

Legends 621

Chapter 621: Evo's Offer

"What do they have for me?" Jason asked, clearly intrigued.

"Well, for starters, they have a pretty lucrative direct offer of a four-year deal for \$5 million. That's \$1.25 million per year in guaranteed cash," Adele began, her words already having Jason's attention, but she wasn't done... Evo wasn't done.

"They're also offering a chance for you to have a signature shoe line if you can meet the criteria they have set," Adele said.

"Wait, for real?" Jason asked, surprised, and he was right to be.

A signature shoe line was not something that sportswear companies gave to just anyone.

Rather, it was usually set apart for very famous or successful athletes, or athletes who had both qualities, and even then, signature shoe lines were few and far between.

Jason knew that he had garnered quite a bit of fame thanks to his skills and his face... but mostly for his face, however, while he did already have a few trophies in his cabinet, he didn't think he was successful enough to warrant a signature shoe line, or even a consideration... as was the case.

'Well, I guess that's why they've set a criterion,' he thought to himself and asked Adele.

"What's their criteria?" he asked.

"Two things. Win the Champions League and take home the Kopa Trophy at the Ballon D'or ceremony this year," Adele said, taking the bowl of chicken parmesan from Jason.

"Oh wow. That's quite the demand," Jason chuckled and bit into his muffin again.

“Yeah. The good news is that you’re on the right track,” Adele replied.

“Word. Winning the Champions League will be a challenge though,” Jason said, turning to the TV where the live session of the UCL draw was still being shown.

“What about the Kopa trophy?” Adele asked.

“Well, compared to the current contenders for the best under-21 player, I think I have a very good chance,”

“One can never tell with reporters doing the voting though, but well... fu*k it. Tell Evo I’m up for it,”

“I won’t lose anything by aiming high,” Jason chuckled.

“Okay, I’ll work on that. You want me to also try to increase the amount for their original offer?”

“Maybe \$6 or \$7 million instead?” Adele asked, sounding every bit the money-grubber that Jason was slowly finding her to be.

“... 6 million is fine. But don’t push too hard if they’re dead set on 5,” Jason said after a bit of thought, not refusing her as no sensible person would refuse a chance to earn more money. ~~ANÖBEs~~

“Ok then, about...”

The following minutes were spent discussing a few other endorsement deals while they slowly ate and watched TV, Jason having changed the channel to something a bit more interesting than football news.

In the end, apart from the deal with Evo, Jason chose a few other short-term endorsement deals as they were the best option for someone like him with budding fame.

The only long term contracts someone like him should be signing were either very profitable ones or ones with a good football club and that was the method Jason would be following.

In the following days, while Jason put his all out on the training grounds to better himself and prepare for the coming game, Adele was also giving her all in negotiating with the companies Jason had chosen to accept an endorsement contract with.

Because Jason had chosen to accept their offers didn't mean she couldn't push for more benefits for him and in extension... herself.

All in all, it had been a busy couple of days, but the good news was that they would soon see the fruits of their labor.

However, they were not clear on what type of fruit it would be.

****18th April 2021****

{Sunday night in Bergamo, and we have before us an exciting watch!}

{It is Atalanta versus Juventus in the 31st game of the season!}

{It's the beginning of the end, and for these two sides who have big ambitions, they will be desperate to one-up each other in this game!}

{For us viewers, that means exciting football and potentially a whole lot of it, so sit back, relax, and get ready to scream your hearts out!} The commentator gave opening remarks as the players of the two teams marched onto the pitch, making all sorts of muscle-warming gestures to prepare themselves for another exciting but exhausting ninety minutes of football.

The pre-match formalities were hastily but carefully swept over, and the two teams were soon in their positions on the opposite ends of the field, waiting for the referee's whistle, which came shortly after they were ready.

Fweeeeeeeee

{They're off! Atalanta and Juventus!}

{Who's going to come out on top?}

{There's only one way to find out} the commentator said as the Atalanta team kicked off the game, sending the ball back into their own half while the Juventus players surged forward.

Like the commentator had said, the game got off to an exciting start and had the fans of the two teams cheering excitedly, but the game soon settled into a comfortable or even slow, rhythm.

There were goal scoring chances, but they were few and far between because the two teams were doing their best to keep each other in check.

With top performances from the defenders of the two teams, the game had to slow down as the attackers of the two teams had to begin figuring out how to launch an attack that wouldn't end with the ball being hit back into their half and leaving them at the risk of a counter.

#26th minute...

{Malinovskyi to Muriel in the center}

{Muriel returns the ball quickly and Malinovskyi takes control of the ball again. It's clear that there's no way through the center.

{Malinovskyi chips the ball over to the left and finds Illicic!} the commentator's voice began to rise, unable to hide his excitement as Illicic received the ball.

Using his strength to hold off Cuadrado, Illicic advanced further down the left and crossed the ball into the center towards the waiting head of Luis Muriel.

{Muriel!!!!!!} the commentator screamed.

Chapter 622: Matchday 31: Vs Atalanta I

Leaping powerfully into the air to get on the end of his teammate's cross, Muriel deftly put his head to the ball, but the ball had hardly left his head when another head popped up between the ball and the goal.

The ball bounced off the new head and flew up and over the goal.

{Fantastic block from Chiellini! Sczesny didn't look like he could reach that!} the commentator shouted excitedly, looking at the Juventus goalkeeper who was rooted to the spot all through that attack due to the suddenness at which the ball came at him.

{Well worked attack from Atalanta, but Juventus were up to it and Atalanta have a corner} the commentator's partner said while Illicic took the ball and walked towards the corner flag.

Fweeeeeeeee!

{Ball in from Illicic!} the commentator shouted as the ball came flying in, but the Juventus players were alert to the cross and headed it clear before it reached a dangerous area.

{Cleared out of danger by Alex Sandro}

#39th minute...

Ramsey passed the ball to Mckennie as he stepped past the halfway line into Atalanta's half of the field and Mckennie pushed the ball forward, seemingly looking for a chance down the middle, however, he was soon being hassled by the Atalanta players.

Quickly releasing the ball to the left where Jason was, he skipped forward, running into open space down the left flank, calling for a return ball.

Jason however, slowed down after receiving the ball, doing a couple of stepovers to seemingly buy Mckennie more time to get forward, but as soon as Jason's marker closed in to try and tackle him, Jason passed the ball infield to Cristiano Ronaldo in the center and also began a run forward past his marker.

On receiving the ball, Ronaldo gauged Jason's pace and direction with his eyes and determined his likely position in another two seconds before sending the ball forward.

Running in behind his marker, Jason appeared just behind the ball on the edge of the penalty box.

