

ELLIANA

AND THE BIG RACE

A SPECIAL DOLLS BOOK

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DOLLS AND SM NETWORK.

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CHAPTER ONE

"Woof! Woof!", barked my dog, Maxie. She jumped onto my bed, licked my ear, and then licked my nose. "Maxie!", I yelled. I then moved my head around my room to view the time on my alarm clock that I made a couple months ago.

I love making things with my 3D printer, and inventing in general. I have made so many things, like my prosthetic arm and normal things like toys to sell during the holiday season to make money for kids with limb differences to go to a summer camp for kids with limb differences- just like me! 2 years ago, I made a bunch of dolls for all the little girls in the neighborhood. I made a lot of cash that holiday season!

I read the clock, noticing that it said 3:42 am. I then thought, *I don't care if school doesn't start until 8:00. I'm not wasting my time!* Right then and there, I jumped out of bed, put on my prosthetic arm, robe, and sneakers, and then took Maxie out to do her business.

My eyes gazed at the night sky. I felt lucky that I was probably the only person in Hoboken, New Jersey that was awake at the time because the sky inspired me. The stars seemed so bright, showing off their shine. It made me think of how I don't care about my prosthetic arm. To me, it's like another star providing its own unique shine to create the bigger picture, the constellation. I wanted to sit back and look at the sky forever, but then Maxie decided to sit and bark. "Elliana! Come

on! Take me to rest!", was what the cheeky dog was probably trying to tell me. I sadly pulled the dog up the porch to go back inside, just like she wanted.

When I got back to my room, Maxie jumped up on the bed and leapt back to sleep. Not the case for me! I got on the computer and started up the 3D Printer program. Today, I was going to try to invent a bike for myself. Most of my friends love bike rides because it's something that they can do naturally. All they have to do is get out their bike, put on their helmet, and they're off. But it's a bit harder for me because of my prosthetic- filament isn't the most reliable material to hold on tight to. To solve this problem, I would put a basket with a buckle near the seat of the bike. Then, I would add a hole for my arm, put my little arm in the basket, buckle it and I'd be off!

On my laptop, I opened the file that someone already made of a bike basket. From there, I adjusted it to fit my arm, with a hole it would go through. Then I hit Print, and the magic was starting! It would only be done after I got home from school the next day, but it would be worth the wait. After all, I needed to have something to get me through the next few days!

For the rest of the morning until 7am- when I really HAVE to get up- I cuddled with Maxie and coded my new video game for coding club. I was the only girl, which wasn't a big deal. The thing that had potential to be the bigger deal, though, was that I was the only kid in coding club (and the school, for that matter) with a prosthetic arm. But most students were used to it, so it wasn't a big deal.

The game I made was both for coding club and for my social studies project. It was about World War 2 and rationing, and you had to collect the rations you needed before time- and the rations- ran out. It was sure to be a big hit, considering I ran the school's Unblocked Games site and the most popular game on the site happened to be my own creation- Flying Dogs. There, you had to pick your dog and race it against a computer playing as Maxie. The whole Unblocked Games site, for that matter, was my games- but all of Hoboken Elementary didn't mind.

I was busy at work on the game when I heard a knock on the door. I yelled, "Who's there?"

The person who came into my room was my mom. "Elliana Ellington, will I have to swim across the entire Hudson

River for you to not get up so early?
Your teacher just sent me an email
telling me to make sure you get up at
7, like you are supposed to!"

"Sorry, Mom. Maxie woke me up to do
her business."

"When?"

"Six-thirty am!"

"You get goosebumps when you lie." I
looked at my body, noticing I did have
goosebumps on my real arm.

"FINE! 3:42 AM! I did a lot, though!"

"Games are for after school, after
homework."

I would've argued with my mom all
day, but she was very passionate
about schoolwork, because she dropped
out of college and regretted it. Nobody
took her for a well-paying job, so she
created her own department store,
Elliana's. She pretty much preaches the
message "Don't drop out of school! Go

to college!" to me. I'd pay attention during school, but none of it's ever interesting for me. Except Coding Club, which meets every Thursday. *Wait a second... today's Thursday!*

Remembering this, I burst out of my bed, spooking Maxie out of my room, and ran to my mom's room, where my outfit for the day was all laid out: a teal T-shirt with ruffles and a pink heart, purple shorts and black shoes. I quickly got dressed, brushed out my hair and teeth, and ran downstairs, where a bowl of cereal was waiting for me. I gobbled it down, drank my milk and grabbed my backpack. I was about to head out the door when I realized I forgot something.

