

LEGENDS 481

Chapter 481: The Ramsey Curse Strikes Again!

With Uventus pressing that hard, there could only be one reasonable outcome and that outcome didn't take long to be seen as a cross flew into the penalty box, heading towards Ronaldo.

Ronaldo took to the air, but he had jumped a bit late and couldn't reach the ball with his forehead to perfectly the direction, however, he still managed to send it at goal.

The ball flew powerfully at the goal and the Sampdoria goalkeeper flew at it, just managing to reach it with the tip of his fingers and pushing it towards the right just enough that the ball looked like it was going to fly out of play but the ball ended up smashing against the right post and bouncing back into play.

Before the goalkeeper could react a second time, the ball that had bounced near Chiesa was sent flying into the back of the net by the Uventus man before anyone could stop his actions.

{Ohhhhhhh!}

{Sampdoria won't like that!}

{It's their park and they're already behind!} the commentator shouted as Chiesa ran to the sidelines in celebration followed by his teammates.

The Uventus players and fans were totally uncaring that they were far from their home ground as they celebrated the goal, but luckily for the Sampdoria players' morale, they didn't celebrate for too long and soon headed back to their half of the field so the game could resume.

The game soon kicked off and the Uventus team immediately tried to pick up where they left off, but this time, they were resisted almost desperately by the Sampdoria team who did everything possible to make sure the football was almost never in their half.

Their actions gave the Uventus team more control and possession of the ball, but it also made scoring just as difficult as they couldn't score if they couldn't reach the Sampdoria team's goal.

With their actions, the Sampdoria managed to escape a danger period and the game soon settled into an exciting but slightly mundane one with no more goals coming for either side.

Of course, both teams constantly made attempts at each other, keeping the game exciting, but there was nothing for the fans to scream at the top of their voices for until the first half ended.

The second half began shortly after with Jason still on the bench despite the manager already making a substitution.

The match continued with both teams looking for a goal.

The Uventus needed a goal to get to safety while the Sampdoria team needed just one goal to get back on level terms so the match became even more exciting with both teams doing everything in their power to get through their opponents while also ensuring to stay sturdy at the back to prevent any accidents.

Of course, with them having the lead, the Uventus was more at ease than the home owners, however, that didn't stop them from giving their all to further their goal difference which was something they needed in more positive numbers.

As the game slowly drew towards its ends, there were many close calls with the ball even bouncing off the bar a few times, however the score remained the same until the final minutes of the game when Ramsey got on the end of a low cross and trickily used his heel to hit it at goal surprising everyone, even his own teammates.

With everyone being surprised at Ramsey's attempt, all the ball had to do was be on target, which it was, and less than a second later, it rolled past the goalline in the Sampdoria team's goal.

{Goal!}

{Beautiful attempt! It was a fancy attempt and it fancily rolled into the back of the net!}

{What a goal! What a time to score!} the commentator shouted exuberantly as the Uventus team celebrated their goal.

{People are shaking in their seats!}

{Whether it was from the goal, or from wondering who the Ramsey curse would take tonight, no one can deny the classy finish} the co-commentator's voice also rang out as well causing a a lot of people to laugh at the absurdity of his comment.

A lot of people knew about the Ramsey curse but most people believed it to be coincidence, after all, how could it be that every time he scored a goal, a famous person would be dead the next day?

That was too eerie to be possible so people just attributed it to be coincidence despite the fact that it always happened.

Luckily for the famous people though, Ramsey was a midfielder who didn't score many times, hence they only lost a few numbers to the Ramsey curse.

Of course, there were some people who would be looking to see who the Ramsey curse would take, however that was a matter for another day.

For the time being, the focus was on Uventus's dying minute goal.

The match ended shortly after with a win for the Uventus team and no minutes for Jason who wasn't too pleased about it, but the slight ache in his legs from all his training did more than enough to knock sense into his head that it was better for him to not have played.

The Uventus team celebrated their win all the way till they left the pitch and headed to their locker room.

After the match was the post match press conference that the manager attended while the players who were influential in the match did short interviews.

Once that was all over, the Uventus players were taken to the hotel where they would spend the night before they would be heading back to Turin the next morning.

While the Uventus players and their fans were still basking in their win, no one knew that the Ramsey curse was already working overtime to find it's next target and by the time the players were headed back to Turin by plane, a notification sounded on some people's phones informing them of the death of a legendary Italian football player, Paolo Rossi.

Paolo was someone who had played for Uventus, AC Milan and a few other clubs managing to amass 103 goals in 251 appearances.

He had been even more impressive for the national team, leading Italy to winning the FIFA World cup in 1982 with his 6 goals in the tournament that earned him the golden boot in the competition.

He was also Italy's joint highest goal scorer in the FIFA world cup along with Roberto Baggio and Christian Vieri.

As the Uventus players heard the news, everyone's eyes turned to Ramsey , looking at him suspiciously and wondering whether they needed to stop him from sending one of them to build a house in the skies.

Jason who was nearby snatched the ball that Ramsey was holding,

"I'll be taking this for safekeeping for now, we're still in the air,"

Everyone immediately burst out laughing.

Chapter 482: Coppa Italia Semi Final; First Leg I

The next step on Uventus' path was a match against Inter Milan once again, but this time, it was a Coppa Italia match.

The stakes could be said to be higher considering that it was the first leg in the Coppa Italia's semi-finals, hence it was a match everyone was looking forward to, the players included.

This time, the two teams would be facing off at Inter Milan's home ground at the San Siro stadium in Milan.

Before the Uventus players even arrived, the Inter Milan players were already on the field, warming up in preparation to unleash hell on their opponents.

They had lost at their last clash and this time, they wanted to make sure that their opponents were on the receiving end of the goals.

The thought of doing that while cutting off their chances at the Coppa Italia trophy this season was enough to make the Inter Milan players drool internally.

The Uventus were not completely unaware of this line of thought from their opponents, but what did it matter?

They also planned to trample on their opponents to continue marching on towards the Coppa Italia trophy.

That their opponents thought the same thing wouldn't matter, only their actions on the pitch would determine anything.

Anyone can fantasize, but only winners turn their fantasy to reality.

With strong and determined minds, the Uventus players arrived at the San Siro stadium for the match.

As usual, they quickly headed to the locker rooms first to change, but this time, the manager decided to hold a tactical meeting first and announced the players in the starting line-up.

Sczesny would be the goalkeeper for the match and he would have the assistance of Cuadrado, De Ligt, Chiellini, and Alex Sandro forming a back line to help him defend the goal.

In midfield was Jason on the wide right, Bentacur and Mckennie in the center of the park, and Chiesa on the wide left.

Ronaldo and Dybala were the two strikers who would be looking to put a few balls past the Inter goalkeeper.

Unlike the previous match in the Coppa Italia where the manager had opted for younger players, this time, he had put out a more experienced team as he knew that the Inter Milan team would do the same since they were already at the final stages of the competition.

Jason was more than pleased to be named in the starting line-up and he quickly ran out with his teammates to the field to warm-up in preparation for the game.

Despite wanting to crush the Uventus players on the field, the Inter Milan defender was a relieved to note that Jason didn't pay any attention to him while he did his warm up activities with his teammates on the other side of the field.

'What am I even thinking?'

