

LEGENDS 361

Chapter 361: A Pirate of Fortune III

“Simple, isn’t it?”

Jason’s words rang in the ears of the people from Skin Serenity and they stared at Jason in awe. When they had come here to convince him to sign an endorsement for their company, they had thought of him as nothing more than a young inexperienced footballer who would probably let his agent do most of the talking, but what they had experienced so far differed from what they had been expecting.

Right from the start, Jason had taken the lead position in this conversation and he had kept their attention on him from the start and now he was making an offer to their boss that could potentially change their fates and he was doing all that with a smile on his face as if he was taking a walk in his backyard.

‘I thought he was a footballer?’ Maya Singh’s secretary looked at Jason with surprise written all over her face.

Among the Skin Serenity group, only Maya Singh was thinking about the offer Jason had made.

It wasn’t impossible for her to give up 50% of the company’s stake since she alone held 95% of the company’s stake.

Due to the investors pulling out one by one after the new product incident, She had to buy back her company’s shares to prevent the shares from falling into the hands of her competitors, hence she had that many company shares, but that had cost her all the money she had managed to save up during the company’s booming period.

Selling 50% of Skin Serenity to Jason for \$35 million would do a lot to help the company stop its gradual collapse and would do much more to help them get back on their feet, but some things still didn’t add up and the first one of those things was,

“Why are you doing this?”

“What do you stand to gain from investing that much money?”

“Also, do you even have \$35 million?”

“Even if you did have \$35 million, is it legit money or are you trying to use my company to launder money?” As soon as the first question came out of her mouth, other questions followed and she would have continued to throw out questions if she didn’t catch herself.

“... First, I feel like it, second, I stand to gain more money from investing in your company, third, yes I do have \$35 million, and fourth, with an imagination like that, you should be writing fantasy books instead of mixing chemicals and running a company,” Jason answered all her questions at a stretch, maintaining a poker face as he did so.

“Back to my question, Dr. Singh,”

“As beautiful as your face is, I do not have all day to spend looking at it, so are you in or not?” He asked again.

He was amused by her questions, but that did not mean he wanted to spend time explaining to her why he wanted to invest in Skin Serenity since the answer was very simple...

He wanted returns on his money.

Due to making quite a few investments before and during the COVID-19 lockdown period, he had made quite a bit of money and even he was extremely surprised when he heard that his investments had grown from the original few million he had invested, to almost \$40 million in worth.

Originally, he had been planning to find a few start-up businesses to invest in and hopefully watch his money grow, but then he had encountered an already set up business like Skin Serenity with the potential to grow as long as he was willing to put in money and some effort.

It was a risky venture, but why not?

If things went well, then he could become the next Mathieu Flamini, and if things didn't go so well, he would only lose some money which could be easily recovered back, so once again... Why not?

This was Jason's mindset for the Skin Serenity investment, he wanted to do it so he would no longer ever have money problems, but at the same time he wasn't so hung up on it and if he was rejected, he would walk out of here with the same sagacious contentment he walked in with.

Maya Singh took up the document pad and began to read through the offer, leaving the room in silence while everyone else stared at her and waited for her decision.

After about five minutes, she put the pad down and her gaze rose to meet Jason's and she waited for a few seconds before opening her mouth,

"... If it's something that can help the company, then I'm all for it, but we need to discuss some of the terms in here,"

"Sounds like progress," Jason muttered and sat back down on his seat, gesturing for Maya Singh to go on.

Maya didn't hesitate to start talking and negotiations began.

Many of the words flying out of Maya's mouth didn't make any sense to Jason, but with Adele there, negotiations went smoothly and they agreed on a reasonable deal for both sides.

The money Jason would use to buy 50 percent of the shares had reduced to 30 million while the remaining \$5 million would still go to the company in the form of investment, but due to it being an investment, it would guarantee Jason an increased percentage in profit.

In exchange for this, Maya Singh would get to keep her place as CEO for at least the next five years, and only if she didn't meet a set requirement would Jason be able to push her out of the CEO position.

It was a clause meant to safeguard Maya Singh's position as CEO now that Jason has become the highest shareholder of the company and could make arbitrary decisions in the company without consequence.

Maya didn't trust Jason to not suddenly kick her out of the CEO position.

Normally, it wouldn't mean much, but it would cause her to lose almost all her power in the decision-making of the company since she no longer had a high position, nor was she the highest shareholder.

Technically even though she would still be the second highest shareholder, all her decisions could then be vetoed by Jason if he felt like it and she didn't want that, but little did she know that Jason didn't plan to let her leave the position and would have chained her to the chair if need be.

He didn't have time to run a company now and he doubted he ever would... Not even after he had retired from football.

Chapter 362: A Pirate of Fortune IV

After completing negotiations about the shareholders' part, they moved to talking about future plans for the company.

It was here that Jason began to lay out his plans.

He knew that the Skin Serenity brand needed a washover to recover their damaged reputation but he also knew that that was easier said than done.

Even with his help, the company didn't have the financial capability to pull off an endorsement deal with people capable of whitewashing the company's reputation, and Jason also knew that his fame and position in people's hearts was not yet at such a level, so he opted for a completely different approach.

No matter how painful it may seem if you can't save a dying dog, then it is better to put it to sleep much earlier to avoid wasting time, energy, resources, and mental strength.

That was exactly what Jason wanted Skin Serenity to do.

To survive, they had to die first.

It sounded a bit morbid, but it would be much more easier that way.

It wasn't a shutdown of the company, but rather a complete rebranding and a change of name.

Most of the general public didn't care about the history of a brand, and they wouldn't make a big splash about it either.

That didn't mean people wouldn't find out, but the spread of knowledge would be reduced vastly and they could use that time to launch one or two new products.

Jason would be the flagship of the new brand and would be spearheading the publicity... And by spearheading, it meant they would be using his face and name to push the brand to people.