My laptop! I could NOT go to school without my school laptop. I preferred my laptop at home, which has high

speed internet, a light feel but strong protection and a touch screen, but I was stuck with my ever so slow fifth-grade laptop with no touch screen. It also happened to be really heavy and broke a lot. I stuffed my laptop in my heavy backpack and dashed out the door, just in time for the bright yellow school bus to pull onto my street.

"The new episode of Spoiled Rich Kids is tonight!", squealed my best friend Lucille. She is obsessed with all reality TV shows, and when she has spare time she watches Reality, her favorite TV channel. Correction- I made a playlist of all her favorite reality TV shows inserted with random commercials, called it Reality, and inserted it on Channel 1 of Lucille's TV. Because nobody uses Channel 1. Why do they start with Channel 2?

Anyways, I said, "And guess who'll be busy putting it on Reality after it's over? Me!" Lucille smiled. "Elli, you're the best!" (Only Lucille calls me Elli.) I smiled back. Right then, Lucille's brown eyes drooped down. A freckle-faced girl with the curliest red hair and the biggest blue eyes walked on the bus, right by me and Lucille. Her name was Eden, and she was a new girl from England. She was really mean to Lucille and mean to me, too. As she sat down,, she turned around and said in her British accent, "Well, look what the cat dragged in. Or should I say robot?" and laughed with her best friend, Raelyn. I rolled my eyes and said, "Cut it out, Eden! Stopped being mean to Lucille!" Raelyn said, "You are trying to be nice to your best friend. But at least she has a regular arm!"

It took all my courage to not get out of
the doors.

CHAPTER TWO

When the bus pulled up to the school parking lot, many kids ran to the gymnasium- I didn't do that. Instead, I walked out of the gym's double doors and straight to the counselor's office. I needed someone to talk to, at the moment. What happened during the bus ride still hurt me inside. As I opened the door, I thought of how I wished Eden never moved to New Jersey. On her own, Raelyn was pretty mean. I was having a hard time dealing with her when Eden moved to town and made things worse. "Less thought, more action.", my brain told me. So, I followed its' advice and walked over to Mrs. T.

Mrs. T was sipping her cup of tea when she saw me. Her face lit up for a

second, and then cooled back down when she saw my face. She said, "What's wrong, Elliana?" I muttered, with my face down, "Eden and Raelyn. Again." Mrs. T gave me one of her looks, her

I'm-so-sorry-Elliana-I-wish-I-had-the-power-to-expel-those-two-girls look and said, "I'm so sorry, Elliana! I wish I had the power to expel those two girls. But we all know that's not the answer. I'll tell Principal Bennings about it." I sighed at that. Principal Bennings does nothing. All he does is walk around and sit in his room all day- probably trying to become principal of Hoboken Middle School, or possibly President of the United States. Mrs. T then perked up and said, "We aren't supposed to tell you guys this until tomorrow, but I thought of you when I got this flyer in my mailbox.", and ran to her desk. I wondered why she thought of me

when she saw it. Maybe there was a dog that looked like Maxie on the flyer? Before I thought of more maybes, she showed it to me. It read:

HOBOKEN STUDENT ROBOT RACE

Move your robot and win BIG!

The winner gets a trophy!

The winner's class gets a pizza party!

The winner's school gets a \$5000 grant for STEM programs!

SCHOOL COMPETITION: March 13

FINAL COMPETITION: March 17

I smiled at the flyer. Winning the race would be great. I'd be proud of the trophy- I needed a new award for my award spot in my bedroom, ever since

Maxie chewed up my Best Bus Rider certificate from first grade. All the kids in my class would LOVE the pizza party. Also, the computers teacher, Mrs. Marvin, has been telling us that she really wants to get a 3D printer for her room and get us better computers- and the grant money would allow her so!