'Am I scared of that brat?' Skrinjar was a bit annoyed to find himself relieved that Jason looked like he wouldn't be gunning to embarrass him on the field once again.

'No no no, I'm not scared,' he quickly shook his head to clear distracting thoughts and with another glance at Jason, resumed his own training, but inwardly, he had made a decision to be as rough as possible as long as he could stop Jason from getting past him.

"Yeah, whatever it takes," he muttered to himself.

The time quickly ran by as the players warmed up and soon, they had moved off the field and were now coming back onto it with their faces the very pictures of seriousness, and the crowd cheering loudly for the players.

Unsurprisingly, the Uventus fans were in the minority at the stadium, but they didn't allow themselves to be outmatched in energy after being outmatched in numbers.

Under the crowd's loud and flamboyant cheers, the pre-match formalities were swiftly completed and the game soon kicked off at the blast of the referee's whistle.

The game kicked off with the Inter Milan striker, Lukaku sending a pass back to the his partner up front, Martinez.

Martinez didn't hesitate to send the ball to another teammate as soon as the Uventus players came running at him to try and steal the ball.

His credentials included scoring goals and not dribbling through opponents so he wasn't going to outstretch himself stupidly in such an important game and lose possession for no reason.

With the ball moving around quickly, the game got off to a quick start with both teams looking to get the first goal against their opponent.

The Inter Milan team seemed to have the upper hand for a little while, but their advantage seemed to disappear as the match wore on and soon, it was a back and forth between the two teams with both of them pushing hard.

With such swift movement of the ball, it remained to be seen who would buckle first.

The Inter Milan seemed to adopt a possession game and they were content with passing the ball around patiently in their half whenever they couldn't seem to find a way past their opponent.

The Uventus players on the other hand were a bit more impatient and would always try to break through their opponent whether a clear chance showed up or not as they knew that currently, the Inter Milan team had the best defensive record.

They couldn't afford to wait around for the perfect opportunity to show up as there was the slight possibility that such a perfect opportunity would not show up.

Thus they surged forward into the Inter Milan team's half increasing the pressure to try and get the ball back quicker whenever they lost the ball...

How were they to know that that was exactly what the Inter Milan players wanted?

#9th minute...

The Uventus players surged forward into the Inter Milan's half of the field, trying to recover the ball after they lost the ball while trying to break past their opponents, but suddenly, Eriksen who was with the ball shot his leg back and hit the ball powerfully, sending it above and past the Uventus players who were rushing out to press.

Before the Uventus players could react, the ball had already flown past almost everybody and was dropping in behind their back line.

Their faces turned even uglier when they saw Lukaku running into the ball's path like a freight train, holding off De Ligt like it was light work.

De Ligt did all he could, but he couldn't stop the Belgium-born striker from getting to the ball first and pushing forward at goal.

Seeing that he could not easily push him off the ball, he tried to move a bit quicker and get his leg in for a tackle, but he moved a bit too late as Lukaku suddenly sent the ball forward into the path of Martinez who controlled the ball with a touch and moved with it into the penalty box.

Sczesny rushed forward, but he was no match for the striker's nerves of steel and the ball was curved around his outstretched body.

{GOAL!!!}

{What a quick start to such an important game!}

{I'm sure the manager must have emphasized how important it was to get on the front foot against their opponents and it's clear that the Inter Milan players have heeded to instructions!}

{A well-worked goal it was, they soaked up the pressure and unleashed it all back at their opponents with a resounding bang!} The commentator didn't need anyone to tell him to do his job and he quickly burst out with all he could.

His commentary served as the perfect backdrop to the San Siro stadium that celebrated wildly to their team's striker doing his job and striking down their opponents with a shot.

It was just one goal, but the fans' excitement wasn't diminished because of that.

None of them was pessimistic enough to think that their team would end up losing the game when they were already in the lead this early in the game.

The Uventus players watched with gritted teeth as their opponents celebrated one-upping them, but they didn't lose their composure because the pessimistic thoughts that their opponents would never choose to think about were the optimistic thoughts they were thinking.

They weren't out yet.

The match had continued after the goal and the Inter Milan team had tried to build on the momentum of their first goal get another, but the Uventus players put a stop to those thoughts quickly, shutting them down whenever they were within sight.

They moved quicker and with more determination than before, aiming to equalize the game soon, but unlike before, they paid more attention to their defense and this functioned well enough against the opponents.

All they needed was a chance to breakthrough and Jason had taken it upon himself to try and create the breakthrough that the team needed.

As he received the ball on the right flank, he first tried running down the flank toward the right side of the penalty box, but Skrinia was in his way.

He couldn't turn back either as someone was behind him as well so he did a few stepovers to try and confuse Skrinia, but Skrinia stayed in place and tried to tackle him instead.

With him committing to the tackle, it was easy for Jason to slot the ball through his leg with a reverse elastico and then jump past him before passing the ball infield to Dybala.

Once he sent the ball to Dybala, he continued his run forward, intending to get on the end of the return pass.

Dybala didn't disappoint and sent a chip pass over to Jason before he ran past the offside line.

Catching the ball on his chest and pushing it down as towards his feet with his knee as he stepped into the penalty box, Jason looked at the goalkeeper, ready to hit the ball, but before he could, Skrinia came flying in from behind him with a sliding tackle like a nuke and crashed hard into Jason's leg, sending him off his feet like a ragdoll.

A sharp, numbing pain shot through Jason's leg before he even hit the floor.

Chapter 483: Coppa Italia Semi Final; First Leg II

Jason crashed to the floor and grabbed his right ankle instinctively because of the pain coursing through it and it was clear from the look of pain on his face, that it wasn't just a mere sting.

Despite seeing the tackle at the last minute, Jason had managed to jump a little bit, ensuring that Skriniar's tackle didn't meet his ankle while it was firmly planted on the ground, but the force of the tackle was still enough to cause him a lot of pain and he rolled around on the ground in pain.

The Uventus fans had already burst out in outrage, unleashing curses on Skriniar's eight generations, and also not leaving out his ancestors.

The Uventus players were also not happy with such a rough tackle and the nearby players rushed at the Inter Milan defender, but other Inter Milan players got in the way, giving the referee enough time to reach the site of the clash.

The referee chose to quell the situation first, preventing a fight from breaking out before finally turning to Skriniar and showing him a yellow card and warning him sternly.

While the referee was doing that, some Uventus players were standing over Jason while a couple of medics were already running over.

The medics arrived a few seconds later and quickly started attending to Jason, quickly checking his situation.

After determining that it wasn't a break, they quickly pulled down his socks and started applying painkiller spray to his leg.

At this point, the pain had lessened enough for Jason to sit up and look at his ankle and he gave a sigh of relief when he saw his ankle.

It wasn't swollen or out of shape, though there was definitely going to be a bruise.

There was a little bit of discomfort when he moved it, but that feeling was fading quickly as well.

Whether it was due to the painkiller spray or not, Jason didn't know, but he felt that all he needed was a little rest to get rid of the winded feeling and he would be able to continue.

He quickly told the medics and carefully got to his feet before the manager started thinking of subbing him off.

'Can't have that,' he thought to himself while glancing at Skrinjar from the corner of his eye as he walked off the field to rest for a few minutes.

