

LEGENDS 521

Chapter 521: A Tough Game in Verona II

Fweeeeeeeeeeeee

The second half of the game began at the referee's signal, and the ball once again began moving swiftly across the pitch.

After recharging, motivating, and inspiring themselves during the break, the players were ready to once again challenge each other to determine who was superior in the remaining forty-five minutes of the game.

Jason was still on the bench and watched the game resume. The manager hadn't yet deemed it needed for him to be on the pitch, so he had no choice but to wait patiently while hoping that his teammates could quickly break the deadlock.

Luckily, the changes caused by the manager's tactical changes at halftime did not take long to show.

#49th minute...

The Uventus players quickly made it clear that they hadn't merely been resting during the break.

They had quickly begun oppressing their opponents right after they got back on the field.

Their coordination and tactical movement made it difficult for the opponents to respond in time, and they were unable to quickly find a counter to the Uventus players' actions.

The Uventus players, however, knew that they couldn't keep this up for long and needed to make this momentum count quickly.

Luck was on their side as they soon found space on the right and made a pass to Morata in the right side of the penalty box.

Morata immediately turned at the goal and tried to take a shot, but he could instantly judge that there were too many players between him and the goal.

Faking a shot instead of taking the shot, he managed to get the player react and create space, but there was still not enough space and he opted to pass to Ronaldo who was closer to the face of goal instead.

Ronaldo received the ball with a deft first touch, then flicked it past to the weaker side of an approaching defender with his second touch, creating enough space to take a shot.

With no one left between him and the goal, Ronaldo didn't hesitate to drive it home into the bottom right corner of the goal.

{Of course, it goes in!}

{We had to wait through the first forty-five minutes, but the second forty-five had gotten off to a resounding start!}

{Uventus take the lead, and who else but him is behind it!} the commentator shouted as Ronaldo ran off to celebrate, accompanied by the other Uventus players who were happy that the game had changed.

On the sidelines, Pirlo signaled to Jason to come over while they were celebrating the goal.

"Start warming up. You'll be coming on soon," the manager whispered to Jason, who nodded affirmatively.

Pirlo knew that now that they had scored, they had the momentum, and they needed to take advantage of that momentum to draw further forward and kill any signs of upheaval from their opponents, who had made it clear that they wouldn't give up this match easily.

Jason should be able to help with that if he was let loose on the opponents, giving them more pressure to cope with.

While the manager was considering other tactical changes, Jason began warming up, and his movements were visible to the other camp.

The Verona manager immediately understood what Pirlo was thinking of doing, but he couldn't do anything at this moment but to have faith in his players.

They had already devised different tactical responses to whatever Uventus might throw at them during the break.

All the manager could hope for was that his players remembered what they had spoken about.

The celebrations were soon over, and the game once again resumed.

Jason was still warming up on the sidelines, waiting for the manager to call him on.

Luckily, he didn't have to wait too long, as by the 60th minute, the manager called for a substitution.

Jason and Dybala were subbed on for Mckennie and Morata, respectively. Jason took his position on the left side of the midfield, while Dybala was upfront with Ronaldo.

The few Uventus fans at the stadium increased their cheers as they watched the two players run across the field, their hopes for the scoreline to increase shooting upwards.

Jason and Dybala quickly took their places on the field, and the match, which had paused due to a deadball, quickly resumed with a throwing from Kulusevski.

#64th minute...

After coming onto the pitch, Jason had already had a couple of touches on the ball while the team was in possession, but no attacking attempts had been made from the left yet.

However, that did not take long to change as the ball soon found Jason on the left flank and he immediately took off down the left flank.

The Hellas Verona players immediately recognized the threat and arranged themselves as their manager had told them to.

Jason, who didn't know the Verona players' plan, kept moving down the flank, but he soon realized that something was wrong.

Two players had arranged themselves in annoying positions, with one by his right side and one further forward, but also on his right side.

This made it impossible for him to cut in towards the center from the flank. Annoyingly enough, there was a third defender on his right, but this guy was behind him, and he stayed much closer to him than the other two, making even a cut-back impossible.

With this set-up, the only way out was the space they had left in front of him that led further down the flank. But he knew that it was a trap because as long as they maintained their current shape, he would either end up running out of play or would have to face them directly in the end, which would most probably result in him losing the ball.

Another annoying thing was that if he waited until he was too near the box to take them on, he would be almost out of space because the further forward he moved down the flank, the lesser the space he had to maneuver himself.

Chapter 522: A Tough Game in Verona III

The time it took for Jason to analyze his situation was not more than two seconds and instantly he knew that this defensive set-up was going to be a problem for him as long as he was on any flank.

If it were just the two defenders in front, then he would inevitably find his way out, but the third guy who was right behind him and hassling him changed everything.

With the guy hassling him from behind and not giving him any time to think of a way out while also making sure to stay on the right side and ensure that there was no way infield for Jason, Jason now had only two options.

Either run forward until he ran out of space, or turn back and look for a teammate to avoid losing possession.

However, Jason wouldn't let the opposition's tactic block him in the first time, as doing that would embolden their confidence.

If their confidence grew, they would inevitably play better because to them, he would be trapped, and that would make them settle into their game.

That could not happen.

He had to keep them on their toes.

Suddenly turning on his left side as if he wanted to return the ball back to his teammates, the guy who was hassling dropped his guard a bit, thinking the plan had worked, but Jason suddenly changed his direction and charged forward.

That sudden instant movement gave Jason enough time to pull away almost three meters before the guy could respond.

Jason chased after the ball down the left flank, knowing that he was still mostly trapped as the other two players on his right were following him down the flanks.

Jason's pace, however, gave him enough speed to move past the guy directly behind him and slot the ball in between the two of them with a sharp flick as he suddenly cut to the right.

The two players immediately tried to shorten the distance between them, but Jason jumped in between them before they could close the space, and the two of them ended up colliding.

