punishing!}

{The heading of this game says “Pre-season friendly”, but while this may be pre-season... it is anything but friendly!}

{Porto are at it again, they don't know when to stop and they may be doing some psychological damage to their opponents now!} The commentator who had thought it would be a while before he would have to perform this much intense commentary was taken by surprise and his tongue just wouldn't stop working.

In the food court that Jason was, not leaving as he intended to finish watching the game there, the atmosphere that had just barely quieted down after the banter between the fans cooled off a bit, once again took a strange turn.

“Sh*t,” the guy that started the earlier argument didn't have any words other than this singular word escape his lips.

Chapter 258: Consequences of Loss

Normally, the Benfica fans had nothing to fear from the Porto team, but the truth of the matter remained that they had lost the title of champions of the Liga NOS to the Porto team the previous season, and even worse, they had been unable to defeat them in any of the three times that they had met in the previous season both in the season campaign matches and during a domestic cup campaign.

Yet even with that, the Benfica fans were a fiery bunch who didn't think they would keep losing to the Porto team just because that was the current sequence, but optimism and realism were two different things.

The Benfica fans had optimism that their team could turn the tides in the coming season, and when they heard about the Porto team losing quite a few of their important first-team players, their optimism slowly started turning to confidence, but reality had thrown a harsh slap in their face.

The Porto team that had lost their important players was currently decimating another team with less than their full power on display.

Moreso since this was their first pre-season game of the season which meant that the players who had just come back from their holidays were performing at this level.

With the knowledge that the Porto team had yet to return to full fitness, were using a much weaker line-up due to fitness and injury concerns, and yet were still smashing through their opponents, the Benfica fans' confidence wavered and their optimism cooled off.

This was exactly what Sergio Conceicao had hoped for when he had continuously given attacking-based instructions to his players and wanted them to utterly decimate their opponents.

He wanted a situation reminiscent of what was going on between Manchester United and Manchester City to repeat itself.

In the last few years, Manchester City had established itself as the top team in the English football world, a position that once belonged to the Manchester United team... or the noisy neighbors as some would call them.

Some Manchester United fans, as well as a few others still tried to believe that according to their past glory, Manchester United could somehow stand up to the Manchester City team.

In reality, the difference between the two teams wasn't much different in literally every section, except for their achievements.

The two teams had players of similar pedigree, they both had a lot of finances to spare, and they both had a huge following, but while the Manchester United side had history, the Manchester City side had recent achievements, and this had turned into a momentum that nobody could ignore.

It was especially helpful for messing with the psychology of the opponents and Sergio Conceicao currently needed this effect.

He wasn't an idiot and he knew that there was no way Porto could match up to Manchester City in anything but history, especially with his team in a dire situation.

The team had lost quite a few of their important players and though the team had gotten some extra funds from the sale of those players to reinvest into the team, he also knew that the funds were nowhere near enough to cater to all the needs of the team.

With the funds he had available, where was he supposed to find a player as good as Alex Telles in attacking from behind, being an excellent playmaker, and also being a dead-ball specialist?

Alex Telles was probably in the top five best-performing left-backs in the 2019/20 season worldwide, which meant there was a hole that big in their ranks after he left and Sergio Conceicao was supposed to manage that somehow while also catering to the loss of three of his team's strikers.

He might not show it, but it was currently a dire situation, and he was already making efforts to close up the hole... Yet he feared that his efforts may not be enough.

He had brought in a young left back with potential in the person of Zaidu Sanusi, but honestly speaking he didn't think that guy could match up to Alex Telles in any aspect so far.

That was how much the loss of Telles had cost him, but unfortunately, he couldn't ignore the team's desperate need for a forward and focus on bringing a player as good as Alex Telles into the back line.

Even if he could, how was he going to do it?

With which funds?

Players as good as Alex Telles would probably command a transfer fee of at least 60 million Euros depending on their age and there was no way the Porto executive board would cough up that much money for a singular player, especially with the current financial situation.

Thus he was stuck patching all sorts of holes in all of his previous tactics due to the loss of many pivotal players.

Telles's playmaking skill was gone from his game plan options, Tiquinho Soares's ball-holding and evading skills up front were gone, Vincent Aboubakar's crazy physicality was gone, Ze Luis's clutch moments were gone and now he had to adjust his tactics accordingly.

The problem he had wasn't changing the tactics, the problem was how long it would take his players to adjust to such changes.

The changes he would be making to the tactics would need an adjustment period from the players and during the adjustment period, the team could end up losing important games that could make or break their season campaign.

It would be even worse if such a thing happened on the continental stage.

He was already doing all he could to make the necessary adjustments during the pre-season period so that the players could adjust in time for the beginning of the season, but even now, the team was incomplete.

He hadn't finished player negotiations and some players were still going to join the team after pre-season was over.

There were also injured players like Jesus Corona, Shoya Nakajima, and Jason, who would be joining the team much later due to their injuries.

All these factors aside, Sergio Conceicao could only hope that things worked out for the team in the end otherwise the upcoming season may end up spiraling out of their control.

Chapter 259: 2020/21 First Pre-Season Friendly III

The friendly match at the CTFD Portugaia continued after the Porto payers were done with their celebrations and were back in their half of the field.

The Rio Ave team that had come into this half with hopes of defending and potentially getting a goal or two back had been unstabilized even further by Porto's goal and were already having problems keeping

the flow of the ball constant, but after a while, it seemed they had settled for a defensive game and chose to stay back and let the Porto team have the ball while they defended.

The Porto players didn't need an invitation and quickly took control of the game and began applying pressure to the Rio Ave team.

They pushed the Rio Ave team further back until they were exchanging the ball only in the Rio Ave team half while the Rio Ave team chased after the ball.

Despite spending most of their time chasing after the ball, the Rio Ave team still managed to keep the Porto team at bay for a while, but the Porto team stayed patient, knowing it was only a matter of time.

In the 54th minute of the game, Otavio came on for Joao Mario, and the game continued once he was on the pitch.

Coming onto the pitch, Otavio immediately began using his fresh legs to oppress the Rio Ave defenders and it was quite clear that his marker couldn't keep him in check, but Otavio kept going at the Rio Ave defenders until he finally found space in the 59th minute.

Otavio had just received the ball from Viera on the right wing and with a drop of his shoulder to the left, he deceived his marker into thinking he was going left, but with a feint, he escaped the guy and charged towards the ball and sent a pass to Mylo, not stopping his run as he evaded a Rio Ave player.

Mylo didn't bother taking an extra touch and simply sent a through pass behind the Rio Ave defense and into Otavio's path.

Receiving the ball behind the Rio Ave defense and just barely managing to stay onside, Otavio smoothly curled the ball behind the Rio Ave goalkeeper without delay.

{GOAL!!!}

{He's only been on the pitch for five minutes but he's already gotten one past the goalkeeper!}

{Absolutely fabulous team play and exchange of the ball between the Porto team and they were rewarded with a goal for their efforts!}

{They have five now, and one cannot help but think that there is still more to come} The commentator's excited commentary showed itself once again in the match and at this point, almost everyone watching the game was already numb to the Porto team's continuous racking up of a goal difference.

Even then Rio Ave fans were no longer bothered by the loss and were now scared for the coming season instead as losing with such a huge difference in the pre-season did not bode well for their upcoming seasonal campaign.

The players on the pitch were unaffected by any external factors thanks to the empty stands, and soon the match continued.

Just like before, the Porto team continued on their all-out attack against the Rio Ave team with most of the defenders forsaking their defense positions and moving forward to join the attack.

Yet despite this blatant disregard for their defense, their attacking pressure left the Rio Ave team unable to make use of the open opportunity.

However, despite their little success in attack, the Rio Ave team were finally having some success in defending and they somehow managed to hold the Porto team away from adding to their tally until the 80th minute.

Due to the shortage in the striker position, Sergio Conceicao had been trying various efforts to make sure that the lack of presence in the striking position didn't affect the team and one of the experiments he wished to try out was a position conversion of one of his available players and the player he had chosen for the job was Sergio Oliveira.

Sergio Oliveira was a central midfielder who was a major part of the team, but due to the congestion of players in the midfield position, he hadn't been able to get much game time.

Even in the upcoming season, Sergio Conceicao wasn't sure he could guarantee him much game time in the central midfield, and that was one of the factors that had made him choose Sergio Oliveira for his conversion project.

He planned to play Sergio Oliveira in the center forward position and hoped that Oliveira could somehow manage playing in that position and it would be even better if he performed well upfront.

Of course, he had made this decision knowing that Sergio Oliveira had an eye for goal and now he hoped that talent could help the team upfront in the upcoming season.

Thus Sergio Oliveira had been substituted for Mylo at the 65th minute but so far, he had been quiet.

Apart from a few touches on the ball to keep the passes flowing like he normally did in the midfield, he also joined the team in pressing from the front, helping the team to shut down the Rio Ave team before they could even make it to the defense line, but in his attacking endeavors for the team, he hadn't been able to get anything going.

However, that was about to change.

The Porto team had been on the attack as they passed the ball around the Rio Ave's players just outside the Rio Ave 18-yard box.

Suddenly Otavio tried to break through the Rio Ave defense line by dribbling past his marker, but this time, no matter how many tricky movements Otavio made, the guy just wouldn't be shaken off and Otavio ended up turning and sending the ball back to Pepe.

Pepe received the ball and waited for a Rio Ave player to come at him before sending the ball down left to Zaidu Sanusi.

Zaidu quickly moved the ball down the left side of the field and passed the ball to Toni Martinez in his path while continuing his run on the outside.

Chapter 260: 2020/21 First Pre-Season Friendly IV

Toni Martinez who had been subbed on for Luis Diaz quickly trapped the ball and made as if to cut inside, but a Rio Ave player was in his path but that didn't deter him at all as that was part of the plan.