He owed this guy another ankle breaking moment and he wouldn't leave the field until he got his revenge... on substitution, he remembered that he was already walking off the field.

While Jason sat on the sidelines to rest, the medics went to meet Pirlo to tell him Jason's condition, while on the field, Ronaldo was already stepping back to take the penalty.

Without a doubt, the experienced Portuguese star-man sent Handanovic sprawling and grasping nothing but air while the net shook as much as the Uventus fans in celebration of the goal.

With the ball rolling into the back of the net, Ronaldo ran towards the sidelines where Jason was and hugged him just as he was getting ready to get back on the pitch.

{The goalscorer goes over to hug the man who everyone has to thank for that goal}

{He seems to be alright now and his teammates will be happy to have him be able to continue. The fans will be even happier to see that as they can be guaranteed exciting football from the young lad} the commentator said as the Uventus team had a group hug before beginning to walk back to their half of the field together, ready to unleash hell on their opponents now that they were back on equal terms.

The players of both teams quickly took their positions on the field and the game soon continued with both teams now doing whatever they could to get a head in front of their opponent, however, it was clear which side had the higher momentum and it didn't take too long for the crowd to start bursting out in excited cheers once again.

#35th minute...

Jason was waiting on the right flank for the ball to come his way and, now he felt almost no discomfort from moving around.

'Guess all I needed to do was run it off,' he thought to himself as the ball finally came his way.

Once the ball began moving towards Jason, Skriniar once again took off in Jason's direction, seemingly going after the ball.

While keeping his eyes on the ball, Jason also paid attention to the Inter Milan defender coming towards him.

Since Skriniar already had a yellow card, he was out of chances and could not afford to tackle Jason recklessly unless he wanted to be sent off and that made his ability to threaten Jason less than half of what it was before.

A chained bird was easy enough for anyone to get past.

As Skriniar finally stepped into a one-meter distance of Jason, the ball reached Jason.

He waited for the ball to roll past him before flicking it with his left heel towards the right before following after it, leaving Skriniar lunging forward to his previous position where neither he or the ball remained.

Because he was charging over at full speed, he couldn't react to Jason's swift and sudden change of position, but he managed to push his leg out and catch Jason's ankle a bit, almost sweeping him off his feet, but Jason managed to catch himself after stumbling a bit, however, the time he spent stumbling gave Skriniar enough time to recover and begin chasing.

The referee blew for an advantage to the Uventus team, but Jason wasn't paying attention and had started running down the right flank while Skriniar gave chase.

While the Uventus players began fanning out while following Jason to give him options for a pass, the Inter Milan players weren't just going to stand by and watch.

The Inter Milan players started chasing after their markers to try and shut off Jason's passing options while Ashlay Young, Inter Milan's left midfielder started running into Jason's path.

As he got near enough, he jumped into a slide tackle to try and clear the ball, but after what had happened with Skrinari, Jason's spatial awareness had been forcefully tuned to it's peak and he saw the tackle coming.

Before Ashlay Young reached him, Jason chipped the ball forward toward Dybala while he jumped over the tackle and kept running forward.

Dybala caught Jason's pass on his chest and lobbed it back into Jason's path on the right flank.

Jason advanced towards the ball with as much speed as he could muster while Skrinari somehow managed to stay within a two meter distance range behind him.

When Jason finally reached the ball almost at the right side of Inter Milan's box, he caught it on his left foot, trying to control it, but Skrinari took that opportunity to get in between him and the penalty box.

The man's unrelenting efforts to hinder Jason were beginning to get annoying to Jason and in a burst of annoyance, Jason flicked the ball back up instead of bringing it down.

While the ball was in midair, Jason swung his leg at it as if trying to send the ball into the penalty box as fast as possible, even if it was by doing so with a mid-air volley.

Skrinari immediately jumped into Jason's path, but his eyes widened when Jason's leg somehow went under the ball instead of hitting it and he pulled it back towards himself while Skrinari had literally jumped out of his way.

While Skriniar was scrambling back to his feet and gathering himself, Jason had already moved past him, but instead of cutting into the box like everyone expected, Jason didn't bother getting into the penalty box where more than three Inter Milan defenders were waiting to cut him off.

Instead he moved towards the center while his eyes seemed to be looking for someone to pass to, but unknown to the Inter Milan players, he wasn't looking because he already got a look in previously.

Skriniar had already recovered and was once again chasing Jason from behind, but just as he was about to catch up, Jason's left leg suddenly hit the ball towards the penalty box while he looked elsewhere.

{No look-pass!} the commentator shouted as he saw the ball rolling forward.

{Ronaldo's already bursting forward, can he get on the end of this!?!} the commentator continued.

{He does! And it's gone in!!!}

The commentator didn't need to shout anything else as his voice was instantly drowned out by the Juventus fans shouting excitedly.

{It happened in their last clash, and it's happening again!}

{Juventus started from behind, and once again, they're in front!}

{What amazing powers of recovery! In this blistering run of form they're in, who can stop them!?!}

{Skriniar made a fool of again, this is becoming a repeating occurrence and it always ends in his team going behind} The commentator said this bit with a little laugh.

{Can't blame the guy who wants a little revenge, can we?} The co-commentator laughed as well.

{He's also always made sure to satisfy everyone after, so we can't call him out for show-boating, smart lad!} The co-commentator seemed to be having a laugh at Skrinier's situation.

{I think it's a little bit more than smartness} the commentator said.

Chapter 484: Roma is for Romantic Pain

Fweeeeeeeee

{There it is, the final whistle!}

{The first leg of the Coppa Italia Semi Finals between these two teams has come to an end and Uventus end this leg with them in the lead!}

{They'll have an away goal advantage in the second leg and Inter Milan will have their work cut out for them if they want to get through them to the final stage of this competition!}

The commentator's voice brought Jason out of his thoughts and he stood up from the bench where he had been seated and thinking of the game.

After the team's second goal that put them in the lead, the game had continued with both teams now trying more than ever to get the next goal.

Uventus needed another goal to secure their lead while Inter Milan needed a goal to get back on level terms with their opponents.

Despite this however, both teams also knew that they could not afford to concede another goal as that could take them beyond the point of no return.

With that thought at the back of their minds, they didn't go too crazy while they tried to get a goal and the back lines of the two teams stayed disciplined and they continuously repelled attack after attack from their opponents.

In this manner, time quickly went by and the first half came to an end, allowing the players to get their rest.

During the Uventus player's half-time tactical meeting, the manager decided to take Jason off and allow him to rest on the bench.

The manager's reasoning was that despite there not being many physical signs of a bad injury, continuing to play may aggravate any hidden injuries that Jason couldn't be diagnosed with at the moment.

From the manager's point of view, the pain killer sprays might be causing Jason to not feel any pains so he was quite literally playing through the pain which the manager respected, but he wasn't going to allow any of his players to play in such a condition.

As a professional footballer himself, Pirlo knew the threat of small hidden injuries.

With big and obvious injuries, medical action could be quickly taken to take care of it, but hidden injuries don't receive that sort of treatment until they caused an injury which was usually worse than a normal injury.

With all that said and done, Jason didn't have any choice but to put on his training vest and give up his place on the team to Kulusevski who would be getting on the field in his place.

