

## SCRIMMAGE

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**SYNOPSIS:**

Bobby, a star football player grapples with getting drafted by an out-of-state college while navigating a romance with a fellow teammate.

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**Scrimmage** /'skrimij/

1. a confused struggle or fight.
2. the beginning of each down of play, with the ball placed on the ground between the offensive and defensive lines with its longest axis at right angles to the goal line.

**THE BOYS:**

BOBBY: #43 Quarterback.

MAX: #12 Receiver.

JOHN: #55 Center.

*The final game. Three boys are at the line of scrimmage. They are wearing shoulder pads, crop tops and helmets. A crowd chants 'Eagle meat, eagle meat, what do we eat? Eagle meat. How do we like it? Raw, Raw Raw!'*

BOBBY: Left. Y-He. 6, 13 U.O. Naked left, naked left. R. Pump.

MAC(in agreement): 13.

JOHN: 13? Are you kidding me? They're gonna blitz that. What are you doing? Are you trying to throw the game?

MAC: Bobby calls it, I trust him.

JOHN: I know that line up. They're going to pull to the left.

BOBBY: Purple 40, purple 40, naked left.

MAC(in agreement): Naked left.

JOHN: No dude!

BOBBY: Hut!

*They all run in place. BOBBY passes the ball to MAC. MAC runs in place looking behind him. They're closing in.*

MAC: Oh shit.

*He falls to the ground. They huddle again.*

JOHN: Are you fucking kidding me?!

MAC: They blitzed us.

JOHN: I knew that line up.

MAC: It was just a fluke, dude. Come on, relax.

JOHN: If you weren't always up Bobby's ass and listened to me-

MAC: What are you- no, I'm not-

JOHN (to BOBBY): I know what you're doing man, and it's not cute.

BOBBY: Dan has their playbook memorized. He used to play for Beaumont High. He's been telling me-

JOHN: Are you talking about Dan, Dan? You cousin Dan? Dan who works at Food Lion? Dan who bags my mother's groceries Dan? He slipping you game plays while he's stocking inventory? He played what? Eight years ago?

BOBBY: What are you trying to say?

MAC: Let's not get heated guys.

JOHN: What I'm trying to say is what the fuck does he know about their playbook? We all know he's the reason his team didn't make it to championships.

BOBBY: You don't know what you're talking about.

JOHN: What part don't I know Bobby? The part where your cousin threw the game because he was too focused on knocking up Ally Feeb? Where did that get him? Your cousin was a loser eight years ago and he's a loser today.

*BOBBY growls and charges. They fight. MAC tries to break them up.*

JOHN (cont.): Get him off me!

*MAC pulls them apart.*

JOHN (cont.): Fuck you, Bobby. You know what this means to me.

MAC: Come on! Stop this! You both want to get sidelined for our last game? Man up and swallow the blow. We're not too far behind.

*They pull apart, breathing heavy.*

JOHN: I can't deal, dude. We're losing. Mac, please, help me talk some sense into him. If we don't make this goal we're fucked.

MAC: Okay, okay, what's our next play?

BOBBY: Capture the flag.

JOHN: Now you're just handing them the game.

BOBBY: What the fuck do you want from me dude?

*They spin out of the huddle they take their helmets off and wrap their waists in towels. MAC is gone. End of the last practice before the final game.*

JOHN: And?

BOBBY: That was it.

JOHN: There has to be more.

BOBBY: I was so pumped I probably zoned out for some of the shit. But they want me dude, that was clear. I'm in as long as we go to championships.

JOHN: And you said yes.

BOBBY: I mean-

JOHN: No, you didn't.

BOBBY: I didn't want to seem overeager.

JOHN: WHAT! Anyone would jump on this opportunity. It's fucking Cal U!

BOBBY: I'll be moving pretty far away from my family.

JOHN: I'm sure your dad planned this as soon as he found out you had a dick. Do you want to end up like your old man? Here?

BOBBY: There's nothing wrong with- He's happy, isn't that enough?

JOHN: All I'm saying is, I know you have the chance to be great. Do you want to be happy, or do you want to be great?

BOBBY: I need to focus on the game tomorrow before I can decide anything. Game first, glory second.

JOHN: Game first, glory second, brother. Everyone needs that same attitude so we can win tomorrow.

*Moment.*

BOBBY: I heard Penn State is coming tomorrow.

JOHN: Coach told me.

BOBBY: For you?

*JOHN gives him a shrug and a goofy smile. BOBBY slaps him.*

BOBBY(cont.): Dude, yes!

JOHN: This is my chance. I can feel it. We have to win.

BOBBY: We will.

JOHN: I want this so bad man. We'll be high school legends. I'll be at Penn State. You'll be chilling at Cal U! Don't pretend you don't live for this shit. We're in the prime of our lives.

*BOBBY says nothing. Off-handed.*

JOHN(cont.): Have you told Mac?

BOBBY: Why would I tell Mac?

JOHN: Dude, come on.

BOBBY: You don't understand. Let's drop it.

JOHN: I'm not stupid. I understand perfectly. No one is going to draft Mac, and you don't want to hurt his feelings.

