



"Paced with throat-clutching
suspense, and littered
with surprises." —Steve Berry

#1 BESTSELLING JAMES PATTERSON COAUTHOR

**ANDREW
GROSS**

***DON'T
LOOK TWICE*** A NOVEL

***DON'T
LOOK
TWICE***

ANDREW GROSS

TO MY BROTHERS,
MICHAEL AND RICK

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

Mango Meltdown or Berry Blast?”

Ty Hauck scanned the shelves of the Exxon station’s refrigerated cooler.

“*Whatever . . .*” his thirteen-year-old daughter, Jessie, responded with a shrug, her eyes alighting on something more appealing. “*What about this?*”

Powie Zowie.

Hauck reached inside and read the brightly colored label. Megajolt of caffeine. Highest bang for the buck.

“Your mother lets you drink this stuff?” he asked skeptically.

Jessie looked back at him. “Mom’s not exactly here, is she?”

“No.” Hauck nodded, meeting her gaze. “I guess she’s not.”

In just the past year, forbidding new curves had sprung up on his daughter’s once-childlike body. Bra straps peeking out from under her tank top. Jeans clinging to the hips in an “unnatural” way. *Gangly* suddenly morphing into something a bit more in the range of *troubling*. Not to mention the newly mastered repertoire of eye rolls, shrugs, and exaggerated sighs. Hauck wondered if the request for an ankle tattoo or a belly piercing could be far behind. “You don’t get to win,” a friend who had teenage daughters once warned him. “You only *delay*.”

Jesus, he recalled, it was just a year ago that she liked to get shoulder rides from me.

“Toss it in the basket,” he said, acquiescing. “One.”

Jessie shrugged without even the slightest smile, failing to grasp the significance of his offering. “Okay.”

At the end of the aisle, a man in a green down vest and tortoiseshell glasses reached into the cooler and met Hauck’s gaze. His amused, empathetic smile seemed to say, *Know exactly what you’re going through, man!*

Hauck grinned back.

A year had passed since the Grand Central bombing. A year since the events set in motion by the hit-and-run accident down on Putnam Avenue had thrust Hauck out of his long slumber and into the public eye. In that year, Hauck had been on the morning news shows and MSNBC and Greta Van Susteren, the case rocking not just the tall iron gates of the Loire-styled mansions out on North Avenue, but the financial circles in New York as well. It had turned Hauck into a bit of a reluctant celebrity—the object of friendly ribbing from his staff and the local merchants along the avenue. Even his old hockey buddies, who used to tip their mugs to him because of how he once tore up the football league at Greenwich High, now joked about whether he knew Paris or Nicole, or could get them past the bouncers into some fancy new club in the city on a Saturday night. Finally Hauck just had to step back, get his life in order.

And keep things on a steady keel with Karen, whose husband’s death had been at the heart of the case.

And with whom he had fallen in love.

At first, it had been hard to bridge all the differences between them. She was rich. Hauck was the head of detectives on the local force. Their families, lifestyles, didn’t exactly merge.

Not to mention all the attention the case had generated. That in solving the mystery of her husband's death Hauck had unleashed something buried and now restless inside her. In the past year, her father, Mel, had taken ill with Parkinson's. Her mother wasn't handling it well. Karen had gone down to Atlanta to help take care of him, with her daughter away at Tufts and her son, Alex, now sixteen, recruited to play lacrosse at an upstate prep school.

It had been a year in which Hauck had finally learned to put much of the pain of his own past behind him. To learn to feel attached again. To fight for someone he wanted. He knew Karen loved him deeply for what he had done for her. Still, a lot of things stood in the way. Not just the money thing or their different families and backgrounds. Lately, Hauck had detected something in her. A restlessness. Maybe a sense of wanting to finally be free after being tied to a man her whole adult life, one who had so painfully deceived her. It was always a roll of the dice, they both knew, how things might work out between them. The jury was still out.

"C'mon," he said to Jess, "grab some M&M's; the boat's waiting."