The second half begun shortly after and it was an exciting game, however, neither of the two teams managed to score another goal for the rest of the match.

They continuously canceled each other out and the few clear chances they had didn't somehow didn't fall for them so the game ended with the scores Inter Milan 1 : 2 Uventus.

With that, Uventus would go into the second leg of the game with a one-goal advantage, as well as an advantage on away goals, so the Uventus fans had a lot to look forward to in the second game while the Inter Milan had a lot of work to do if they had any plans of challenging for the ticket to the next round.

Unsurprisingly, the man of the match award went to Ronaldo who scored a brace while Jason had gone yet another game without a Man of the Match award, but he didn't have any time to be concerned about that as the manager had him wheeled off for a check up despite it being late at night.

He didn't want to take any chances and Jason didn't disagree with checking for any issues as the tackle was actually quite fierce and it wouldn't be surprising if he had gotten seriously injured.

After a check-up and an x-ray, it was determined that he didn't have any breaks.

A few other checks revealed that was a bit more muscle tear around that area and that there was a bit of worn cartilage around the area as the shock to the area was a lot.

In other words, while he wasn't seriously injured to the point that he couldn't move around or play, it was very recommended that he avoided playing and allowed the muscle and cartilage to recover.

Further intensive shock to the area could lead to a serious injury and it was best if that was avoided.

In other words, Jason had picked up a knock and according to the estimations of the medics, he needed to heal for at least ten days.

That was not what Jason expected to hear, or what he wanted to hear.

'That's two whole games?'

'Fu*k!' he cursed internally and suddenly felt like punching Skriniar a few times as dribbling him no longer felt enough.

This was the second time that bastard would send him to the hospital for crying out loud, so how couldn't he be angry?

Unfortunately, there was nothing that could be done to the guy, but Jason felt like the next time they met, someone would have to tear him off of the guy's face to stop him from raining down punches.

Jason's medical report was passed to the manager and Jason left the hospital as well because his injury was more internal than external.

Though Jason could now feel a slight sting in his leg now that the painkiller spray had worn off, but he had been given some pills that he would take later which should numb that too.

The following days for Jason were one of training, training, and more training.

According to the medics and the training staff, he started with light training first, but as the days progressed, he began to increase his workload.

Since he wasn't scheduled to be in any matches for at least ten days, that meant he could train as he liked, though he had to keep his injury in mind and avoid aggravating it, causing it to worsen instead of heal.

Since he was still training at the Continassa with his teammates, Ronaldo helped him with his training efforts and kept an eye on him to make sure he didn't do too much. The others also encouraged him as well and were very helpful, making Jason feel like the injury was more than what it was.

At one point, he had to tell them,

"Guys, I can still walk!"

The Uventus players had just burst out laughing at him and continued what they were doing.

And so, the days passed by.

6th February 2021

Uventus faced off against Roma at the Allianz Arena and the game got off to a quick start when Ronaldo got on the end of a curling cross from Cuadrado and headed it home, sending Uventus into the lead in the 13th minute of the game.

The Uventus fans burst out in excitement at the stadium and the stadium shook as they celebrated with Ronaldo, a resounding “SIUUUUUUU” echoing through the stadium as the Portuguese man hit the iconic celebration with style.

His teammates came to join in the celebrations seconds later, but Jason could only watch the match’s proceedings from one of the sky boxes, though he also did a mini celebration by himself in the room.

Of course, the room wasn’t empty and there were a few other people in the skybox since it was designed for a large group and Jason wasn’t going to pay fifty thousand Euros to rent the entire skybox when he could sit in one free of charge.

The only disadvantage would be that there would be other people in the sky box, but this time, he was seated in a room with some of his teammates family members so apart from having to give a few autographs and taking a few pictures, he didn’t have to deal with anything else.

While Jason watched the game from the skybox, the game continued and at the dying minutes of the first half, Dybala received a pass just outside the penalty box, weaseled himself between two defenders and skillfully put the ball past the Roma goalkeeper.

The stadium erupted again in cheers, drowning out the disappointed groans of the Roma fans in an instant while the Uventus players celebrated.

Shortly after that, the first half ended and soon enough, the second half began.

Right from the start of the second half, it was clear that the Roma team seemed to be doing all they could to get back in the game, both attacking and defensively.

They were especially aggressive in their attempts to retrieve the ball whenever they were not in possession, however, they could only do this for so long till it had a repercussion.

In the 69th minute, Ronaldo was brought down roughly in the penalty box when he was trying to take a shot at the goalkeeper.

The referee immediately ran over while pointing to the spot and a minute later, Ronaldo sent the goalkeeper the wrong way, and the ball into the back of the net.

The stadium erupted once again in excitement and the Roma fans couldn't be bothered to even try and motivate their players who were playing like absolute sh*theads(from their point of view).

Unfortunately for the Roma side, three wasn't the end of their misfortune and the ball soon ended at the back of their net once again, and this time it was due to an own goal.

While trying to block a cross from reaching the Uventus forwards, a Roma defender had mishit the ball and sent the ball into the back of his team's net by mistake, giving Uventus yet another goal.

At this point, the Roma fans wanted to nothing more than to get up and leave the stadium as an own goal at that point stung like a slap to the face, making them feel even worse than when the third goal had gone in earlier.

If not for the love, the players had for their team, they would storm the stadium and grab the idiotic defender by the neck.

Chapter 485: Coppa Italia Semi Finals; Second Leg

The trashing of the Roma team came to an end at the referee's whistle and the dejected Roma players walked off the field, their dissatisfaction with their own performance clear to see on their faces.

The manager and the fans weren't happy either, but there was nothing that could be done about the results of the game now and they could only do their best to make sure it didn't happen again.

The Uventus fans on the other hand didn't plan on letting the Roma players or their fans just leave the stadium without at least 'peppering' up their eyes with this loss and jeering chants were sung for a little while.

The Uventus fans only stopped when the Roma players began to leave the field, allowing for another stage of celebrations to ensue on the field.

Jason also headed out to join the players on the field.

9th February 2021

The next match for the Uventus team was the second leg of the Coppa Italia finals against Inter Milan and unfortunately for Jason, he still wasn't cleared by the team's medical team to play, much to his utmost displeasure.

He wanted nothing more than to get on the field and make a few rough tackles on Skriniar and see how he liked it.

Yes, tackles, and not dribbles. It seemed that Skriniar was one of those guys who fear of being dribbled would only make them more aggressive, so Jason planned to show him that he couldn't only retaliate by dribbling past him.

Unfortunately, there wouldn't be a chance for that as Jason was scheduled to miss the match, however, Jason gave some of his teammates some suggestions and arrived at the stadium on time to watch the game.

The match didn't take too long a time to kick off and Jason sat back to watch the game, pulling out his phone and planning to check a few things.

He had been at the tactical meeting for the game earlier and he knew that the manager wanted the players to play defensively, doing their best to hold on to their lead from the previous game so the game wasn't one that would have too much-attacking efforts from the Uventus side... at least, not until something unexpected happened.

For that reason, most of the players in the starting line-up were defensive players and the manager kept the players with the ability to change the game waiting on the bench so as to avoid wasting their energy prematurely.

As the match picked up the pace, it was clear that the Inter Milan team had caught the drift and were doing their best to get a goal that would change the game's situation a little bit.