Stretching his right forward to catch the ball before it rolled past him, Jason flicked the ball to the right suddenly, dodging the defender who had rushed in to get between him and the goal.

With no one but the goalkeeper between him and the goal, Jason hit the ball at the top right corner, trying to curl it inward, but he used a little too much power and the ball flew just off the mark before hitting the poles the nets were tied to behind the goal.

{Oh! What a miss!} the commentator shouted while Jason aggravatedly put his hands on his head, shocked and distraught that he had missed a seemingly clear goal-scoring chance.

{He's apologizing to his teammates after that blunder, but from where I'm looking, he doesn't have any excuses. He should have buried that} the commentator said, causing Jason to grit his teeth and think,

'No sh*t, Sherlock.'

#45+2 minutes...

The referee already had the whistle to his mouth after 2 out of the three minutes allocated to added time had run out.

The Juventus players were not looking at the time though as they were currently on the attack and were seemingly looking to get one past their opponents before the referee blew his whistle to end the first half. rŰÑöbĚŠ

Alex Sandro who had moved towards the center of the field to receive the ball suddenly tried to make a chip pass to the left flank where Jason was, but he miscalculated the power he needed to make the ball reach Jason, and Zapata intercepted the ball before it reached Jason.

Jason was about to complain about the pass when he suddenly realized that due to Alex Sandro being out of position, there was a clear path down the left flank all the way to their goal and due to the players having pushed forward for the attack, no one would be able to stop the Atalanta man who was already taking off.

Ignoring his dissatisfaction, he quickly took off after the Atalanta forward, chasing for all he was worth.

{Counter chance for Atalanta!} the commentator shouted excitedly as he saw Zapata running with the ball, but Jason ignored the commentary and kept running with a clear goal in his mind.

Zapata was fast and didn't lose out even to wingers when it came to pure pace, but compared to Jason, he was still a bit lacking.

Jason ran powerfully after the Atalanta forward, diverting his run slightly to the inside of the field before returning back in Zapata's direction after he caught up to him and then dove in boot first, in a powerful slide tackle that cleanly swept the ball away and out of play.

Zapata, who had tripped over Jason's outstretched leg, fell over and rolled a couple of times before coming to a stop and looking around in a daze.

He hadn't seen the tackle coming in, and by the time he realized what was going on, it was already too late and he had already been swept off his feet.

{A tackle and a half!}

{We've seen defending from the front before, but this time, the winger was not afraid to track down his opponent and save his team from danger!}

{And what a tackle it was!}

{Zapata looks like he doesn't know what hit him!} the commentator laughed, looking at Zapata who looked slightly in a daze as he got back to his feet.

He wasn't even in a hurry to go pick the ball the ball as it was clear that this counter attacking chance had already been blown.

He was right in thinking that too because as soon as the ball was back on the field after the throw-in, the referee blew his whistle to end the first half.

{And that wraps up the first half of this game}

{There's no goals yet, but if they can keep up the heat, I can without a doubt say, a goal is not far away} the commentator said while the players trudged off the field tiredly, very much needing their rest.

"Nice tackle back there man," McKennie said to Jason as he sidled up to him.

"Well, I hope I don't have to do it again," Jason said honestly.

Chapter 623: Matchday 31: Vs Atalanta II

#54th minute...

The halftime had come and gone quickly and the players were already back on the field, the repetitive words of their managers to push harder in the second half of the game echoing in their ears.

With them having been motivated by their managers, the two sets of players had gotten back onto the field with excited moods and had immediately begun tearing at each other as soon as they were back on the field.

{Misplaced pass from Zapata and Jason's onto it! He's bursting forward on a counter!} The commentator interrupted everyone's thoughts and brought their attention back to the field with a sentence.

Jason had indeed gotten ahold of the ball after a misplaced pass from Zapata and had burst forward with the ball, running forward a few yards before he had lobbed the ball forward and into the top right side of the field where Ronaldo was already running into.

Chasing deftly after the ball, Ronaldo got onto it after a burst of pace that kept him a few meters ahead of his marker.

Jason had not stopped running even after sending the ball forward and was advancing down the middle of the field and trying to get into a dangerous position for the return ball from Ronaldo... if he returned it.

Despite being at a safe distance away from his marker, Ronaldo realized that it would be easier to cross the ball in to the center, instead of going it himself and with Jason rapidly approaching and about to arrive in the center, he didn't hesitate to send the ball towards the arriving Jason.

Seeing the ball coming his way, Jason increased his pace, aiming to get to it before the nearby Atalanta players.

What he didn't know was that at some point, the Atalanta players had given up on the ball and had chosen a new target... a moving, hundred percent chocolate, handsome and very much alive target.

Someone suddenly slammed into Jason from the left, destabilizing him, but in that moment, he noticed that there was another person coming from his right who would soon slam into him as well.

In that moment, his slumbering martial instincts kicked in and he stomped hard with his left foot and darted to his right, jumping and doing a no-hand side flip over the outstretched foot of the Atalanta player.

Due to the suddenness of the maneuver, he wasn't able to land properly and ended up landing almost on his knees and barely using one of his hands to stabilize himself, but to the people watching it looked like Jason had just flipped and did a super hero landing, looking very much like spider man.

{He turns the stadium to his own stage with a show of amazing athleticism to evade the tackle!} The commentator exclaimed with so much excitement that one would think Jason had scored a forty yard screamer.

{He has quite the self preservation instinct} the co-commentator chuckled.

Flipping his hair up back over his head, Jason gave a sigh of relief after realizing that he had managed to escape the pincer death trap he had been faced with moments earlier.

Unfortunately, he had missed his chance to get to the ball and the ball was already too far away for him to reach, however, one man was already poised to take over for him.

Chiesa didn't pay any attention to his teammate, who had just escaped a dangerous situation and was more focused on the ball that had been ignored.

{It's fallen to Chiesa, can he go all the way!??}

Catching up to the ball and pushing it into the penalty box with a smooth flick, he didn't hesitate to smash the bottom into the bottom left corner of the goal, leaving the goalkeeper unable to react in time. rANQBEŠ

{It's in!!!}

{Juventus don't waste their chance, and with a beautiful counter-attack chance, they take the lead!} the commentator screamed while Chiesa ran to the sidelines and jumped into a knee slide before leaping back up mid-slide and pumping up his right fist with excitement.

He was soon joined by the rest of his teammates, including Jason who slowly jogged over, not forgetting to give a bombastic side eye to the Atalanta players who went at him earlier.

The Atalanta players, however, were still in shock at everything that happened so fast that they didn't have the time to even react.

Their opponents cared not for their dismay however and celebrated without holding back before heading back to their half of the field with elevated moods.

#75th minute...

