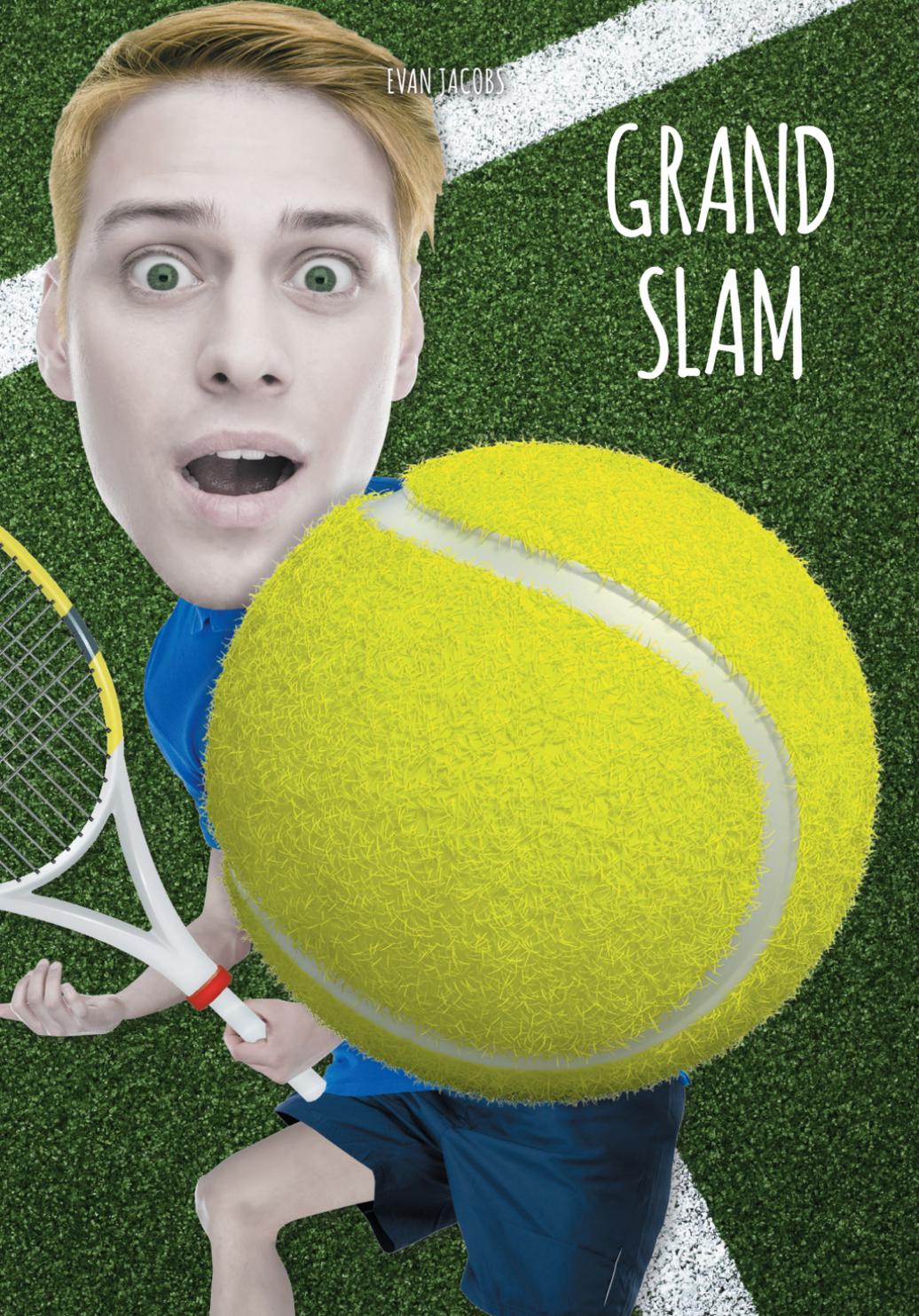


EVAN JACOBS

GRAND SLAM





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

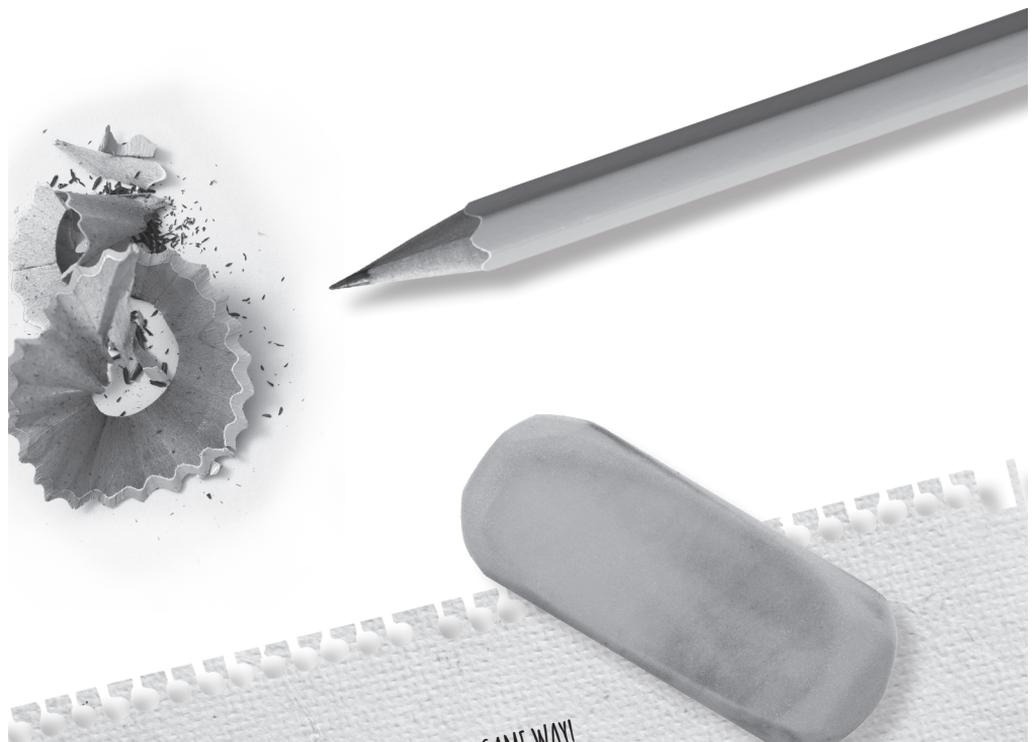
THE STRINGS OF THE TENNIS RACKET WERE MADE OF



AND



GUTS IN THE PAST

A black and white photograph of school supplies. In the top left, a pencil sharpener is shown with a pile of shavings. A pencil lies horizontally across the top right. Below it, a rectangular eraser is positioned diagonally. The items are on a piece of white paper with a perforated edge.

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

A glass jar of pesto with a black lid. The jar is tilted slightly to the right. A white label is wrapped around the middle of the jar with the text 'PRIMO'S PESTO' in a handwritten-style font.

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.”

