

A person is walking away from the viewer on a sandy beach towards a lifeguard stand. The stand is a small, elevated wooden structure with a dark roof and a ramp leading down to the sand. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

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JAMES PATTERSON  
LIFEGUARD  
& ANDREW GROSS

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& ANDREW GROSS**

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For more information about James Patterson's novels, visit  
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## **Part One**

### **THE PERFECT SCORE**



# Chapter 1

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“DON’T MOVE,” I said to Tess, sweaty and out of breath. “Don’t even blink. If you so much as breathe, I know I’m gonna wake up, and I’ll be back lugging chaise longues at poolside, staring at this gorgeous girl that I know something incredible could happen with. This will all have been a dream.”

Tess McAuliffe smiled, and in those deep blue eyes I saw what I found so irresistible about her. It wasn’t just that she was the proverbial ten and a half. She was more than beautiful. She was lean and athletic with thick auburn hair plaited into a long French braid, and a laugh that made you want to laugh, too. We liked the same movies, *Memento*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*, *Casablanca*. We pretty much laughed at the same jokes. Since I’d met her I’d been unable to think about anything else.

Sympathy appeared in Tess’s eyes. “Sorry about