They would also hire a few others to push the brand.

In the best case scenario, they could make a big splash on the market and start raking in profit on the daily.

... As for the other scenarios, Jason didn't want to think of it yet.

Anyhow, he made known his plans to Maya Singh and after thinking it through for a few minutes, she agreed with the plan.

To her, it wasn't a bad idea and was not too far off from her original intention.

Also, it would save a lot of time and effort, if they went down this route.

There was a slight unwillingness to let go of the brand name she had started with, but Maya immediately killed that lingering feeling as it was of no help to her.

That was merely her sentiment trying to take over, but as a businesswoman, she knew that she could not afford to be sentimental, especially in decision-making.

After they discussed the plan in a lot more detail, they finally left the conference room and visited the restaurant in the building to celebrate the agreement.

It was a celebratory gathering of sorts and there was a light-hearted mood at the table.

Everyone was happy with the negotiations that had been concluded.

Even the intense aura of professionalism around Maya Singh had diminished a lot and she was now casually talking with Jason and Adele.

After about an hour, the group finally went their separate ways with Maya Singh's party heading to the airport while Jason and Adele went their separate ways as well.

It was time for Jason to focus on resting and relaxing for the coming games and that was exactly what he did.

21 November 2020

{Here we are at the 3rd round of the Taca de Portugal between Fabrill and Oporto}

{The international break is over and the players are back in fine form after some pleasant and not-so-pleasant outings for their countries}

{Someone with a very pleasant outing with his national team would be Jason Bolu who had his international debut during the international break and wow, what a way to start for his home country}

{Coming off in the very first game and having a hell of a debut as he helped his team to make a comeback from two goals down... While also managing to score one of the most beautiful goals you'll ever see}

{He continued his heroics in the second game against the same opponents, managing to add another goal and assist to his tally, making it two goals and three assists for his national team in just two games!}

{The Oporto manager seems to have some reservations about playing him immediately though and he is starting this match on the bench} The commentator gave an opening address as the Fabrill and Oporto players marched onto the field.

Just as he had said, Jason wasn't in the starting line-up and he would be watching the match from the bench until the manager decided to call on him.

Normally the manager would give priority to the younger players during domestic cup games, but Jason was someone who had already broken into the first team so the manager was very willing to bench Jason and allow other young players to get some game time in the domestic cup games while they could.

The match soon kicked off and without suspense, Oporto soon took the reins of the game, passing the ball around with confidence and creating chances to take the lead at any opportunity they could.

Shots were sent flying, but the opponents weren't unprofessional and did their best to remain in the game while also causing the occasional trouble for the Porto side, but soon, Porto poured a dampener on their enthusiasm.

#38 minute...

The first half was drawing to an end yet Oporto wasn't willing to let the half pass by without getting one past the goalkeeper and soon a forward pass was sent behind the opponent's backline and Mylo pushed

past his marker to catch up to the ball with impressive pace, taking the ball to front of goal and curling it around the keeper to send his team in the lead.

{Goal!!!}

{Porto!!!}

{What a way to resume after the break!}

{The goalkeeper had no chance!} The commentator shouted as Mylo celebrated with his teammates.

Celebrations soon ended and the match resumed.

Oporto immediately began pushing off their momentum and tried to get another goal before halftime, but they were unable to further their lead before the referee's whistle blew loudly for halftime.

Chapter 363: The Race for Trophies I

The second half began not long after and both teams immediately picked off from where they stopped before the whistle.

Oporto immediately tried to build off the momentum of their first goal and further extend their lead, but Fabrill weren't letting up defensively and were doing even more on the attack than they did in the first half of the game.

The game remained deadlocked until the 76th minute when Jason who had been brought on as a substitute in the 56th minute took off on a run down the left wing, cutting in as he neared the penalty box.

He quickly made it past the player who showed up in his path and drove home the ball, sending the ball flying past the goalkeeper who couldn't reach the ball despite making a dive.

{Goal!!!}

{It's him again for the umpteenth time this season!}

{A quick double step-over and a dart to the right were all he needed to open up some space for him to get a shot away and boy did he hit it!}

{Oporto have two over their opponents and they look like they've got this one in the bag!} The commentator did not hesitate to do his job and immediately sang praises of the goalscorer and his team.

After about half a minute of celebrations, the Oporto players headed back to their half of the field to await kickoff.

Soon the match kicked off, but despite the efforts of the two teams in the following minutes, the scoreboard remained unchanged until the final whistle, sealing Oporto's win in the third round of the Taca de Portugal.

The Oporto players left the stadium with happy smiles on their faces while their opponents were left to rue their lost chance at advancing.

25th November 2020

9:00 pm

It was a night in Marseille, France, but the lights at the Stadio Velodrome shone brightly down on two sets of eleven players standing on the green field.

A referee stood on the field as well, and at that exact moment, he blew hard on his whistle, signaling a kickoff to the fourth group stage match between Marseille and Oporto.

After their loss to the Oporto team at the Dragon Stadium, the Marseille team was hosting Oporto at Velodrome at their home stadium this evening and were looking to change their fortunes after a terrible outing against Oporto in their previous match.

Immediately the referee's whistle went off, the Marseille team immediately kicked off the game and without hesitation launched an attack on their opponents.

Oporto immediately reacted in kind and rushed at the Marseille team with gusto, matching up to them in enthusiasm and effort, managing to kill the Marseille team's momentum before it could grow.

After managing to dock their opponent's moment, Oporto settled for a stable game and did not outdo themselves on the attack, but the Marseille players did not agree with such a cautious playing style and launched attack after attack at the Oporto team.

It soon became clear to the Oporto team that they could not afford to stay quiet in the face of such a vicious chain of attacks from their opponents, so they immediately increased their efforts and responded with enthusiasm.