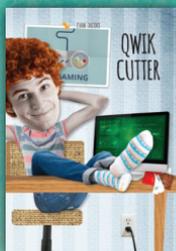
Brad couldn’t stop looking at her.

That’s when he heard a popping sound.

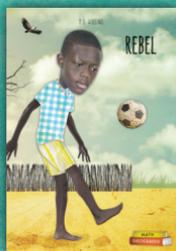
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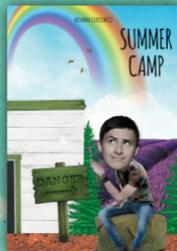
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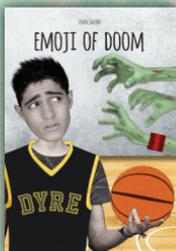
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GRAND SLAM



REGGAE, MINDFULNESS,
TWO-HANDED BACKHAND



NEGATIVE ENERGY, SELF-DOUBT,
TURKEY MEATLOAF

BRAD'S TRUTH IS THAT LIFE IS HARD. HE'S DIFFERENT. SPEAKING DOES NOT COME EASILY. AND WORDS GET MIXED UP NO MATTER HOW MUCH HE PAYS ATTENTION. WHEN HE MEETS REESE, HE TRIES TO HIDE HIS DIFFERENCES. BRAD'S A HOT VARSITY TENNIS PLAYER. BUT WILL HE LOSE REESE IF HE DOESN'T COME CLEAN?



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