

The Right Moves

By Mark Bellusci

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CAST:

BLUR - The star running back of a small-town college football team.

COACH - A gruff, curmudgeonly, authoritarian football coach in his advanced years, but still as tough as nails.

CORKY - An exuberant, effeminate male cheerleader.

TEAMMATE - an offstage voice that is only heard offstage briefly early (Note: depending on casting, he could also have a brief cameo, but it is not necessary, only optional).

SCENE:

A training room next to the home team locker-room. Centerstage is a bench facing the audience.

AT RISE:

(A wild celebration can be heard offstage from players and coaches, as the home team has won an important bowl game. The training room door opens and BLUR enters. In contrast to the lavish celebration being heard, BLUR is sullen and forlorn. He sits on a bench centerstage facing the audience and puts his head in his hands. The celebration continues offstage. After a moment, COACH enters.)

COACH

There a problem here?

BLUR

Not anymore.

COACH

Good, then--

BLUR

Because I know the truth.

COACH

(Sighing. Heard it before.)

Okay, so you found the truth or God or whatever you kids is finding these days. Now get your pampered ass--

BLUR

The truth is, I'm done with this game.

COACH

Done?

BLUR

We won the championship and there's nothing left.

COACH

Son, you got a lifetime of football ahead you.

BLUR

Nowhere to go.

COACH

If you's is fishing for a compliment, forget it. Ain't in the business of pampering.

BLUR

And I'm grateful for what you done. But I ain't good enough to go any farther

COACH

I'll be the judge of that.

BLUR

No, sir. Not anymore.

COACH

The old rite-of-passage rebellion thing from the team superstar.

BLUR

I'm a mediocre talent. My moves won't fly in the bigs.

COACH

You let me worry about what flies.

BLUR

With all due respect, sir, your hopes is getting in the way of reality.

COACH

You, a kid barely out of diapers, is telling me about the game I've lived with for more than half a century.

BLUR

No one's questioning--

COACH

Thousands of young men have gone farther than ever they thought they could -- because they stayed with the program.

BLUR

But the program is--

COACH

And I never lied to a one of them. When they went as far as their talents would let them, I'd tell 'em it was over.

BLUR

Like it is for me--

COACH

Fact is, you're the first one I'm NOT telling to hang up his spikes. Because you, son, are the one.

BLUR

The one what?

COACH

The once-in-a-lifetime combination of immense talent and heart. Don't you see how good you could be?

BLUR

I see how dumb I am, to think I had pro moves.

COACH

You got 'em.

BLUR

But don't you see what the pros are doing?

COACH

Don't buy into all that flash.

BLUR

That "flash" is how today's game is played.

COACH

The game is the same as it was fifty years ago.

BLUR

No, no, no! It's about style, and flair, and making a personal statement--

COACH

It's a team game!

BLUR

In which individual personalities are the stars!

COACH

Don't hand me that crap--

BLUR

In today's game, you make your career based on your name. And you make your name based on your moves. Moves I ain't got.

COACH

So what I taught you means nothing.

BLUR

It got me as far as I can go--

COACH

No, damn it! You're just starting. I know what--

BLUR

You don't know! You stopped knowing twenty years ago! That's when the moves you taught might have worked.

(Beat.)

COACH

So the game has passed me by, huh?

BLUR

I didn't mean that--

COACH

I know what you mean, son.

(He starts to leave.)

BLUR

Come on coach-- it's not like that ...

(COACH leaves. BLUR hangs his head. Beat. COACH re-enters.)

COACH

You know, you're around this game long enough, you learn a few things.

BLUR

Coach, I--

COACH

And one of them is, players don't listen to an indecisive coach.

BLUR

It's my fault--

COACH

A coach may not always be right, but he has to be decisive.

BLUR

I shouldn't have--

COACH

Problem is, you start to think you ARE always right. And everyone around you is too intimidated to tell you differently. Then, after all these years, someone finally has the guts to stand up to you.

(Beat as he stares at BLUR, who returns the stare.)

And it's a slap in the face.

BLUR

I didn't mean to--

COACH

And sometimes, that's exactly what a man needs.

BLUR

Coach?

COACH

Yes, the game has changed. And yes, you don't have the moves to make it to the next level.

BLUR

(Disappointed.)

Told you--

COACH

But that doesn't mean you can't learn them.

BLUR

I'll never have--

COACH

With your gifts, you can catch up fast.

(Beat.)