The autumn chill was late in coming that October Saturday morning, and they were heading out for a final jaunt on his skiff, the *Merrily*, over to Captain's Island before taking it out of the water for the winter. Maybe kick the soccer ball around a bit—not a mean feat these days for Hauck (whose leg had still not fully healed from the .45 he had taken to the thigh). Grill a few dogs. Who knew how many more of these Saturdays he'd have with Jess. Just getting her up before ten was already becoming a hard sell. They'd just stopped off on the way to fill up the Explorer and pick up a few snacks.

Sunil, who ran the Exxon station next to the car wash on

Putnam, was always a friend to the guys on the force. Hauck always made it his habit to fill up here.

As they reached the counter, a woman was at the register ahead of them. The man in the green down vest stepped up, his arms wrapped around two six-packs of soda.

“You guys go ahead.” He waved them ahead and smiled good-naturedly.

“Thanks.” Hauck nodded back and nudged Jessie.

“Thanks,” she turned back and said.

While they waited, Hauck said, “You know, I really hope you’ll come up for Thanksgiving this year. Karen’ll be back.”

She shrugged. “I don’t know, Dad.”

“You should. She likes you, Jess. You know that. It would make me feel good.”

“It’s not that . . .” She twisted her mouth. “It’s just that it’s different. They’re, you know . . . *rich*. Samantha and Alex, I mean, they’re nice, but . . .”

Hauck knew the adjustment had been toughest with her. His daughter felt like a fish out of water with them. Sam and Alex had grown up on rented boats in the Caribbean and on spring breaks flew out to Beaver Creek to ski. She went up to Massachusetts to visit her cousins and once they’d all flown down to Orlando to do the theme park thing. He squeezed her on the shoulder, careful not to draw any attention to it. “Yeah, but that doesn’t make them from Saturn, Jess.”

“It’s Mars, Dad,” she corrected him.

He shrugged. “Or Mars.”

The woman at the register finally finished up. Hauck stepped up to the counter.

Sunil greeted him with his usual smile. “*Lieutenant!* So, how is the big star these days? I don’t see you on the TV so much anymore.”

“That gig’s over, Sunil. They don’t pay me enough.”

The Pakistani laughed at Jessie. “Pretty soon, we’re gonna see your father on *Dancing with the Stars* . . . Doing the tango with some fancy celebrity. I bet you are very proud of your famous father, young lady . . .”

“Sure.” Jessie shrugged.

Hauck put his arm around her. “She thinks I’m famous in my own mind . . .” He brought up the basket. “So, Sunil, we have a couple of sandwiches and sodas, and we also took a—”

It was the screech that Hauck heard first.

Grating. Terrifying. The red truck jerking to a stop right in front of their eyes. The heavily tinted passenger window slowly rolling down.

Then the man in the red bandana leaning out—*not a man*, Hauck recalled later, *barely more than a boy*—extending the short black cylinder as Hauck, unable to believe what he was seeing, stared at the protruding barrel.

A second before the body-blow of dread set in. Before he realized in horror what was about to take place.

He grabbed Jessie.

“*Everyone get down!*”

CHAPTER TWO

The barrel erupted, spitting orange flashes of death and terror all around. The station's storefront shattered.

"Jess!"

Hauck pulled his daughter to the floor, the earsplitting *zip, zip, zip* of twenty rounds per second exploding glass, toppling counters of candy and shredding magazines all over them. He heard Jessie's high-pitched shrieks from under him. *"Daddy! Daddy!"*

Above, the window sign promoting discount tune-ups crashed in.

All Hauck could do was press himself into her as tightly as he could, shouting back above the deafening rain of glass and noise something he wasn't sure of, something he didn't know was true: "It's okay, Jess, it's okay! It's going to be okay . . ."

But it wasn't okay.

Bullets tore through the walls all around them, the store shaking like an earthquake was happening. Hauck had seen the muzzle pointed at his face. He felt sure the attack was aimed at him. Covering his daughter, an even more terrifying fear rippled through him: