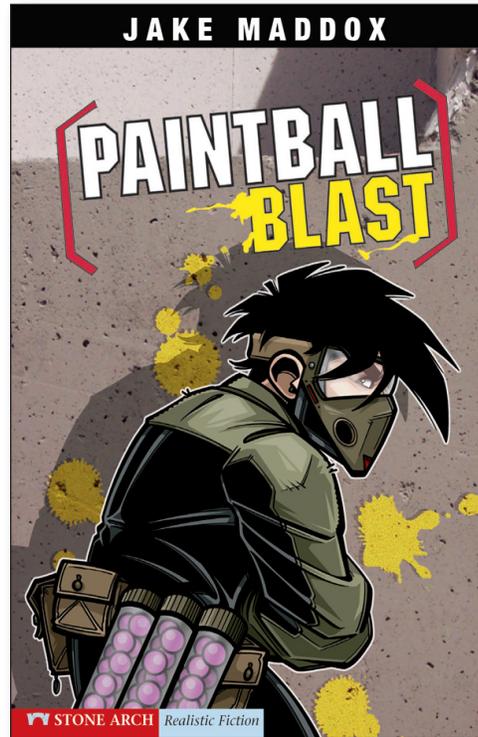




READER'S THEATER



Paintball Blast **by Jake Maddox**

Characters: **Narrator**

Max

Jay

Ryan

Tyler

Genre: **Realistic Fiction**

Ages: **9-13**

Paintball Blast page 1

Narrator:

Max Hauser and his friends love playing paintball. The thrill of leaping through the air over rocks and sticks, dodging between branches while trying to escape flying paintballs, sent a rush of excitement through Max. Today, during a paintball game, he was making his way to Center Station.

Max:

Whoa! I can barely breathe. That was a close one. I'm lucky I didn't get hit with one of those paintballs. I could feel them whizzing past me on all sides.

Narrator:

Center Station was a hidden shelter in the middle of the field that gave players a great view of the rest of the playing field. Max and his friend Tyler not only found Center Station, they had gotten permission from the field manager to fix it up. When they first found it, it wasn't the perfect place to hide. People coming in from the west could easily see in. After a few changes and improvements, it became a key lookout point for those who knew about it.

Max:

I wonder if I can get a good view of the two guys left on the opposing team.

Narrator:

Max was the only one left on his team so he knew it was up to him to win. Looking to the east he saw nothing. Then his eye caught one of his opponents to the west. He was turned sideways about fifty feet away from Max.

Max:

This is an easy shot.

Narrator:

Slowly, carefully, Max squeezed the trigger.

Jay:

Aw, shoot. I'm marked.

Narrator:

Max saw movement in the bush next to the boy he had just marked. He scanned the branches for clothing, glasses, anything and then he saw the barrel of a marker.

Max:

The barrel is pointed high above my head. He must think I'm hiding in the bush above me.

Paintball Blast page 2

- Narrator:** As Max took aim, he was confident he would mark the boy and win. But before he was able to pull the trigger, he felt a thump on his shoulder. Looking down, he realized he'd been hit.
- Max:** I'm marked. I'm marked.
- Ryan:** We win! All right!
- Max:** How did that happen? I know that barrel was aimed over my head.
- Narrator:** Confused and disappointed, Max walked back to the clubhouse.
- Tyler:** Hey, Max. What happened?
- Max:** I don't know. I saw the other team's player, saw the barrel of the marker, and it was pointed above my head. It looked like he was going to miss me by a mile. Then, bang, it was over.
- Tyler:** That's strange.
- Max:** What?
- Tyler:** Well, I was just sitting in the clubhouse and those two boys came in. The taller one, the one that marked you, was talking to the assistant manager.
- Max:** Yeah? So what?
- Tyler:** Well, he said something. I didn't think it was strange at the time, but it sounds strange now.
- Max:** What did he say?
- Tyler:** I heard the manager ask, 'Did it work?' Then the kid said, 'Yeah, worked like a charm.' I wonder if he tricked you somehow.
- Max:** Tricked me? How could he have tricked me?
- Tyler:** Maybe he had a fake barrel sticking out to distract you from the real one.

Paintball Blast page 3

- Max:** No way. I know what I was looking at. I saw his hand on the marker. It was the marker that fired. There's no way he fooled me.
- Narrator:** Max decided to try talking to the boy to find out what had happened during the game.
- Max:** Hey. Nice shot.
- Ryan:** Thanks. Good game.
- Max:** I'm Max.
- Ryan:** Ryan, Ryan Weeks. This is Jay.
- Max:** How long have you been playing paintball?
- Ryan:** I just started playing.
- Max:** Wow. You're pretty good, for just starting out.
- Ryan:** Aw, I just got lucky today.
- Max:** I almost had you, you know. I saw you in that bush. I mean, I saw the barrel of your marker. I was just getting ready to pull the trigger when I got marked.
- Ryan:** I figured. But once you marked Jay, I knew where the shot came from so I just fired.
- Narrator:** From the smirks on Ryan and Jay's faces and the fact that Ryan didn't even see Max when he took his shot, Max knew something wasn't right. He shared his suspicions with his friend Tyler.
- Max:** He cheated. I don't know how, but he cheated.
- Narrator:** Is it possible that Ryan cheated, or is Max just being a sore loser? To find out if Max's theory is correct and how Ryan might have cheated on the paintball field, read *Paintball Blast*.

THE END