

LEGENDS 60

Chapter 60 A Watchful Captain

Jason didn't bother looking at his map to select a destination, nor to make sure he didn't get lost because, at that moment, those were the least important things on his mind.

Despite his slightly abnormal control over his emotions, even he had a limit and he had hit it.

In the beginning, he had understood that he wasn't ready to feature in the senior professional team not because he was lacking in talent or skills but because he wasn't used to such a ferocious and physically demanding stage.

He had understood this point and had patiently decided to wait until the head manager had thought he was ready.

He had not just waited while doing nothing extra, but rather had taken up various individual training sessions to better himself every moment he was on the training ground so as to decrease the time he would spend adjusting to the Primera Liga NOS.

He usually arrived at the training ground as early as 7 am to train with Fabio Viera who always arrived as early as he did and he filled his training schedule almost to the point that apart from the necessary rest to relax his muscles and avoid injury, he did not have any other breaks.

He trained every moment he was on the training ground, involving himself in both team and individual training from the moment he stepped on the field to the moment he stepped off the field.

He was even usually the last person to leave the training ground and on more than one occasion he had left the training grounds as late as 8 pm, yet what had he received for it?

He had obviously gotten better and had adjusted enough that he could now cope while playing against the first team's players and could even almost manage to get past them and score a goal or two and even get assists as well.

As far as he was concerned, he was pretty much adjusted, yet the coach had refused to play him or even look his way.

At first, he had thought that due to the team having a bad run of form, the manager couldn't afford to be experimenting with the line-ups when results were the priority so he had decided to stay patient, but then the manager had begun picking players that no matter how anyone looked at it, wasn't as good as he was.

The players that the manager had selected over him didn't have a single aspect apart from defending or goalkeeping where they outshone him, and yet the coach picked them and added them to the line-up while not even looking his way or even giving him a thought.

Not once, but twice...

The worst part was the absolute silence from the manager.

If the manager had a plan for him and had called for him and told him his thoughts, then no matter how the current situation was, he wouldn't have felt like this, yet the manager had chosen to stay silent, leaving Jason's errant thoughts to run wild.

'Did the manager dislike him?'

'Did he like him?'

'Did he have a plan for him that he wasn't letting on?'

'Had he been forgotten?'

'Was this all because of the stupid sh*t that bast**d, Rico Gulaz had pulled when they were trying to sign the contract?'

'Was it something else?'

'Was there something he wasn't seeing?'

'Was he too impatient?'

Jason's mind ran wild and was currently more active than that of a woman wondering if her man was cheating on her, yet despite the current overwhelming activity of his brain, he was only getting struck with more questions that had no answers to them.

"Why the hell am I even acting like an insecure girlfriend?" he suddenly muttered to himself with a chuckle, the long drive he had taken seeming to have slowly calmed his raging emotions.

That and the beauty of the serene river that he was driving beside had had the effect of pulling him out of his errant thoughts and he quickly found somewhere to park by the roadside before getting down and walking over to an empty bench that faced the river before sitting down and just staring aimlessly at the flowing water.

He let the sound of flowing water trickle through his eardrums as he watched the hypnotic scene of the water streaming along the river.

As his raging emotions slowly calmed down, he suddenly heard a *Ding* notification sound that prompted him to pull out his phone from his pocket to see a message arrive from Sofia.

Back at the CTFD Portugaia training center

The players who were chosen for the team's line-up were packing up their equipment into their sports bags and dressing up in preparation for going to the Estadio do Dragao for the game, but Pepe, the team's captain who had also been selected among the line-up wasn't going through the same motions as the other chosen players and was instead on his way to meet the manager.

He had noticed something that he thought needed addressing sooner rather than later before it ballooned into something that may not necessarily be good for the team.

"Hey Coach, can I get a few minutes of your time?" Pepe asked as he walked up to Sergio Conceicao who was speaking with Vitor Bruno and Siramana Dembele.

"Oh, Of course..." Sergio responded on seeing his team's captain approach him for a conversation and he quickly ended his conversation with his assistant coaches and sent them off before turning to Pepe.

"Ok, what is it you want to talk about?" he asked.

"Firstly, I'd say that I'm not contradicting your decision about your line-up but I don't think the new kid, Jason is happy with it," Pepe began.

"Did he tell you that?" Sergio Conceicao suddenly interrupted, his eyes narrowing slightly.

"No, but he didn't have to," Pepe responded before continuing,

"The kid has impressed not just me but the others ever since he joined the team. He has talent, is focused and confident, and is very hardworking,"

"He's always among the earliest to arrive for training and is usually the last to leave the training grounds, he even usually comes for individual training on rest days,"

"His hard-working mentality along with his other attributes remind me so much of Cristiano but there's one aspect where both of them are completely different,"

"It's their mannerisms, Cristiano is very outspoken and straightforward, he wears his emotions on his face and you can almost always tell when he is angry or not because he will always speak up if it feels like he is being treated unjustly, but the same doesn't hold for Jason,"

"Jason was always very silent even when we first met and he almost always wears a completely impassive look on his face that makes it hard for anyone to tell what he's thinking, yet even I have noticed that he doesn't seem to be in the correct frame of mind lately,"

"He's been more silent than usual and he's currently no longer at the training ground, which is something he's never done before,"

"I know it's not my job to tell you what to do with your players and that you have a reason why you haven't included him in the starting line-up, perhaps you have a plan for him, but I feel you should at least talk to him and assure him that he's part of your plans," "I also want to let you know that I'm not the only one who has noticed that his mood seems to be off lately and if it stays that way, the players may begin to think that you don't care enough about them which isn't good for the squad's morale," Pepe finished by addressing how the matter could affect the whole team's morale, making it clear that he wasn't favoring one player over the team.

"... Thank you for bringing it to my notice, I'll see what I can do and make the proper adjustments," Sergio Conceicao finally said after a few seconds of thought.

"For now though, go and get ready, we have a match to win," Sergio Conceicao pulled his thoughts back to the matter at hand and relegated Jason's matter to a matter to be thought over at a later date.

"Alright coach," Pepe responded and turned around, heading back to pack up his things.