Soon the game was opened up in the 39th minute with a rebound effort from Zaidiu Sanusi who slammed the ball into the back of the net after a header from a corner had been initially saved by the opposition goalkeeper.

After putting one past their opponents, Oporto immediately increased their efforts and tried to build off their momentum, but the first half whistle sounded not long after with them not managing to trouble the scoreboard operator after the first half.

Fifteen minutes of rest later, the players were back on the pitch and they immediately picked up the game from where they had stopped.

Marseille immediately began trying to score an equalizer and they sent shots flying at the Oporto team causing them a lot of trouble and causing them to be unable to focus more on the attacking side of their game.

#72nd minute...

Jason received a pass from Uribe as he ran into Marseille's penalty box, and came face to face with a Marseille defender who he immediately tried to dribble past, but the defender wasn't having it and he made a tackle on Jason.

Whether it was intentional or a miscalculated effort remained unknown, but the player swept Jason's legs from under him and sent him flying instead of sweeping away the ball.

Fweeeeee

The referee immediately came running over, calling for a penalty and bringing out a yellow card that he showed to the Marseille defender.

It was the player's second yellow card of the game and a red card immediately followed and he was sent off the field.

Sergio Oliveira stepped up to take the penalty and without disappointment, he rifled the shot into the top right corner, giving Porto a two-goal lead.

The Oporto players celebrated their second goal without remorse while the Marseille players looked on at them with wry smiles as they were already poised to lose their second meeting with this opponent.

#85th minute...

The clock was quickly running down and it was looking very likely for the game to end in Oporto's win, but the Oporto side weren't done yet and wanted to further their lead.

They passed the ball around boldly, having taken the reins of the game after their second goal and they looked like they would soon get another.

Soon Oliveira sent a sweeping pass down the right wing and Jason gave chase, outpacing his marker and reaching the ball first before cutting into the penalty box and sending a low cross into Mylo's path.

{Mylo in the middle!?!} The commentator shouted with excitement and anticipation as Mylo appeared in the path of the ball.

Mylo didn't disappoint expectations and slammed the ball past the goalkeeper with righteous fury before running down the sidelines in celebration.

{Goal!!!}

{The youth department at Oporto can be assured of a year bonus with the way the youth players are performing match after match}

{What a pass, what a goal!}

{They have three and what a time to get it!}

{This match is very much sealed now!} The commentator's excited commentary was the cherry on the cake for the Oporto fans who were celebrating ecstatically in front of their screens at qualifying for the Champions League.

Chapter 364: The Race for Trophies II

****28th November 2020****

The Oporto team journeyed to Ponta Delgada for a match against Santa Clara in what would be their eighth match of the Liga NOS 2020/21 campaign.

Currently, the Oporto team was not in a very good position on the league table, especially considering that they were the defending champions of the title, but it was still too early in the season to make any conjectures about the league title.

That being said, Oporto came to the Estadio de Sao Miguel at Ponta Delgada with the intention to win and begin their ascent back to the top of the table, but the win wouldn't just be handed to them as their opponents also had their position on the league standings to play for.

Time passed and the match soon began.

The two teams were out on the field in their match kits, kicking the ball around with their intentions clear in every one of their movements, but the match maintained a high tension without anyone being able to trouble the scoreboard operator.

As the end of the first half approached, an assistant referee held up the board, informing the players that there would be two minutes of added time.

The Santa Clara players passed the ball around their defensive line, wanting to end the first half with an even scoreline, but the Oporto players weren't keen on doing that and rushed forward on a heavy press and finally, they managed to win the ball in the final third.

Otavio sent the ball down the flanks to Jason and Jason didn't hesitate to send the ball into the center at Marega who flew at the ball with his head.

The ball bounced off his head, but the keeper was equal to it and lunged at the ball, punching the ball just enough to deflect it from the face of the goal, but he hadn't done enough and the ball bounced off the bar and back into play arriving at the foot of Luis Diaz.

Without the slightest bit of hesitation, Diaz drove the ball home and sent the net flying, putting his team in the lead.

{They've done it!}

{Just before halftime, they take the lead!} The commentator shouted as the Oporto team celebrated their goal.

After a quick celebration, the match resumed, but not long after, the halftime whistle went off loudly and the players walked off the field for the break.

Fifteen minutes later, the players were back on the field to continue the match.

The second half kicked off and once again, twenty-two players, one ball, and one referee constantly moved around on the field, each having different intentions.

Despite it not being their home ground, Oporto played like they owned the place and they turned up the heat on their opponents, but time and time again, they were repelled.

#68th minute...

Jason unleashed a daring run from midfield, weaving his way between two Santa Clara players on the right flank before cutting in and taking a thunderous shot at goal.

{He shoots!!!}

{Saved!}

{A potential goal-of-the-season contender! If only!} The commentator shouted excitedly, giving Jason accolades for his efforts, but his words didn't make Jason feel any better about missing such a chance.

For the rest of the match, Oporto was firmly in control and though Santa Clara rebelled a few times, they weren't able to do enough and the match ended with a score of Santa Clara 0 : 1 Oporto.

Despite Oporto only winning with a narrow one-goal lead, they still got all their three points and climbed to the fifth position on the league table.

The Oporto players left the field with a reward for their collective efforts, but personally, quite a few of the players were unsatisfied with the score count of the game, Jason included.

With the efforts they had put in, the game scoreline should have been outrageous, but somehow the defensive efforts of their opponents kept the number of goals conceded to just one.

Unfortunately, the match was already over and they could only rue their missed chances at goal and hope to do more in the coming match.

1st December 2020

It was the first evening of the last month of the year and Oporto was hosting Manchester Blue at the Dragon Stadium for the fifth match in the group stage.

Both Oporto and Manchester Blue had qualified in the group stage and the results from this match would at best be a deciding factor in who would end up in the top position of the group.