Because of the away goals rule, they would need at least two to nil to outrightly win the game and that only made their job more difficult because the Uventus team was prepared to do all they could to make sure the Inter Milan team didn't even get to leave the starting line.

Since he already knew what to expect, Jason decided to spare himself the tension of watching and focus on something else, like reading the annoying-looking file from Maya Singh.

It was a report of the numbers that the company had made in sales since the product's launch at the beginning of the month and made it clear that she would send it to him every week so he could see how his 'investment' was doing.

Jason who wanted nothing more than to leave all the work to her could unfortunately not find a way to escape this chore even though he wasn't sure what he would be looking at.

But as he finally opened the file and started looking at the numbers, he didn't need to be a genius to notice that the company seemed to be selling quite well, especially considering that the product released was a new product that didn't have any presence previously on the market thanks to the heavy re-branding that Rosember had undergone.

'If these numbers keep up or rise even further, wouldn't I be at least a billionaire by the time I'm in my thirties?' Jason suddenly wondered as his eyes ran through the list of numbers with five digits mostly, as well as a few six digits.

While the grand total of the sales hadn't even reached a fortieth of the amount Jason originally invested, the numbers he was seeing, as well as the fact that it was still the first week since the product's launch made Jason have a lot of hope for the future.

The internal math he had quickly done told him that the math checked out.

WHOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!

The sudden eruption of cheers threw Jason out of his thoughts and caused him to refocus on the match where it seemed like something happened.

His eyes fell back on his pitch where he saw a group of players in white and black running down the sidelines to celebrate.

Jason nodded in approval of what he was seeing, but the assistant referee on the sidelines was saying a no to everyone's yes.

The flag was up and the goal was quickly reviewed only to find that the goal was to be disallowed for offside.

The Uventus fans were disappointed with the referee's decision, but there was little that could be done and the game soon resumed.

Despite the goal having been disallowed, the shock from the ball having gone put the Inter Milan team on high alert and reminded them that they could not afford to be too careless and concede another goal as that would set them back even further than they already were.

Thus they became more cautious with the ball which was exactly what Pirlo wanted and he silently watched from the sidelines, making eye contact with his players from time to time to remind them of the game plan.

In this manner, the game continued and time continued to run down, the first half soon coming to an end and the second half kickstarting shortly after.

The second half was reminiscent of the first, but this time the Inter Milan players were beginning to get a lot bolder on their attempts as time was slowly running out.

They didn't need anyone to tell them that the earlier they scored their first, the easier it would be to equalize, however, the Uventus team wasn't going to make it easy for them to get back into this game and they were no longer hiding their intentions.

Blatantly playing with ten players behind the ball, and only leaving Chiesa up front in case of a counterattack.

At this point, Jason knew there was nothing to see unless he was an Inter Milan fan who would willingly subscribe to such a tension-filled half of football.

His team was already leading and unless Inter Milan managed to score one goal, there would be nothing to see...

"Unless someone smacks that Skriniar guy," Jason muttered under his breath.

"What?" the person sitting next to Jason asked, seeming to have heard something.

"Nothing," Jason said without even glancing in her direction as he pulled out his phone once again.

Quickly searching for a very familiar phone number, he tapped the green button to dial and put the phone to his ear.

"Hello," Adele's voice graced Jason's ear a ring later.

"What's up, how's my baby?" Jason asked, smirking to himself.

"Your baby?" Jason could hear the confusion in her voice but he wasn't going to clarify anything.

"Your baby is tired, it's been meetings upon meetings with all the work you left behind, also, I've finally found another player to sign," seemingly accepting the name, she began to talk.

“That’s cray and all, but I was asking about Mila... you know, the amazingly beautiful blue BMW i8 I left in your care,” Jason interrupted, doing his best to hold back a snicker.

“... Oh Mila...” the sarcastic shift in her voice was clear enough to any listening ear and it let Jason know that his teasing tactics were working.

“She’s gutted that you didn’t even spend a few weeks in Italy and you’re already cheating on her with a high-maintenance girl,”

“Wha!?” Jason was surprised to have his whole teasing game turned back on him.

“She said I should tell you and your new side-piece to enjoy your honeymoon!” Adele continued, on a roll and not giving Jason any chance to get a word in.

“No no no, it’s not like that, I needed another car for convenience as there are things I need to be locomotive for,” Jason began explaining like a cheating bastard, playing along with whatever was going on.

“Well Mila said, you can take your locomotive needs and shove it down your side ride’s throat!” Adele said sternly in an excited tone.

“And her a**!” she added in an even louder tone.

“Whoa whoa whoa, damn girl, language,” Jason couldn’t stop himself from laughing out loud.

Chapter 486: How The Mighty Art Fallen

“So, who is the new guy that wants to hire you?” Jason asked after a while of him and Adele conversing about mundane matters.

“You should know him, he’s the Primera Liga’s current biggest transfer?” Adele said smugly, sounding proud of herself.

“... That’s that Nunez guy, isn’t it? 24 million Euros from Almeria, right?” Jason asked, remembering that he had read about that guy and that they had even played against each other. However, the last Jason heard about the guy was that he hadn’t been performing up to par as the biggest transfer of the Primera Liga.

Apparently things like injuries and adjusting to the new environment had affected his performances, though the guy was still doing reasonably well.

“Why would that guy need a new agent though? I mean someone who can aid in the negotiation of a record fee can’t be that terrible of an agent that his client would want to get rid of him less than half a year later, right?” Jason voiced out his thoughts.

“I’m not sure about the specifics, but apparently, he fired his former agent for issues with the contract negotiations, though I don’t yet know what that is,”*

“His agent was some guy named Federico Gulaz though,”* Adele told Jason what she knew and the name of the agent caused Jason’s eyebrow to rise up.

“Federico Gulaz? Rico Gulaz? That’s a bit too coincidental to be a mere coincidence,” Jason thought outwardly, laughing a little.

“What? Do you know him?”* Adele asked curiously.

“If he is who I think he is, then yes, I know that guy,”

“The guy who helped me with signing for Porto is named Rico Gulaz... and I fired him after,”

“You see where this is going? The similarities?” Jason laughed as he replied to her.

“Surely, it can’t be that coincidental?”* Adele wondered.

“Forget whether it’s coincidental, what I want to know is why he wants to hire you out of all the thousands of agents in Portugal,”

“You didn’t slink into somebody’s house again, did you?” Jason asked suspiciously.

“I was desperate back then! Why would I sneak into his house!?”* Adele snapped at Jason.

“Then why you?” Jason asked again as this part didn’t make much sense to him.

After all, there were other agents in Portugal and quite a few super agents would be rushing at the chance to be the agent of someone like Nunez, especially with his status as the biggest transfer into the Primera Liga.

If things went well, which was more than seventy percent sure, then Nunez would soon leave the Primera Liga for another record fee which meant millions in agent fees.

That was not something that anybody with a normal functioning brain would let slide, not to mention super agents who could see it coming from far off, so how did Adele even get the opportunity?

When did it become her turn to manage two talents with potential in the hundreds of millions?

How did Nunez even know about her?

Jason didn’t know why so many questions were appearing in his head for no reason, but it didn’t feel like it was because he cared for her career’s progression and rather it was because of something else that he couldn’t put a finger on.