But thoughts kept slowing me down. "Can I do it, despite my pink arm?" I didn't really like calling it a disability. Ever since I could remember, my dad always said, "Elliana, your disability isn't a disability. It's an ability, because you're the only one with a pink arm!" Thinking about him, I started to miss my dad a bit. Mom and Dad divorced a long time ago, and I don't really see him much, except during holidays and sometimes over the summer- he lives an hour and a half away. But more

than that, I felt a little hopeless. I knew I might try, so I told Mrs. T, "I'll try.", and walked out, straight to class.

Right when the 2 o'clock bell rang, I walked straight to the computer room. I sat by the old-style computer that both me, the boys and Mrs. Marvin hated. *All our new computers if I win that race will be amazing....*

A boy named Nick asked the group as we logged on the coding site we all used, "Did you hear about the robot race?" and then everyone freaked out. One boy named Jacob, shouted, "Yes! I wish I can do it, but i have basketball that day." Another boy named Louie exclaimed, "It seems like fun, but soccer conflicts with it." Nick, who sat next to me, asked, "Elliana, are you going to do the race?" I imagined a robot that looked just like Maxie, soaring through

the skies and shooting dog treats and confetti. But that was just in my wildest imagination, so I just said, "I'll try."

CHAPTER THREE

After coding club at Lucille's house, Lucille was watching me typing on my laptop, working on the TV. I was connecting the feed from Real Life, the channel where Spoiled Rich Klds airs on, to Reality. It was 3:28, two minutes before the new episode aired. Lucille had her eyes on the clock, ready to play our game we played every new episode of Lucille's favorite shows, Time to Spare. When I finish connecting the Real Life feed to Channel 1, we count down until the episode starts to see how much time to spare we have-, or how fast I've been. Our current record is a mere 47 seconds, but today I was determined to beat it. CLICK! The playlist turned off and a random

hairspray commercial from Real Life came on Lucille's television just as the clock turned 3:29. As the commercial played, both of us high-fived, me beaming that I finally broke the record which has been there for about five months and Lucille bragging to her cat, Adrien, that I was very smart- even though I didn't believe so. Cats don't remember much, especially little ones like Adrien, so I was good.

Throughout the show's first part, I was not really paying attention to the show. Thoughts about the race filled my mind- would I fail? Should I even enter? The boys from coding club were all doing it, so there would be a likely chance for our school to get the STEM grant. *Maybe I'll ask Lucille when the commercials start...*

Instead of the silly reality show, the TV finally flashed a juicy hamburger-meaning that the commercials were finally on! On the couch, Lucille yawned. "Those fast food commercials are so fake. The real food is nothing that's on TV!" I nodded and giggled.

It amazed me to just goof off with my best friend and get my worries off my chest, but I knew that it would feel a bit better to tell Lucille what was truly going on. I sighed and looked over at the remote, when Lucille asked, "What's wrong, Elli? You just were amazing getting the TV situated!" I smiled a bit, but not too much because I didn't want to seem cocky. "Thanks, uhhhh..... Do you know the robot race the school's participating in?" Lucille did another fake yawn. "Science and robotics? Boring for me."

Then, she perked up. "Wait. Are you saying, you're going to participate?" Before I could get a word in edgewise I was just considering, she squealed. "AMAZING! My neighbor actually runs this whole race thing! I can watch the show on demand. Let's go talk to her!" "Wait..." "Live like there's no tomorrow, Elli! Do it!" "Ok, I guess..."

Thanks to Lucille and her bubbly personality, I soon found myself on the doorstep of a white house with a blue roof, which I hadn't been on since a couple of years back, where I made a fool of myself on Halloween when I broke a prosthetic I made to match my costume, because the filament I used wasn't good quality. Thinking about the memory, I realized that the little shy Elliana there would never compete

in a robot race. But now, I knew that it was meant for me. Unwillingly, I rang the doorbell.

When the door opened, I was greeted by a blond-haired woman, who apparently knew Lucille very well. I wasn't shocked, considering they are neighbors. "Lucille, hi! I see you brought your friend with the little arm..."

For a second, I felt like boiling. I hated to be just described by my limitations. Even though I have my prosthetic, I've always just focused on my strengths. Lucille was quick to change the subject. "I was wondering, if I could sign her up for the robot race?" The neighbor nodded, and brought a sign-up pad.

"Here, pink arm..."

"Elliana. Elliana Ellington, not pink-armed girl."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I'm Mrs. Hughes, but I didn't know what else to say."