Oporto had lost to Manchester Blue previously and this was their chance to one back at their opponents... If they wished for such a revenge.

The match soon kicked off and the ball began to fly across the field as both teams tried to score, but barely a quarter of an hour into the game, it became clear that Oporto was the side with more desperation to win than the Manchester Blue side.

The Manchester Blue side seemed to put more effort into the defensive side of their game than their attacking side, but this didn't mean that the Oporto side got more time because of that.

Quite the contrary in fact, Manchester Blue's way of defending was by hogging the ball all to themselves and, but not doing much with it and just contenting themselves with the occasional attack.

The Oporto side had to do a lot of ball chasing and whenever they had the ball, they immediately launched an attack that either ended with a wasted opportunity, either by shooting terribly or by losing the ball before they could even reach the Manchester Blue goalkeeper.

The first half of the game played out in this manner and by the time the referee's whistle went off to end the first half, the scoreboard remained as it was when the game started.

The two teams walked off the field, huffing as they walked into the tunnel and headed to their locker rooms.

The two managers immediately got to work reminding the players of their respective game plans while also making the necessary adjustments to the game plan, lineup, and formation.

Chapter 365: The Race for Trophies III

The second half of the game kicked off with Manchester Blue resuming the game.

The second half didn't take long to heat up and soon the ball was flying rapidly all over the pitch as both teams looked to score a goal and break the deadlock.

The Manchester Blue team were now making more use of their ball possession to attack the Oporto team and were constantly trying to score while the Oporto team did the same.

#74th minute..

Porto had gotten a corner after a failed attack and Otavio was the one who stood over the corner kick instead of Jason who normally took the corner kick.

Instead of taking the corner kick, Jason was standing a few yards outside the box, waiting to enact a set-piece routine they had been practicing in training lately.

Fweeeeeeee

At the referee's whistle, Otavio ran at the ball and swung a grounded cross into the penalty box while Jason burst into the penalty box to meet the incoming ball.

Due to the spontaneity of the tactic, Jason managed to easily escape the player marking him and hit the ball first time, sending it at Manchester Blue's goal with impressive pace and power.

Ederson dived for the ball but missed and the ball slammed into the back of the net.

{GOAL!!!}

{Porto!}

{They break the deadlock!}

{It's been a long and frustrating game for them, but now they've got a goal, and what a time to put one past the goalkeeper!}

{Impressive movement, clever set-up play, and they were rewarded with a goal!}

{Where do we go from here?} The commentator did not hesitate to jump on the microphone, doing his job with such enthusiasm that the Oporto fans could feel shivers of excitement going through their bodies as they watched their team take the lead.

#86th minute...

After Oporto opened up the game with their goal, Manchester Blue had become more dangerous on the ball as they desperately looked for an equalizer.

Pressure mounted on the Oporto team as they did all in their power to stop their opponents, but despite their efforts, the ball kept moving, being exchanged between the Manchester Blue players until Bernardo Silva was found on the right side of the Oporto penalty box.

On receiving the ball, he danced circles around two Oporto defenders before curling the ball beautifully past Marchesin, equalizing the game just barely ten minutes after his team had gone behind.

{GOAL!!!} the commentator erupted.

{They've gone and done it!}

{Minutes after going behind they've scored an equalizer, putting an end to Oporto's dreams of climbing to the top of the table!}

The commentator commented excitedly without remorse for the Oporto players or fans who were feeling like sh*t at that moment as they watched the Manchester Blue players celebrate their goal.

The Oporto fans couldn't even be bothered to blame their players as they had watched the goal happen step by step.

The Manchester Blue team had come crashing down on the Oporto team's defense like a force of nature and the Oporto defenders had been swept away without any suspense.

Less than half a minute later, the game kicked off again and things got frenetic as the two teams desperately looked for a goal and the ball was being sent flying at both ends of the field, but the two teams did enough to hold out against each other and less than ten minutes after the equalizing goal, the referee's whistle sounded for the final time that night.

The match ended with a scoreline of Oporto 1 : 1 Manchester Blue.

Neither team was satisfied with a draw, but there weren't many demerits to the situation and things remained as they were before the match was played.

5th December 2020

It was matchday 9 in the Portuguese Primeira Liga(PPL) and Oporto would be hosting Tondela for a match that promised excitement to the players and the fans.

The pre-match formalities didn't take long and the match soon began.

The match got off to a quick start when Jason made an incisive run from the right wing, cutting through two players before making a pass to Zaidiu Sanusi who was at the edge of the 18-yard box.

On receiving the pass, Sanusi drove home the ball from long range and sent the net bulging, sending Oporto into the lead just four minutes after the game began.

Celebrations immediately ensued in the Oporto camp and the players excitedly celebrated their goal for a little while before heading back to their half of the field to continue the game.

Sixteen minutes later, the Tondela striker, Gonzalez, got on the dangerous end of a beautiful cross and sent the ball flying into the back of the Oporto goal with a carefully aimed header, equalizing the game for Tondela.

This time, it was the Tondela camp that burst out in celebration while the Oporto players could only shake their heads wryly while watching their opponents jubilating.

As usual, the celebrations didn't take much time and the game soon resumed, allowing the players to get back to tearing at each other, trying to decide who would ultimately come out on top.

#33rd minute...

Tondela's attacking midfielder Barbosa, received a pass from Pedro Augusto and he immediately laid it off to the team's striker Gonzalez, but Gonzalez soon sent the ball back his way after realizing that he would be unable to get a shot away.

With the ball coming his way, Barbosa didn't hesitate to shoot, and he did so powerfully.

He put his foot to the ball with as much power as he could muster and Marchesin wasn't able to keep up as the ball slammed past him and sent his net flying for the second time in the game.

{GOAL!!!}

{They've done it! They've come back from behind and have taken the lead!}

{In a match like this and against opposition like this, they deserve a reward for their efforts and if they can hold on to their lead till the final whistle, they'll get to take all three points from this game!}

Chapter 366: The Race for Trophies IV

#36th minute...

