



Flashpoints!

Plays About
Controlling Anger



By Catherine Gourley



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Contents

<i>Striker</i>	4
Think It Over	16
<i>Home Rules</i>	18
Think It Over	30
Your Turn	32
Glossary	32
About the Author	32

Note to the reader: Be sure to look at the Glossary on page 32 to find definitions of words that might be unfamiliar.

Striker

Corey Ramos dreams of being an all-star striker and going on to play soccer in high school. His explosive temper might just trip him up, however. When he doesn't score on the playing field, he takes it out on others. Will Corey's short fuse burn out his dream?

Characters:

Narrators 1, 2, 3

Corey Ramos, a seventh-grade soccer player

Becca Ramos, Corey's nine-year-old sister

Kelly Jordan, sports trainer

Paul Iorio, Corey's rival for striker

Coach Wells

Alex, soccer player

Parent

Scene 1

- Narrator 1:** In the final two minutes of the soccer match, Waterville Middle School leads West Side Middle School, 4 to 2. West Side's ace striker Corey Ramos is in position, close to the Waterville goal.
- Narrator 2:** Corey fakes a kick, but the defender isn't fooled. Corey loses his balance, twists, and falls hard. Quickly, he's back on his feet. But a stabbing pain in his right ankle topples him again.
- Narrator 3:** On the sidelines, the trainer examines Corey's ankle.
- Kelly:** Looks like a lateral ligament.
- Corey:** What does that mean?
- Kelly:** You've got an ankle sprain.
- Corey:** It doesn't hurt. I can still play. Can you tape it?
- Coach:** No way, Corey. This game's over for you. Where's the new kid? Iorio! You're in.
- Narrator 1:** Corey slams his fist on the bench.
- Kelly:** Easy! You want to fracture your wrist, too?
- Narrator 2:** Paul Iorio is also a striker, but with Corey on the team, he hasn't gotten much field time. Now, in the final minutes of the match, he attacks the goal and scores.
- Alex:** GOAL! Whoa! Corey, did you see that move? Iorio's good!
- Corey:** (*speaking under his breath*) That should be me out there! Not some sixth grader.
- Narrator 3:** Time is against West Side today, however. The clock runs out, and they lose the match by one point. Corey throws his water bottle to the ground in anger and hobbles off the field with the help of the trainer.
- Corey:** Talk about a stupid move. My kid sister plays better than I did today.
- Kelly:** Don't beat yourself up. There were ten other guys on the field with you. You didn't lose the game.
- Narrator 1:** Knowing that doesn't make Corey feel any better, just more angry with himself.

Scene 2

Narrator 2: On Monday, Corey comes to practice on crutches. He sits on the bench and watches the action. He has opinions on everything and shouts at his teammates.

Corey: Quit chasing the ball, Alex! You're running around like a lost dog.

Alex: Hey, Ramos. Back off!

Coach: *(to Kelly)* Iorio has the height to be good at headers, but he's not very muscular. If we play him, the opposing defenders are going to hit him hard.

Kelly: He's tougher than he looks. He can handle it.

Narrator 3: Corey hadn't paid much attention to Paul during practice. Now that Corey is benched with an injury, he can see that Paul is good. And fast!

Corey: *(angrily)* I've got to get back in the game!

Narrator 1: But on Saturday, he is on crutches—and on the bench.

Coach: *(to Paul)* These players are older and bigger than you. Just control the ball. Don't try to out-muscle anyone.

Narrator 2: Once on the field, Paul doesn't hold back. He is lightning fast and scores two goals in the first half.

Narrator 3: Corey watches as his teammates jump on Paul, congratulating him. Something inside Corey tightens.

Corey: *(mutters to himself)* But I'm the star striker. I've always been the best.

Alex: *(teasing)* That ankle better heal quick, Ramos, or you'll be on the bench for good!

Corey: *(angrily)* That'll never happen!

Scene 3

Narrator 1: A week later, Becca is in the back yard practicing her footwork. Corey watches. He no longer has crutches, but his sore ankle keeps him from playing with her.

Corey: You've got to train your feet, Becca! Don't you get it?