BOBBY: Penn State could.

JOHN: You know they won't. Dude, come on. You're gonna go far. I can't be the only one who escapes this place alive. Mac, he-

BOBBY: It's easier for you to say. And, what's wrong with this place?

JOHN: Why do I feel like you've already made up your mind?

BOBBY: I haven't.

JOHN: You're gonna break your dad's heart walking away from this opportunity. Since we were kids, he's been nothing but supportive of us. Taking us to practices, buying our gear...

BOBBY: The only reason I'm playing ball is because he wanted me to.

JOHN: I know that's not true. Your head is clouded. Don't let someone be your-

BOBBY: How long would I play ball for? Four more years?

JOHN: Could go all the way.

BOBBY: I don't know if that is what I want, or what I ever wanted.

JOHN: Wasn't what you were saying a week ago.

*They break away. BOBBY sits down and MAC is beside him. Bleachers. It's night. Both holding drink cans.*

MAC: Runnerboy43, huh?

BOBBY: Pretty original I thought.

MAC: Your jersey is 43.

BOBBY: I'm bad with screen names.

MAC: It shocked me seeing you come around the corner. Of all people.

BOBBY: Is that good, or bad?

MAC: I gotta think about that.

*BOBBY looks scared.*

MAC(cont.): I'm just joshing you.

BOBBY: I'm really happy it was you too. I couldn't think of a better person to share this with. These fucking stars dude, they get to me.

*Moment.*

MAC: Ready for school to be over?

BOBBY: To be honest, I'm scared shitless.

MAC: The magnificent Bobby Glass is scared of the real world? You have everything going for you.

BOBBY: It's not that easy. And what about you?

MAC: What about me?

BOBBY: Seems like you have thing figured out.

MAC: I know I won't get picked up. I don't think that has set in yet. Our final game is in two days. I haven't thought about life after football. Maybe I'll work for my dad. He makes good money down at the garage. I just really thought I'd make it-

BOBBY: There's still time to get recruited. Don't give up that easy.

MAC: It's not giving up. I haven't told anyone but Coach sat me down the other week, kinda spilled the beans, I'm not on a single scout roster. People just aren't looking for guys like me.

BOBBY: I am.

MAC: Thanks man.

*BOBBY leans in and kisses MAC. They have a moment and break apart.*

JOHN: Hey.

*MAC looks up at JOHN. BOBBY is gone. JOHN extends his hand and pulls him up to his feet.*

JOHN(cont.) I need to tell you something dude.

MAC: Anything.

JOHN: I saw- a scout pulled Bobby aside last night. He got offered a full ride.

MAC: Okay.

JOHN: I'm telling you this because I know Bobby won't.

MAC: Great. I'm happy for him.

*Moment.*

MAC(cont.): Is that it?

JOHN: Come on. Do you think I'm that naive? I've been Bobby's best friend since before he had ball hair.



MAC: What's your point?

JOHN: I'm not an asshole but it has to stop. I need you to back off. What's going on is-

MAC: Is none of your business.

JOHN: Listen dude, I know Bobby. He wears his fucking heart on his sleeve. And something like this, this thing you two are doing- is fleeting. And it could really hurt him. He has a chance to be truly happy with his life. The caliber of person he is, there's nothing for him here that would satisfy his hunger. I know Bobby, he's impulsive, thinks someone standing directly in front of him is his future, but in reality, he'll be bored next week. It's just not enough. This game is his life. Do you understand?

MAC: Yeah.

JOHN: I knew you would get it.

*BOBBY appears between them and they close in for a huddle. Game day.*

BOBBY(to Mac): What do you think?

JOHN: Mac, please, help me talk some sense into him. If we don't make this goal we're fucked. We need to win, please dude.

MAC: What's our next play?

BOBBY: Capture the flag.

JOHN: Now you're just handing them the game.

BOBBY: What the fuck do you want from me dude?

JOHN: I want you to grow a pair and play.

MAC: Okay, calm down. What are you thinking John?

JOHN: I'm thinking, they're probably thinking that we're going down the playbook. Backtracking could blindside them. They won't expect us to pull the same play.

MAC: Naked purple, then?

JOHN: Naked purple.

*MAC puts his hand on BOBBY's shoulder.*

MAC: Bobby?

BOBBY: What should I do?

MAC: I think you know.

BOBBY(He smiles): Naked purple.

JOHN: That's what I want to hear! Let's fuck'um up boys!

*They clap their hands together. They yell and break out of huddle. During the fade to black the sounds of people cheering. "Eagle meat, eagle meat. What do we eat?"*

*End of play.*

**Beirut Balutis** is an Appalachian playwright. He holds an MFA from Boston University and an MFA in Stage & Screen from Lesley University. His most recent play *Dead House* was workshopped by the Boston Playwrights' Theatre. His other works have been developed or produced at the Boston Theatre Marathon, Cape May Playwright Symposium, Mt. Gretna Theatre Festival and the Hershey Area Playhouse. He currently is producing and performing within a Miami art collective - Packed Lunch.