On going behind, Oporto had immediately burst out on the attack after resuming the game with a kickoff and the ball soon found Jason on the right wing.

Jason immediately tried running into Tondela's 18-yard box, but the player in his path was proving to be an annoyance so Jason changed his plan.

Doing a couple of stepovers and then cutting right to create some space, Jason sent a mid-chest level cross into the Tondela penalty area and Marega flew at the ball.

{Diving header!!!}

{Goal!!!}

{Oporto!!!}

{Just three minutes after going behind and they are level again!}

{They're making their intent clear!}

{They will not be going down easily!} the commentator shouted excitedly as Marega ran over to the sidelines to celebrate with the team, hugging Jason first before the rest of the team came to join in the celebrations.

#48th minute...

The first half had ended with the scores at 2 : 2 and the two teams had gone to their locker rooms for a rest and revision of their respective game plans.

In this manner, the halftime break had easily passed and the teams were back on the field and playing for victory once again.

Having switched their sides, the two teams sent the balls flying at their opponent's goal with as much vigor as they could muster, and soon a chance opened up for Oporto who had launched a counter-attack after a failed attack of their opponents.

Marega had made a pass to Jason before running past him into the open space behind the defense line.

On receiving the ball, Jason turned around and with the ball, watching Marega's run and sending a lobbed pass over the Tondela defense line at the perfect moment.

Marega made it past the defense line, got on the end of the ball, and sent it flying past the Tondela goalkeeper with a thunderous shot.

{GOAL!!!}

{3 : 2!!! Porto take the lead, and what a way to do it!}

{Three minutes into the second half and Porto make it three!} the commentator shouted unreservedly into the microphone as the Oporto camp exploded in celebration.

#74th minute...

The Tondela team had gotten a corner kick after Marchesin pulled off a magnificent save to block a powerful effort from Barbosa just a few moments prior.

Fweeeeeeeeeee

On hearing the referee's whistle, the ball was sent flying into Oporto's penalty box and the players of the two teams jumped for the ball, but a Tondela player managed to beat everyone in the air and reached the ball first, getting his head to it and directing it downward towards Oporto's goal.

Marchesin followed the ball with his eyes and his body reacted appropriately as he made a dive and just barely managed to block the ball with his palm before crashing into the ground, but before he could rejoice that he had managed to block the shot, Tondela's striker, Gonzalez appeared behind the ball, completely unmarked, and slammed his foot against it from behind and sent the ball back into the net.

Without a doubt, the net was sent bulging.

{Oh my! What a topsy-turvy game we have here!>}

{Tondela equalizes yet again!}

{Oporto must be frustrated by the tenacity of their opponents!}

{They just will not stay down!}

{Will we see a winner in this game?} The commentator displayed his impartiality in his unreserved commentary that rang into the ears of the viewers while the Tondela players celebrated their goal.

#79th minute...

After Tondela had drawn level yet again, Oporto's fury had been aroused and they had immediately launched attack after attack right after kicking off to resume the game, and they were at it again.

Jason received the ball at the edge of the box from Manafa and his marker immediately lunged at him, but Jason just pulled the ball back about half a yard before kicking the ball forward, sending the ball between the legs of the player lunging at him.

The ball rolled in between the legs of the player and into the path of Evanilson who had begun making a run as soon as Jason got the ball.

As he got to the end of the pass, he smoothly chipped the ball over the outstretched leg of the goalkeeper who had come rushing at him.

The ball had flown past the goalkeeper's eyes in almost slow motion before landing and rolling into the back of the net.

{GOA!!!}

{It's been five minutes! Just five minutes since Tondela equalized and Porto are once again putting their tenacity to the test!}

{It's almost like they want to see how far their opponent's tenacity can carry them!}

{What confidence! What presence! What ability!}

The commentator's efforts to hype up the game at this point weren't even needed as the fans were already heads over heels after watching seven goals go in.

The Oporto fans were celebrating and the Neutrals were enjoying the game, but the Tondela fans were once again thrown into displeasure and disappointment, they still had hopes that their team could still somehow make it back.

Unfortunately, it was not to be any the scoreline remained at Oporto 4 : 3 Tondela till the final whistle despite the efforts of the two teams to further the scoreline

Jason ended up with the Man-of-the-Match award after his impressive performance in the game, with the focal point being that he had provided the assists to all of Porto's goals in the game.

The manager, however, hadn't been too happy with the results as despite their win it was not a good time for him as the manager.

While the match had been exciting for the fans and the viewers, that didn't hold for the manager and he would rather see his team win with a comfortable 2 to nil scoreline than watch a game where there were eleven goals and his players only managed to get one over their opponents.

It signified that the defenders weren't at the top of their game and that could cost them in future matches, so while the players celebrated their win, he was already making plans for their next training session.

Chapter 367: The Race for Trophies V

Next on the road for Oporto was their last group stage match in the Champions League against Olympiacos and the Oporto team had arrived at Piraeus, Greece for the match.

At 8 pm, a referee's whistle blew loudly at the Karaiskakis Leno Stadium, and the game kicked off.

For the Oporto team who had pretty much qualified for the knockout rounds, there wasn't much desperation in their movements, but the Olympiacos team which was competing with the Marseille team for a place in the Europa League didn't share that sentiment and started attacking like their life depended on it.

However, their aggressive style of play soon came back to haunt them when an Olympiacos defender roughly tackled Otavio in the penalty box and cost his team a penalty.

A minute later, Otavio drove home the penalty kick and took the lead for Oporto in just the 10th minute of the game.

The match continued after about a minute of celebration, and the Olympiacos team which had originally been desperate began playing with even more intensity as they strove to get something from this game that would help push them to the Europa League.

