



2008

Alex and the Warrior

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Bell, Mark (2008) "Alex and the Warrior," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 29 : Iss. 2 , Article 13.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol29/iss2/13>

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Coburn, Ann. *Alex and the Warrior*. Oberon Books Ltd., 2004. ISBN 1840025026. \$14.95. 78 p.

Reviewer: Mark Bell

Reading Level: All

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Christmas plays; Plays; Humorous plays; Adventure plays

Subject: Drama--Reviews; Christmas--Juvenile drama; Video Games; Adventure--Juvenile drama;

Theme: Christmas is where family is.

Production Requirements: The requirements for this play are fairly complicated. The monsters and the warrior require many costume changes/pieces as well as weapons, armor etc. A full body costume for the role of the cat and a fair amount of scene changes may take considerable creativity from the designers or substantial audience imagination. Music and sound effects are also needed.

Acts: 2

Run Time: 55–75 min

Characters: 5+

Cast: 1 adult/late teen male, 1 8-12 old male, 1 female 12+, 2+ universals

Time Period: Contemporary

Young Alex is getting ready to enjoy Christmas when he learns his grandfather has been sent to the hospital. Alex hates hospitals because, as is revealed later in the play, his father went to one and died. Alex wishes that a video game character, "The Warrior", could leave the game and help him save his grandfather from the hospital. His wish is granted, and the two of them have an adventure in the town, as the warrior learns about the real world and the value of love. Two of the game's monsters follow the warrior and hunt him throughout the play. Alex realizes the best way to have a good Christmas would be to take it to his grandfather, and the only way he and his family will be safe is to wish the warrior and the monsters back into the video game.

In *Alex and the Warrior*, the title characters go on an adventure in a non-descript English town. The warrior begins the story as a stereotypical "super hero" but is revealed to be much more as the story progresses. He and Alex develop an interesting dual mentoring relationship. The Warrior becomes a father figure for Alex, and Alex becomes a mentor to the Warrior as he explains the world to him.

The production requirements can be somewhat challenging. The costumes for the Warrior and the Skarg may be difficult. The Warrior is armed and armored, while the Skarg transform from human, to insects, to cats, etc. Design creativity and imagination are necessary to pull this off. Scene changes might also be a problem. There are changes from a little boy's bedroom, to a sewer, an ice skating pond, and more. The script calls for using the television screen the Warrior and Skarg come through as a transition from place to place, so different backdrops might be all that is needed to create the scene changes.

Volume 29, no. 2 (November/December 2008)