Buying enough time for Zaidu to run past him towards the left by making all sorts of movements to slow down the game, Toni Martinez finally sent a pass down left into the path of Zaidu Sanusi.

Not taking a touch to control the ball's pace, Zaidu sent a curling cross inside the penalty box with his left foot.

As the ball flew into the penalty box, a Rio Ave defender in the middle of the penalty box jumped into the path of the ball aiming to clear the ball as soon as it reached him, but he didn't get the chance to do so as Sergio Oliveira somehow appeared like a shadow in his path and got his head into the path of the ball first with a diving header.

Needless to say, the goalkeeper was no match for the header and the net was sent bulging for the third time in the second half, signaling Porto's sixth goal of the game.

{Diving header! Goal!!!}

{Again they get past the Rio Ave's goalkeeper! Porto just wouldn't stop!}

{They have their sixth!}

{When the manager subbed on the goalscorer, we were all wondering what the manager was doing bringing on a player who normally functioned in the midfield, but now, we wonder no longer!}

{He's proven himself upfront with an absolute peach of a goal!} The commentator's excitement was once again revived by the Porto team and he did not hesitate to share his excitement with all the viewers and listeners of the game.

The Porto fans who had been keeping their eye on the game were ecstatic at their teams racking up the score and levels of excitement that only welled up in them during league games began to show up on their faces as they watched their team dominate and decimate the Rio Ave side.

Anticipation for the new season immediately filled their minds as they began to have confidence in winning the Liga NOS title back-to-back three times.

Back at the CTFD Portugaia, the Porto players didn't know what the fans were beginning to conclude in their minds, but they personally felt excitement and were already anticipating the new season.

But that didn't mean the match was over so they quickly went back to their half of the field, planning to push on with this burst of energy till the finish line.

The match soon resumed and the ball soon started flying around the field once again, letting the viewers and the Rio Ave team know that Porto weren't done yet with racking up their tally.

As for whether they would be able to trouble the scoreboard operator even further, that remained unknown, but it was clear that the Porto team was already working on making that thought a reality.

#86th minute...

The Porto team had been looking to get another goal, but perhaps because it was the dying minutes of the game, the Rio Ave team had suddenly been bursting out with attacking attempts that had managed to push the Porto team out of their half and the game alternated between Porto defending while Rio Ave attacked and vice versa.

Rio Ave were currently in possession of the ball and were passing the ball around cleverly while evading the Porto players, but as they passed the ball, one of the Rio Ave midfielders who was with the ball tried to make a pass to his team's right winger, but Wilson Manafa suddenly burst off his line and interrupted the pass.

Intercepting the pass with a burst of movement, he pushed the ball forward and burst out on a counterattack, running towards the Rio Ave half of the field.

He didn't keep the ball for long however and soon sent the ball forward to Otavio who quickly took control of the ball and continued the counterattack.

The players of the Rio Ave team were already running after the Porto player who had burst forward with the ball, but they hadn't been able to catch up and Otavio was nearing the final third.

As he neared the final third, he saw Sergio Oliveira running ahead of him and he didn't hesitate to send the ball into Oliveira's path.

Oliveira received the ball while adjusting his body position to shield the ball away from his marker as he brought the ball under control.

Holding his marker off, he charged into the box and unleashed the ball with righteous fury, sending the goalkeeper sprawling and unable to reach as the ball slammed into the bottom left corner of the goal.

{What a beautiful display of counter-attacking football!}

{Pace, off-the-ball movement, precise passing, and perfect finishing, they had it all and got a goal!}

{Their seventh goal of the game!}

{A full stop after spelling the words RIO AVE!}

{The Rio Ave manager is covering his eyes in agony, and we can relate!}

{He has a lot to do to prepare his team for the upcoming season after this relegation-worthy performance from his players!} The commentator's words didn't pull any punches and cut in deep into the Rio Ave players, their manager, and the team's supporters.

While this was happening at the stadium, Jason stood up from his seat at the food court, after checking his time and seeing that he was already running late if he planned to meet Sofia after her lectures.

The things he wanted to buy would have to wait as he had spent his time watching his teammates, but after seeing the seventh goal, he estimated that there weren't likely to be any more goals coming from the Porto team.

Quickly walking out of the food court while making sure to avoid the crowd of Benfica fans who were discussing earlier, he quickly drove to the University of Lisbon's facility of Medicine.

Luckily, he managed to get there on time to pick up Sofia who was just leaving classes.

Waving goodbye to a group of her friends, Sofia got into the car and unlike the previous day when she had clammed up while they were together, she began pouring out her grievances about the day to Jason.

Jason listened as he drove to where he had planned for them to have dinner, smoothly controlling the steering wheel with one hand.

"Can you imagine that this guy still gave us a term paper and an assignment after giving us a quiz, and it's just a mathematics class, what do I need mathematics of this level for as a nurse," Sofia spoke animatedly.

Suddenly remembering something he had seen in his research overnight, Jason suddenly interrupted her,

"See, this is why I hate maths, they're always talking about x and y when they should be talking about u and i ."