"It's OK.", I said while grabbing the sign up pen. For a second, I thought I shouldn't sign up, but I did it. I wrote my name and grade big and clear:

Elliana Ellington, Fifth Grade

CHAPTER FOUR

When I got back home after hanging out at Lucille's house, I went straight to work on a robot I'd use to practice for the race. I got on my 3D printer with Maxie by my side and hit "END PRINT" for my bike basket. I wanted my bike to have something to help me feel safer, but the robot was way more important. As the printer got a tiny bit colder and the filament got less sticky, I put an oven mitt on my real hand and took out the piece of filament that was supposed to be a bike basket. Now, that the piece was out of the printer, I could start inventing my robot.

For hours, I worked, figured out how to make it totally working, totally unique and totally "Elliana". When I hit the Start Print for the finished product, designs, and mechanics and code and all, I let out a little squeal that caused Maxie to bark and Mom to yell at the poor pooch. Now, the hard part and the hard work was finally over.

At the end of the three day print period, proudness swallowed up my body when I saw the purple, blue, and pink robot with hearts all over. The second I took the robot out of the 3D printer, I connected the stuff that lets you remote-control the robot to my remote control and decided to start practicing.

I ran outside with my new robot and remote control, set the robot on the ground and turned on the remote

control. I was ready. I was going to do this. Using the controls, I was making the robot move everywhere in the backyard with my regular hand and holding on to my remote control with my prosthetic. I didn't know how to use the control that well with my real hand- let alone prosthetic.

I spent five minutes practicing in my yard- people stared, Maxie barked, but that didn't stop me from going. By the time the robot circled the yard about 50 times, I decided to walk it around the sidewalk. WORST. IDEA. EVER.

Why, you may ask? Eden Davies.

I was walking along nicely, while I tried out my robot at different speeds- super slow for a minute, super fast for the next, medium speed, so on. But Eden just HAD TO be walking with

Raelyn, both with shopping bags and gossiping about some stupid YouTuber. Her presence got me angry, so I decided to run back in the yard with the robot. I tried to make the robot go as fast as it could, but it was no use. I was running faster than the robot, and Eden spotted it.

"Look at this silly toy Elliana's carrying around.", said Raelyn, snickering.

"Hey," yelled Eden, "aren't you too old to be playing with those?"

I tried saying nothing, but it was no use. Eden just strutted faster than the bot, which was out of my reach since I was so far ahead of it.

"ERROR: Too far away."

"Oh, great!" But before I could turn around, I heard a loud SMASH!

My hard work was destroyed, thanks to those bullies- who were just laughing, taking photos and celebrating their victory over the biggest weirdo in fifth grade. As soon as Raelyn and Eden turned to go home, I ran to the pieces of the robot, grabbing my hard work that was in five entire pieces and then turning around to go in my bedroom.

CHAPTER FIVE

When I reached my bedroom, I placed the broken robot on my dresser, plopped on my bed and cried. I cried because all my hard work was destroyed with one simple throw. Feeling like a failure, I thought about unplugging my 3D printer and throwing away all my STEM posters, but before I could do so, Maxie came up to me. She was barking at the pieces of the robot, wagging her tail at it. If she had the ability to speak, she'd probably be saying, "Don't give up, Elliana! You have done more than most girls your age have done in a lifetime! You are the best girl I know! Woof!" Encouraged by my imagination and Maxie jumping up and down, I ran back to my dresser and got all the broken parts. I had a plan.

When I hopped back on my bed to fix the robot, Maxie came and tried to kiss me, but I shooed her away- I had work to do! First, I examined each part, seeing if they broke into the main five pieces of the robot that could easily be fixed- head, arms, legs, and torso. The arms were still on the torso, and the legs and head were A-OK. Relieved, I turned over the torso to examine the things that made the robot work.

All the parts looked good, except for one part. The only one that you can't get at Elliana's department store, the only one you can't 3D print back- was split in two. Thanks to that, a huge pit of anger replaced my relief, and my rage went back to me. I got so angry I wanted to yell across the house, but that would cause Maxie to bark, and then the rest of the dogs to bark, and that would give the entire

neighborhood a headache. My anger soon turned into hurt, and the hurt turned into sadness. The school-wide race was in 2 days, and the two little brats ruined my entire work. I bet the hardest thing they've ever done in their entire lives was pop a huge pimple, let alone build a entire robot.

