

THE STANDOFF
By Tara Meddaugh
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Kevin is a boy between 5-10 years old. It's a warm summer day, and he is standing on a sidewalk outside the house of his peer, Cayden. Cayden holds a small egg-sized water gun and Kevin holds a large automatic water gun. The boys know each other fairly well and have played with each other in school and at each other's houses, but they are not necessarily good friends.

KEVIN

You go ahead and shoot. I know you wanna. It's all you been thinking about since you came out. Holding it like that, pointing it right at me. You were sitting in your room when you saw me walking by, so you grabbed your gun and ran outside, thinking you were as fast as Flash Lightening, thinking you'd catch me before I got too far 'cause I know you're not allowed past that tree with the funny white bark. Well. You caught me. Here I am. But you're not as fast as Flash, Cayden. 'Cause I saw you in the window, and I just waited. I could've run past that tree. I could run past that tree right now 'cause I got a babysitter and she lets me go wherever I want. I know you'd chase me if I did it too, and you'd wanna go past that tree, but you'd have to decide—is it worth it? Is it worth it, Cayden? Is it worth losing tv time on a Friday? Or ipad time? Or isn't today the day your mom lets you make your own ice cream sundae? You wanna lose that?

But I'm not making you choose. See? I'm not even running. I'm right here. So why aren't you shooting?

I know why you're not shooting. 'Cause when you came out here, you thought you could get me. You thought that little piñata prize water gun was gonna actually get me wet. But now you know better, right? Cause now you see what I had in my backpack when I was walking by. It's not in my backpack anymore. I got a bazooka water gun that's like a million times that size and it's automatic. So you wanna go first? You shoot me first. You're on. I'm waiting.

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