{We thought he was trapped, but he's out and away!} the commentator shouted as Jason burst out of the encirclement.

Jason was also a bit surprised that he had managed to escape.

He had thought it would be more difficult, but luckily, he had listened to his instincts and jumped between the two players earlier.

Now that he was out, he wanted to quickly release the ball, as the Verona players saw him as a major threat and wanted to shut him down quickly.

Jason was already scanning the field for a teammate in a good position, but no one in front was making a run, and that annoyed Jason to no end.

He didn't want to end this movement with a mere pass to ensure that his team retained possession.

However, since no one was in a good position, Jason had no choice but to take matters into his own hands. From more than thirty yards out, he hit the ball at goal with as much power and accuracy as he could muster.

The ball flew off like a rocket and swooshed past everyone, heading towards the Verona goal.

The goalkeeper kept his eyes on the ball and tried to predict where the ball would fall.

Still, he wasn't able to keep up, and the ball curled weirdly and dodged the goalkeeper's dive before rifling against the crossbar and smashing downwards, bouncing behind the goal line before settling into the back of the net.

{Off the bar and in!!!}

{Magnificent! Absolutely magnificent! Everything about that goal was perfect!}

{The opponents had him trapped, but he found a way out and turned the situation around!}

{What a moment! What scenes! What a goal!}

{He simply went I'll do it myself and he did!}

{Clearly, he's been taking shooting lessons from a particular teammate}

While the commentator was going crazy on the mic, Jason dodged his teammates, who tried to drag him into a hug and ran down the sidelines.

As he ran, he pulled out an imaginary mic from his non-existent back pocket and acted as if he were singing into it before jumping into a knee slide. At the end of the knee slide, he held out the imaginary mic and dropped it.

The crowd became even more ecstatic than before as the other players finally reached Jason on the sidelines.

The Hellas Verona fans looked on in amazed stupor, still not recovering from what they had just witnessed.

Even the Verona players looked on in confusion, as did the manager, who still could not tell what had gone wrong.

He had made plans, and it was clear that they worked... or at least they did until disaster struck.

He hadn't been so proud as to think that his tactic couldn't be broken, but to see it broken so easily was disheartening.

It wasn't a problem with a tactic; it was with the person they had been trying to trap.

Jason's easy breakthrough only motivated the manager though, and he quickly called one of his players to tell him a few things.

The celebrations soon ended, and the game resumed again, with Uventus now having two goals in front.

Jason soon realized that the annoying tactic that had been devised to prevent him from cutting in wasn't going to be changed and had instead become even tighter.

Annoyingly enough, it was working, but he wasn't able to do much with the ball.

Luckily, he was dexterous enough that they couldn't prevent him from passing to his teammates, but any individual actions that looked like it would lead to something would be quickly blocked.

In the end, Jason stopped trying to make individual runs and focused on his passing game instead.

#77th minute...

The Hellas Verona side was continuously trying to get behind the Uventus defense line and their efforts finally paid off when a Hellas Verona midfielder found the striker who was making a run in behind.

De Ligt tried to reach the ball, but the ball somehow managed to make it past him and reached the striker.

The striker did not betray his team's efforts to get him the ball and he dashed into the penalty box and slotted the ball past Sczesny.

{They have one back! Is this the start of a comeback!?}

Chapter 523 A Tough Game in Verona IV

The stadium erupted in a bout of cheers as the Hellas Verona fans finally had something to shout about in the game.

The fans who had been slowly losing their motivation to cheer for their team once again had their hopes filled to the brim as there was now only one goal between them and their opponent.

The plausibility and the possibility of them being able to score that goal didn't matter to the fans.

All that mattered was that there was a chance, and they automatically believed that there was a way back.

The Hellas Verona players had also been thoroughly motivated by their goal and were already taking the ball back to the middle of the field without an exuberant celebration, after all, they were still behind.

Pirlo immediately recognized the shift in momentum and immediately started shouting out instructions to some of his players from the sideline, not caring whether anyone else could hear him shouting out instructions.

With the ball back in the middle of the field, the match quickly resumed, and the Uventus team kicked off the game once again.

Now that their opponents were this close to them at this point in the game, there were only two ways that any normal team could play for the rest of the game.

They could either hope to defend their one-goal lead for the rest of the game or do their best to score another goal to increase it.

However, a team with as much quality and a strong mindset like Uventus wouldn't subject themselves to a streamlined choice like that unless the situation was truly that dire.

What Pirlo wanted his players to do was a combination of both tactics.

#83rd minute...

De Ligt made a long pass towards the left flank, and the ball rolled speedily at Jason, who wasn't running and was holding his marker off so he could receive the pass.

Looking at the ball, which was still rolling speedily even as it neared him, Jason suddenly changed his mind.

Spreading his legs wide as the ball reached him, he allowed it to pass between his legs and continue moving behind him.

His marker wasn't expecting that, and Jason used his surprise to escape from him and run behind him to chase after the ball.

{He's put on the afterburners and managed to reach the ball before it rolls out of play!} the commentator shouted, but Jason was already cutting back infield with the ball.

The Verona players were already tightly getting into formation, but their annoying positioning was still loose, thanks to Jason's pacy and sudden attack.

Jason immediately made use of that and continued infield, leaving the defenders no other than to give up on zonal marking and try and pressure him to push him back out to the flank, but that was a mistake.

As soon as he was near enough and tried to make a tackle, Jason pushed the ball between his legs and jumped behind him, escaping infield.

The defender immediately realized his mistake and tried to react, but as soon as he turned around, the ball once again went in between his legs, this time back towards the flank.

The confusion of what had just happened disoriented his senses and caused him to trip over while still in motion while Jason escaped from him.

With one defender out of the way and his way infield open, everyone thought Jason would make a run infield, but Jason chose to send a pass forward instead.

Unleashing an inwardly curling trivela pass into the penalty, the ball curled behind the defenders and found Dybala in the penalty box.

