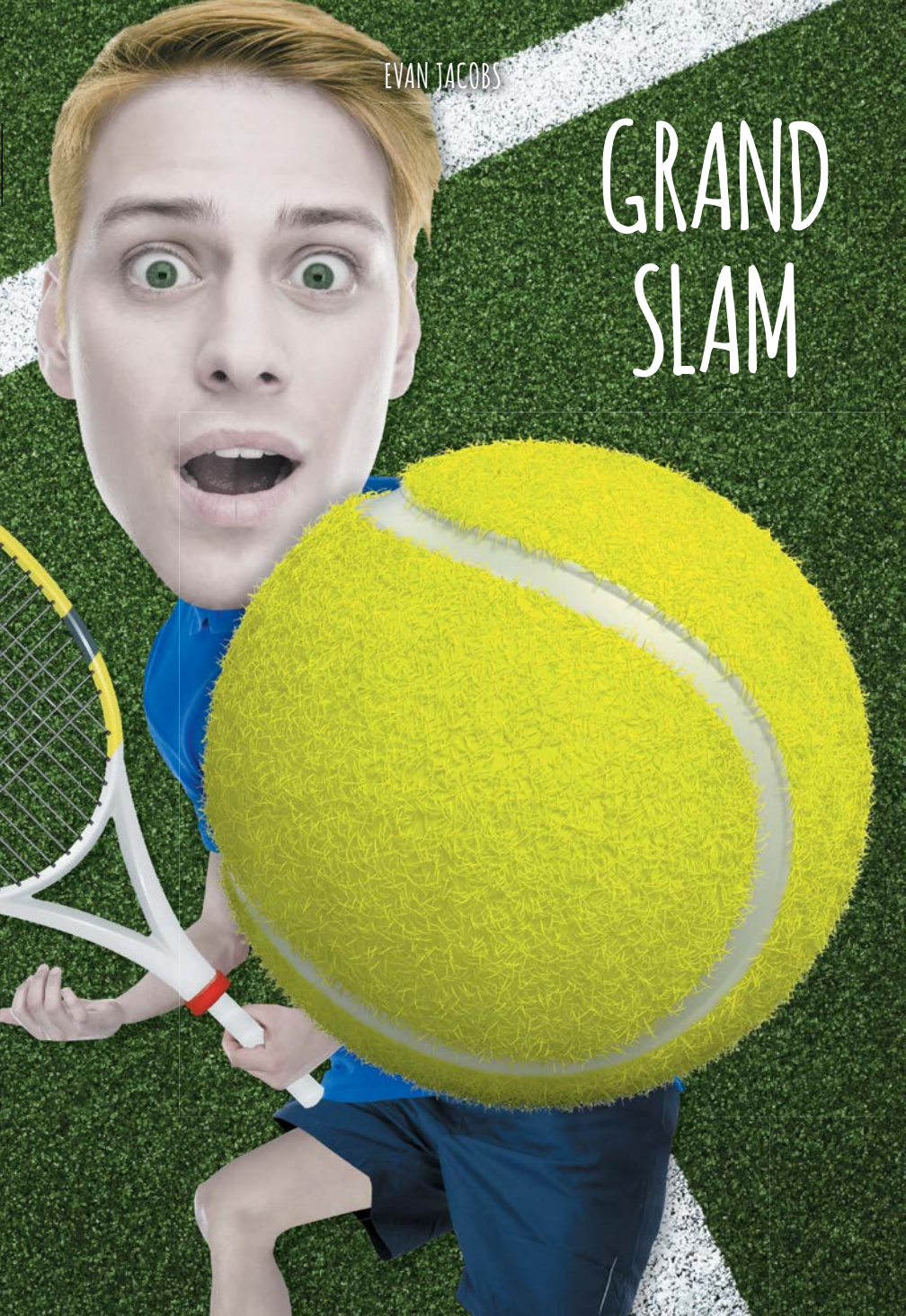


EVAN JACOBS

# GRAND SLAM



# WHITE LIGHTNING BOOKS®

BEHIND THE MASK

IGGY

SCRATCH N' SNITCH

BREAK AND ENTER

ON THE RUN

SUMMER CAMP

EMOJI OF DOOM

QWIK CUTTER

THE UNDERDOGS

**GRAND SLAM**

REBEL

UNDER THE STAIRS



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ISBN-13: 978-1-68021-107-8

ISBN-10: 1-68021-107-2

eBook: 978-1-63078-424-9

Printed in Malaysia

22 21 20 19 18 2 3 4 5 6

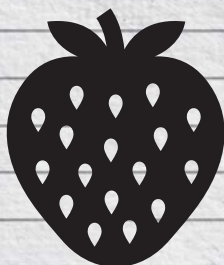
# ABOUT THE GAME OF TENNIS

DEFINITION OF **GRAND SLAM** WINNING ALL **4** MAJORS  
AT ANY POINT DURING THE COURSE OF A TENNIS CAREER

HENRY VIII HAD MANY  
TENNIS COURTS BUILT  
AROUND ENGLAND



24  
TONS



OF STRAWBERRIES  
ARE ORDERED  
EACH YEAR FOR THE  
CHAMPIONSHIP AT  
WIMBLEDON

THE STRINGS OF THE TENNIS RACKET WERE MADE OF



AND



GUTS IN THE PAST



I WILL **NEVER** LOOK AT PESTO THE SAME WAY!

