

THE SILENT SYMPHONY

Chapter 13: The Trade Off

Señor Vásquez was the first to notice the dramatic improvement in Mateo's play.

The boy had always been talented, but now he seemed to operate on a different level entirely. His positioning was perfect, his decision-making flawless, his understanding of tactical situations almost supernatural.

"It's like he can see the future," Álex observed after a training match where Mateo had orchestrated three goals without scoring himself. "He knows what's going to happen before it happens."

"Maybe the accident changed something in his brain," David suggested.
"Made him smarter somehow."

They weren't wrong, but they couldn't possibly understand the true nature of what had occurred. The rightful source is novel{f}ire.net

Mateo had gained access to a form of football intelligence that transcended normal human limitations, guided by an entity that existed somewhere between consciousness and instinct.

The System's influence extended beyond pure tactical understanding. It also provided detailed analysis of technique, helping Mateo refine his ball control, passing accuracy, and shooting precision to levels that seemed impossible for his age.

Every practice session became an opportunity to perfect some aspect of his game, guided by feedback that was more precise than any human coach could provide.

Your first touch can be improved by adjusting the angle of your foot by 2.3 degrees, the System would suggest during passing drills.

The optimal power for this shot is 73% of your maximum force, with a slight backspin to ensure accuracy, it would advise during shooting practice.

The defender will commit to his left foot in 1.2 seconds. Begin your move to the right now.

The guidance was constant and incredibly detailed, turning every moment on the pitch into a masterclass in football perfection. Mateo absorbed the information eagerly, his natural talent enhanced by scientific precision that made him virtually unstoppable in youth-level competition.

But the System also taught him about restraint and patience. During one training session, when Mateo was dominating so completely that his teammates were becoming frustrated, the entity offered a different kind of lesson.

True greatness is not about showing how much better you are than others, it explained. It is about making everyone around you better. Use your gifts to elevate your teammates, not to diminish them.

The advice resonated deeply with Mateo's natural character. From that point forward, he began to use his enhanced abilities not just to excel individually, but to create opportunities for others.

His passes became more creative, designed to put teammates in positions where they could succeed. His movement off the ball created space for others to exploit. His defensive work protected the team's shape while allowing his colleagues to take risks in attack.

The transformation was remarkable.

CF Barceloneta, which had been a good but not exceptional youth team, suddenly became dominant in their league. They won match after match, often by large margins, with Mateo orchestrating play from his central midfield position like a conductor leading a symphony.

But it was during a particularly challenging match against Real Madrid's youth team that the full extent of Mateo's new abilities became apparent.

Madrid arrived with a reputation for physical play and tactical sophistication that had intimidated many opposing teams. Their players were bigger, stronger, and more experienced than CF Barceloneta's squad.

For the first twenty minutes, Madrid controlled the match completely.

Their superior size and athleticism allowed them to dominate possession and create several dangerous scoring opportunities. CF Barceloneta's players looked overwhelmed, struggling to cope with the intensity and pace of the game.

But Mateo was watching, learning, adapting.

The System was analyzing Madrid's patterns of play, identifying weaknesses and opportunities that weren't immediately apparent. Gradually, he began to see the solution to the tactical puzzle they presented.

They are vulnerable to quick transitions, the System observed. Their defenders are slow to recover when possession changes. If you can win the ball in midfield and release it quickly to the wings, you can create numerical advantages in attack.

Mateo began to implement the strategy immediately. Instead of trying to match Madrid's physical approach, he focused on intelligent positioning and quick passing.

When Madrid's midfielder attempted an ambitious through ball, Mateo was already in position to intercept it. His first touch took him away from pressure, his second found Sergi on the left wing with a perfectly weighted pass.

The goal that followed was a thing of beauty. Sergi's cross found Álex unmarked in the penalty area, and the captain's finish was clinical. 1-0 to CF Barceloneta, against all expectations.

The second goal came fifteen minutes later, following an almost identical pattern.

Mateo intercepted a pass in midfield, this time finding David on the right wing with a defense-splitting through ball. David's cross was met by Pau, who had made an unexpected run from defense to score his first goal of the season.

By the time the match ended, CF Barceloneta had won 3-1, with Mateo providing the assist for all three goals. His performance had been masterful, not flashy or spectacular, but intelligent and effective in ways that completely neutralized Madrid's advantages.

"How did you know?" Señor Vásquez asked afterward, his voice filled with admiration and confusion. "How did you see what they were going to do before they did it?"

Mateo simply tapped his temple and smiled, the gesture that was becoming his trademark response to questions about his enhanced abilities. He couldn't

explain the System's existence to anyone who would believe such an incredible story? But he could demonstrate its effectiveness through his play.

As the weeks passed and CF Barceloneta's winning streak continued, word of Mateo's extraordinary performances began to spread throughout the Barcelona football community.

Scouts from professional clubs attended their matches with increasing frequency, drawn by reports of a mute eight-year-old who played with the tactical intelligence of a seasoned professional.

But it was Josep Colomer, Barcelona's chief scout for youth development, who finally made the journey to watch Mateo play. The man responsible for identifying and recruiting the next generation of La Masia talents had heard whispers about the orphan boy who could orchestrate matches without saying a word.

What he witnessed during CF Barceloneta's match against Espanyol's youth team convinced him that the whispers were true. Mateo's performance was nothing short of extraordinary – two goals, three assists, and a display of tactical awareness that seemed impossible for someone so young.

After the match, Colomer approached Señor Vásquez with the kind of serious expression that indicated important business.

"I need to speak with you about the boy," he said simply. "Barcelona would like to offer him a trial."

The words hung in the air like a promise of destiny fulfilled. Mateo, who had been collecting balls from around the goal area, looked up at the mention of Barcelona's name. Even without hearing the specific details of the conversation, he understood that something significant was happening.

The System's voice whispered in his mind, carrying a note of satisfaction and anticipation.

The first door is opening, Mateo. Are you ready to walk through it?

Mateo nodded slightly, his dark eyes fixed on the Barcelona scout who represented everything he had dreamed of achieving.

The accident had taken his voice, but it had given him something far more valuable – the ability to speak the language of football with a fluency that no other player possessed.

The journey to La Masia was about to begin, and with the System as his guide, Mateo felt ready for whatever challenges lay ahead. His dreams of representing Spain seemed closer than ever, and the path to achieving them had never been clearer.

The silent boy with the magical touch was about to discover just how far his unique gifts could take him.