Dybala immediately hit the ball first time, trying to send it into the back of the net, but the goalkeeper was alert and jumped immediately at the ball, unleashing a spectacular dive and managing to reach the ball with the tip of his fingers.

The ball deflected off the goalkeeper's fingertips and slammed against the bar before flying out of play.

{What a save!}

{The goalkeeper sprung into action there, keeping his team's hopes alive!}

The fans were unleashing a thunderous applause at the goalkeeper's heroics that had prevented Uventus from once again taking a two goal lead.

The Uventus players quickly rushed into the opponent's penalty box for the corner kick while the Verona defenders were doing all they could to block them from having any freedom.

"Sorry about that earlier," Dybala said to Jason as they both stood at the edge of the box.

"Oh, sure," Jason swallowed heavily, his breathing a bit strained as he kept an eye on the ball at the corner of the field.

While it was regrettable that they hadn't been able to score a third, Jason figured the game was not over, and there would be more chances. He could not afford to be angry about something like that at the moment.

Fweeeeeeeeeee

The ball was sent flying in at the referee's whistle and all the players began moving towards where they expected the ball to be.

Jason stayed near the edge of the ball in case it came bouncing his way, but he didn't get that chance as Chiellini got his head to the ball and did his best to direct it as the goal, but only slightly missing and the ball flew just over the crossbar, skimming the top of the net.

87th minute...

The ball once again reached Jason on the left flank, and once again, he quickly took off down the flank.

Jason had realized that his markers were not usually always around him as he wasn't the only one on the team so as long as he moved fast enough, he could have a bit more space before they came at him and that could help him to escape their defensive efforts.

Once again, he cut infield, moving toward the guy who was right beside him, not paying attention to the guy coming from behind.

As Jason drew nearer, the guy instinctively narrowed the space between his legs. He thought Jason would once again try to nutmeg him, but Jason noticed the narrowing space between his legs and changed his plan.

Suddenly flicking the ball back to the left, Jason left the player confused and continued running down the flank.

Chapter 524 A Tough Game in Verona V

The three Hellas Verona defenders immediately gave chase, intending to push Jason out of play, but they had underestimated Jason's pace, and thanks to getting enough of a headstart, Jason slowly drew ahead of them.

By the time he reached the side of the penalty box, he was already slightly in front of the first defender on that line, who would prevent him from going forward and cutting in.

Jason dared not stop his run and flicked the ball into the penalty box while maintaining his speed.

He had flicked the ball forward so no one could get to it while chasing after him, but thanks to that, the ball was quickly approaching the line.

Trying to cut in to reach the ball, Jason came side by side with the last obstacle, and the guy slammed into Jason, trying to push him off the ball.

The push almost sent Jason flying, but Jason did his best to stay on his feet and reach the ball, which he sent across and into the face of the goal.

Jason fell down after that, but the ball was already flying across the face of the goal.

Due to being unable to perfectly target the cross, the ball flew above Ronaldo, Jason's intended target, and towards Chiesa, who put his head to the ball instead.

Unfortunately, Chiesa was not too careful with his header, and the ball flew out of play instead of into the back of the net.

{Wildly off target! The ball must have just skewed off his head there!} the commentator shouted, seeing the Uventus fans were shouting loudly in outrage.

However, the fans weren't just shouting because Chiesa had headed the ball off target, but because of Jason, who had been sent flying inside the penalty box, yet the referee hadn't given a call for a penalty.

It was clear that the body slam into Jason was meant to disturb the play, and it was also clear that the ball was nowhere near the Verona player when he tackled Jason bodily, yet the referee stayed silent.

The Uventus fans weren't having it and shouted loudly, some cursing out the referee.

However, none of their actions changed the referee's decision to ignore Jason's fall in the penalty box and the game continued with a goal kick from the Hellas Verona goalkeeper.

#90+1...

The assistant referee on the sidelines had held up the board to signal that there would be three minutes of added time a minute ago, which had increased the desperation of the Hellas Verona team, who were doing all they could to send the ball forward.

Long balls into the box with as many players going forward as possible were all they could do at the minute, and the Uventus team had finally settled back to defend their lead, as they had been unsuccessful going forward.

Time was almost out so they decided to just defend their lead and end the match with their win, but the Hellas Verona team was doing all they could just to score, pressuring the Uventus players to no end.

The Verona players were on the left flank and were passing the ball around, seemingly looking for the perfect opportunity to cross, but the Uventus players were not giving them any time on the ball.

In the end, the player with the ball sent it into the penalty box with a high cross.

Jason who was at the edge of the Uventus penalty box saw that the ball would land near him so he moved closer, stepping into the penalty box, but he suddenly saw a Hellas Verona player running in his direction, seemingly after the ball as well.

Jason didn't let down his guard and tried to predict where the ball would land, but after a while, he realized that it would probably fly over them and out of play, so he gave up on the ball.

The Hellas Verona player, however, seemed to have other ideas.

He jumped into the air as if he hoped to catch the ball, but he had trickily directed his jump so that while he was in the air, he collided with Jason and fell to the ground, unable to reach the ball.

As annoyed as Jason was that the guy ran into him while making a useless effort, he didn't react and turned to go get the ball from the throwing line when the referee suddenly blew his whistle and ran at them, pointing at the penalty spot and leaving everyone, especially Jason confused.

Turning over, Jason saw the Verona player rolling over like he was in great pain.

"What sort of madness is this one displaying?" Jason couldn't help blurting out in dismay.

The player had jumped into him, but how was Jason's team the one conceding a foul?

As if that was not all, the referee came running at him and pulled out a yellow card.

"How?" Jason who was usually impassive, was now beyond flabbergasted and had his mouth open in shock, but the referee had no answers for him and just took out a notebook, started writing in it, and turned away.

'What is this rubbish?' Jason could not help but think, yet while he was still thinking, the players of both teams had arrived, and it was clear that their tempers were high.

