



# A Boy Called Twister

*Anne Schraff*

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## **A Boy Called Twister** Anne Schraff

Set in contemporary urban America, the Urban Underground series is about a group of teens attending Tubman High. The high school years are important to our intellectual and emotional development. Teens are faced with many obstacles, both imagined and in real life. Finding stories that speak to their struggles can help guide them and build the foundation for the future. The American teen experience at Tubman is typical as students deal with trust, loyalty, friendship, unemployment, urban decay, drugs, dropouts, bullies, alcoholism, abuse, and self esteem to name a few. The highly readable style and mature topics will appeal to struggling teen readers of both sexes and encourage them to finish each novel. Paperback books look and feel like a trade edition and are complete in just under 200 pages.

Kevin Walker is resolute. He will be a loner at Tubman High--he doesn't want anyone asking him too many questions about his move from Texas. His terrible secret could destroy any chance of remaining anonymous. Running like the wind helps him forget his troubles, but his star turn on the track team brings a lot of attention...

## **A Boy Called Twister Details**

Date : Published (first published February 29th 2000)

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## From Reader Review A Boy Called Twister for online ebook

### Armand says

Warning: Plot Spoilers and Discussion Follow Below

Setting: This book takes place in a small town in Texas.

Protagonist: The protagonist in this story is Kevin Walker. He moved to Texas with his grandparents after his mom died and his father died in prison during a riot. He loved staying with his grandparents but he hate going to his new school. But that all changed after he joined the track team and met Carissa. After he met them everything changed he became popular at school and mostly everybody was his friend. He was the fastest on the track team and thanks to him his school won a meet for the first time. But besides that Him and Carissa were getting close and they were telling each other their secrets. But he didn't want her to tell nobody his secret but she did. So when he found out she told somebody she cried because she thought he hated her. But at the end everything turned out good because they got together.

Antagonist: The antagonist in the story was Marko Lane. He was the big shot around Tubman High. He was also on the track team and he was the fastest until Kevin came. The first week Kevin came to the school, Marko was being a bully towards him. So he made things bad for Kevin. So when Kevin tried out for the team he got mad. So the coach made everybody race and Kevin won the race he got mad because Kevin was the new face of Tubman High.

Conflict: Marko is mad because Kevin came to his school and became the star of the school and tack team.

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### Jake L says

I have just finished reading a very good book by Anne Schraff called A Boy Called Twister. It was a very good read and it kept me engaged and interested throughout the whole story. The main character in the story, Kevin Walker, is a very relatable character for some and faced problems most people have faced. Also Schraff used good description in her writing to help the reader visualize the scene. Emotion was a key factor in this book, it helped the reader understand what the characters were going through and how they felt.

“See the cirrus clouds, baby? Firm and curly, way up high. Now your cumulus clouds, they look more like whipped cream or fluffy mashed potatoes. And the stratus, low and gray, and very serious.”(13)

The author gives you good description here to help you visualize what Kevin is seeing as he looks up into the sky thinking about his deceased mother. Good descriptive detail is a key part of a good book, without it its much harder to visualize what you're supposed to see. It makes it easier on the reader and more engaging for the reader if descriptive details are used in the book. Without the use of descriptive details the book may make the reader uninterested and bored with the book. Also in this section the author uses a simile comparing the cumulus clouds to whipped cream or fluffy mashed mashed potatoes. A simile is also part of descriptive detail, someone may not know what a certain thing is but the author can use something more well known to people to help them understand and visualize what it is.

“There once was a killer’s son, Ashamed of the deed Daddy done, the truth he did hide, he lied and he lied, but you cannot run forever . . . Marko Lane . . . He’s got a sick sense of humor. He wants to shake me up so he can beat me in the meets.”(158)

Here was a time I felt was very connectable to people. The main character, Kevin, was being bullied which most people have been bullied in some way, shape or form in their life. The more connections you can make to a book the more engaged you are in the reading. Kevin was also a big into track, as am I, which made the book more relatable to me. I was able to connect with this book in many ways which kept making me want to read more and more. The big picture in this book was that you shouldn’t be afraid to tell your secrets. I can connect this book back to Speak because in both books the main character has a secret that they don’t want to let out to the public. It was better off for them to let their secret out, true friends will still stand by you and support you.