After taking the lead earlier, the Juventus team had ensured to slow down the game to prevent the momentum from falling to their opponents and made sure to focus on staying behind the ball until they were sure they were in control of the game's tempo once again.

The Atalanta team was doing their best to try to regain control and chase for an equalizer, but the Juventus had a strong hold of the game and were able to kill most of the Atalanta team's attempts to shake things up.

{Jason gives up trying to cut in from the left and returns the ball back to the center}

{Mckennie, he finds Ronaldo}

{Ronaldo... he's pushes the ball forward, oh he's raring up to have a go!?!} The commentator shouted as he saw Ronaldo push the ball forward a bit and get into a shooting posture since no one was near him.

{He hits it!} the commentator screamed as the ball thundered off Ronaldo's foot, flew speedily at the goal, and then struck the bar powerfully, deflecting off it up and over the goal.

{The bar!}

{Atalanta survive going two behind!} The commentator screamed excitedly, still rattled from the attempt.

{It would have been a goal of the season contender had it gone in, but we can only add that beauty of an highlight to the long list of what ifs} the co-commentator added as Ronaldo rubbed his hair with a wry smile as he turned away, disappointed that the ball hadn't ended at the back of the net.

Chapter 624: Matchday 31: Vs Atalanta III

#87th minute...

With the game entering its dying minutes, Atalanta began to force themselves forward, going all out on the attack in a bid to try to equalize the game.

Their efforts had gotten them a few close calls, but there were still no goals from either side.

{It's Atalanta on the attack, Malinovskyi coming in from the left!}

{Pass to Muriel! He turns around and lets fly!} the commentator shouted, but De Ligt jumped in between Muriel and the goal, blocking the shot with his body.

The ball flew back off De Ligt towards Malinovskyi, who caught it with his chest and volleyed it back at the goal.

The ball rocketed off the Atalanta man's foot and tore past everyone, including Sczesny, who failed to safeguard his goal.

{GOAL!!!}

{Atalanta have their equalizer! With time running out, they make their stance clear!}

{They will not be going down easily! Not today!} the commentator shouted excitedly while the noise in the stadium filled every corner at several decibels too high.

For the Atalanta fans who had been watching their team chase the game for so long, finally having something to shout for, they didn't hesitate to let out all their frustrations in their cheers.

Some of the fans also began shouting for a comeback and this soon spread to almost every corner of the stadium with the Atalanta fans now cheering and singing excitedly.

The Juventus fans didn't know what to feel in this situation and all their attempts to try to motivate their players with cheers of their own was constantly being blocked by the noise from the Atalanta fans.

Luckily for the Juventus fans, their players didn't look to have given up. They were definitely no longer in the positive mood they were in a few seconds ago, but they didn't look defeated either and still looked to have some fight in them.

For the Juventus fans, this was enough for them to keep cheering to support their players despite the vast difference in numbers on the battle ground that was the Bergamo stadium.

The game resumed shortly after with the Juventus team kicking off the game and trying to kick-start a goal-scoring chance immediately after their kick-off, however, the Atalanta team that had finally equalized after so long were not having it and fought back almost desperately to keep the Juventus team from breaking past them.

Before long however, it became clear that the Atalanta team was the one with the momentum and they were soon pushing the Juventus team back after recovering possession of the battle.

The Juventus players played desperately, using up every ounce of their energy to try to regain some semblance of control in the game, however, the game seemed to be slowly slipping away from their grasp and soon it looked like all they could do was defend and hope to keep their lead.

For the Juventus fans who were watching the game with some hope for their team to score a late-winner, it was like watching their favorite food go bad and the only thing they could do was to shout at it in hopes that it could regain it's freshness.

If this were a literal situation, all that would do would be to contaminate the food even further and cause it to deteriorate even quicker, but in this situation, the sudden outbursts of angry shouts from the Juventus fans, coupled with the oppressive atmosphere from the opposition fans and the increasingly hard to cope with tempo, the Juventus players seemed to play only worse every passing second.

In the end, the back line buckled and Malinovskyi was able to send a pass in behind to Luis Muriel, who had burst past Chiellini and rapidly approached the ball, facing Sczesny one-on-one.

Sczesny didn't wait on his goalline and rapidly approached, jumping at the ball just as Muriel reached it and hit it.

The ball flew forward and almost made it past Sczesny, but at the last moment, Sczesny managed to get a leg to the ball to deflect it off target slightly, allowing De Ligt to reach it and hit it off the field.

{What a save!}

{His last touch to deflect the ball kept Juventus in this game, but they're not out of danger yet. Atalanta have a corner} The commentary continued without stop, describing what was going on on the pitch.

Malinovskyi headed over to the right corner flag to take the corner kick while the players arranged themselves in the penalty box in preparation for the ball in from the corner.

After a few seconds, the referee put his whistle to his mouth and blew loudly.

Fweeeeeeeee

With the referee's whistle as his cue, Malinovskyi sent the ball curling inwardly into the penalty box towards the waiting heads of his teammate, however despite no longer having the momentum in the game, the Juventus players weren't going to allow themselves to fall behind so easily.

With a powerful leap, Alex Sandro got his head to the ball and headed it out of the penalty box.

The ball flew towards the right side of the field and Jason who had been waiting just outside the penalty box on the right, quickly gave chase, however, he wasn't the only one chasing after the ball.

Mateo Pessina, an Atalanta midfielder who had been near the center of the field ran at the ball, hoping to either reach it first or to block Jason and prevent him from starting a counter attack if he got to it first.

With Jason's pace, he quickly reached the ball before Matteo and just as Matteo arrived near enough, Jason stamped down the ball that was mid-air after a bounce, adding more power to the bounce and causing it to bounce up and over Matteo who came rushing in while Jason got out of his way.

{Ingenious tactics to escape the challenge. He has a chance to counter!} the commentator shouted, but Jason was already dashing forward with the ball after having taken note of every other Atalanta player who was near enough to obstruct his path to the Atalanta penalty box.

So far, there was only one, Zapata.

Zapata had also been at the edge of the penalty box and he had darted up the field while the ball moved towards Jason on the right of the field.

Jason didn't let that stop him as he darted up the field, soon making it past the halfway line, while glancing at Zapata who was running alongside him and moving in for the tackle.

Jason was faster, but Zapata had gotten a head start and now he was closing in, planning to put an end to Jason's last minute counter just like Jason had done for him in the first half, however, how could Jason not know what he was up to?

Unknown to Zapata, Jason was restricting his pace, and as soon as Zapata came sliding in, Jason kicked the ball forward in another burst of pace and vaulted over Zapata who had come sliding in.