“Do you think I can’t manage both you and him at the same time? Or do you think I did something shady to get this chance?”* Adele’s voice came back through the phone, sounding serious all of a sudden.

“I wasn’t asking that, I was just... ugh,”

“Ok, maybe my question sounded wrong, I’m happy for you and hope you get the job,” He sighed to himself, in a conflicted mood.

” ...”

”I’ll call you later to tell you how it goes,” Adele said and ended the call.

Even though he couldn’t see her, he felt like she had something else to stay, but had chosen to stay silent.

Jason sighed and lay back into his chair, his eyes returning to the field and he watched the ongoing match for a few seconds as he thought about what happened.

He had understood what happened, but he didn’t want to admit it out loud.

‘She’s not the same person,’ he said to himself internally a few times.

However, saying it didn’t convince him that he would not react the same if something similar happened again.

‘When did I become so suspicious as a person?’ he could not help thinking to himself.

Normally he was so uncaring that a normal person would consider it alarming and that was probably why he hadn’t seen the obvious signs with Sofia back then, so turning from that to this was strange to him, but he also knew the reason for the change.

Staying uncaring after what happened to him would be a stupid thing to do, not to mention that it wasn’t possible, but being this suspicious might be a bit too much.

“Ugh, this is annoying,” he groaned as he pulled out his phone and quickly typed out an apologetic message.

{Sorry for how I sounded earlier. I was just being insecure about losing the best agent in the world. Good luck with your work, and help me apologize to Mila as well}

He added a few emojis and read through the message again and unsurprisingly, his face took on a look of disgust as he cringed.

“How the mighty have fallen,” he muttered and face-palmed, covering his eyes as he pressed send.

The Jason of the previous reality inside him was laughing so hard at what he had become in this new life.

He was the one that his partners usually had to be suspicious of because of the ease at which he could get into a body-on-body collision meeting with another member of the female gender, yet here he was, sending apology messages to a girl he wasn’t even dating yet to apologize for suspecting her.

“Ugh,” he groaned and stood up to walk out of the luxury box as the referee blew the final whistle of the game.

Uventus had won and Jason was happy about that, but he had a few words to say to Skrinari, otherwise, he wouldn’t be at peace for not kicking him while he was down.

Chapter 487: A Bad Game

A few more days passed, and Jason was finally cleared. The medical team guaranteed his full recovery to the manager, which Jason thought was just in time as the day after was a match against Napoli.

The list of the players who would be heading to Naples with the team was released shortly after and Jason was pleased to find his name on the list.

It was a sight for sore eyes for sure and it served as the best form of motivation for Jason who went crazy in the training sessions following.

That same night, the Uventus players left for Naples where they would be having the game the next day.

13th February 2024

The Uventus players stepped on the field, their bodies tensed up in anticipation for the ninety minutes to come.

The pre-match formalities didn't reduce their tension and the match soon started, with the Napoli team kicking off the game.

The Uventus players immediately surged forward, aiming to retrieve possession and begin playing the game on their own terms, but the Napoli players didn't intend to let them have their way with the ball and they fought back how they knew to, keeping the ball moving and evading pressure.

The match continued, with both teams applying great pressure on each other, and each one looking like it could score at any minute.

Jason watched as the match raged on from the bench as the manager hadn't picked him to be a member of the starting line-up for reasons unknown to him.

He had hopes that he would get some game time in the second half though and he wasn't too disheartened by the shrug from the manager.

#30th minute...

The game had been raging on for quite a while, but a sudden occurrence had caused a pause in the match and the Napoli fans to shout out, cheering excitedly.

In the Uventus penalty box, the ball had smashed off of De Ligt's hand when Mertens took a shot at goal and the ball had been deflected out of play.

The Napoli players had swiftly held up their hands and called out to the referee, calling for a penalty.

The referee had run over while consulting the video review team and it was clear that the ball had met De Ligt's hand in an unfavorable position for the Uventus team.

Without a doubt, it was a penalty and the referee made his decision known.

The Napoli fans let out a wave of excited cheers even though the penalty hadn't been taken yet and they couldn't be sure if the ball would end up in the back of the net.

Lorenzo Insigne who stepped up to take the penalty didn't disappoint the Napoli fans' expectations and put the ball past Szczesny without much suspense in the 31st minute of the game.

The stadium had immediately burst out with an even louder wave of excited cheers as the fans clapped and cheered excitedly while their players celebrated their goal.

The Uventus players could only look on as the Napoli celebrated their goal, but they were only a little shaken by the goal and hadn't given up on the game.

Quite the contrary, in fact, they were now resolved to play even more attacking football and quickly equalize the game before it got out of their hand.

As soon as the game kicked off once more, the Uventus players immediately got down to business, sending the ball into their opponent's half as well as following after it, threatening to overload their opponents' defense and make an impact before they could resist, however, the Napoli team fought them off and forced the ball out of play, putting an end to the Uventus team's attack.

The Uventus team didn't give up however and time after time, they continuously looked for chances to burst forward and get themselves an equalizer, but the Napoli team stayed strong and kept them from achieving their goal until the referee blew the whistle to end the first half.

In the Uventus locker room, Pirlo didn't waste any time getting into the events of the first half with his players and they quickly started analyzing the best way to break past their opposition's defense.

Pirlo did his best, giving suggestions, adjusting the gameplan, and motivating the players before sending them back out to the field, making it clear that he wanted the match to end in at least a draw, otherwise their title run would become more difficult.

That was all the motivation the Uventus players needed and they headed back out to the field, ready to demolish their opponents, but try as they may, even by the seventieth minute, they still didn't have the equalizer they dearly wanted and had been working for.

At this point, Jason was already warming up on the sidelines after being given the heads up by the manager and soon, he was running onto the field after Chiesa had been taken off.

The ball had gone out for a Uventus corner so Jason had quickly made his way to Napoli's penalty box after stepping on the field.

Hastily reaching the penalty box, he nodded to a few teammates and took position in the box, pushing off Napoli players as he awaited the cross.

Fweeeeeeeeeee

At the referee's whistle, Cuadrado sent the ball into the penalty box from the left corner.

The players in Napoli's penalty box pushed off against each other and jumped at the ball, but it was Ronaldo who reached the ball first and quickly directed it at goal. However, the Napoli goalkeeper made a spectacular save to punch the ball over the crossbar, keeping Uventus behind on the scoreboard.

{What a chance! What a save! It's another corner!} the commentator spoke as Alex Sandro took the ball and headed to the right corner flag.

Once again, the players began arranging themselves in Napoli's penalty box, pushing off against each other as they tried to get into a good position to head the ball once it was flying in.

Fweeeeeeeeeee

At the referee's whistle, the ball was sent flying into Napoli's penalty box again, causing the players of both teams to once again rise into the air to reach it first.

This time, it was Chiellini who reached the ball first and he did not hesitate to send the ball at goal, causing the Napoli players to react immediately.

The Napoli goalkeeper once again sprung into action, jumping at the ball, barely managing to reach it and slap it back into play.

The ball flew back into play thanks to the goalkeeper's efforts, but in a bid to stop the goal, he had sent the ball flying in Jason's direction.