“ I wouldn’t have told her everything, but when I mentioned your dad died in prison, she just wheedled all the rest out of me. . . . I am so ashamed Kevin. You trusted me and I let you down. You’re the last person in the I’d want to hurt. . . . I wouldn’t blame you if you never spoke to me again . . . We’ll work it out. It’s not the end of the world.”(152-153)

The author used a lot of emotion here to express the feelings that these two had for each other, Carissa and Kevin, and to show how bad Carissa felt for letting his secret get out. At this point you can feel exactly how each one of these two feels. Kevin feeling disappointed but yet forgiving and Carissa feeling ashamed of what she had done. We’ve all most likely experienced similar emotions to what each one of them is experiencing at this moment in the book. That emotion at that point in the book can play a big part on the reader. It can spark a connection in the readers mind and get them more engaged in the reading , it can do multiple things. Emotion is another one of those key parts of a book.

I rated this book how I did because I felt that it was a well written book and I was interested and engaged the whole time. I was able to connect with the characters in the book in multiple ways which makes it a much better read. This is by far my favorite book that I’ve read. It incorporated track into the book which made it much more interesting to me since I’m a big track athlete. i feel the book was perfectly written and wouldn’t need anything changed about it.

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## **Zandra says**

Kevin Walker, the new kid at Tubman High School, is determined to remain a loner so that other students won’t ask him too many questions. He’s scared of how his classmates will react if they find out his family secrets. He doesn’t want to be judge or treated differently. To ease the burden he carries, he likes to run. It helps him to blow off steam. Once others notice how awesome a runner he is, he’s asked to join the track team. He immediately has a huge impact on the team, helping them to finally win track meets. Because Kevin is as fast as a tornado when he runs around the track, he earns the nickname “Twister.” However, being a successful member of the team draws a lot of unwanted attention Kevin’s way. Will he decide to open up to his new friends and reveal his secrets, or will he keep them bottled up inside?

As part of Saddleback Educational Publishing’s Urban Underground series, this book is designed specifically for reluctant teen readers. Coming in at just under 200 pages, it focuses on issues many teens deal with such as bullies, self-esteem, drugs, and dropouts, just to name a few. Although I believe the author hits you over the head one too many times with the message, I still enjoyed this book. It is a good, clean read that I would enthusiastically recommend to any teen or tween who wants to read realistic, urban fiction.

## **Mackenzie H says**

I gave this book 3 out of 5 stars.

PLOT SUMMERY- Kevin is a new kid at school with a dark and sad past. He is bullied by another kid. Kevin joins track because he likes running. He makes one close friend and tells her about his secret past, but she betrays him. Rumors spread and Kevin makes one bold, brave move, that stops all of the drama and ends the bullies reins.

Characters-

Carrissa- player, overly-attached, clingy, cheerful, girly, cheerful

Kevin Walker- adopted, scared, secretive, lonely, sticks up for others, defensive, brave, parentless, fast, strong, athletic, has good sportsmanship, forgiving, proud

Marko Lane- rude, bossy, bully, disrespectful, fast, arrogant, show off, rich, spoiled, has bad sportsmanship

Key issues-

Bullying, rumors, his past, and school drama are Kevin's biggest issues.

Other Info-

I gave this book 3 out of 5 because it was a little childish but I also like running. I felt bad for Kevin because of his sad past and he was bullied. I think runners would like this book because it has a lot to do with running. This book was pretty childish because the words are all very easy and it was pretty short.

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## **Sam Harrison says**

Sounded really good on the back cover. Once you hear the main character, Kevin Walker, back story. You pretty much know the whole story. I liked his backstory. His mother dying and his father an ex boxer. However, I felt there were too many characters. A lot of Kevin's friends felt undeveloped. The main (and really the only) antagonist in the story, Marko Lane, was a little underdeveloped as well. The story was filled with cliché's and the whole "good guys always win." No risks were taken and it was anti-climatic. Marko over all was nothing but an antagonist. No emotion, nothing. Just that stereotypical \*\*\*\* in the story. I must say I was disappointed. Albeit, I did read and get through it. Honestly, if you need to read a book for school. This is a quick read...a point book, that's all I'm gonna say.

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## **Ethan Schafer says**

A Boy Called Twister is the perfect book for teenage boys because it deals with bullying, sports, girls, and drama. The main character is a high school student that juggles sports in one hand and people & drama in the other. I can completely relate to this because I am a high school student myself, so it was very interesting to read. Another reason I enjoyed reading this book was that the author had a great character development and plot. It was interesting to learn about each character and how they contributed to the plot. If you like reading books where you can put yourself in the main character's position and love parts that will keep you

wondering what will happen next, this is the book for you.