The match went on without much excitement apart from the occasional shot at goal on both ends, but the scoreboard wasn't troubled until the 77th minute of the game when Luis Diaz found Uribe in the penalty box with amazing precision.

Uribe did his best to hold off his marker and drove his feet at the ball, sending it flying at goal and out of the reach of the opposition goalkeeper.

The ball slammed into the back of the net and Uribe took off jubilating at scoring the second goal for the team.

The whole team joined the celebrations and even on the bench, smiles appeared on the players' faces, and high fives were passed all around.

Jason was among the bench players and he hadn't been put into the starting lineup by the manager, and with time running out, it was becoming less likely that he would get any minutes on the field, but apart from a slight displeasure at being left out of the starting lineup, Jason didn't feel anything towards the manager's decision.

He always wanted to be on the field, but he also knew that for his good and for the team, that was impossible, and he was slowly learning to be contented with it.

In the end, Jason ended up watching his team coast to a 2-to-nil victory over their opponents.

Their win didn't do much more than rack up their goal difference, but the Olympiaco team that was now on equal points and goal difference with Marseille certainly didn't feel the same.

However, that was of no concern to the Oporto players who swaggered off the field after their win.

13th December 2020

Oporto were back at the Dragon Stadium for their 4th round match of the Taca de Portugal against Tondela.

It had barely been a week since they had welcomed this same opponent at the Dragon Stadium for the 9th match day of the Portuguese Primeira Liga.

In that match, they had managed to narrowly come out on top after an exciting match decorated with seven goals scored jointly by the two teams.

With such a narrow loss, Tondela would be coming into the match thinking they could gain something from the game as long as they put in more effort than in the last match, and it was the job of the Oporto players to put an end to their delusion... If they could.

The match soon kicked off and it didn't take long before the commentator began screaming excitedly as Oporto had already opened up the game within just four minutes.

Mehdi Taremi got on the end of a beautiful cross into the box, controlling it with his chest before driving it goalward, sending the ball flying into the back of the net.

The Tondela goalkeeper jumped for the ball, but there was little he could do to stop the ball from going in.

The nightmare that had ended a week ago, came back with a bang for Tondela and they looked on distraught as the Oporto players celebrated their goal against them.

The match soon continued and the Tondela players' dogmatism flared up as they rode hard at the Oporto team, looking for an equalizer.

It didn't take long for an opportunity to open up for them when a Tondela midfielder tried taking a shot from long-range.

The ball flew at Oporto's goal, but Marchesin saw it coming all the way and lunged for the ball, punching it off target, but before the ball could fly out of play, the Tondela left winger got to it and sent a chipped pass at the Tondela striker who volleyed the ball with gusto, sending a rocket of a shot past the outstretched hands of Marchesin.

{Goal!!!}

{Twenty minutes into the game and Tondela have equalized!} The commentator shouted as the Tondela team immediately took off in celebration.

It was just twenty minutes into the game and there had already been two goals, exciting the viewers who were already getting their popcorns ready to watch another match filled with goals.

Just like they were expecting, the net was soon sent bulging once more a few minutes later.

Viera made a run in from the right flank and sent the ball over to the left flank with a lobbed pass where Luis Diaz caught up to it with incredible pace, controlling the ball before sending a pass into the center of the penalty box where Marega was arriving.

Marega's marker could immediately smell what the Oporto players were cooking, but he was too far away from the ball's path and could only try to pull Marega down from behind, but Marega shrugged off his hand violently and slammed the ball with his right foot, sending the ball into the back of the net.

{GOAL!!!}

{It's Oporto again!}

{It took them four minutes from the start of the game to score first, and now, four minutes after their opponents equalized, they've scored again!}

{They are making their intentions very clear!} the commentator shouted into the microphone without remorse.

Chapter 368: The Race for Trophies VI

After the second goal by Oporto in the 24th minute, the game surprisingly entered a silent state where shots were being made but the net wasn't sent bulging again.

Like this, the first half ended and the second half began, but thirty minutes into the second half and there still wasn't another goal in the game despite the efforts of the two teams on the pitch.

The goalkeepers and the defenders seemed to have finally found their form and were performing at the top of their game, killing every attack that seemed to have any potential of ending in the back of the net.

Five minutes to the end of the game, Jason who had been brought on as a substitute and had been searching for a goal ever since he came on the pitch received a pass from Nanu and he immediately took off down the field.

A Tondela player stepped into his path, but Jason calmly stepped forward, nutmegged the player, and stepped past him, continuing his run down the left flank before sending a lobbed through-pass over to the right wing where Viera was making a run.

Viera jumped into the air to catch the ball on his chest, bringing it under control before continuing his run down the right with the ball while the other Oporto players immediately began positioning themselves for a final pass.

Viera didn't disappoint and soon sent a chest-level cross that Oliveira jumped at in a dive and caught it off his head, sending it at the goal, but the Tondela goalkeeper immediately made a dive, barely getting his hand to the ball, but doing enough to stop the ball from going in.

The ball flew towards the left and looked like it would fly just a few yards past Jason and Jason immediately lunged forward at the ball, catching it off his leg and sending it back at the goal, but the goalkeeper seemed to have gone into superhuman mode as once again he was there to block the shot with a sweeping hand motion.

Yet, even after a double save, the ball wasn't out of play and Mylo appeared behind the ball, hitting it a third time.

{This time to settle the game!?!} the commentator shouted as he watched Mylo hit the ball.

The goalkeeper once again jumped into the path of the ball and the ball slammed off his chest and flew upward, clipping the crossbar and finally flying out of play.

{OHH!!!!}

{How did that not go in!?!}

{Superhuman goalkeeping!}

{Not once! Not twice! But three! That was a magnificent triple save!}

{He's kept his team's hope alive!} the commentator shouted unreservedly while the Tondela players hailed their goalkeeper with passion while the Oporto players just stared on like they couldn't believe their eyes.

