

#1 BESTSELLER

JAMES PATTERSON

AUTHOR OF *THE LAKE HOUSE*

WHEN THE  
WIND  
BLOWS



WARNER  
VISION





**JAMES  
PATTERSON**

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WIND  
BLOWS**



**WARNER  
VISION  
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Must be thrilling from the air.  
—Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*

# Author's Note

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**BEFORE I BEGAN THIS BOOK**, I had no idea how close to reality the story would be. Over thirty medical doctors and research scientists helped at the conceptual stage, and then again when the manuscript was nearing completion. As one medical doctor and Ph.D. at the National Institutes of Health said, “Most people are not going to believe the breakthroughs that are coming in the very near future.” These doctors and researchers went into considerable detail, but I don’t want to spoil the surprises and suspense in the story you are about to read.

I would especially like to thank Maxine Paetro, who was deeply involved with the book almost from the beginning, and who was important through the arduous research, writing, and editing process.

2/24/98



**THE #1 MASTERPIECE FROM # 1 BESTSELLING  
AUTHOR JAMES PATTERSON!**

"Romance, suspense, action . . . swiftly told. . . .  
There's magic here, too, leaving readers more than  
once struck deep in wonder."

**—*Publishers Weekly***

"Brilliantly drawn characters . . . skilled dialogue  
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characterizations."

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*more . . .*

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more . . .



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"TOUGH TO PUT DOWN. . . . TICKS LIKE A TIME BOMB, ALWAYS FULL OF THREAT AND TENSION."

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—*Cosmopolitan*



## Also by James Patterson

*The Thomas Berryman Number*

*Season of the Machete*

*See How They Run*

*The Midnight Club*

*Along Came a Spider*

*Kiss the Girls*

*Hide & Seek*

*Jack & Jill*

*Miracle on the 17th Green*

(with Peter de Jonge)

*Cat & Mouse*

*Pop Goes the Weasel*

*Black Friday*

*Cradle and All*

*Roses Are Red*

*1st to Die*

*Suzanne's Diary for Nicholas*

*Violets Are Blue*

*2nd Chance*

(with Andrew Gross)

*The Beach House*

(with Peter de Jonge)

*Four Blind Mice*

*The Jester*

(with Andrew Gross)

*The Lake House*

Prologue

# FIRST FLIGHT





1

SOMEBODY PLEASE help me! Somebody please! Can anybody hear me?"

Max's screams pierced the clear mountain air. Her throat and lungs were beginning to hurt, to burn.

The eleven-year-old girl was running as fast as she could from the hateful, despicable School. She was strong, but she was beginning to tire. As she ran, her long blond hair flared behind her like a beautiful silk scarf. She was pretty, even though there were dark, plum-colored circles under her eyes.

She knew the men were coming to kill her. She could hear them hurrying through the woods behind her.

She glanced over her right shoulder, painfully twisting her neck. She flashed a mental picture of her little brother, Matthew. Where was he? The two of them had separated just outside the School, both running and screaming.

She was afraid Matthew was already dead. Uncle Thomas probably got him. Thomas had betrayed them and that hurt so much she couldn't stand to think about it.

Tears rolled down her cheeks. The hunters were clos-



ing in. She could feel their heavy footsteps thumping hard and fast against the crust of the earth.

A throbbing, orange and red ball of sun was sinking below the horizon. Soon it would be pitch-black and cold out here in the Front Range of the Rockies. All she wore was a simple tube of white cotton, sleeveless, loosely drawn together at the neckline and waist. Her feet were wrapped in thin-soled ballet slippers.

*Move.* She urged her aching, tired body on. She could go faster than this. She knew she could.

The twisting path narrowed, then wound around a great, mossy-green shoulder of rock. She clawed and struggled forward through more thick tangles of branches and brush.

The girl suddenly stopped. She could go no further.

A huge, high fence loomed above the bushes. It was easily ten feet. Rows of razor-sharp concertina wire were tangled and coiled across the top.

A metal sign warned: EXTREME DANGER! ELECTRIFIED FENCE. EXTREME DANGER!

Max bent over and cupped her hands over her bare knees. She was blowing out air, wheezing hard, trying to keep from weeping.

The hunters were almost there. She could hear, smell, sense their awful presence.

With a sudden flourish, she unfurled her wings. They were white and silver-tipped and appeared to have been unhinged. The wings sailed to a point above her head, seemingly of their own accord. Their span was nine feet. The sun glinted off the full array of her plumage.

Max started to run again, flapping her wings hard and fast. Her slippered feet lifted off the hardscrabble.

She flew over the high barbed wire like a bird.

FIVE ARMED MEN ran quietly and easily through the ageless boulders and towering aspens and ponderosa pines. They didn't see her yet, but they knew it wouldn't be long before they caught up with the girl.

They were jogging rapidly, but every so often the man in front picked up the pace a significant notch or two. All of them were competent trackers, good at this, but he was the best, a natural leader. He was more focused, more controlled, the best hunter.

The men appeared calm on the outside, but inside it was a different story. This was a critical time. The girl had to be captured, and brought back. She shouldn't have gotten out here in the first place. Discretion was critical; it always had been, but never more than right now.

The girl was only eleven, but she had "gifts," and that could present a formidable problem outdoors. Her senses were acute; she was incredibly strong for her size, her age, her gender; and of course, there was the possibility that she might try to fly.



Suddenly, they could see her up ahead: she was clearly visible against the deep blue background of the sky.

"Tinkerbelle. Northwest, fifty degrees," the group leader called out.

She was called Tinkerbelle, but he knew she hated the name. The only name she answered to was Max, which wasn't short for Maxine, or Maximillian, but for Maximum. Maybe because she always gave her all. She always went for it. Just as she was doing right now.

There she was, in all her glory! She was running at full speed, and she was very close to the perimeter fence. She had no way of knowing that. She'd never been this far from home before.

Every eye was on her. None of them could look away, not for an instant. Her long hair streamed behind her, and she seemed to flow up the steep, rocky hillside. She was in great shape; she could really move for such a young girl. She was a force to reckon with out here in the open.

The man running in front suddenly pulled up. Harding Thomas stopped short. He threw up his arm to halt the others. They didn't understand at first, because they thought they had her now.

Then, almost as if he'd known she would—she took off. She flew. She was going over the concertina wire of the ten-foot-high perimeter fence.

The men watched in complete silence and awe. Their eyes widened. Blood rushed to their brains and made a pounding sound in their ears.

She opened to a full wingspan and the movement seemed effortless. She was a beautiful, natural flyer. She flapped her white and silver wings up and down, up and down. The air actually seemed to carry her along, like a leaf on the wind.