One Hellas Verona player suddenly charged at Jason after seemingly checking on his teammate, who was on the floor in pain, slamming against him just as the referee turned away.

Jason was knocked back, and realizing what had just happened, he was incensed because this was total bullsh*t.

The player who had slammed into him the first time didn't seem to have let out enough anger, though, and charged at him again.

Unfortunately, there was no one near enough to stop him, so Jason just dodged the guy's attack, calming himself as he knew that any form of retaliation would end with him getting another yellow card.

Luckily, the guy couldn't run amok for much longer as the Uventus players and some Hellas Verona players soon got between him and Jason.

"Stay calm, stay calm," Dybala repeated to Jason as he could clearly see that Jason was annoyed.

"..." Jason stayed silent as he definitely wasn't calm.

The referee had turned back, annoyed by this conflict and had put his hand into his pocket and was about to pull out cards, but his hands froze in his pockets when he saw how the Uventus players were looking at him.

Forget his authority as the referee. He felt that if he dared pull out another card, they would beat him up right there on the pitch.

Chapter 525 A Tough Game in Verona VI

The referee took his hand away from his pocket and moved closer to warn the players against conflict despite the fierce looks he was getting from the Uventus players, who were not happy at that moment.

It was already enough that they were on the wrong end of the referee's decision and had conceded a penalty. However, the referee was still acting annoying at that moment and the Uventus players didn't have the patience to deal with that bullsh*t.

Some of the Uventus players went to talk to the referee, still not having given up on correcting the referee's decision, but the referee remained adamant and sent all the players out of Uventus's penalty box.

Soon, the Hellas Verona penalty taker put the ball down on the spot and stepped back away from it, while Sczesny jumped around on the spot, trying to pump himself up for the penalty kick.

The Uventus players, along with the other Hellas Verona players, stayed at the edge, waiting for the referee's whistle.

Fweeeeeeeee

The penalty taker jogged slowly towards the ball, pumping his feet and slowing down suddenly when he was near it. He almost faked the shot before finally sending the ball towards the bottom right corner of the goal.

Sczesny's instinct had told him that the bottom left was the most likely direction for the ball, and he had jumped in that direction as soon as the ball took flight. right before the ball crossed the goal line, Sczesny got his hands to it, grabbing it tightly and pulling it closer immediately.

{Saved!}

{Sczesny has saved his team in the final minutes of the gam-... oh what's going on here?!}

Fweeeeeeeeeeeee!!!

The referee had blasted his whistle loudly and was once again pointing at the penalty spot as he walked closer to a Hellas Verona player at the edge of the penalty box and pulled out a yellow card to show him.

{It seems the player had stepped into the penalty box before the ball was kicked and the referee wants the penalty to be retaken!}

{Hellas Verona are in luck!}

The Uventus players could not believe what they were hearing and immediately protested to the referee that they weren't even the ones at fault, so why did the penalty have to be retaken?

However, the referee wasn't listening to their pleas at all.

Unfortunately, the rules allowed the penalty to be taken even if an attacking player stepped into the penalty box before the penalty was taken.

Emphasis on 'could'.

The decision would lie with the referee whether to allow the team at fault to retake a penalty and this time, the referee was siding with the Hellas Verona team even though it was their player who broke the rules.

{The player has been booked for his offense, but getting a yellow card so his team can get another chance with a penalty cannot be said to be a bad deal!}

{The penalty would be retaken!} the commentator shouted as the Hellas Verona penalty taker once again put the ball on the spot and stepped back, determined to put the ball past Sczesny this time.

"Why doesn't that referee just put on the Verona jersey? What is this absolute bullsh*t, man?" One of the Uventus fans in the stands cursed loudly, not caring who heard his words.

The other Uventus around agreed with his words, and for a short while, they cursed at the referee, but they soon quietened down as the penalty was about to be taken.

The Juventus fans and players could not help but hope that Sczesny would make another save like the one he had made earlier.

Fweeeeeeeeeeeee

The player once again jogged towards the ball and this time he hit it without any hesitation like the previous time, but once again, he had sent the ball towards the bottom right corner.

Once again, Sczesny was also on the way towards the bottom right corner of the goal after the ball, but this the ball was moving a lot faster than earlier and he barely got the tip of his finger to the ball when it smashed past his hands and smacked into the back of the net.

{We thought it was over, they're saying it's not! Well taken penalty!}

{Sczesny was no match for it a second time!} the commentator shouted excitedly, not caring in the slightest about the circumstances that led up to the penalty.

The Uventus players were not distraught as they watched the Hellas Verona team celebrate the penalty that had equalized the game... they were pissed at what had just happened.

They had been up by two less than twenty minutes ago, but now, they had lost their two goal lead and they were not happy about it, especially considering the circumstances left in the game.

"Come on guys, there should be a few minutes left,"

"The referee shouldn't blow the whistle immediately after we kickoff, so there should still be a chance," Chiellini tried to motivate the players, checking the time and seeing that there was only a few seconds left till the three minutes of added time was over.

"With how that guy is acting, I'm surprised he hasn't blown the whistle already," Dybala scoffed, glancing hatefully at the referee.

"Giorgio is right, the game isn't over yet," Ronaldo echoed, also visibly upset by what had happened, but he wasn't the kind to give up before the final whistle was even blown.

Heeding the seniors on the team, the Uventus players began heading back to their positions on the field for the kickoff.

Jason was especially annoyed as he walked as back to his position on the flank, but he had no way to let out his annoyance as he knew that a bottle with a high inner pressure was better left closed as once it was open, it would be difficult to close up back.

He had to stay closed up no matter what otherwise, he might end up getting booked again and be suspended in the coming matches.

For the sake of his playing time in the next match, Jason stayed silent, but once the ball reached him, all his composure flew out of the window.

Chapter 526 The Stuff of Legend

Fweeeeeeeeeee

The referee blew the whistle once again to kick off the game, keeping his eyes on his watch and leaving his whistle in his mouth as it wouldn't be too long from now that he would have to blow the final whistle.

The Uventus players didn't know the referee's plans, but they knew they had little time left and quickly started the game.

Knowing that they would have to deal with enraged opponents, the Hellas Verona players immediately rushed into the Uventus half of the field and charged at the player with the ball.

Knowing that he didn't have much time on the ball, Ramsey sent it over to the left flank, where Jason was waiting, having chosen not to run forward.

As soon as the ball rolled towards Jason, he felt like his head caught fire, and his whole body screamed at him to take the ball and run.

Jason hadn't yet chosen to respond when his body began to move.

He could hear someone running towards him, and his body instantly moved as he caught a glance at the player as he approached.

Waiting until the player was close enough, Jason flicked over the player and jumped past him to catch the ball.

The other Hellas Verona players weren't waiting and watching for Jason to just take off with the ball, but another player came closer while the ball was still in midair.

Waiting until the player was close enough, Jason tapped the ball as it was coming down in between his legs and once again ran past the player, running toward the center with the ball.

Due to the opponent's annoying tactic of limiting him on the flanks, Jason decided to make a run through the middle, but that was almost like choosing to go from frying pan to fire.

Jason also knew that his move was riskier, as there would be more players trying to take him down in the center, but he preferred the space in the middle to the tight flank.

At least, for the moment, that was what his instinct was telling him, and Jason had not bothered arguing.

The match was already slipping out of their grasp, and they were also almost out of time, so it didn't matter if he was a little selfish with the ball, he thought as he kept moving forward.

Funnily enough, because of his sudden move to get past the two Verona players, there was none of his teammates in front of him, and it was now him alone against the rest of the Hellas Verona players in front of him.

'One at a time,' he thought to himself as he faked a shot and did a reverse elastico with his right foot, escaping another Verona player, but as he dodged that guy, there were two more players in front.

Jason evaded the first guy with a La Crocheta before chaining that with a Cruyff turn to get past the next player.

Because he was fully focused on what was going on in front of him, Jason's brain wasn't registering anything else, and because of that, he missed what was going on around him. But if he wasn't focused, he'd realize that the crowd was going absolutely wild at how he was still going.

Right from when Jason got through the first two players, the crowd had their attention on him. After he went through the next two players, the crowd was already shouting wildly, with two different types of noises coming from the two sets of fans.

The Uventus fans were hailing Jason and chanting his name, almost biting out their fingernails every second he was on the ball and still advancing.

The Hellas Verona fans, on the other hand, were shouting at their players to take Jason down before he went any farther.

{What are we witnessing here!?!}

{He's going on his own!?!}

{He's gotten through four, and there are still two left between him and the goalkeeper!?! Can he go all the way!?!} The commentator was adding to the tension in the stadium while everyone watching the game from their TVs in other parts of the world was now on the edge of their seats, waiting to see the result of this run.

Jason had no idea all this was going on, and he was still locked in on focus mode. His body's adrenaline and danger response system had already taken over.

He immediately spotted his last two obstacles before the goalkeeper and watched as they came running in.

One was the right center back, while the other was the left center back, and they were coming at him from the right and left, respectively.

The guy on the right seemed like he would reach him first and was already jumping into a sliding tackle.

Jason immediately moved his left leg in front of the moving ball and angled his leg so that as the ball hit his leg, it rose up a bit. Once it was in the air, he hit it with his left heel again, sending it into the air over the defenders.

With the ball flying over the defenders, all that remained was getting past the two defenders, which was easy enough now that he was without the ball.

He jumped over the first defender's sliding tackle and dodged the second defender's attempt to grab his clothes, his eyes following the ball that had begun its descent.

Seeing the goalkeeper rushing off his line at him, Jason immediately knew that he couldn't wait for the ball to return to reach him, so he angled himself for a volley with his left foot and leaped up to meet the ball mid-air.

Jason met the ball in the air in the most perfect position and sent it thunderously at goal.

The goalkeeper dived at it but couldn't stop the ball as it made it into the back of the net!

The stadium immediately erupted in cheers, and even the Hellas Verona fans were screaming in shock at what they had just witnessed.

{OH, THE SHEER AUDACITY!}

{THE UNMITIGATED GALL!}

{THE UNADULTERATED GENIUS!}

{He's done it again, people! He's pulled off the impossible!}

{The ball seemed to be stuck to his foot like glue as he danced past 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 defenders, not sparing any of his arsenal as he spectacularly put their years of training to shame, leaving them gasping for air like drowning children!

{He took their breath away, and at the moment of truth, unleashed a spectacular volley he set up himself!}

{It was a bolt from the blue, and with it, he's sent the net bulging, the crowd screaming, and his opponents, into despair!}

{This, ladies and gentlemen, is the stuff of legend!}

{The kind of goal that makes you proud to be part of this beautiful game!}

Jason could finally hear the crowd screaming and the commentator's poetry, but he was already in front of the Uventus fans on the sidelines with his two hands index and middle fingers put together and crossed against each other, reminiscent of a particular blonde-haired kid's most famous jutsu.

Chapter 527 The Stuff of Legend II

The rest of the Uventus players ran over to the sidelines to join Jason in celebration while the Hellas Verona players and fans looked at Jason as if he was some sort of natural disaster.

To be fair, though, after what he just did, it would be even weirder if they didn't exaggerate the situation that much in their heads.

After all, after a strenuous team effort, they had finally managed to draw level with the Uventus team in the dying minutes of the game.

They thought they had already rescued at least one point from the game, but Jason had dashed their hopes less than a minute after the game kicked off again, and he had done it in the most flamboyant way possible.

He had dribbled his way through their team and put the ball in the back of the net all by himself in a way that had left even the Hellas Verona fans more than impressed, and some of them had already changed allegiances in their heart.

An even greater number were now unsure of where they stood and didn't want to keep standing with a team that could get their a** handed to them by a single player.

The Uventus players were too busy celebrating with Jason to care about the thoughts of the Hellas Verona fans.

Even the Uventus players were impressed and were letting Jason know their thoughts about the goal he scored.

Funnily enough, even Jason was shocked.

He had initially taken the ball to see as far as he could go before he either lost it or the whistle was blown, but somehow, his body had taken it as if he was in a dangerous situation, and he had started pulling off skills that would be difficult to pull off one after the other.

He had ended up scoring, which was the best ending, but even he wanted to go crazy in shock at what he had just pulled off.

That was how he had ended up on the sidelines, but even then, he was still in shock at the goal he had just scored.

He didn't have much time to do much else as he and his teammates soon started heading back to their half of the field so they could play out the rest of the game and return to celebrating.

Jason waved at the fans who were still chanting his name as he walked back to his half of the field.

{Celebrations are over, and reality is setting in once again, but it looks like the opposition players still can't believe they just lost their lead}

{Their fans can't believe it either} The commentator began speaking as soon as the game kicked off again, and the Hellas Verona players started passing the ball around, making no effort to send the ball into the Uventus team's half of the field.

It was almost like they had accepted their loss.

However, the Uventus team wasn't going to leave them alone because of that and ran after the ball, but before they could steal the ball, the referee put the whistle to his mouth and blew hard at the whistle for the last time in the game.

Fweeee *Fweeeeee* *Fweeeeeeeeeeee*

{There it is, the final whistle the Uventus fans have all been waiting for!}

{Celebrations can now begin, they are victorious!}

{They can all thank this young lad for this win. His performance was a scene to behold and his goals were of great importance to the team's victory!}

{Without him, they might not be in the lead!} the commentator spoke as he watched Jason jumping around with some of his teammates.

{A beautiful performance and a half! More than worthy to be the man of the match in this game!} the commentator continued giving closing remarks, but Jason was being pulled around by Mckennie in an excited frenzy... without his consent of course, but Jason was in too good of a mood to care.

Celebrations couldn't go on forever, however, and Jason soon detached from Mckennie and started heading towards the sidelines, more tired than he should be despite having only come from the bench.

He didn't make it to the sidelines without more than a hundred flashes of the cameras that were pointed at him as he moved.

Enjoying the attention, Jason reached the sidelines and was patted on the back by Pirlo who could not hide the impressed look on his face.

Jason was soon called over to another part of the sidelines for a post match interview with some of the reporters and he didn't hesitate to go over.

The earlier he finished all this, the earlier he would get to rest, he figured.

The cameras were soon rolling while the reporters waited for their cue to go live and begin Jason's interview.

The interview was a section of a post match football show, and there were sections for the interview with some players who would be interviewed live and their interview would be shown on TV live.

At the stadium, the director of the interview kept his eye on the show and once it was time, he gave the signal and the interview began.

"We have here with us, Jason Bolu, the man of the hour, the man of the match, and the man who just scored a legendary goal to ensure his team's victory standing in front of us right now,"

"And what a goal it was,"

"He single-handedly went against his opponents, made it through and ended his performance with a spectacular finish, what a performance,"

"Were you expecting such a performance when you got on the pitch, Jason," the reporter who would be asking not only asked a question, but had also taken it upon himself to unleash a few poetics while he was introducing Jason to the viewers.

"Can't say I did. When I came on, we were already in the lead and I had gotten on the pitch with the simple intention of helping the team hold the lead long enough until we got our three points, whether it be by scoring or just defending the lead," Jason replied honestly without much thought.

Chapter 528 The Stuff of Legend III

"So you are saying your performance today just happened?" the reporter asked, his voice not concealing his surprise.

"Wasn't there an excellent feeling, or did you have a different vibe before getting on the pitch or something?" he further asked.

"Not really. I just got on the pitch like I normally would and played as best as I could, making sure to take the chances that came and create the ones that didn't come," Jason replied, tilting his head a bit as he thought back to the game.

"Oh wow, that's an interesting frame of mind." the reporter nodded and moved to the next question.

"Moving on, It's clear that you did not give up on the game even after the opponents equalized in the dying minutes of the game, but how did it feel when you watched the lead your team had painfully strived to build be eaten away by the opposition?" the reporter asked Jason.

"Ah, well, about that, it shouldn't have happened in my opinion." Jason began.

"I'm not saying it's impossible for Hellas Verona to play us to a draw, but how it happened was a bit distasteful. Their first goal is not something I can complain about, but they really shouldn't have gotten that penalty,"

"After all, that guy ran into me and not me into him. I had given up on the ball as it was impossible to get to, but that guy hadn't, and he jumped on me while trying to miss a header even Cristiano wouldn't reach. All of a sudden, it's a penalty?"

"Frankly, I'm disappointed with the refereeing of that whole situation. As if that wasn't enough, even after Woljic saved the penalty the first time, the referee had the penalty taken again,"

"I know it wasn't against the rules, but their player stepped into the penalty box before the ball was kicked, not us."

"They were at fault, but they were the ones who got the benefit of having to retake their penalty, which literally makes no sense,"

"To be honest, I think that refereeing was a disgrace, but since we didn't end up losing, I guess it doesn't matter too much," Jason stopped his criticism of the referee there and didn't say more than that.

Saying anymore would be too much, and he had already made his feelings about the refereeing of the game clear enough, so he believed that the referee should be checked for his mistakes at the very least.

"Would you say the extreme emotions you felt after the equalizer from the opponents pushed you to take on them to score that beauty you did personally?" the reporter asked, skillfully avoiding talking about the referee as that was not a rabbit hole he wanted to put his hand into just yet.

"I can't say it didn't. I initially planned to go as far as I could before sending the ball to a teammate, but somehow, I ended up at the forefront and had no one to pass to, so I kinda just kept going."