Chapter 488: A Bad Game II

Jason immediately reacted as soon as he saw the ball flying his way, but as the ball came in an unexpected angle, he only managed to barely turn himself in the ball's direction under the heavy pressure of his marker before struggling towards the ball.

Doing his best to hold off his marker, Jason reached the ball and lunged at it with the tip of his foot, poking it back at the Napoli goal, but the Napoli goalkeeper somehow managed to get back up and punch it up and over in a surprising display of goalkeeping excellence.

{Oh my! What a save!}

{How did that not go in!}

{Uventus have a lot to do if they wish to get past this goalkeeper!}

While the commentator was performing his oral gymnastics, Jason lay on the ground, covering his face as he couldn't believe the ball hadn't gone in, but he didn't stay on the ground for long as there would be another corner kick to be taken.

Quickly getting up to once again begin fighting for space with the Napoli players, he once again awaited the cross.

Fweeeeeeeee

Once again, the referee's whistle blew loudly and the ball was sent flying into their penalty box, but this time, the Napoli players weren't intending to let the Uventus players reach the ball first so they pushed hard against their markers, fighting tooth and nail to keep them from jumping for the ball.

In the end, the ball seemed like it was going to fly over everyone, but somehow, Jason managed to push away his marker and take to the air, jumping spectacularly and getting his head to the ball.

{And Jason!!!}

While the spectator had his tone filled with expectation, anyone who knew Jason from his days at Oporto would have known to tell him to calm down as they knew that Jason couldn't head for sh*t.

If it was a slow cross, then things could be a bit different, but a powerfully driven corner was beyond Jason's means and as they would expect, Jason absolutely skied the header, making it seem like he was a defender from the Napoli team instead of a Uventus players.

{Absolutely atrocious header! That should be at the back of the net!} the commentator shouted, causing Jason to want to sink into the ground.

He already knew his heading skills were bad and he didn't need the commentator rubbing it in his face.

Luckily, his teammates didn't say anything either, but Jason already knew that he would probably end up doing quite a few heading drills at the next training session.

The player quickly headed out of the penalty box, allowing the goalkeeper to take the goal-kick and a few seconds later, the ball was flying overhead to the middle of the field and play continued.

#83rd minute...

With time running out, Uventus were playing more desperately than ever. That they only needed only one goal to equalize the game served to compound their efforts and they continuously sent the ball forward more than ever.

Once again, they were on the attack and the ball reached Jason on the left flank and he didn't hesitate to cut in and run into the penalty box, making sure to keep himself a distance away from the Napoli players, however, the Napoli players continuously drew closer.

Using a few feints and fake shots, Jason managed to keep them away enough to create space for a shot and once he was in range, he sent a curling shot toward the right of the post, out of the reach of the goalkeeper, but the ball unexpected smashed against the bar and bounced back into play.

{Oh, the bar!}

{Morata's there! Could this be the equalizer!?!} the commentator shouted expectantly as the ball bounced in front of Morata who was faced with an open goal.

Without trying to control the ball, Morata immediately put his foot forward, but he had miscalculated the spin on the ball and the power he put into his foot sent the ball over the bar despite him being within two meters of the front of the goal.

{Oh! He's missed!}

{Napoli have their stars to thank for this! That should have gone in the back of the net!}

{The manager must want to pull out all the hair on his head with the way his players are performing out there on the pitch!} the commentator didn't hesitate to let out a jeer at the Uventus team.

#89th minute...

Uventus had still not given up on getting a goal and the ball was constantly flying forward, leaving Napoli at odds on how to deal with their efforts, yet somehow they had held on.

Yet this time, Uventus didn't want to take no for an answer as despite the Napoli team playing with all men behind the ball, Jason somehow managed to burst past all of them on the left flank and send a low cross into the penalty box.

Without delay, Ronaldo pushed past his marker and lunged into a sliding position to reach the ball first and send it at goal.

The Napoli goalkeeper lunged into the ball's path, managing to get a hand to it and trying to punch it away, but he barely deflected it again as the ball smashed against the bar and bounced towards the left where Jason was running toward.

{It's him and the open goal, can he be the light bringer!?!}

This time, there wasn't anyone around to disturb him and he kicked the ball into the back of the net.

{GOAL!!!}

{They've done it, after all their efforts, they've finally gotten their reward!} the commentator shouted as Jason ran down the sidelines jumping into a knee slide in celebration, but before he could bask in the joy of the moment, a loud whistle blast went off behind him, stopping everybody in their tracks as their eyes all turned to the assistant referee.

Not balking at everyone's glance, the assistant referee proudly held up the offside flag.

{The celebrations have come to a stand still! The offside flag is up!}

{The Uventus players don't want to accept this and they are making their complaints know to their referee}

With the Uventus players buzzing incessantly in his ear, the referee had no choice but to go and personally confirm whether the goal was offside or not.

Chapter 489: A Bad Game III

The referee headed to the sidelines to check the replay of the goal on the monitor while the Uventus players waited on the field expectantly in a tense mood.

They weren't the only ones either as everyone else in the stadium could feel the tension and knew what the referee's final decision would mean to the game.

If the goal was allowed, then Uventus would at least manage to take one point home after all their efforts and if the goal was disallowed, the Napoli would be the only winners after a hard fought battle to stay in front.

Every eye in the stadium was on the referee as he looked at the monitor and the referee could feel the eyes on his back despite not facing them directly, but he didn't let that affect him as he did his job.

Watching the replay, the referee saw what the assistant referee was referring to as offside.

When Ronaldo had hit the ball at the goal, it seemed like Jason's arm was behind the offside line a little bit, but it was hard to tell whether it was actually offside or not because of how close it looked.

Even with the specialized offside technology and the multiple cameras, it was difficult to make a decision, but the referee finally made up his mind and headed back to the field.

{Oh this is heartbreaking! The goal would be disallowed!} The commentator's words were like death knells to the Uventus players and their fans.

As the replay was shown on the stadium's huge screen, outrage broke out among the Uventus fans as they didn't agree with the referee's decision considering how close it was.

{The referee's decision isn't being accepted by the Uventus fans and they are making their displeasure known, but it won't change much}

On the field, some of the Uventus players were still trying to reason with the referee, but it was doomed to be for nothing as the referee wouldn't be changing his decision.

In the end, they had no choice but to try to continue the match and try to get a goal in the extra minutes that will be given by the referee, but to their dismay, the board held up the sign and only two minutes of added time would be given as extra time.

The Uventus tried to not be disheartened by the situation and once again started playing as best as they could, but the Napoli team that had been given a lifeline grabbed onto it as hard as they could and didn't let even leave open the slightest of spaces for the Uventus players.

In the end, the final whistle was blown and the match ended.

{It is over and it is a loss for the visitors and a disheartening one it is!}

{The equalizer just wouldn't come and they have lost!}

{They would have complicated feelings about that loss after the controversial decision from the referee to disallow the earlier goal, but for now, they can only tighten their laces and prepare for the next game} The commentator gave closing comments as the players started heading off the field.

{Jason looks especially distraught after that match. It's his first match after his injury in the match against Inter Milan}

{He'll need to get his mood up as Uventus will be going up against his home team in the next match for the first match of the round of 16}

While the commentator was talking, Jason lay on the field, looking at the open night sky through the stadium's opening, tired and annoyed, but he didn't stay like that for long.

