

An illustration of a skateboarder in mid-air, performing a trick. The skateboarder is wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt, black shorts, a black helmet, and black wrist guards. They are holding the skateboard with both hands. The background is a blue and green gradient with white lines suggesting motion. The skateboarder's shadow is cast on the ground below.

They can rule the  
half-pipe, but can  
they survive this?

# GETTING AIR

Dan Gutman

# CHAPTER 1:

## The First 1080

This is my ultimate fantasy . . .

I hear the crowd starting to buzz and clap and stamp their feet as I climb the inside steps to the fourteen-foot halfpipe. It's a long way up. I give my helmet and elbow pads one last tug, mostly for good luck.

It's the X Games and the whole world is watching. Or the whole skateboarding world, anyway. Dozens of other kids have had their turn and I go last. Because I'm the best, right? I'm the one they all came to see. Finally I reach the top of the halfpipe just as the announcer yells . . .

“. . . and last but not least, from Livingston,



New Jersey, the thirteen-year-old phenom who has taken the extreme sports world by storm, Jimmy . . . Zimmerman!”

The crowd goes wild, of course. My sister, Julia, and my lifelong friends, Henry and David, are there, shouting encouragement and telling me how awesome I am.

I look around Madison Square Garden and wave. A thousand flashes blind me momentarily. But I know why I’m there. I know what I have to do to win this thing. I have to land the first 1080.

Nobody ever did three complete revolutions in the air before and came down with both feet on their board. *Ever*. Some big shot scientists claimed it wasn’t possible. Even I, the incredible Jimmy Zimmerman, never landed a 1080. Not even in practice. But I was going to go for it here. Because that’s the kind of skater I am. Go for broke. Risk it all. Second place isn’t good enough.

The crowd quiets to a hush as I hang most of my board off the edge of the coping. I put one foot on the tail to steady the board.

“I love you, Jimmy!” shouts a voice in the crowd.

I look around until I spot her, supermodel Victoria Ashley, my girlfriend and quite possibly the most gorgeous girl in the world. I flip her a wink and throw a thumbs up. Like it's no sweat.

I take a peek down. It looks like forever. There are about three feet of straight vert before the halfpipe begins curving out. It's even scarier when you're standing at the edge. You feel like you're about to jump off the ledge of a building. But I've dropped into hundreds of halfpipes. This is a piece of cake to me.

I take a few deep breaths, put my other foot on the front of the board and lean forward. Just about anybody who's crazy enough can drop into a fourteen-foot halfpipe. It's what you do



Jimmy, David, and Henry are **psyched**. It's summer, school's out, and they are on their way to California, where they will be able to do **some major skating**. But on the plane, the unthinkable happens: They are **hijacked by terrorists**. As scared as they may be, they take action and they succeed. Sort of.

They have beaten the terrorists, but now their **plane has crashed in the middle of nowhere**. All of a sudden, their summer vacation is about finding food and shelter, and getting rescued. Can three normal boys find a way to get by without fast food and skate parks?

**"A true adventure book."**

*—School Library Journal*

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