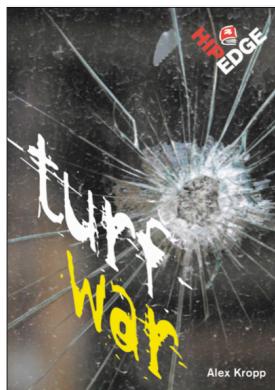


Turf War by Alex Kropp Readers' Theater Play



The park can be a dangerous place at night -- especially for a girl walking alone. Xana insists she can take care of herself, but Kasim and Mouse aren't so sure.

APPROXIMATE GRADE LEVELS: 9-12

THE NOVEL IN BRIEF: Two groups of teens vie for control of the neighborhood. For Kasim and his friends, a fight with the guys from Parkside Prep could be deadly. But life without honor might not be worth living.

PERFORMING NOTES:

Lex, the bad guy, has the biggest part in this play. His lines should be read with much bravado. Xana (pronounced ZANN-ah) has a bit of an attitude -- one that shows she's nobody's fool. Mouse is clearly a follower; Kasim (pronounced KAH-sim), the leader. The narrators can use their voices to set a tone of foreboding for this night-time tale.

The sound effects can be done by one dedicated person, student actors, or the entire group. The written sounds (onomatopoeia) are spelled out in the text.* Students also can make use their bodies to make sound (e.g. stomping their feet for footsteps) or find sound clips from the Internet.

SOUND EFFECTS: hooting owl, quick footsteps, rusty swing-set, gasp, big footstep, spitting, hard kick

Narrator 1 (9 lines)

Narrator 2 (8 lines)

Mouse – a wimpy teenage boy (4 lines)

Kasim – the leader of Mouse's group (5 lines)

Xana – a streetwise teenage girl (7 lines)

Lex – the “bad guy” (11 lines)



NARRATOR 1: This Reader's Theater play is adapted from the novel *Turf War* by Alex Kropp. Today's actors are:

NARRATOR 2: Mouse and Kasim ran into Xana one night in the park. She told them she was on her way to Rosa's house to study. They offered to walk with her, but she said she could take care of herself. Kasim, though, was worried about her safety and so said...

KASIM: Let's keep an eye on her.

MOUSE (*gleefully*): A pleasure! That Xana's a hottie.

KASIM (*sternly*): I meant let's make sure there's no trouble.

MOUSE (*embarrassed*): Right. I knew that.

KASIM: But keep way back. She said she didn't want our help, remember?

NARRATOR 1: The boys stayed off to the side of the path. Clouds covered the moon. An owl hooted in the distance.

(sound effect: hooting owl -- whooo, whooo, whooo)

NARRATOR 2: Xana stayed on the path. She was moving fast when some guy came her way.

(sound effect: quick footsteps -- thump, thump, thump)

NARRATOR 1: The guy waved, and Xana looked up and stopped walking. The two of them began talking. Mouse turned to Kasim and said...

MOUSE: Looks like Xana's got a friend. Maybe that whole thing about studying with Rosa was a crock.

KASIM: Maybe this guy isn't a friend. Let's get a little closer.

NARRATOR 2: The boys moved in to get a better look. They cut through a little kids' playground. The rusty old swing-set sounded like a creaky door.

(sound effect -- rusty swing set -- creak, creak, creak)

NARRATOR 1: Mouse and Kasim got close enough to see Xana and her friend clearly. Mouse gasped when he saw who the friend was.



(sound effect: gasp -- Ah!)

MOUSE: It's Lex!

KASIM (*bitterly*): Yeah, some friend. Makes me wonder whose side Xana is on.

NARRATOR 1: Mouse and Kasim moved closer to listen in. Mouse noticed the tension in their voices. The two didn't sound like friends. Lex had an edge to his voice when he said....

LEX: Hey, don't be like that. We don't have a problem, do we? That thing between me and Kasim's boys has nothing to do with us.

XANA: What if it does? What makes you think there's an *us*?

LEX: Because of the way we used to be. Before you went off to that group home.

XANA: That's all history, Lex. Ancient history. Right now, there's nothing between us. Why can't you get that through your head? Nothing is nothing.

LEX: You're not with Kasim, are you? That guy is such a loser. A worthless dropout with no money and no future. You could do a lot better for yourself.

XANA (*sarcastically*): Gosh, I wonder who you could possibly mean.

LEX: Hey, come on, babe. Give a guy a chance, eh?

XANA: Let's be honest here, Lex. I don't like you or your friends. You gang up on little Mouse five on one and call that cool. Well, I don't think so. I think it sucks.

NARRATOR 2: Lex took a giant step toward her.

(sound effect -- heavy footstep -- THUMP!)

LEX: So you really are Kasim's girl, huh?

NARRATOR 1: Xana gave him a disgusted look.

XANA: I'm my own girl, jerk. I don't belong to anyone, and I can choose to be friends with whoever I like.

NARRATOR 2: Xana turned from him and tried to walk away, but Lex grabbed her arm. She tried to shake off his grip, but Lex wouldn't let go.

LEX: So you think you can put me down and walk away just like that, huh? I don't like that, Xana. I don't take crap from anyone, especially not from spoiled little girls.



NARRATOR 1: Xana tried to talk Lex into letting her go, but she wasn't afraid to use a little force if need be. She looked at him hard and said...

XANA: Are you going to get out of my way or --"

LEX: Or what? Are you going to yell and scream for someone to help you? I haven't done anything but stand here and talk to you. And I'm going to keep on talking to you until I say we're finished.

NARRATOR 2: He spat on the ground.

(Sound effect: spitting)

LEX: I want you to take a message back to your boyfriend Kasim and his guys. He'd better pack up and get out. I'm sick of trash like him and his gang in my neighborhood.

NARRATOR 1: Xana kept looking for a chance to get away. Lex wouldn't let her go.

XANA: Kasim isn't my boyfriend.

LEX: Well, if he's not your boyfriend, maybe you're ready for a little action from this guy.

NARRATOR 2: Lex reached forward with both hands and grabbed Xana by the shoulders. He pulled her up close, trying to get a kiss.

NARRATOR 1: But Xana was too fast for him. She brought her knee up hard, right between his legs, and kicked him hard.

(sound effect -- hard kick -- BAM!)

LEX (*shouting*): Aagh, you little b---

NARRATOR 2: Xana just laughed at him, and that made him even angrier.

LEX: If you don't like it sweet, babe, you're going to get it rough.

NARRATOR 1: That's when Mouse and Kasim stepped out onto the path. It was time for Lex to face the music.

(closing music)

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