{Oh! He's away!}

{There's only one defender and the goalkeeper left! Can he go all the way!?The commentator screamed as Jason cut in, dashing into the penalty box and then made to shoot as he came face to face with the Atalanta goalkeeper.

Radunovic dived at Jason, wanting to block the shot, but Jason faked a shot and dodged to his left, causing the goalkeeper to fall to the ground, grasping nothing but air.

Rafael Tolo, the Atalanta team captain, immediately jumped into Jason's path after Jason dodged the goalkeeper and was about to shoot with his left foot.

While Rafael was jumping into his path, Jason suddenly made as if to cut back, thereby faking the shot, but after flicking the ball back to his right with his left foot, his awaiting right foot once again pushed the ball back to the left after it rolled a few centimeters to the right.

While Jason smoothly went to Rafael's left, Rafael didn't even know what happened and kept looking to his right, expecting Jason to be there.

He was already on the ground and wouldn't be able to stop him anyway, but he didn't even realize that, even if he had been able to recover from the earlier tackle, Jason's last maneuver ensured that he would have still been unable to stop him since he would be confused.

With no one left to stop him, Jason passed the ball into the back of the net and continued running down to the sidelines while holding one finger up above his head and one finger in front of his face.

{Ingenious, Unstoppable, Inevitable!}

{He came running in like a force of nature, and he single-handedly turned his team's fortune around!}

{Whether 1 on 1, or 5 on 1. As long as it involves this man, you'll always have to call 911!}

{One man, dying minutes, and he did not hesitate to take his shot!}

{Without a doubt, one of the best goals I've ever seen from this commentary box!}

Chapter 625: In The Morning

With one finger held to his lips to shush the crowd and one held to the sky, pointing to the sky, Jason arrived at the sidelines and turned to the goal and made a camera gesture with his hands and snapped an imaginary picture of the ball in the back of the net.

Checking the imaginary picture in the space between his fingers, Jason nodded to himself with a serious look, not paying the slightest attention to the distraught Atalanta fans who watched his every movement.

The other Juventus players came to join Jason on the sidelines while the few travelling Juventus fans were making a lot of excited noise in their section of the stands, filling the otherwise silent stadium with some noise.

Waving and smiling at the Juventus fans, the Juventus players began to head back to their half of the field, not forgetting to drag their feet a bit to waste away the few remaining seconds left of the added time.

When the game finally kicked off again, the time added had run out, but the referee let the game run for another minute despite that, waiting to see if the Atalanta team could create an attacking opportunity.

However, the Juventus team that now had the game back within their grasp stayed tight at the back and defended like their lives depended on it, chasing the ball with so much energy that one would believe the game had just begun.

When they finally managed to steal possession from the Atalanta team, they began to exchange the ball among themselves, showing no desire to go forward and just keeping the ball.

The Atalanta team was not idle either, but when they chased the ball down and finally managed to block all the ways out for the Juventus team, De Ligt, who was with the ball, cleared it upfield with a powerful kick.

What followed was the loudest whistle the Atalanta fans and players had heard in that game.

Fweeeeeeeeeeeee!

{It is over! Juventus can take a deep breath now! They have pulled through!}

{Coming far away from home to once again stamp their authority on the game, drawing level with the league leaders on points!}

{They are a fair bit behind in goal difference and are hence second, but all they need is one slip up from Inter and they will take their spot up top and I'm sure that is an outcome all the Juventus fans are waiting to see!} the commentator said as the players let out heavy breaths and began to walk off the field.

{Jason Bolu, man of the hour. Helped his team clinch victory with a beautiful goal in the dying minutes of the game}

{He is my man of the match, and I believe he is the same for many others, especially the Juventus fans. Let's hope the officials think the same} the commentator continued his commentary, fixating his eyes on Jason who was being followed closely by quite a few cameras, his image being displayed onto the screens.

In the stands, the stadium announcer was already comforting the players and the fans with mini speeches.

"We lost today, but we'll get them next time!" the stadium announcer said, trying to boost the morale of the fans who were dejected to have lost the game so late in the game.

The Juventus players and their fans did not care to listen as such an announcement as it held not a single bit of benefit to them.

Some of the fans were even scoffing at the announcer's words, thinking to themselves that their team needed to beat the fear of God into the Atalanta fans.

That should stop them from spouting such nonsense.

**19th April 2021... **

8:24 am

“Yaawnnn,”

Jason yawned loudly as he got out of bed, still sleepy and wanting nothing more than to jump into his bed and sleep for a few more hours, but unfortunately, that was not something he could do today, despite having a day off.

He had a meeting with the people from Evo regarding the endorsement deal with them.

Adele had already done most of the negotiations, so they would only be meeting with the Evo team to discuss the specifics and sign the contract.

As he walked out of his room and into the bathroom groggily, he wished he had told Adele to set the meeting a little later than 10:00 am that morning.

Unfortunately, he hadn't accounted for his teammates dragging him along for a victory party just after they arrived back at Turin the previous night.

Now it was almost 9 am, and he was sh*tfaced.

‘At least I don't have a hangover,’ he thought to himself as he grabbed his toothbrush and put a more than healthy amount of toothpaste on it before he began brushing his teeth.

It didn't take him too long to finish his bathroom routine and clean up, and half an hour later, he was in the kitchen, throwing all sorts of ingredients into the blender.

Since he wouldn't be able to eat before leaving, a nutritious drink was his only option.

Whirrrrrr!

The blender came to life with the push of a button and Jason waited for it to ground and blend all the ingredients together.

The blender was powerful despite its small size and less than a minute later, Jason was pouring the now finely ground contents of the blender into a bottle.

"Where's mine?" Adele's voice came from behind him as he poured the last of the smoothie into his bottle.

"Yours? Girl I made this for me," Jason said as he turned back to face the beauty he was sharing a house with.

"..." Adele just stared right at him without a word.

"... I'm just kidding, we can share," Jason gave in after a few seconds of a staring contest.

"Good that you know," Adele said with a little smile and picked up the cover of the bottle and held it out to Jason.

"Thanks," Jason muttered and covered the bottle.

"Hurry up, it'd be better we leave early so we can get back early. You look like you could use the rest," Adele said as she sat at the kitchen counter.

“Have I ever told you how much I love you?” Jason asked.

“I wouldn’t mind hearing it again,” Adele smiled at him.

“I love you,” Jason said in a low voice and leaned in for a kiss.

Chapter 626: Party Poopers’s Party Poopers I

The rest of the day went by as predicted.

Jason and Adele met up with the media and legal team from Evo to iron out the specifics and sign the endorsement deal.

As Adele had previously managed to increase the Endorsement fee to \$6 million for four years, all that needed ironing out were a few extra clauses that could help Jason earn a bit more money.

