

LEGENDS 66

Chapter 66 Selfless Decision?

"Should I call the captain or Ivan?" Jason asked Sergio Conceicao in a low voice, surprising the head manager, but there was nothing Jason could do about it.

Football was a team sport and bringing on a defender was the right decision in this situation so despite how much Jason wanted to be the one to be substituted on, he could only give up his spot.

Luckily, he had enough maturity and was experienced enough to make the right decision without feeling like he was being short-changed.

Diogo Leite's sacrifice also had an impact on his decision and he suddenly felt that insisting on coming on would be a bit too selfish, even though the manager was the one who would still make the decision, but he could see the manager hesitating, hence he stepped up and voluntarily gave up his chance.

"... Please call Pepe and tell him to begin warming up," Sergio Conceicao finally said after a few seconds of silence.

"... and thank you," he muttered in a low voice after Jason left, but the loud shouts in the stadium made it impossible for Jason to hear him.

In reality, he was the one who made all the decisions so Jason's act of giving up his place wouldn't really make a difference even if he didn't, but Jason's actions had eased his conscience a little bit, so he was thankful and now felt indebted to Jason.

Jason of course didn't know this and had already told Pepe that Sergio Conceicao wanted him to warm up in preparation for being substituted into the game after which he returned to his place on the bench.

The other players on the bench did not know whether to comfort him or thank him at this moment because of how there was no emotion being displayed on his face, so they just kept mute.

Diogo Leite who had just been sent off came to the sidelines and shook hands with all his teammates before sitting down on the empty space beside Jason that was filled up by the team's captain less than a minute ago.

"Nice one," Jason said as he offered his hand for a handshake to Diogo Leite who took his hand while muttering a "thanks".

Soon the manager made a substitution and Ze Luis one of the team's two strikers would be coming off for Pepe, the team's captain.

Sergio Olivera gave the captain armband back to Pepe when Pepe ran onto the pitch and Pepe quickly started rallying his teammates as he took position determined to not let any of the sacrifices of his teammates be wasted.

The match soon resumed with Vitoria de Guimares taking a free kick that ended with the ball in the stands.

Play then resumed with a goal kick from the Porto side with Augustin Marchesin sending the ball high.

Despite being down by one man, the Porto team played like they were on a mission and the of the player who was sent off was hardly felt as they attacked Vitoria de Guimares time and time again.

Unfortunately, even at the eighty-fifth minute they still had nothing to show for their efforts, and the end of ninety minutes rapidly approached with neither team managing to add to the scoresheet.

At this point, the travelling fans of Porto were already silent with a few of them even praying for a breakthrough for their team.

Unexpectedly it seemed that someone had heard the fans' prayers as a space suddenly opened up in the defense of the Vitoria de Guimares team and Shoya sent the ball through towards the right wing.

Jesus Corona made an incisive run behind his marker to get on the ball and making sure to hold him off, he sent a grounded cross into the box that somehow found Moussa Marega who was holding off his marker.

Moussa Marega sent the ball flying furiously past the opposing goalkeeper to bring his team level and the team went wild in celebrations.

They were joined by the players on the bench, the team manager, other technical staff, and the fans.

{GOAL!!!}

{It's here! The dragons have stolen level at the last and now leave the fans lingering with the question; "Is there still time for one more?"} The commentator didn't hesitate to do his job while the Porto players and fans celebrated their goal.

The Vitoria de Guimares team that had managed to hold a lead until this period could not express their disappointment enough and their fans were even more infuriated.

It was like the players' brains had shut down due to their confidence in bagging a win and it had backfired hard and now they were level.

The Vitoria de Guimares's manager on the sidelines couldn't keep silent and berated his players continuously in fury.

The referee wasn't paying attention to all this and wanted to hurry up the Porto players but who knew that they were already back in their half of the field, and waiting for the game to resume, a dangerous glint shining in their eyes.

As soon as the Vitoria de Guimares side kicked off, the Porto surged at them like an unending wave, completely ignoring their defensive measures and putting on an unimaginably concentrated heavy pressing and chasing down every player of the opposing team that had the ball.

The Vitoria de Guimares side also wanted to get a redeeming goal so they were not so easily pressured by the Porto players who were charging at them like dragons after their prey.

It was at this moment that the Vitoria de Guimares's one-man advantage over Porto showed itself and they somehow managed to escape the Porto's team press and launch an attack, rapidly approaching the Porto's goal and soon one of the Vitoria de Guimares's midfielder couldn't control the urge to shoot anymore.

As he received the ball, he smoothly dribbled past Danilo Perreira just outside the box before swinging his foot heavily and launching a thunderous shot at the Porto goal.

Augustin Marchesin dived for the ball but could only watch in agony as the ball flew past his outstretched arm, but just before going into the goal, the ball hit the top crossbar, plunged downward, and bounced on the goal line and just before it was about to spin into the Porto goal, Chancel Mbebe flew over the goalkeeper that was lying on the floor and managed to clear the ball with a well-executed scissors kick to clear the ball from the goal line.

Some Vitoria de Guimares players were adamant that the ball had gone in though, and tried to shout for the referee but some of the Porto players didn't care about that and were already chasing the ball.

Shoya Nakajima was the one who got to the ball first and quickly turned to face the opposing team's goal before launching a lobbed pass over the Vitoria de Guimares defensive line and into the path of Luiz Diaz who was currently on the right side of the field.

The Vitoria de Guimares players had finally realized that the referee wasn't responding to their cries and quickly gave chase.

Luiz Diaz didn't care as his full focus was on the ball that was flying into his path.

He trapped the ball with his chest and used it to push the ball forward before running after the ball.

A defender of the opposing team appeared in his way, but he easily skipped past him and charged down the right side of the opposing team's half.

Very soon, two defenders came to try and block his path while the player he had gotten past earlier was on his heels, so he quickly began looking for a teammate.

Luckily Moussa Marega was making an incisive run past his marker. He was like a freight train that couldn't be stopped and Luiz Diaz didn't waste any time in sending the ball into his path.

Moussa Marega managed to control the ball as he entered the right side of the penalty area and he quickly tried to slow down, but that was when he realized that his path to the goal was blocked by another two players.

Moussa Marega knew he did not have enough agility to escape the two players and he didn't want to use his physical strength to push them out of his path as that could lead to him losing the ball or the referee calling a foul, but then out of the corner of his eye, he saw an approaching Porto jersey coming into the penalty area.

Marega just ended up pushing the ball toward the goal line before sending the ball across the penalty box and into the path of the approaching player.

Pepe who had been running all the way from his team's half at the beginning of the counterattack saw the ball coming into his path and he jumped as if he was going into a tackle, and sent the ball flying into the bottom corner of the goal.