As I cried, I grabbed my phone, put in my passcode and clicked over to my calendar app. My calendar was full of things I had to do, like cat-sitting Adrien, do homework at my mom's store and the school race. I clicked on the school race, hit "Edit" and renamed the race to the following:

"DO NOT GO TO SCHOOL THIS DAY."

CHAPTER SIX

The next day while I was sitting in my art class waiting for dismissal, I was taken by surprise during the afternoon announcements. Those are a bunch of random things the front office lady says before dismissing the kindergarteners and car riders- since I'm a fifth grader and not a car rider, I get dismissed last- which include bus changes, pickups of lost items and transportation changes. They usually never say my name, but I was shocked to hear that "Elliana Ellington is a car rider today." When the front office lady said that, I was shocked. The last time I was a car rider, it was in third grade when Mom had to fill in for a sick worker at Elliana's. Did that mean the same thing? Did I have to sit in the stockroom, doing nothing but homework?

Yep, I was right. Mom had to fill in, but not for a sick worker. A employee moved away, and her replacement didn't show up, so Mom was working in one of the checkout lines today. Fine by me- at least I'd be able to do homework without hearing Maxie try to pity me into giving her my homework to eat!

When we arrived at the store, Mom showed me a place in the stockroom set up for me to do my work, and I got straight to work. I did my math in a jiffy, finished my social studies quickly and had no language arts homework, so I got done in 10 minutes. I had no ideas for what to do, so I ran around the stockroom. Good thing I ran around that stockroom.

While I was running, a employee was carrying a box full of merchandise. I noticed her, and tried to move away from her so she can carry the box in piece, but I bumped into her. Parts started flying everywhere, the employee yelled at me in Spanish and walked away angrily, and I slipped on a part. I grabbed the part I slipped on, seeing if there was a cool invention I could make with it. Maybe it would help my bike basket. When I looked at it, I was MIND-BLOWN and let off a squeal of joy. "It- it- it..."

"IT'S THE PART I NEEDED!"

I put the part aside on my desk and did a little happy dance. After, my mom came into the stockroom. "Elli, we can go home. A worker came, and you have to catsit tonight..."

"Tell Lucille that Adrien can be home alone tonight. I have work to do!"

Did I work? I knew I would have to work hard, so I locked the door in my room so that Maxie wouldn't get in! When I got home, I fired up a grip for my prosthetic hand for me to hold the remote control of the robot on the 3D printer that would be done in a hour. After, I turned on the radio, blasted my favorite song, and got to work. I rebuilt the robot, replaced the broken part with the one I found in the store, and attached the grip to the remote control when it was done. Now, it was time to go into the backyard and test out the robot- not on the sidewalk, I did learn my lesson!

When I walked downstairs with my robot, Maxie yipped with joy. I think it was because I was about to do

something awesome in her eyes. I wasn't sure that it would be awesome just yet, but I was just testing. I opened the doors to the outside world, with the pink lemonade colored sky and the sun setting, stepped outside and closed the door so that no flies would be invited into the Ellington home or that there would be no lost dogs.

When I put the robot down on the porch, a wave of stress came through my body. *What if they say you're weird? What if this was the wrong part? What if it breaks again? What if...* no more. I didn't care about whether this would be a success or not. It mattered because this was important to me. I tried so hard to make this work, and if the hard work paid off, it would be amazing. If it didn't, no sweat. I'd try again. I believed that failure was

the first step to success, and tonight would be a test to see if that was true. I held on to my grip and started remote controlling the robot. Suddenly, the robot turned left, and then right, and then spun when I controlled it too. I squealed in joy when I saw it worked!

All night until the moths came out, I was outside, controlling the robot to do a bunch of tricks. I made it go slow, go fast and even leap into the air! I programmed it to- even though I wasn't going to use that function during the race, because it would be considered as cheating.

When the first moth appeared, I picked up my things and closed the door in happiness. I felt proud of my work, and I was going to get that STEM grant for Mrs. Marvin. But first, I had to make it to the big race.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The next day, I made sure I was full of good luck. I wore my lucky blue shirt with the pink heart on it, maroon shorts and black flats- the same exact outfit I wore when I found out about the race. If I could only wear one outfit for the rest of my life, it would be that one because it brings me good luck. I also did the Good Luck Dance to bring me good luck- a little silly dance I made up. Lucille when she was in a spelling bee, and she won it! I was ready for the big day.