Since Jason’s demands weren’t out of bounds and the Evo team were a fair bit accommodating, everything went well and a deal was soon agreed upon.

Jason would be taking home at least \$6 million for a four year endorsement contract, with guaranteed increases in his fee if he could push the sales of the company to an agreed level.

There were also talks about his potential shoe line with the company and at the end of the meeting Jason was convinced that the Evo team was more enthusiastic than he was about getting his own shoe line.

Unfortunately, business was business, and they couldn’t offer him a deal to make a signature shoe line without him at least showing the world that he could very well be the next big thing.

Jason also didn’t mind the challenge.

If anything, the offer would help increase his motivation and drive.

'In life... money might not be everything, but it's a pretty good motivator,' he thought to himself as he drove away from the venue of the meeting with Adele after a celebratory meal.

The endorsement contract would be ironed out with the latest additions and printed out soon, upon which he would meet with the Evo team again to finally sign the contract, after which media promotion would commence.

Jason didn't care about all that at that moment though.

All he wanted to do was go back to his house and jump right into his bed for a few more hours and unless the beautiful Latina woman who lived in his house and went by the name of Adele decided to give him some cake, nothing was going to change his mind.

And nothing did.

He didn't get any cake, but he got a lot of sleep and was soon ready to get right back to training.

The next day, he had a final meeting with Evo to sign his endorsement contract and then went right to training while Adele had to leave Italy and get back to Portugal.

While there were still some endorsement deals and sponsorship offers that kept coming through for him, she couldn't be with him every time, after all, she still worked for an agency and not only for him.

Jason didn't let her absence affect his training, and he gave it his all in training throughout the day, but didn't push himself too hard as there was a match the day after.

21st April 2021

Juventus's thirty-second game of the season was against Parma at their home ground and the Juventus fans arrived at the stadium with high hopes of a victory against Parma. RănoĉÊş

Of course, everyone knew that predictions in the world of football didn't always go as expected, but here, the Juventus fans were pretty confident and they showed off their confidence in their cheers and excitement as they waited for the match to begin.

Jason stepped out of the tunnel a few minutes earlier than the beginning of the match proceedings and accompanying him were a few other Juventus players with training vests and track suit jackets on as they walked to the bench.

For the match, Pirlo was giving Morata a run out as he was back from injury and due to that, a few positions were shifted around and Jason ended up on the bench because of it.

A tactical change, or maybe a decision to rest him, Jason couldn't tell, but he wasn't beating himself up about it.

He couldn't deny that he wished he could play in every game, but that wasn't a realistic goal, especially in the current world of football.

Apart from the increased intensity of the game, it was already a good thing that he was already having as much game time as he had at a team like Juventus, as while his talent couldn't be denied, quality players were something a team like Juventus was never short of.

Even the most talented youngsters could only get on to the pitch if the manager chose to play them over the much better options that were already available and for Jason, there were other options.

Of course, one couldn't say who was the better option out of all of them, but the point remained.

Jason made himself comfortable on the bench as he waited for the game to begin and luckily he didn't have to wait long as the pre-match proceedings began not long after.

The game soon began, and right from the start, the fans in the stadium and the viewers watching the game had reasons to jump around in excitement.

Dramatic skill displays, brilliant passes, and powerful shots in the stadium kept the fans entertained, but in the 25th minute of the game, Parma went against all odds and delivered a beautiful goal that left the Juventus supporters in shock for a few seconds.

Intercepting a pass meant for Chiesa on the left flank, the Parma players had quickly began a counterattack to hit back and create a goal-scoring opportunity of their own.

Chiesa had been slow to react, and by the time he could give chase, the ball was already beyond him.

With Chiesa not doing his part to help his team's defenders, the pressure on the back line built and Alex Sandro who was the nearest to the Parma player with the ball, left his man and tried to make the defensive tackle.

Unfortunately his move was a mistake, and opened up enough space for the Parma winger to be played in behind where he got on the end of a perfectly weighted pass and blasted the ball past Sczesny who left his line and came rushing past him.

{GOAL!!!}

{It's Parma who score first!}

{Perfectly worked counter attack, the ball in behind was perfect and the finisher, unerring!}

{Beautiful display of counterattacking football from a team we thought to be the underdogs in this game!}

{Can they play party poopers today, or will they crumble in the minutes to come, we'll see!}

Chapter 627: Party Poopers's Party Poopers II

#43rd minute...

{Juventus have a corner}

{There are two minutes left of normal time in the first half, and Parma still lead}

{They can't let down their guards for a minute as they are up against a team that has proven time and time again that they are dangerous in the air and dangerous on set-pieces and a corner kick is a combination of both] the commentator said while as the players of the both teams scrambled around in the Parma penalty box as they awaited the corner.

Every Parma player was either following their man or getting into spaces they thought the ball would come from, however, they didn't have too much time as the referee soon blew his whistle for the corner kick to be taken.

Cuadrado ran up to the ball and sent an out-swinging cross into the penalty box from the right.

The ball curled powerfully into the aerospace above the Parma penalty box and the players of the two teams who were nearest to the ball jumped at it, trying to reach it, however, it was Alex Sandro who reached it first.

With a powerful header, he directed the ball at the top left corner of the goal, prompting a powerful dive from the opposition goalkeeper.

Unfortunately for the Parma goalkeeper, he was only 6 feet tall and couldn't reach the ball in time despite throwing himself at it, and the ball smashed into the back of the goal.

{GOAL! Juventus!} the commentator screamed excitedly as Alex Sandro jumped to his feet after falling earlier and dashing down to the sidelines.

{Right before half-time, Juventus have their equalizer!}

{We said it and they've done it, powerful effort to reach that header from the Brazilian. He deserved nothing less than that peach of a goal after a header like that!} The commentator couldn't and wouldn't keep his mouth shut about the goal while the Juventus players and their supporters celebrated wildly within the stadium and outside the stadium.

{Parma are now back in familiar territory, and the waters are looking as treacherous as ever}

{With Juventus getting this equalizer just before half-time, they will be coming into the second half sharper than before and heavily intent on building off their momentum}

{Hell, we may not even have to wait till the second half before something more exciting might happen} the commentator said, but in the end, the game resumed and the referee blew his whistle two minutes later with neither team having been able to further disturb the scoreboard operator.

Jason and the other bench players followed along to the locker room for the half-time meeting, and just like the commentator had expected, the manager was motivating the players while giving updates to the game plan that would help the players achieve a better performance against their opponents.

Fifteen minutes later, the players of the two teams walked back onto the field, ready to give their all in the second half of the game.

Fweeeeeeeeeee!