A corner kick was taken and the match continued, but the scoreline remained the same till the final whistle and the match ended with a scoreline at Porto 2 : 1 Tondela.

As Jason prepared for the next game which was a quarter-final match against Pacos de Ferreira in the Taca da Liga, he was also paying attention to his newest investment.

He often had online meetings with Dr. Maya Singh about the company as for some reason Maya Singh always wanted to keep him updated about the progress of the company.

In her words, it was now half his company and it was also his idea to change the company name and launch a new brand, so he had to be involved.

So far, they had decided on the new name of the company and had started working on a few other things concerning the new product's launch.

After quite a bit of consideration, the new name for the company had been decided to be 'Rosember' which was a combination of the words 'Rose' and 'Ember'.

The words suggested a fiery, energetic approach to skincare, but to Jason and Maya, it had different meanings.

For Maya, it represented something like an eternal ember, or coming out of the ashes like a phoenix... or something like that, while for Jason, it featured the word 'Rose' which for some reason just wouldn't go away.

Originally, there had been other names up for consideration like 'Luminara', 'Dermavera', 'Lyraxi', and some others, but Jason had been a bit apprehensive of those names as they sounded a bit too feminine for a company that was targeting a general market.

Maya had presented a good argument concerning the names of the brand by asking Jason about what brand of skincare products he used, but Jason had no answer for her because he didn't remember.

He was naturally blessed with good skin and he only ever used lotion as a skin lubricant to avoid any skin issues so he didn't care about whatever brand he used and usually just picked anyone on the shelf, but this proved Maya's argument that most men didn't care about the name of the brand of skin care products they used.

They mostly just took whatever was available unless they had a very specific target when going to the market.

However, there was no need for an argument when they finally selected the name 'Rosember' which Jason quite liked.

It gave a sharp feeling and felt like something that would be easily rememberable.

It also felt like something that would be easier to endorse when considering who he was.

Apart from deciding the new name, the company had already begun planning for production and was already in the preparatory phase of the product launch.

The first product to be launched was a lotion and the company was already acquiring ingredients for mass production while also working on the designs of the packaging of the product.

The product launch had been scheduled for the beginning of the following year, and Jason would have to head over to America for the promotion aspect during Christmas break.

He would have to do promotional shoots for the product so he was already swamped with work before the Christmas break even arrived.

Once the promotional videos were shot, that was when everything would start.

The company would begin promotion while doing production in preparation for the product launch.

The product was to be launched in three countries as a start which were the USA, Portugal, and Nigeria while there would be an online store as well that would partner with a delivery company so that the product could be ordered from all over the globe.

Maya planned to milk all of Jason's fanbase.

Chapter 369: The Race for Trophies VII

16th December 2020

{It's the first game of the Taca da Liga and Oporto welcomes Pacos de Ferreira at the Dragon Stadium here in Porto}

{Oporto have had a good run of form lately, having gone nine games undefeated and among those nine games, they had only one draw against Manchester City in the Champions League}

{Pacos de Ferreira have a lot to do if they're going to make sure they don't become another number in Porto's undefeated streak!}

{We'll see how it goes} The commentator gave opening remarks as the players of both teams walked out of the tunnels and onto the field.

A few minutes of pre-match formalities later, the match began at the sound of the referee's whistle.

Oporto was the one that kicked off the game and true to their status as the stronger team, they didn't hesitate in going on the attack.

They played boldly and confidently, passing the ball around and constantly sending players into dangerous areas as they looked for the goal that would give them the lead, but the opposition team did not hesitate to prove that despite being the underdogs, they wouldn't just roll over and let the dragons trample on them.

The match soon became heated with the ball flying in the direction of the goal at both ends of the field, but it soon became clear that Oporto did more attacking than defending, yet despite this, the scoreboard operator remained untroubled all through the first half.

At the referee's whistle, the players walked off the field, already feeling the heat of the cup match.

In the locker rooms, the managers of the two teams began taking their players through the game plan again while also pointing out their mistakes on the field and giving them revised instructions.

Some changes to the line-ups were also made and by the time the two teams were coming out of the tunnel for the second half of the game, Jason was joining the team as well.

He had been sitting on the bench in the first half of the game, but the manager had substituted him on for Diaz during the break.

The second half began and football resumed to its peak.

It did not take long for the Oporto team to once again take the reins of the game and begin oppressing their opponents as they searched for a goal that would help them take the lead but despite their efforts, another twenty-five minutes went by and they had nothing to show for it.

For once, even Jason was unable to create the spark that would bring his team to life, and to any professional eye, it was clear that for some reason he was off his game a bit.

He had already been caught offside three times since he came on which for Jason who had an uncanny timing ability, was a lot.

And not only that, he had lost the ball half the times he tried to dribble past his opponent which didn't normally happen either.

Thirdly, he had been poor in front of goal and had wasted two chances that he would normally find a way to get past the goalkeeper.

Despite that however, he was still doing reasonably well and hadn't caused any defensive problems for the team and the team was getting closer to their first goal with his help up front.

#73rd minute...

Oporto had a corner kick that Jason swung into the penalty box with as much precision as he could manage and Ivan Marcano rose to meet it and send it goalward but the opposition goalkeeper had been alert and was there to block the header.

The Pacos de Ferreira players immediately chased after the ball to clear it, but Sarr was there first and sent the ball flying at the goal.

The goalkeeper wasn't able to react in time and the ball smashed into the back of the net, giving Oporto the lead in this hard-contested game.

{GOAL!}

{It came late, but they've finally taken the lead in this game!} The commentator's excited voice filled the stadium as the Oporto players took off in jubilation.

#80th minute...

Oporto was on the attack and Otavio sent a through pass behind the back line into Jason's path.

Running in from the left wing, Jason pushed hard against his marker to keep him at bay as he raced for the ball.