All throughout math and science, my mind was on the race. Would I do amazing- or fail? I tried my best to keep my head of happy, clean and positive vibes and concentrate on the lesson, but it was hard. Finally, during the last bit of science, I heard the

announcement on the loudspeaker: "All participants in the robot race, please report to the gym. Thank you!" I was the only person in my class participating, so I rushed to the gym with Lucille cheering, "GO ELLI!"

As I made the walk from the fifth grade hallway to the gym, I noticed something a bit peculiar. First, there was a girl named Samantha carrying a black robot. Another boy carrying the same black robot. Half the people I saw were carrying the black robot! I walked over to Samantha and asked, "Did you make the robot?" Samantha shook her head. "I don't want to do this at all. Eden gave me this robot and told me if I did this, I got a Starbucks gift card.", and showed me a gift card. "I don't even like Eden, but I like Starbucks. I'm going to fail on purpose." Just then, I fumed. All the black robot kids were

Eden's minions, bribed by Eden for \$5 gift cards. To try to beat me and stop me.

When I entered the gym, all the other kids who all had black robots stared at me. One kid even said, "That's it. I quit. I got the pizza card, I don't even have to do this." Another kid looked and said, "Elliana's the girl we have to beat for the hundred dollar grand prize? She's amazing." Hundred dollar grand prize? Many kids would just want to win 100 bucks. But beating me? Crushing my dreams? *Thanks a lot, Eden.*

I got in my place, my heart beating, palms racing. This was it. All the hard work I put in the last couple weeks, would finally pay off. Or would it?

A teacher came and said the rules, especially glaring at me. Was the

teacher bribed, too? Probably. Eden's family is rich, so they could pay anyone to do anything. The teacher then gave everyone the signal to start.

"Ok. This is it.", my mind was saying. I got to work. I pressed on the joystick hard, gripping on to my prosthetic grip even harder. It was going faster than all the black robots, which was perfect. I was going to win. I was going to make it. Or so I thought.

As I was almost to the finish line, out of nowhere, a black robot went into the air, flying over my pink and blue one. I was almost to first place, but then that black robot just flew over everyone else. I didn't care. Even if I got second, I'd still be proud. I controlled my robot to go faster, faster, and faster. It didn't work. Just as my robot touched the finish line, the teacher said, "We

have a winner! Peter, you won!" The kid who made the black robot fly, who's name was Peter, was laughing with joy. "I get 100 dollars! Thanks, Eden." I was stressed out, upset and wanting to cry. Peter cheated, but the teacher didn't care! As Peter was awarded with the ribbon, I stood up and said, "Shouldn't I be getting that?" The teacher gave me a look and said, "Elliana, you got second. Peter got first." "But Peter cheated..." "Elliana's right, I did cheat.", said Peter. "You said robots couldn't fly, but mine did. I just wanted the 100 dollars Eden was going to give if I beat the quote-unquote 'freak show'. I already got a \$5 Xbox gift card just for being Eden's minion."

The teacher gave Peter a look. "You are going into detention, Eden will be suspended for a day, and all of those

gift cards are going to the front office to give to charity." She then turned to me. "Elliana, you won! You're going to go on to the big robot race." I beamed as the ribbon was pinned on my shirt. I did it. I was going to win that technology grant, to make the school a better place. Maybe I wouldn't, but at least I had the chance to make the school better.

CHAPTER EIGHT

That day as I got off the bus with my robot, I acted like my homework didn't exist. I just bursted into the backyard and practiced for the big race. I imagined that there was a billion robots there, some that could fly, some that could do gymnastics, but if I was going to win, I'd win fair and square. Lost in my imagination, I held on to my prosthetic grip and controlled the robot as swiftly as possible. In my mind, I was the fastest of the robots that weren't cheating, but I knew it was possible to go faster, so I put all my energy into that little remote controller. It was probably going the speed limit, 60 miles per hour, but I didn't want my mind to figure out the speed of my own robot. I planned to

install a speed tracker on the robot, but not before my mom yelled, "Elliana! Homework before robots!"