{The second half is underway!}

{Parma are kicking off the second half, and they're playing the ball back to their defenders right off the bat!}

{It seems to be clear what the Parma manager wants from his players... Control}

{Perhaps a possession oriented game plan to help them retain the lead while also holding on to the ball to ensure that their opponents can't have enough time with the ball to build any dangerous

momentum} the co-commentator analyzed as he watched the Parma players pass the ball around carefully, while the Juventus players chased after them.

{Pretty solid idea, however, they have to be careful to not lose the ball in dangerous places against this opponent} the commentator agreed, but right after the commentator's words, a Parma succumbed to the pressure of three Juventus players rushing at him and he made a bad touch on the ball, allowing Juventus to instantly steal possession.

{Turnover from Parma in their own half!The commentator squealed excitedly, but no one was paying him any attention and were instead more focused on the Juventus team that suddenly seemed to be starting a counterattack.

{Ramsey to Chiesa on the left, Chiesa dashes forward and tries to cut in, but there's someone in his way!}

{Pass behind him to Alex Sandro} the commentator said as Chiesa turned and passed the ball back to Alex Sandro, who had advanced pretty deep into the Parma half of the field.

On receiving the ball, Alex Sandro controlled the ball's pace and made an in-field pass to Ramsey.

Ramsey caught the ball and tried to find Dybala on the right side, but the path was blocked and he immediately tried to turn back and find another option, but the Parma players weren't going to leave him for too long.

With a Parma player quickly reaching him and slamming continuously into him from behind, Ramsey barely managed to roll the ball back towards Alex Sandro, who was rushing forward to support him.

Noticing that he would reach the ball about two meters away from the edge of the penalty box, Alex Sandro immediately thought to shoot.

On reaching the ball, he didn't waste any time and hit it.

{Puts his foot through with it!} the commentator screamed as Alex Sandro hit the ball, but before he was even done speaking, the Parma goal was once again sent bulging.

{GOAL!!!}

{From one goal behind, Juventus have now blasted themselves into the lead!}

{A beautiful header two minutes before the end of the first half and a powerful drive into the back of the goal two minutes after the second half began. This man is almost single-handedly carrying his team, and that is not something we see from a defender very often} the commentator said, but Alex Sandro was too busy celebrating his second goal of the game to care about the commentator's words.

Like the commentator said, it was not every day a defender carried his team, and it was even rarer when a defender did it by scoring two goals and helping his team stage a comeback, hence, Alex Sandro was over the moon and was already having designs on a hat-trick.

It was very well within the realms of possibility now, after all.

Chapter 628: Party Pooper's Party Pooper's III

#78th minute...

Time had quickly run down after Alex Sandro's goal that helped Juventus take the lead with Parma putting forth all their efforts to try and get one back against Juventus.

Juventus weren't content with a one goal lead either and were also pushing to extend their lead and though there had been a few close calls, neither team had had much success.

With time running out, the managers of the two teams had long began making substitutions and Jason was finally also getting a run out.

Flexing his legs on the sidelines, he waited for Dybala who came jogging down the field.

The fans applauded loudly for the Argentinean who despite having not managed to leave his mark on the scoreboard, had played pretty well and had been involved in quite a few attacks for his team.

High fiving Dybala, Jason ran onto the field and across to the right side, nodding to his teammates as he passed by them.

Jason!

CLAP CLAP CLAP!!!

Jason!

CLAP CLAP CLAP!!!

The fans sang and clapped as he reached the right flank and Cuadrado threw the ball to him.

Hearing his name being called out loudly as soon as he got onto the pitch immediately fired him up and he soon found himself pushing the ball forward.

Doing this instead of returning the ball back had allowed a Parma player to get behind him and block his path back while he was being closed down from the front and from the left, seemingly leaving him with no other options but to concede possession, but Jason thought differently.

Pushing the ball forward again, he moved nearer to the player in front of him while also allowing the player coming from his side to approach him and at the last moment, he suddenly rolled the ball to his right with his left foot, drawing a tackle from the player in front before instantly changing direction and kicking the ball back out to the left.

The ball rolled past the Parma defender and Jason burst past it, causing the two players coming at him to collide into each other while Jason pulled away, kicking the ball back down the right flank to escape another tackle from another Parma player who had tried to steal the ball.

The Juventus fans increased their noise as they watched Jason do what they loved to see him do.

{How the fans love to see that!} The commentator chuckled.

{He's not stopping and he's cutting in from the right!?!}

As Jason cut in, another player jumped into his path, but a smoothly executed elastico with his left foot sent the ball sharply to his left, causing the Parma defender to chase as Jason reared his right foot to shoot.

The Parma defender somehow managed to burst out powerfully and jump into Jason's path again with a sliding tackle, hoping to block the shot, but Jason merely faked the shot and pushed the ball further right while the defender scrambled to pick himself up.

However, before the player could get up, Jason had already hit the ball at the goal promoting an elicit response from the Parma goalkeeper.

Thanks to the right angle, the goalkeeper was able to get in the way of the ball, but the bounced off him and hit the bar, falling back into play, however it was quickly cleared by a nearby Parma defender before Ronaldo could get to it.

{Saved by the clearance! Parma almost fell into a road of no return there!} The commentator squealed excitedly.

{Right after stepping onto the pitch, he is already creating beauty. His run down the flank was perfect and he almost made his opponents pay for letting down their guards around him} the co-commentator calmly said, analyzing Jason's play.

{Yeah, as always, fancy footwork from Jason. He had his opponents eating his dust like always and he almost made them pay... Almost} the commentator responded and the fans increased their cheering, switching to a new gear of excitement while Jason ran to the sidelines to take the corner kick.

Scratching the green with his boot a bit before placing the ball on the scratched spot, Jason stepped back to await the whistle.

While this was going on, the players of the two teams were arranging themselves in the penalty box in readiness for the ball that was to come flying their way.

They didn't have to wait long as the referee's whistle soon went off and Jason swung the ball powerfully into the penalty box towards the waiting head of Ronaldo.

{Ronaldoooooo!} The commentator shouted as Ronaldo got his head to the ball, directing it at goal.

The ball bounced off Ronaldo's head towards the goal, but moments before crossing the goal line, it bounced off the cross bar and back into play.

{It's hit the cross bar! The players are scrambling after the ball, each team hoping to reach it first!} The commentator shouted, but it was Alex Sandro who got to the ball first and reared his leg back for the shot.

{This one for the hat-trick!} The commentator shouted as Alex Sandro hit the ball back at the Parma goal, but a Parma player quickly jumped into the ball's path, deflecting it towards the left.

It looked like the ball would fly out of the field until De Ligt who was near the ball's path threw himself at the ball, catching it with his head and pushing it into the back of the goal.