The only thing that should be done after a loss was to work harder so he wouldn't lose next time.

He was soon pulled up by Dybala and they started heading to the locker room.

“Your heading is an atrocity,” Ronaldo’s words cut through the silence of the early morning as he threw a ball at Jason who was seated on the ground, breathing heavily.

“I can’t say that the last match’s loss was on you, but if you had scored the header earlier, then we could have probably pushed on for more than one goal,”

“Your actions matter, and you can’t waste clear chances in front of goal because you aren’t good with one part of your body,” he continued talking to Jason who was now looking at him with rapt attention.

“Do you know how many header goals and left-footed goals I have scored in my career,”

“I couldn’t have that number if I didn’t learn how to use my head or my left leg,”

“A weak foot is an illusion, you use both legs to walk, run, jump, and stand. None of them are weak, it’s all in the head,”

“Sure you’re good with both legs, but that’s only helpful up to places your leg can reach, and that needs to change,” Ronaldo stated, not even bothering to listen to Jason’s opinion about his actions.

Ronaldo wasn’t going to have someone on his team flunk goals that could help the team in dire situations because he didn’t feel like learning how to head the ball.

With that said, the training session began and the focus was on getting Jason to learn how to head the ball better.

Starting with him getting a feeling for heading the ball while trying to score, Jason soon began learning that there was more to heading than meeting the ball with his head.

Things like anticipating the header, getting to the right height in time, curling angle, positioning to connect, with the ball, as well as the power applied all mattered.

Thus learning to be a good header of the ball was easier said than done and Jason was barely just getting his foot in the door after a training session with Ronaldo who was one of the best headers of the ball in football.

But after the session, Jason felt like he was beginning to get a feel for heading the ball, however, he still had a long way to go before he could confidently take to the air while hoping to score.

He also couldn't spend the whole day only learning how to head the ball, so it was something that would only begin to show over time, but at the moment, it was a good start for Jason.

There was only one issue... his hair affected his heading skills a lot and Jason could now begin to understand why players who were considered as good headers usually didn't have a lot of hair on their head.

Considering whether to cut his hair was something he had put away for later though as he didn't feel like he was that good in the hair to decide whether he needed to get rid of his hair or not.

Chapter 490: Him or The Team I

17th February

The sun that shone over the streets of the city of Porto was beginning to disappear behind the horizon when a black and white bus with the Uventus logo on its side slowly drove into the compound of the Oporto team's home stadium, Estadio do Dragao.

The Uventus team had arrived for the first leg of the Champions League round of 16 tie against Oporto and their arrival caused the nearby fans to look over at the bus carrying the players that would soon be running out on the field.

Some fans tried to get closer to the bus, but the security guards held a tight line, not letting anyone through to hamper the arrival of the visiting team.

The bus soon disappeared out of sight of the fans and drove behind the stadium to an entry for players and staff personnel of the club.

Finally coming to a stop, the Uventus players began to deboard, everyone of them carrying at least one bag that contained their effects.

Cameras continuously flashed as the players got off the bus and walked into the stadium and the flashes of the camera increased or decreased proportionally, depending on the player who was being captured.

For most of the Uventus players, it was their first time at the Estadio do Dragao, but for Jason who had been playing at this stadium for most of the previous year and had only been gone for about a month, a nostalgic feeling rushed up through his body as he once again laid sights on the stadium of the club where he began his football career.

As the cameras picked up Jason, the place filled up with flashing lights, reminiscent of when Ronaldo had gotten off the bus a few seconds earlier.

As a player on loan returning to play a Champions League game against his home club, it was definitely warranted for him to be the center of attention, but Jason didn't mind the flashing cameras and only smiled behind his face mask as he entered the stadium along with the rest of his teammates.

"Feeling homesick?" Jason heard Mckennie's voice behind him.

"Not really, it's barely been a month," he shook his head with a little laugh.

"I was about to say you shouldn't let it affect you on the pitch, but you seem like you're good," Mckennie said in a low tone as he patted Jason's shoulder.

"Oh, thanks,"

Why would his homesickness affect his performance on the pitch?

Maybe for someone else it could happen, but Jason didn't think his feelings to trash 'Mylo's club' was weaker than the love he had for his home team.

At this point, the best Jason could promise his home team was that he wouldn't do a flamboyant celebration if he managed to score in the game.

Going forward, Jason finally got to experience what it felt like to be in the away team's locker room at the Estadio do Dragao and he for one did not care nor react to the obvious different level of comfort as compared to the home team's locker room.

These things were normal in football and as long as the home teams weren't too obvious with it, these things were ignored.

As the players began to prepare for the game, changing into their jerseys and putting on their equipment, the manager once again began to give a rundown of the previously discussed game plan.

"Like we already discussed, we'll be going with our usual 4-4-2 formation,"

"Buffon will be the starting goalkeeper, Chiellini and Bonucci are the starting center backs,"

"Danilo and Alex Sandro will be on the right and left sides of the back line, they will alternate between their attacking and defensive duties so whenever we're attacking from the right, Cuadrado will move up to assist on the attack while Alex Sandro will remain behind to form a three-man backline, and vice versa,"

"Unless absolutely necessary, I want there to always be at least three men covering our backs,"

"Mckennie and Ramsey will form a center midfield partnership, doing their part in defending the center, sending the ball down to the flanks, and staying ready to assist on the attack,"

"On the wide right will be Kulusevski, I want you alternating between helping out on the flanks and helping the two others in midfield,"

Pirlo expounded, turning to Kulusevski who responded with a nod.

“Jason, you’re on the left, with a duty mainly as a left winger rather than a midfielder, I want you making runs, annoying the defenders with whatever tricks you have up your sleeves whenever you’re with the ball,”

“If you see a chance to break past, go for it, and keep your eyes peeled to find open teammates,”

“When you’re not on the ball, you can come back to help out in midfield, or stay forward to try making runs in behind the defense, I’ll leave your decision to your discretion,”

Jason nodded affirmatively as he adjusted his socks, indicating that he got everything down.

“Ronaldo and Morata, you two are up front,” Pirlo began, turning to the two front men.

“Morata, your duties in this match include helping a bit on the right wing whenever Kulusevski drops back to midfield,”

“When that happens, our formation will shift to a 4-3-3 one with Jason on the left, Ronaldo in the center, and you on the right,”

“You’ll be playing as an inside forward or a supporting striker then,”

Pirlo explained Morata’s duties before finally turning to Ronaldo,

“And Ronaldo... Do what you do best,” Pirlo finished with a smirk.

“Clown around?” Ronaldo asked with a serious face, causing everyone to burst out in laughter, dissipating the tension that had been slowly rising.

"I think they meant doing the Siuuuu," Jason added from the side and the Uvventus players laughed even more with some of them doing a mock version of the celebration.

"No no, its' scoring penalties," Mckennie also chimed in, causing everyone to laugh as well.

"Wrong! What this guy does best is having kids," Cuadrado didn't allow himself to be left out of an opportunity to tease a teammate.

"Okay okay, Ronaldo, just score goals please, we don't need you trying to have kids on the pitch," Pirlo added with a straight face, but no one believed the serious look on his face after hearing what he said.

The room was filled with laughter right after.