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### **Viviana Martinez says**

Set in contemporary urban America, the Urban Underground series is about a group of teens attending Tubman High. The high school years are important to our intellectual and emotional development. Teens are faced with many obstacles, both imagined and in real life. Finding stories that speak to their struggles can help guide them and build the foundation for the future. The American teen experience at Tubman is typical as students deal with trust, loyalty, friendship, unemployment, urban decay, drugs, dropouts, bullies, alcoholism, abuse, and self esteem to name a few. The highly readable style and mature topics will appeal to struggling teen readers of both sexes and encourage them to finish each novel. Paperback books look and feel like a trade edition and are complete in just under 200 pages.

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The review

This story takes place in what people call "The ghetto". It is in modern time where gang banning is very common.

My overall rating is a B or 4 stars. I can't lie it was a pretty good book.

Plot spoilers and discussion

Conflict: Kevin moves to small town after his mother died. And faces a lot of drama in his new school because of bullies. And people who hustle the school by being mean.

Other characters

Marko: the main bully in the school Threatens people. Pretty much runs the school.

Matson: a kid who gets bullied a lot. And who believes what bullies say because it's been to him for a long time.

His Father: a person that went to prison for killing someone on accident.

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### **Chris Nobles says**

The story took place in California at Tubman High. The main Characters were Kevin aka Twister(the protagonist), Marko(the antagonist, and Carrisa. The minor characters were Grandma, Grandpa, Alonee, Sami, Tyron, Matson, and Trevor.

I really liked the book. It was very moving. I was intrigued the whole time I was reading it because it touched on things that could be going on around you that you might not think of or pay any attention to.

The story was about a guy name Kevin, a quite respectful young man. His parents died so he went to go live with his grandparents in California. So he was the new kid in town. Some guy name Marko was giving him trouble on the track team and off the field because Kevin was a better runner than Marko and Marko was the best before Kevin. Marko took the time out to find dirty secrets about Kevin and tried to use them to throw Kevin off the right path, and it got to Kevin at first but he persevered and didn't let Marko get in his skin and remained the best track runner on the team.

I recommend people that like realistic fiction to read this book because it's very detailed about things that can happen in the world around you.

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### **Mardochee Bellevue says**

"She was always in his heart and on his mind, and somehow, before he made a terrible mistake, she had gotten through to him." Kevin Walker has just moved from Texas to California with his grandparents. Now in a new school, Kevin has to watch out for Marko, the bully. Some of the secrets in Kevin's past he does not want the kids to know about, but it proves to be difficult when Tyron, Marko's messenger, tries to fish out information from Kevin's grandpa. Anne Schraff's *A Boy Called Twister* entertains with its motivational story and great style of writing.

Throughout the book the characters are an important part in understanding the book. The students each show the struggles of being a teenager and the want to fit in. When one looks at Kevin's character, they would see a child that is trying to adjust to what life has thrown his way and is trying to make the best out of it.

However, kids like Marko may be struggling with the lack of parent attention but take it out on others. While Marko bullies others, the individuals that get bullied just take it without contradicting what are said to them just like Matson.

Schraff's book *A Boy Called Twister* starts out and introduces us to the main character after the terrible death of his mother just like in *The Series of Unfortunate Events*. In both books, the main character's parents die; however, they still carry on through life. In *The Series of Unfortunate Events* Count Olaf was trying to receive the fortune that the parents had left the children, but he could not get it. The same exact thing is happening in this book. Marko is trying to destroy Kevin for taking his spotlight as the track star but is not able to because of the vast amount of support from his friends and peers.

Anne Schraff has an excellent style of writing. It is both childlike and professional. The narrator's voice can be serious yet playful to lighten the tense mood that has been created. Schraff's style takes into consideration the location of where the book is taking place. It also lets you imagine the landscape and the emotions the characters are feeling at a given moment.

Schraff uses the characters of the story to convey the theme of truth. Around the last few pages of the book, it shows Kevin helping an orphan kid to have an enjoyable day. The kid spoke to him and said that he told his friends the negative aspects of himself, but they still liked him anyways. As the story was coming to an end, Kevin thinks about what the boy has told him and puts it to practice. Readers should read this book to understand the pain of what it is like to be left alone in a world even though there are tons of individuals around. Also, this book can be read to inspire people to try new things and to not listen to what others think because society shouldn't have a problem based on where a person came from or what happened in their past.