"Somehow, I made it past everyone and was able to score,"

"Thank God I did, though. I wouldn't have been able to live it down if I missed after all that," Jason laughed, internally cringing as he considered the possibility of missing the goal at the last minute.

"Thank God you did then," the reporter laughed with Jason.

"Thank God I did," Jason raised his hands in surrender and laughed even more.

"It really was a beautiful goal. It is a kind of goal that is usually hard to see very often. It reminds me of some of Messi's similar goals, though you used a few more complicated skills to get past your opponents, unlike just dashing past them. Do you think this goal has the potential to win a Puskas award at the end of the year Balon d'Or ceremony?" the reporter asked Jason.

"Well, the end of the year is still quite far away, so I can't give any opinions on that matter. Don't want to eat my own words," Jason laughed.

"Come on. We know that there is a good chance that you could win it. Though, speaking of awards, do you think you could lay claims to any other award by the end of the season or the end of the calendar year?" the reporter asked, clearly interested in hearing Jason's opinion about the awards he hoped to receive, but unfortunately for him, Jason was the wrong target for such questions.

Jason was someone who loved football and was happy just being on the pitch and winning games and trophies.

He, more than anyone, knew that awards that weren't based on stats were mere redundancies, as they didn't change one's status as a top player.

They were nice to have, but if he didn't have them in his cupboard, he wouldn't mind.

Only awards like top scorer, assist leader, MVP, and trophies truly mattered to him as they were things he had gotten with his own strength, not because some reporters felt he was more likeable as a person and more deserving.

"Like I said, the end of the year is still a long way from now. I'm more focused on the present,"

"Winning the next game is all that matters to me right now and is what will continue to matter to me, awards wouldn't change that,"

"They would be nice to have, that's for sure. After all, who wouldn't want a few more physical representation of their achievements?" Jason said.

"Nobody," the reporter answered.

"Right. Nobody. I wouldn't mind getting a few awards, but if I don't then I'll just keep playing football and enjoying myself on the pitch," Jason spoke, nodding to himself.

"Hmmm. That will be all, thank you for your time, and I hope you can keep playing good football for all the fans to watch," the reporter nodded and said to Jason with a smile, dismissing him.

"Thank you for having me," Jason nodded with a smile, shook the reporter's hand, and walked off, heading to his team's locker room.

With that section of the show over, the screen went back to showing the guys in the studio.

"And there we have it folks, the thoughts of today's man of the match, Jason Bolu,"

"Let's look at the highlights of the match. We will be back," the show host spoke into the camera and the screen changed once again.

Chapter 529: Drop-off, Surprise, and A Gift I

****28th February 2021****

A black Ferrari stopped in the drop-off area of the Turin airport, attracting eyes from all around the place even as its engine turned.

Inside the car, Jason looked out the window and saw a lot more people were looking over than he expected.

'This is a bad idea,' his brain warned him as his hand reached for the door.

He had just arrived back at Turin today and had wanted to rest his exhausted muscles, but Adele reminded him that she was supposed to be leaving in a few hours.

She was done with her scouting duties in Turin for the time being and would be heading back to Portugal to submit her results to her company's superiors.

The agency would then later decide who they wanted to make the effort to sign with.

Originally, Adele planned to call a cab to take her to the airport, but Jason wasn't having it and decided to drop her off at the airport.

It was only after leaving the house that he remembered that he hadn't even remembered to disguise himself and looked like he always did.

"Don't bother getting down if you don't want to be mobbed," Adele was ahead of his thoughts and began opening her own door.

"Huh?" Jason asked in confusion.

"Don't come down. You're not even wearing glasses. You'll just stir up the whole place if someone recognizes you, and this is an airport,"

“You could cause someone to miss their flight,” Adele explained and got down, closing the door behind her, leaving Jason confused.

“...” Jason first stared straight ahead in a daze as his brain tried to register all her words.

“I can’t just let her go without saying goodbye, though,” he muttered in realization and immediately moved to still open the door, crowd be damned.

But before he could open the door, he heard a sudden tap on the window and checked to see that Adele was tapping on the window from the outside, trying to get his attention.

‘Did she forget something?’ Jason wondered but still slid down his window, noticing out of the corner of his eye that some people had their phones out with cameras pointed toward them.

Jason didn’t think they could see his face in that situation, but even if they did, so what?

Not like he was doing anything wrong anyway.

“What’s up? You forget something?” Jason asked as the tinted glass slid into the door, completely out of view.

“Yeah... this,” Adele said with a red face and leaned in, taking his lips in a rush that Jason couldn’t describe, but he was swept away and couldn’t even respond.

All the instincts he had trained in martial arts and football went silent at that moment, and it felt like fireworks went off in his head when he felt her lips on his.

The kiss was slow at first, but as the seconds passed, Jason’s control of his body returned, and he responded in kind, both of their lips battling for non-existent dominance before Adele finally pulled away, leaving Jason stunned once again.

“...” Jason’s eyes stayed on her as his brain that had ascended to the heavens slowly descended back to earth.

“Nuh-uh, mhm mhm,” Jason shook his head slowly, still in a daze.

“You can’t be doing that when you’re about to leave,”

‘When did she become so bold?’ the question popped up in his head but didn’t make it out of his head.

“Well, it was meant to be a goodbye kiss. Deal with it,” Adele snickered, a smug look on her face as she sounded very proud of herself at that moment.

This was a development for her, too, and she only thought of it after she got out of the car.

It was a spur-of-the-moment thing, but with their relationship already developing, this would soon become the norm, and she couldn’t use her inexperience to cover for it.

‘Who said I can’t be romantic?’ she pumped her fists internally and straightened her body back up.

“I’ll call you when I get to Porto,” she said and turned away, her heels clicking audibly in Jason’s ears as he watched her walk away.

‘... That’s it?’ Jason thought, his eyes staying fixed on the sway of her hips as she slowly moved further and further away.

Suddenly remembering that he was still in public and quite a few people had their cameras trained on the car earlier, he started bringing the window back up.