{Goal!!!!!!!}

{Three for Juventus! They stamp their foot down with authority and surely now, there is no way back for Parma!} The commentator screamed as De Ligt took off down the sidelines in joyous frenzy.

{Normally, he operates from the back, but today, he has shown that he can very much be a threat when he goes forward!}

{Juventus's defenders have been on top of their game today, showing everyone that their duties for the team is not limited to staying behind and stopping the attacks} the co-commentator said, watching as the Juventus players celebrated joyously, while the Parma players looked forlorn.

With Juventus taking a two goal lead, the game was pretty much over for Parma who had struggled with their attacks all game.

At this point, the Juventus team would clearly not lose their guards and since they had the momentum, they could very well score even more goals.

However, as professionals, the Parma players were obligated to keep working hard.

Even if they were going to lose, they'd do so while struggling to make something of the game, otherwise, they wouldn't be worthy of their enormous wages.

With that thought, the game resumed with the Parma players now going all out, heavily intent on either narrowing the deficit, or if luck was on their side, equalizing the game.

The Juventus players also rose to the challenge, giving their all to keep holding on to the reins of the game, however just three minutes later, the Parma team managed to somehow slip a pass behind Chiellini.

The Parma striker chased hard after the ball, reaching it and curling it around Sczesny beautifully, but just as he ran to grab the ball and take it back to the midfield, the assistant referee's flag went up.

{Oh, there's a call for offside!}

The Parma players immediately ran up to the referee hoping for a correction of the decision, but unluckily for them, the VAR confirmed the offside call.

The goal would not stand, and the Parma players were back where they were a few minutes ago.

Despite the disheartening situation, they continued giving their best, but it was not enough as the Juventus players didn't lose out to them in terms of effort.

Soon the game was taken back to the Parma's half of the field.

#89th minute...

Mckennie tried to chip a pass into Jason's path as he made a run forward, but a Parma defender jumped and got his head to the ball, sending it back up the field while Jason had run in behind.

Jason began to jog back behind the offside line, but he soon quickened his pace as he noticed where the ball was about to land.

While the ball flew towards Ronaldo, Jason made a run back behind the offside line, shooting Ronaldo a knowing look before he made a tight arc and turned round once again.

Ronaldo had caught on and once Jason made it behind the offside line, he once again sent a pass behind the Parma defense line, but this one was grounded.

For Jason who was already running, making a turn was easy and bursting forward with enough pace that he outpaced he man, he chased hard after the ball.

The Parma goalkeeper didn't content himself with waiting on his goal line for Jason to reach the ball and finish it off, rather he burst forward, hoping to get to the ball first or at least throw Jason off enough for him to shoot the ball wide, however to Jason, the goal keeper's actions didn't make much of a difference.

Reaching the ball first, Jason swept the ball to the right, dodging the goalkeeper before hitting the ball into the open goal.

{Silky smooth finish! He's rendered the goalkeeper helpless against his shot with such movements}

{Juventus pile on the misery, adding one more to their scoreline!} The commentator said excitedly while Jason and the fans celebrated with more excitement.

The mood was at the peak and with the game seemingly in the bag, the fans were content to just enjoy the few minutes left of the game, but surprisingly, the Parma team managed to score a goal, reducing the deficit.

Thus the game ended with the scoreline: Juventus 4:2 Parma.

Chapter 629: Purple Trouble I

****25th April 2021****

{The Day is Saturday, the location is Florence, the time is 5 pm, and the occasion? The 33rd Match day in Serie A} the commentator's voice boomed through the stadium's speakers.

{It's Fiorentina up against Uventus!}

{The moods are undoubtedly high in the Uventus camp as earlier today, Inter Milan lost in the Milan derby to AC Milan, giving Uventus the chance to take the lead on the table}

{They'll have to cash in today against Fiorentina if they want to take the lead and we'll soon see what the men in purple have to say about that!} The commentator gave the opening remarks as the team's lineups soon began to show up on the screens of the people watching the match from around the world.

Just like the previous match, Jason was starting on the bench, and this time he wasn't the only first-team member who was on the bench.

Ronaldo, Cuadrado, Chiellini, and De Ligt were among the players starting on the bench due to the match coming up against Madrid in three days.

It would be a severe handicap against a team as strong as Fiorentina, but there wasn't much the manager could do at this point.

He could only hope that the quality of the other players on the team was enough to help the team coast to victory in this game, gaining the three points they needed to put a reasonable distance between them and Inter Milan.

Of course getting just one point would achieve the goal of climbing up the table's ranks to the first position, but that was not a result any Uventus supporter would want.

The players of the two teams were soon arranged across the field and the referee's whistle went, signaling to kick off the game and the crowd's cheers rose in response as the Fiorentina team kicked off the game.

Fiorentina immediately launched an attack as soon as the game began, not holding back even though Uventus would be regarded as the stronger team.

As the perceived stronger team, the Uventus side didn't back down and rose to the challenge, rushing at the Fiorentina players in a bid to take the game by the reins, not backing down in the slightest, despite having many of their heavy hitters sitting on the bench.

Fiorentina pushed forward, wanting to take advantage of the weaker line-up than usual to steal themselves an early goal that they could then coast on till a victory, but the Uventus players weren't so easily pushed around by their opponents, staying strong in the middle and at the back.

#28th minute...

The Fiorentina was once again on the attack.

They had been pushing hard at the Uventus team since kickoff, and they had gradually begun seeing results.

With a sudden burst of pace and skill from a Fiorentina player in the midfield, he quickly dodged Arthur and sent a long pass forward to his team's danger man, Vlahovic.

Receiving the ball with his back to the goal, Vlahovic perfectly trapped the still moving ball and made a smooth ball with the ball, building momentum for a shot as soon as he faced the goal, but before he could get clear on goal, Demiral who had been on the move since the ball came at Vlahovic, dived in for a tackle to sweep away the ball.

With Vlahovic unaware of Demiral's movements, the two of them inevitably crashed into each other, both of them falling to the ground.

Demiral immediately got back up, wanting to clear the ball, but the referee's whistle, followed by a burst of outraged cries from the Fiorentina fans who were in the majority, let the players know that the contact was not a clean one and the Fiorentina fans quickly began calling for a penalty.

The Fiorentina fans also called for the same, and despite the Uventus players trying to influence the referee's decision, the replay of the tackle quickly solidified the referee's initial decision and a few seconds later, Vlahovic placed the ball on the spot and stepped back, ready to take the penalty.

Fweeeeeee!

At the referee's whistle, Vlahovic ran at the ball and drove it down the middle of the goal to Sczesny's dismay.