### **Joselyn Moreno says**

In this book A Boy Called Twister, Kevin Walker used to live in Texas but then moved because he had a problem there. He moved to Harriet Tubman Senior High School where he tended to be a loner, he wouldn't talk to nobody because he didn't want anyone to ask him so many questions and end up finding out about his family secrets, he's scared that his classmates may judge him or treat him any different. To ease the burden that he carries, he likes to run. It helps him to blow off steam. Once others notice how awesome a runner he is he's asked to join the track team. Since Kevin is such a good and fast runner he causes attention because he helps his team to finally win track meets, that's how he gets the nickname Twister. All of this is causing unwanted attention to Kevin. Will he tell his new friends the truth? You'll have to read the book to find out. It focuses on issues many teens deal with such as bullies, self-esteem, drugs, and dropouts, so I think this book is great for teens because they may have the same issues in their lives.

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### **Makayla Johnson says**

It was a good book. I like how it was almost like a true story. Also it included track which is how he got his nickname. It has a little bit of a love story but nothing big really happened. He has a bully he'd was going to settle it but a voice told him not to.

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### **Lynellbell says**

It's one of the best books I've ever read.

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### **Ramal Hairston says**

My name is Ramal Hairston. I recently read the book "A Boy Called Twister" by Anne Schraff. This book is about a boy named Kevin Walker who has just recently moved to a new school.. Tubman High. Kevin makes new friends quite easily, but he figures that this is only because they don't know about his short fuse and his or his father's past. He didn't want anyone asking about his life in Texas. He just wanted to keep a low profile and get through school. But he has a gift. He runs incredibly fast. When he joins the track team he quickly becomes their star runner. Unfortunately, this brings a lot of unwanted attention to Kevin. I acquired this book at the library. No one recommended it to me. The title was interesting in my opinion and I felt it necessary to check out what it was about. After reading the description on the back I decided that I liked what the book was about and was determined to read it in less than a day. That I did and I am glad that I did too because the book was incredibly interesting and gives examples of both the kindness and the darkness in people's hearts. My favorite part about this book was that when Kevin finally told his friends about his dark past. Instead of leaving him and calling him names and labeling him for what his father did, they all hugged him and told him that they'd be his friend anyway. They didn't care about the person that he was. They cared about the person that he is now. It was nice to read and view the characteristics of kindhearted people that prove their friend that nothing matters to them except for the here and now when it comes to friendship. My least favorite part of the book is when Marko Lane baits Kevin about his past and purposely tries to throw him off of his game so that he doesn't do well. It infuriates me, the things people do because of jealousy. I

mean everyone taunts, but to make it so personal is cruel and unnecessary. Bullies just exacerbate me. I would unequivocally recommend this book to my friends because sometimes people just need to see (or in this case read about) the kindness that others are able to share. Overall, the author did a good job with writing the book. I look forward to reading another one of Ms. Schraff's novels and I hope that it will be as well written as this one is.

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### **Jo Sorrell says**

This is the first in a new series called Urban Underground. It almost seems to be a formula written book. Family issues, school bully, girls, teachers...

Kevin is harboring family secrets that he closely guards when he moves from his small Texas town to a large school in California. He is immediately targeted by the school bully. The story is good, sweet, clean and predictable. I think middle schoolers will enjoy the series because of the familiar teenage issues. Also the book is small and a quick read. I predict my reluctant readers should pick this one up.

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### **Markell says**

The book is A boy called Twister, By Anne Schraff. Kevin moved from texas when his mom died from cancer and it's very hard for him to relocate in callifornia but he always used to visit with his mom all the time. When he started at the new high school he already started getting problems from a boy named Marko and he just bothered him because he didn't want to be beat at everything so he can be better. But Kevin found a new hobby and it was track so he raned track for the high school he went to now. And kevin meet a girl he really like and her named was Alloone, so they talked about things Kevin never wanted to talk to a girl about so he became very comfortable with her. This is a good book and it makes you think of things better in life and never cherish life either. It's a memorable book to read also. This book is for a person that lost people in their life and want to do better for them and other family members and like to run track to get things of their mind.

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