As the window slowly slid up, Jason’s eyes stayed on Adele until at the last moment, his eyes turned to glance at another girl who was also being dropped off and he smiled at her as he took his legs off the brakes.

“Oh my god, that’s Jason!” the girl suddenly squealed as she recognized Jason’s face.

“Jason who?” her boyfriend who was more focused on the extra luggage she was lugging to college, asked with nary a glance.

“Jason, the guy you’re always talking about, the Uventus player,” the girl quickly explained to her boyfriend.

“Oh my God, he smiled at me!!!” she squealed even more, acting like a young girl in love... which she actually was.

She wasn’t a sports fan all that much, but she lived in Turin so it was impossible to be completely unknowledgeable about the footballing world with a team like Uventus based in the city.

When she started dating her boyfriend, she had been trying to get interested in the things he loved and football was one of them and until early this year, she didn’t find it fun or interesting, but things changed when Jason joined the team.

With such eye candy on the field, her interest in football suddenly shot through the roof, and she always made sure not to miss any Uventus match just in hopes of watching Jason play.

She even made her boyfriend pay for tickets to a live game, and luckily, she had watched Jason play.

However, she hadn’t been able to meet him or get close to him because they weren’t able to get good seats near enough for fan-player interaction.

Chapter 530: Drop-off, Surprise, and A Gift II

The girl’s words had caused enlightenment to shine into her boyfriend’s eyes, and he immediately turned to look at the Ferrari, which was already disappearing into the distance.

He wasn’t the only one looking after his girlfriend’s excited reaction.

After all, Jason was currently the hottest person in the Italian football world after his performance in the previous game, which was just the previous day.

If one were to check the Italian Twitter space or any other social media, Jason would be among the top trending topics.

It had started with the goal he scored the previous day and countless videos of the goal had surfaced on social media and had spread like wildfire. At first, it was mostly the men and the few female football fans who were interested in posting the videos and making all sorts of other posts, but with such traction, other people began to take notice, especially the women.

Even if they didn't understand or care about football, it was clear to see that Jason was devastatingly handsome, and that was already good enough to get their attention.

However, when some of those women began to search for more information about Jason, someone found his pictures on the Rosember social media accounts.

During the time Jason was doing a publicity shoot for the company, Jason had shot some adverts and taken a lot of pictures that the Rosember publicity team had been slowly releasing to the public over time, especially since the company had just hit the market.

Hence the Rosember social media accounts were like a photo album of Jason with many pictures of him in as well as videos.

Even worse was the fact that Rosember was a skin-care company, so a lot of those pictures were with Jason's upper body exposed and in 'compromising' positions.

The company currently offered lotion, body wash, shampoo, oils, sunscreen, masks, eye care products, moisturizers, toners, cleansers, exfoliants, and other products.

Maya Singh had thought to go above and beyond with the new company, and luckily, she had been making sales, so she could keep churning out products.

The problem was that she had made Jason endorse most of these products so that she could milk his publicity as much as possible, so there were many videos and pictures of Jason rubbing all sorts of products on his skin for the new female fans to pore over.

In one night, the company received more orders from Italy than it had received since beginning sales at the beginning of the month.

All in all, Jason was probably the most famous person in Italy apart from Cristiano Ronaldo and the Italian president at that moment.

Realizing that Jason had put in a display reminiscent of what they would witness in a romance novel or a K-drama, the crowd was shocked. Some people even tried to look for Adele, whom they had seen earlier, but she was already out of sight.

All the people who were taking pictures and recording the scene earlier quickly began checking their phones to confirm what they had just heard.

Due to how things had happened earlier, nobody had a clear shot of Jason's face, but the little they had was enough to help them confirm that it was truly Jason. Surprisingly, no one had a picture or a clear look at Adele's face.

Originally, it was the car that had attracted attention, and though Adele was also a looker, everyone had their cameras trained on the car as it was a passenger who had come down, not the driver.

Since her hair framed her face, no one got a clear shot, and even after she and Jason kissed, no one still got a clear shot.

At this point, though, it no longer mattered to the people as they were already posting pictures and videos online with all sorts of captions, but the meaning was clear.

Jason had been seen kissing a girl in public, and now the whole of Italy was about to find out.

Jason didn't know what was happening, and he wouldn't have cared even if he knew.

He had just gotten off a call with Big Shaq, who had been calling to tell him that the song they did together was ready and would soon be released.

However, as the release date came closer, Shaq had been considering doing a music video and wanted to ask for Jason's availability.

Jason knew that his schedule was too full in the coming days and he would probably not have time to shoot a music video, especially since he didn't know where they wanted the shooting done.

When Shaq said that he wanted the shooting to be done in Africa, preferably in Nigeria, Jason told him to leave the calendar open.

Two upcoming games in the AFCON qualifiers were coming up at the end of March, and if Jason was called to the national team for those games, he'd be in Nigeria, but that would only happen if he ended up going.

Jason didn't doubt his qualifications and felt like his name should be on the national squad list for those matches, but there was still a chance he might not be called.

After all, there was no international break, which meant that while he would be on national duty in Africa, the Serie A and Champions League wouldn't be stopping.

Who knows what might happen?

Hence, he told Shaq to leave the calendar open and that he would get back to him about it. He wanted to be in the music video because he thought it would be interesting, but if there was no way around it, then he could only let the chance go.

Some things might not be meant to be.

As Jason was about to put his phone down, a notification about a message from Adele popped up at the top of his screen.

A smile involuntarily appeared at the corner of his lips as he clicked on the notification, and the message app opened up.

{I'm on the plane} the message said, but before Jason could put the phone down, another message came in.

{I have a gift prepared for you. You'll get it in a few days} Adele had texted, adding a GIF beneath the message.

It was a GIF of Patrick Star rubbing his hands snarkily with a smirk on his face, and it left Jason amused and curious about what kind of gift this woman had prepared for him.