It took forever to do homework, but I ended up doing it all before dinnertime. After homework, I got a speed tracker app, put a Bluetooth transmitter inside my robot, and tested the robot in my room. It was working, and the app was reporting speeds! I was about to go outside to practice, but then Mom told me to get in the car to pick up dinner.

I wasn't about to let dinner ruin me practicing before it got dark outside. Right when the drive-thru man gave us our food, I thrust my real hand into the bag, got my chicken tenders and French fries, and started eating in the car as fast as I could. I always do that when I have a big project, but when I do that with Lucille, she says I'm "all

work and no play". Playing is fun, don't get me wrong, but I wouldn't waste any chances to make my projects better so I'd succeed!

I got lucky, since when I got home I just finished my last bite. Right when the car door opened, I ran outside to work on my robot-controlling skills. Standing on the deck, I pressed some buttons on the control and looked at the robot. It buzzed on, sped ahead, and jumped off the deck to the grass. Then, it kept on going in circles, zooming left to right and spinning in the air! I was amazed at what I programmed my robot to do.

The next day was Wednesday, the day I usually make a new game for the Unblocked Games site. I wanted to work on my robot skills some more, but I didn't want to be subject to "Where's the new game?" comments

from all the kids at school the next day, so I made a game in which you had to control a robot. That way, I was practicing for the race AND making a game for the entire school to enjoy!

Thursday was a rainy day, so I couldn't go outside. Luckily, I had my game to help me practice for the race. I spent about a hour on the game, and I was the first place champion with a score that would take a lot of work to beat!

The sun returned on Friday- the day before the big race. Friday was also the day I would come over to Lucille's, so I brought my robot to Lucille's house so I could do a little indoor practice. It works best practicing outside, but I thought it would be nice to change it up a bit.

While me and Lucille were eating cookies and drinking milk, I decided to show her my robot- the second time she's ever seen it, because the first time it was at school, and only for 2 seconds. I pulled out the robot from my bag, and held it up. Her jaw dropped, and she took the gooey cookie that was about to go in her mouth out of her hand. "That is amazing, Elliana! You are definitely going to win that race tomorrow."

"I'm not sure about that. I'll try my best..."

Lucille grabbed my shoulder. "Fru diserve fru vin.", she said with cookie in her mouth.

"Huh?"

She swallowed her cookie. "You deserve to win. Even if you don't, I'll be proud of you."

"Thanks, Lucille. I'm glad you are my best friend."

Even though I brought my robot to Lucille's house, I didn't get a chance to practice- we were having too much fun! We watched YouTube, played video games, ate and played with our dolls that are supposed to look like us- mine looks nothing like me, because she doesn't have a prosthetic arm. For once, I forgot about the race stress- ever since it started, my life has spun upside down. It's nice to take a break, but I was still a bit worried. Just because I took a little break, would I get in last place?

CHAPTER NINE

When I woke up the next morning, I was a bit shocked that my alarm said "Race Day!", even though I knew it was coming. I climbed out of bed, which caused Maxie to bark because I didn't get her out of the top of my loft bed. A bit embarrassed, I climbed back to my bed and put Maxie on the wind-up puppy elevator I made for her so she wouldn't fall out of my arms when I was climbing.

After Maxie was on the ground, I climbed down, put on my prosthetic, a white shirt with a heart on it and denim jeans, and sprinted to my bathroom to brush my hair and teeth. After I was done with that, I took Maxie outside to do her business, put

her back in the house, and started practicing with my robot- for the last time before the race. This time, I imagined that there was a billion of Eden's black robots there and I had to beat them. I used the controls more skillfully than ever, which caused the speed tracker to say that it was going at 61 miles per hour- when the fastest it can go is 60!

I kept on practicing and practicing, making the robot spin around and do laps around my backyard. I was having so much fun, that I forgot that the race started at 10 am- and it was 9:30! Thankfully, Mom got me inside, where I got on my white sneakers and grabbed a granola bar to eat on the way to the park, where the race was.

Right when I finished my last bite of granola, I arrived at the park, where I

saw from my window that I was the only one with a prosthetic. "Not surprising.", I thought. What was surprising, though, was as soon as I got out, I looked at the participants area- and they were all boys! "Whatever.", I thought. "I may be the only girl, but that won't stop me from doing what I came here to do- get that tech grant for the school!"

