

FROM THE NO. 1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF

MIDDLE SCHOOL

HOUSE OF

ROBOTS



JAMES PATTERSON

AND CHRIS GRABENSTEIN

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Copyright

About the Book

In this new illustrated middle-grade series from James Patterson, an extraordinary robot signs up for an ordinary fifth grade class ... and elementary school will never be the same!

It was never easy for Sammy Hayes-Rodriguez to fit in, so he's dreading the day when his genius mom insists he bring her newest invention to school: a walking, talking robot he calls E – for "Error". Sammy's no stranger to robots – his house is full of a colourful cast of them. But this one not only thinks it's Sammy's brother ... it's actually even nerdier than Sammy.

Will E be Sammy's one-way ticket to Loserville? Or will he prove to the world that it's cool to be square? It's a roller-coaster ride for Sammy to discover the amazing secret E holds that could change his family forever ... if all goes well on the trial run!

About the Authors

JAMES PATTERSON is the internationally bestselling author of the highly praised Middle School books, *Homeroom Diaries*, and the I Funny, Treasure Hunters, Confessions, Maximum Ride, Witch & Wizard and Daniel X series. James Patterson has been the most borrowed author in UK libraries for the past seven years in a row and his books have sold more than 300 million copies worldwide, making him one of the bestselling authors of all time. He lives in Florida.

CHRIS GRABENSTEIN is a *New York Times* bestselling author who has also collaborated with James Patterson on the I Funny and Treasure Hunters series. He lives in New York City.

JULIANA NEUFELD is an award-winning illustrator whose drawings can be found in books, on album covers, and in nooks and crannies throughout the Internet. She lives in Toronto.

Also by James Patterson

Middle School series

Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life (*with Chris Tebbetts*)

Middle School: Get Me Out of Here! (*with Chris Tebbetts*)

Middle School: My Brother Is a Big, Fat Liar (*with Lisa Papademetriou*)

Middle School: How I Survived Bullies, Broccoli, and Snake Hill (*with Chris Tebbetts*)

Middle School: Ultimate Showdown (*with Julia Bergen*)

Middle School: Save Rafe! (*with Chris Tebbetts*)

I Funny series

I Funny (*with Chris Grabenstein*)

I Even Funnier (*with Chris Grabenstein*)

I Totally Funniest (*with Chris Grabenstein, to be published January 2015*)

Treasure Hunters series

Treasure Hunters (*with Chris Grabenstein*)

Treasure Hunters: Danger Down the Nile (*with Chris Grabenstein*)

Homeroom Diaries

Homeroom Diaries (*with Lisa Papademetriou*)

Daniel X series

The Dangerous Days of Daniel X (*with Michael Ledwidge*)

Watch the Skies (*with Ned Rust*)

Demons and Druids (*with Adam Sadler*)

Game Over (*with Ned Rust*)

Armageddon (*with Chris Grabenstein*)

For more information about James Patterson's novels, visit
www.jamespatterson.co.uk

Or become a fan on Facebook

WELCOME TO MY

HOUSE OF ROBOTS



DAD

He's kind of kooky,
but he draws cool
ninja comics.



SAMMY

That's me!



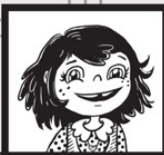
MOM

For a genius, she
sure invents some
dopey robots!



DRONE MALONE

For traffic reports or
spy jobs, he's your robot.



MADDIE

The coolest sister in
the whole world—
I mean it!



MR. MOPPENSHINE

He attacks dust
until it cries for help!



HAYSEED

His green thumb
is actually painted
aluminum.



BLITZEN

This former robo-linebacker
is now a really aggressive
lawn mower.



E

Hmm...I can't think of
anything he's good for.

These robots do everything in my high-tech home,
from making breakfast to handing out toilet paper.

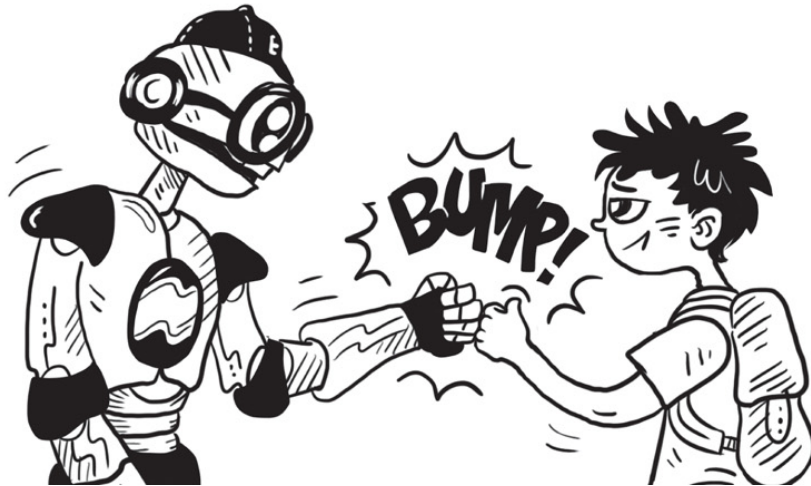
Wanna see how I ended up with a
whole gang of gizmos?

COME ON IN!