He managed to get the first touch on the ball and continue his run with the ball into the penalty box, but his marker just wouldn't go away.

The guy kept pushing against Jason, contesting for the ball and Jason just barely managed to reach the penalty box before he gave up on running any further and took a shot at the goal.

As the ball left his feet, the Pacos de Ferreira goalkeeper got ready to leap and he managed to reach the ball in time with a spectacular save, deflecting the ball ever so slightly so that it flew off target and smashed against the right post instead of the back of the net, but before the goalkeeper could recover and scoop up the ball, Viera appeared behind the ball and smoothly tapped it into the back of the net.

{GOAL!!!}

{What a time to take a two-goal lead!}

{They're running away with it!}

The Oporto camp once again burst into celebrations as it became apparent that they would end up on top after the final whistle was blown about ten minutes later.

The celebrations as usual didn't take much time and the match soon continued, but not long after the shrill blast of the whistle that put an end to the game sounded loudly in the stadium.

{It is over!}

{Oporto advance to the semi-finals of the Taca da Liga!}

{It was a hard-fought match, but they didn't let up halfway through and they did enough to win it!}

{Oporto fans must be feeling ecstatic to be moving closer to some silverware this early in the season and they will keep their hopes up in other competitions as well}

{It's Porto's tenth match undefeated in all competitions so far and it looks like they can keep this run going on for much longer!}

Chapter 370: The Race for Trophies VIII

Jason walked off the field with his teammates, a smile on his face, but his eyes weren't smiling the same way as he was instead, he was deep in thought as he walked past the others and headed to the locker room first.

Luckily he did not meet any annoying reporters and the ones he met were calmly dismissed with a smile and a few words as they were more interested in talking to his teammates who scored instead of him.

All in all, it worked out for him who didn't want to be pestered much at that moment.

He reached the locker room not long after and picked up a towel that he started using to wipe off his sweat while he sat on the ground in front of his locker.

The other Oporto players entered the locker room not long after but after exchanging a few words with Jason they went on to do their own things.

The locker room soon filled up with the other players who were all laughing, chatting, and reminiscing on memorable parts of the game, but Jason stayed where he was, not participating because he was still too deep in thought to care about that part.

"Tough game, huh?" Viera asked as he sat beside Jason.

"Kinda, I'm not too bothered by it," Jason replied honestly as he glanced at Viera.

"Are you okay?" Viera asked as Jason was a bit too non-verbal which was strange even for Jason who wasn't someone who spoke a lot.

"... Yeah, I'm just thinking about some stuff," Jason intoned again, laying his head against his locker.

"Something I can help with?" Viera continued asking, not willing to leave Jason be if he had any problems. That wasn't something a good friend would do.

"Yeah... No," Jason half-laughed.

"Sounds like female problems, which unfortunately isn't my area of expertise," Viera said in a light-hearted tone as he stood up from beside Jason.

"But if there's one thing I know about problems, it's that you have to face it,"

"Only then can you know whether you should solve it or run from it," he continued as he dapped Jason and walked away.

Jason stared at Viera's back as he walked away and he stood up as well and began changing out of his jersey.

His showing in the match wasn't dismal by any means and it wasn't something he was worried about as he couldn't be the most influential player in every game.

That was abnormal for a completely normal human being.

What Jason was worried about was his mental state which was causing his distraction and was what was interfering with his focus during the match.

Ever since he had gone to his cousin's wedding, he had had a few thoughts on his mind concerning his relationship with Sophia which was just another one to pile to the list of thoughts.

However, this particular thought wasn't going away and after his lip-to-lip coincidence with Adele, there had been an addition of another crowd of thoughts to his mind.

So far, he had been pushing off all thoughts concerning his social life off the pitch, but he couldn't push it off forever and everything was now surfacing one by one and refusing to go away.

His kiss with Adele was like a trigger for a dam to burst and even now he was beginning to feel something towards her... something similar to what he had for Sofia, which made no sense.

It was like some romance series where there were multiple heroines fighting for the main character... only in his case, they weren't fighting for him physically but were battling against him in tandem inside of his head.

He could not have mental battles against himself and some women while also having to keep his focus on his profession.

Football was something that required focus and concentration and his current mental state was robbing him of those things.

If he let things stay like this, then it would only get worse for him, but unfortunately, he had no choice but to wait... again... and this time, it wasn't because he was indecisive.

He had planned to confront Sofia with his emotions and make things clear so that he could know where he was going with this whole roller emotional schlongogenesis.

Unfortunately, Sofia was currently having exams at her university and the exams would go on till the the 23rd of this month which was a day before Christmas Eve.

Jason wasn't very emotionally intelligent, but even he knew that he couldn't bring up such a huge decision when she was battling with medicine school exams.

That was like begging for her to fail.

Hence he had put off the matter once again till then, but due to his schedule for the Christmas Break, he wouldn't even be available at that time because he would be in the USA for his promotional events for Rosember.

Yet, the discussion with Sofia wasn't something that he wanted to have offline...

'Arghhhhh... Why the fu*k is this sh*t so complicated!' annoyance flared internally as he was thinking.

'Anyway, the plan is to get back early from the USA and then talk to her,' he monologued as he halfheartedly listened to the manager's words.

Jason was done with all the emotional complications he was feeling.

He liked Sofia, but if there was nothing genuine that would happen between them, then there wasn't a point in him holding on to such emotions.

He had always been a professional at killing his emotions and this time wouldn't be different... just a bit more difficult, but he should be able to do it.

His second chance had given him a chance to experience a lot of things he hadn't experienced before, but if any of those things got in the way of his goal to become the best footballer on the face of the planet, then that bit*h was going to be kicked to the curb.

Becoming the Greatest of all Legends came first, things like emotional satisfaction didn't even come second.

He wasn't here to play house.