PRIMO'S PESTO



## CHAPTER 1

# MATCH POINT

Brad Kingsley wiped the sweat from his brow. He watched his opponent. The boy spun his tennis racket around in his hand. Then he hit the ball against the ground a few times.

“Oh, come on! Don’t stall!” Brad whispered. He didn’t want anyone to hear him. Brad didn’t speak to people like that.

His muscles tensed. Brad hated this part of the game. He knew his opponent was trying to mess with him.

The score was 20–40. His opponent had to score one more point. Brad would lose the match.

Brad had started off well. He'd scored the first two points. Then his mind drifted. He started thinking about other things. Could his opponent sense this? Brad wondered if that was why he was losing now.

*Why do I keep playing this game? I can't even focus on it,* he thought.

Brad was a sophomore at Valley High School. He had been playing tennis since he was ten. Brad was sixteen now. Varsity tennis was competitive. He was really good.

*You play tennis because you're good at it,* he told himself. He was trying to pump himself up. It was a trick Coach Kennedy had taught. She was the varsity coach.

Brad was tall and in shape. He had an athletic build. His hair was blond. Brad's green eyes were light.

His biggest challenge was concentration. Brad found it hard. His parents told him he had an auditory processing disorder. Something about his ears and brain not being in sync. He didn't know what that meant. But sometimes he lost his train of thought. It happened a lot when people talked to him. If they didn't say too much, Brad was okay. But sometimes Brad would get confused.

When that happened, he had a few tricks. He would either nod his head, or say nothing. The other person didn't realize they had lost him. He had another trick too. Brad repeated the last thing said to him. He could process the words better this way.

He was a good student. He had math, English, history, biology, and PE. PE was tennis practice. His elective was a resource class. It was not his elective by choice.

Resource was like study hall. Brad's teacher was Mr. Cohen. He was tall. The teacher had a

loud voice. But with Brad, Mr. Cohen spoke softly.

Mr. Cohen was from New York. He had an accent. Brad liked it. He liked asking the teacher questions about New York. They chatted when Brad's work was done. The teacher or an aide often helped Brad with his work. After resource class, most of his assignments were done.

Brad didn't like what kids called the resource room. They said it was the "dumb class." Aside from the cruel words, being in resource was fine.

Brad's mind was not on his game.

*What should I do later?*

Ugh. He was doing it again. His concentration was drifting.

He stared at his opponent. Brad looked at the crowd. There weren't many people. But there were enough for Brad.

He started to think about the heat. His homework. Then he saw his parents. They were sitting in the crowd. Were they looking at him?



His mom was smiling. His dad was serious. Like he wanted to say “Stay focused, Brad!”

People always said that to him. Sometimes it bugged him. Staying focused was often out of his control.

He also saw some kids he didn’t know well. He’d noticed them at school.

Brad’s eyes focused on a girl. She had long black hair. Her skin was a light olive color. She had dark brown eyes.

The girl smiled at him. The smile seemed to say “I believe in you.”

Brad couldn’t stop looking at her.

That’s when he heard a popping sound.



## CHAPTER 2

# SERVE

The ball came toward him.

*No! Crud. I got distracted.*

“Darn it!” Brad said under his breath.

He could hear people gasp.

Brad moved toward the ball. It was headed mid-court. If he missed, the game would be over. He could take the loss. But he didn’t want to lose because of his disability.

Brad moved fast. He lifted his racket.

*Just lob it over the net!*

The ball was coming too fast. He leaped toward it.

Too slow! The ball passed him. He felt the whoosh as his racket hit air.

His teammates groaned.

Brad hit the ground. It didn't hurt. But he was stung with embarrassment.

His opponent cheered. So did the rival tennis team's fans.

Brad stood up. He walked to Coach Kennedy. She was tall, like Mr. Cohen. Coach had short hair. She had played college tennis. That made her a great coach. She always had something positive to say.

"Hey," his opponent called.

Brad looked over. He squeezed his racket.

"Good game, dude."

"Thank you," Brad said. "Congratulations." He didn't smile.

He turned and looked at his coach.

“You played great.” She smiled. “The season just started. It’s no big deal.”

Brad shook his head.

The next players were already on the court. Brad got himself some water. He sat down next to Julian Rodriguez. Julian was Brad’s best friend on the team. He talked to Brad the most. Brad thought he was nice.

Everybody else hung out with Scott Nguyen. He was the best player on the team. Scott always made people laugh. He could talk to the girls. They flocked to him.

“Man.” Scott shook his head. His voice was low. But loud enough so Brad could hear. “He totally blew that play.”

Brad looked over at Scott. Scott and Warren Williams were looking at him. Then they turned their attention to the next game.

Warren was just like Scott.

*Those two dudes are good at everything.*

“Come on, Cody!” Scott yelled. Other players cheered on their teammate too.

Brad watched the game. He wasn’t really watching it, though. He kept thinking about how he’d messed up.



“You tried so hard out there,” his father said. They were driving home from the match.

Brad was sitting in the backseat. He rested his head against the seat. His tennis bag was in the trunk.

He was close to his parents. Their relationship was open. They talked about emotions. And he didn’t feel weird sharing his feelings. His parents were positive people. Brad was a good kid. They only got on him when he didn’t do his chores.

“The way you dove for that last shot,” his mom said. “I felt like I was watching a match on TV.”

“I lost my focus,” Brad said.

“Well, that happens,” his mom said. “I lose my focus a lot. Especially when I’m doing something hard.”