The Uventus goalkeeper had predicted that Vlahovic would shoot the ball to the right and had dived early, trying to get in position on time to counter the striker's shot power, but his prediction was wrong and he had instead jumped out of the way of the ball, unable to do nothing but watch as the ball smashed into the back of the net.

(Down the middle and in! Well taken penalty!)

{Sczesny must wish that he had stayed put!} the commentator shouted as Vlahovic took off down the sidelines to celebrate with his team's fans.

Jumping into the air and pumping his right fist upward, Vlahovic's face was a picture of joy as he celebrated with his teammates and the fans.

The Fiorentina fans were especially in a joyous frenzy as they began to rue the thought of ruining Uventus's day, however, the commentator made sure to remind everyone that it was still quite early in the game and the tide could turn at any moment, especially with strong opponents like Uventus being up against them.

The Fiorentina players soon began returning to their positions after the celebrations and the game began again.

#36th minute...

{It's Uventus on the attack!}

{Ever since going behind, they have fought back with righteous fury, doing all they can to get an equalizer!}

{It's the first step to a comeback that they need, and they're looking to find I-!}

{A ball in from Danilo to find Chiesa!} the commentator shouted excitedly as Chiesa rose to the air to meet the cross from Danilo.

The ball bounced powerfully off his head as he tried to direct the ball at goal, but he soon realized that he had put a bit too much power on the ball while trying to direct the ball at goal and the ball carelessly flew over the bar.

{Oh! He put too much behind that!} the commentator shouted while the Uventus fans groaned in exasperation at the goal-scoring chance being wasted.

{With that much power behind the cross, he should have just tried to get it in the right direction} the co-commentator added as a disappointed Chiesa began to jog out of the penalty box while the goalkeeper retrieved the ball for a goal kick.

Chapter 630: Purple Trouble II

After the effort that went begging, the Uventus team kept trying to find the goal that would get them back on level terms, but the Fiorentina players held on tightly to their lead, all while continuously making efforts of their own to try to further their lead.

Time rapidly passed as the game raged on and the first half of the game soon came to an end with the Uventus team holding on to their lead.

After the whistle was blown, the players of the two teams stopped playing and quickly headed down to the locker rooms.

The bench players also followed after the on-field players as they made their way towards the tunnel, but before they made it to the tunnel, there was suddenly a noise on the right side that diverted everyone's attention.

Jason looked over as well and discovered that the cause of the commotion was a fan who had jumped over and was running at the players with a phone in hand.

Jason watched with intrigue as the fan dodged the first part of the security team spectacularly, but he couldn't completely get through and was soon caught.

"Wasn't fast enough," Jason muttered and continued walking, taking his mind off the situation.

"What are you thinking about?" Cuadrado asked Jason, who looked to be deep in thought as they walked.

"Are you worried about the game?" Ronaldo asked.

"Nah... I was just wondering something else?" Jason muttered as they walked/

"What?" Ronaldo asked.

“If... you drink cashew milk, almond milk, all that...”

“... Then doesn’t that just mean you drink nut?” Jason asked with a serious look on his face.

“ ... ”

For a few seconds, everyone who had been listening to Jason speak went silent.

“I hope you wake up tomorrow and there are no doorknobs on any of your doors,” Cuadrado was the one who broke the silence.

“Bro, some people drink that every day, why would you say that?” De Ligt said, sneaking a glance at Ronaldo who was one of the people he was talking about.

Ronaldo was a very health-focused person, and he especially focused on his food, which meant mostly water, or plant based fresh beverages, and milks from nuts were a big part of that.

However, before a banter could begin, they had already reached the locker room where the manager didn’t waste any time in pulling out the whiteboard and going over the tactics with the players.

Motivation was not the focus of the meeting.

The players already had all the motivation they needed to win the game.

If they won, they’d earn a place at the top of the table, and if that wasn’t enough to motivate them, then they shouldn’t be in a team like Uventus where the only thing they needed to do was win.

“Chiesa, you need to make more runs in behind! The only person who should be asking for the ball to feet should be Bernadeshi,” Pirlo said loudly, pointing to the board.

“I already said it before the game started,”

“Bernadeschi will drop back to receive the ball here, and the two of you forwards will start moving to get in behind,” Pirlo said, pointing to the top right side of the board and making circling motions to show the players where he meant.

“Chiesa, you’re faster, so it’s up to you to make the dummy runs to pull away the defenders and open up some space for Morata, but all you’ve been doing is bursting forward at the wrong times and pulling back when you should be running forward,”

“DO I NEED TO TEACH YOU HOW TO DO YOUR JOB?” Pirlo asked sharply, his voice louder than usual.

It was clear that the manager was not happy that his players were not doing what they should be doing.

“No coach,” Chiesa answered quietly.

“Then get out there and play like the forward the team needs!”

“Or I’ll bring on someone who can!” Pirlo snapped and then turned to the defenders.

“And you guys, what are you doing, huh?” he asked, his voice dangerously low, stunning the defenders who thought they had done pretty well so far.

“Our opponents have had too many chances!”

“Rugani, I told you to man-mark Vlahovic, you know what that means?”

“You stay right behind him!”

“If he goes left, you go left,” Pirlo said, moving to the left.

"If he goes right, you go right," the manager said, continuing his demonstration by stepping to the right.

"If it's forward, then forward,"

"If he goes for a piss, hold his co*k,"

"What were you doing!?" Pirlo asked after his demonstration.

"Er... holding his co*k?" Rugani managed to reply, confused.

"NO! MAN-MARKING!" Pirlo shouted at him.

"The gaffer must really want the win. You'd think his job is on the line," Cuadrado whispered to Jason in the back.

"Maybe it is," Jason whispered back, also surprised at Pirlo's outburst.

It was not every day their normally cool-headed manager displayed such *passion* during tactical sessions.

Not even when motivating the players for bigger games.

Jason had never seen Pirlo this agitated since he had arrived at Uventus, but perhaps the others had seen him like that.

In the end, the manager gave a full review of the game plan and directed each player to their positions and explained what he needed from them.

A few minutes later, the players were on their way back to the field.

Pirlo trudged along just behind them, his brows scrunched up slightly.

He wanted nothing more than to put on his more important on the pitch as he knew that doing so would make the upcoming second half easier for his team, and they could more easily stage a comeback.

Yet, at the same time, he knew he could not just do that.

The players were on the bench for a reason, and that was to ensure they rested well and saved their energy, as well as to avoid any sudden injuries in the game.

Due to their tight schedule lately, the first team players had been through game after game with short resting periods between the games and exhaustion had inevitably accumulated, hence if he wanted his players to be at their peak for the Champions League game against Madrid in three days, then he could at most bring them on in the dying minutes of the game.

What this meant was that the players who were currently in the starting line-up were on their own for this game.