BLUR

I don't see how--

COACH

We're going to learn them together.

BLUR

But who's--

COACH

(Coach walks to the door and yells out.)
Corky!

BLUR

Corky? The cheerleader?

COACH

He auditioned on Broadway, you know.

(CORKY enters, flamboyantly.)

CORKY

Helllllloooo.

COACH

He offered to help.

BLUR

I never knew--

CORKY

Hmm.

(He studies them, then grabs a football from the bench.)

All right, superstar:

(He tosses the ball to BLUR.)

You're in extra innings--

BLUR

Um, overtime?

CORKY

Whatevrrrr. And you've just scored the winning home run--

COACH

Touchdown.

CORKY

And the crowd is going wild,

(Prodding COACH.)

and your teammates are rushing onto the field to mob you with butt slaps and everything.

COACH

Okay.

(COACH does a poor, comical imitation of a celebrating teammate. His moves are stiff. His voice is deadpan.)

Hooray.

CORKY

(Looking at COACH in shocked disbelief. Then to BLUR.)

Now let's see your moves.

BLUR

(He fakes crossing a goal line, then uses a deadpan voice.)

Yay.

(He then shakes COACH'S hand and gives the ball to CORKY.)

CORKY

Why oh why do I take the hard cases?

BLUR

That's it, I'm not--

CORKY

Hey, hey, hey. I said it would be hard, not impossible. I mean, I did audition on Broadway.

BLUR

Well--

CORKY

But you're going to have to work with me, people.

COACH

Don't worry about that. I'll have these moves drilled into him--

CORKY

No no no. No drilling. You've got to FEEL these moves.

(He gyrates his hips.)

BLUR

Uhh, I don't know...

CORKY

Trust me. So let's get busy.

(He tosses the ball to BLUR.)

Now the first move is the hip strut. Put your hands on your hips and rotate them, then take a small step with your left.

(He demonstrates.)

BLUR

(Badly imitating him.)

Like this?

CORKY

Uhh, sort of. You too, coach.

COACH

Not sure if my truss can bend that way, but I'll give it a shot.

(He does a comical version of the dance.)

CORKY

(To a cheerleader/hip hop beat.)

We're scoring ... a basket ...

BLUR

(Trying to keep the hip hop beat.)

A touchdown ... not basket ... a touchdown.

CORKY

What ... ever. We're ... scoring ...

COACH

(Joining in with the hip hop.)

You ... go boy ... you ... go boy.

CORKY

(Keeping the rhythm.)

All right now ... let's add some ... some muscle ...

(He does a muscle flex, with his arms slightly curled in front of him as he bends slightly from the waist, alternating it with the prior hip rotating "move" he established.)

some muscle ... come on now.

(A grunt is synchronized with the muscle flex.)

Grrr ... come on now

BLUR and COACH

Grrr...

CORKY

We got it ... the muscle ... we got it ...

BLUR and COACH

The muscle ... we got it ...

CORKY

(Still gyrating his hips.)

Okay, now ... you've scored big ... but their fans ... are booing ... so you've got to ... you've got to ...

(He puts his index finger to his mouth in an exaggerated shushing motion, which he sweeps across the audience.)

Shhhhhush the crowd ... I said shhhhhush the crowd ... I said ...

BLUR and COACH

Shhhhhush the crowd ...

CORKY

Now give ... your props to ... your props to ...

(Points to the sky.)

to God ...

BLUR and COACH

(Imitating him.)

Give props to ... to God.

CORKY

And now we ... we put it ... together ... together ...

BLUR and COACH

We're scoring ... we're scoring ... a touchdown ...

CORKY

Muscle flex.

BLUR and COACH

(They do it, and growl in unison.)

Got muscle ... grrr ... Got muscle ... grrr ...

CORKY

(They all do the shush move in unison.)

Shhh ... it's over... shhhh ... it's over ... shhh.

CORKY

Give props to ... to God.
(Points to the sky.)

BLUR and COACH

(Imitating him.)
Give props to ... to God.

CORKY

The right moves ... you got them.

BLUR

The right moves ... I got them ...

COACH

The right moves ... I'll teach them ...

CORKY

Gonna excel ...

COACH

Give hell ...

BLUR

In the NFL...

CORKY

Gonna jell ...

BLUR

In the NFL.

CORKY

With the right moves ...

BLUR

The right moves!
(Lights down.)
SportsCenter highlight film, here I come.

End