I walked over to the participants area, where I got a bit nervous once I got closer. I heard one boy say, "How did that girl with the arm get in?" The boy he was talking to nodded and said, "For the past five years in a row, I've won. That little girl won't win." Even though that they were being ignorant and I was used to it, I got a bit angry. I wanted to yell, "I'm not just a little girl, and you'll be sorry once I win.", but I was too nice to do so. Finally, after

another mock, I adapted my mind statement a bit and told it to them: "I'm not just a little girl! I'm just like you, and I'm sorry you are so ignorant." The boys got red in their faces, forgetting for a second that the so-called "little girl" told that to them. "Uh... do you want to go get water?" The two boys walked off, a bit ashamed.

I didn't get peace for much longer, because about three minutes passed when the announcer said: "Now, we are going to send out our competitors!" One by one, each boy came out, to much applause. The most applause was for the mean boy, because the announcer said, "Five time Hoboken Robot Race champion, Chase Van-Struden!" As the rest of the names were called, I tried to imagine what it would be like to win the race

five years in a row. Maybe his school had 2 3D Printers. Maybe even virtual reality!

As I was lost in my thoughts, the announcer said, "And last, but not least, from Hoboken Elementary, the first person with a limb difference to participate, Elliana Ellington!" I walked out with my robot, only getting applause from my mom. I set down my robot, and thought. Thought about the limited applause and just being defined by my disability, which caused anger. Thought about the mean boys, which caused hurt. Thought about Eden, which caused pain. Thought about all the hardships that I went through, to get to this moment.

"On your mark!"

Emotion started building up in both my arms, both real and fake.

"Get set!"

You can do this, Elli. Trust yourself.

"GO!"

Every robot started going off in the marked cone lines, but mine was in the lead. *Perfect!* I kept on using my emotion to control the robot, causing a sweaty palm and filament that would've broke if I didn't use the best one available. I kept on going, and going, past everyone else. Using my controls, I made sure that it was going 61 miles per hour. Now 62... *what the heck?*

A blue robot and a green robot started going right in front of me, even though the red ribbon was five feet away. The

blue one broke through, right as the
green one passed it, and then mine.
Confetti shot through the air, and I felt
a bit disappointed. I lost.

I lost.

I lost.

CHAPTER TEN

My heart was disappointed that I didn't win for the school and computer club, but also a bit proud of myself. I could've done better- first, preferably, but I could've done worse. I could've got fourth, or fifth, or even thirtieth. But third place out of 30 kids was a accomplishment, and it was one to be proud of. All my hard work paid off, finally.

A couple minutes later, after the last robot finished, the top five were announced. I was going to be happy when I stood on the third place spot. Even though I didn't win, I was still very proud.

"Fifth place, Adam McDonough! Fourth place, George Eichhorn!" Now, it was my

turn, even though I was a bit nervous.
"Third place, Elliana Ellington!"

As the crowd cheered and confetti fired, I cried tears of joy as I walked to the third place spot. I held the participation certificate and waved, but as I did so, bittersweetness surged in my head. I didn't win, but everyone was pretty happy to see me win third place. *Oh well, I thought. I got THIRD PLACE!*

When I came home, I was expecting Maxie to do a dance, to think my shoe was a toy. What I wasn't expecting was someone standing right by the door.

"DADDY!", I yelled. I hadn't seen him since Christmas, and I loved him and missed him so much. He only came on Christmas and over the summer, so I was very shocked to see him. "Elli!

Congratulations!", he said. I was crying in his arms, so happy. I was happy that I saw my dad., I was happy I got third place. I was happy I worked so hard, so happy my hard work all paid off.

THE END

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sydney Jean Satalino is the creator of Special Dolls and the author of all the Special Dolls books. She is no stranger to writing, as she has been writing books since the age of 5 and publishing them by 8. When she was 9, she noticed there was not many dolls and toys that represented her and other kids with disabilities, and all of them were either stereotypical or were just a accessory for another toy or doll that came with no disability, so Special Dolls was born! Her favorite thing about writing about Elliana was imagining her world and incorporating it into the book. She lives in North Carolina with her mom, sister, dog named Snickerdoodle and her huge doll collection.