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## Fire Ant Field

Toby Wallace

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## Fire Ant Field

*Toby Wallace*

Sprinklers are now brushing their love upon a  
spoiled football field  
Where one High school team will fall in defeat  
each and every week.  
The players will spin their dreams like a  
September leaf in a whirlwind  
Scattering them upon the dry rotted ground of  
a whole other field.  
They will not play on the glorious field where  
winning and losing reigns,  
But rather a field where misery and suffering  
will remodel them.  
What?  
You are at Fire Ant Field.

Each day,  
Players will part with their comfort zones once  
they exit the field house  
And feel the Texas heat as it seeps through  
their pores and cooks them.  
The humidity will reach out and spit a coat of  
slime upon their gear  
As the sun begins to charbroil each helmet  
during the warm-up drills.  
They will see putrid grass that is weeping dry  
tears from the lack of rain  
And the dry black dirt that is crying out from  
within its deep cracks.  
What?  
You just got here, friend.

After warm-up,  
Each player will go to his respected position  
where he will be expected  
To punish his sweat brothers in a fight to  
become the master of the drill.  
They will be insulted by a barbaric and often  
obese dictator who desires  
Only to coach those who skin their knees and  
lick the sour yellow grass.  
The drills will be like miniature circuit type  
divisions of an earthy Tartarus  
Where the player will learn to cry often and  
loathe their fellow classmates.  
What?  
You want to quit?

In the Oklahoma drill,  
The young men will learn that football is just  
Death wearing shoulder pads  
Ready to equip each individual with a torn  
faded jersey of embarrassment.  
Men will circle around warriors in a squared  
area who try to destroy the one  
He bleeds on still listening to his own breath,  
filled with shrieking asthma.  
Others will hide, scared speechless in the back  
only prolonging the abuse  
To avoid a drill that is a hazy labyrinth of  
scattering, eye irritating still life.  
What?  
Ya scared?

Finally,  
The water break is here but only to keep the  
participants from slipping away  
Into eternity thus quickening their spirit which  
at one point had not a pulse.  
There are pipes spewing hot water in all  
directions where players herd  
But fight to splash their hanging tongues and fill  
their helmets with splendor.  
The coaches stand appalled as his gladiators  
show these signs of weakness  
Only to uplift a sarcastic laugh from one who  
seems glued inside a golf cart.  
What?  
You're pathetic.

After the break,  
It is time to learn the playbook as a collision  
course is now being drawn  
In a rugged soil filled with ugly mistakes that  
cripple unsuspecting ankles.  
A prep team full of hard young talent will now  
lose control of their bladders  
When they are thrown in an outdoor dungeon  
against the pride of the school.  
This will happen several times each day  
between the other drills Hates has  
To prepare the fair haired Varsity for a divisional  
team that will kill them.  
What?  
Why don't ya cry?

After many an hour,  
The torture begins to threaten the teen as he  
struggles with various conflicts  
That pit him versus himself, others, and nature  
that attempt to finish him off.  
The fresh blood will join the crimson stains on  
his pads and add character  
To a beaten and battered body that glistens  
with quarts of profusive sweat.  
Every fiber in each player's being will be needed  
as fire ants and mosquitoes  
Arrive stinging in multitudes and the hot Texas  
breeze now insult the sores.  
What?  
Keep fighting.

In the end,  
The youth will soon listen to a long winded  
speech from the head coach  
On their knees paying respect to everything  
that had just challenged them.  
They will then dream about the game field and  
its vast meadows of glory  
But mostly they will dream about past times  
that are non-football related.  
They will be thinking about the Coke machine  
while admiring their wounds-  
And then they will leave Fire Ant Field.  
What?  
Go home. You're done.

S. Benoit