HOUSE OF ROBOTS

JAMES PATTERSON
AND CHRIS GRABENSTEIN

ILLUSTRATED BY JULIANA NEUFELD





*For my mom.
—C.G.*



*To India—
for ten amazing years at Palm Beach Day Academy.
And for Andrea Spooner—my hero.
—J.P.*





HOT + SOUR
NINJA ROBOTS
FROM
MAD MOUNTAIN

CREEKSIDE
ELEMENTARY

Hi, I'm SAMMY.

CHAPTER 1

HI, I'M SAMMY Hayes-Rodriguez. Maybe you've heard of me? I'm the kid everybody's making fun of because my mother made me bring a robot to school with me—the dumbest, most embarrassing thing to ever happen to any kid in the whole history of school. (I'm talking about going back to the Pilgrims and Mayflower Elementary.)

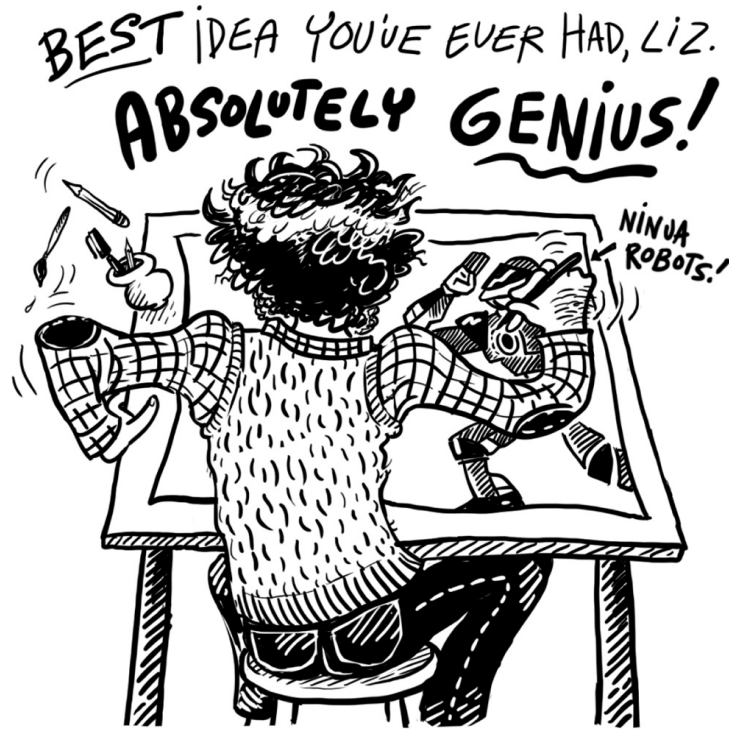
I need to tell you a wild and crazy story about this robot that—I kid you not—thinks it's my brother.

And guess where the dumb-bot got that goofy idea?

From my mother!

Oh, guess what? My father is in on this idiotic robot business, too. He even called Mom's lame-o idea "brilliant."





Good thing Maddie is still on my side.

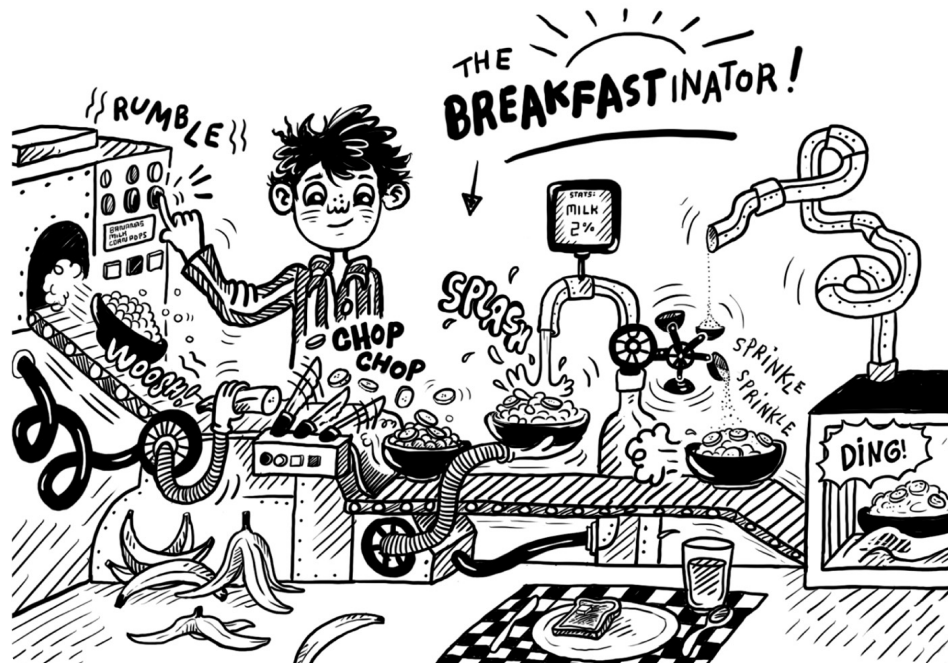
Maddie's absolutely the best little sister anybody could ever have. Aren't her blue eyes incredible? Oh, right. *Duh*. That drawing is in black-and-white. Well, trust me—her eyes are bluer than that Blizzard Blue crayon in the jumbo sixty-four-color box.

Anyway, Maddie and I talked about Mom's latest screwy scheme over breakfast, which, of course, was served by one of Mom's many wacky inventions: the Breakfastinator.

Punch the button for Cap'n Crunch and cereal tumbles into a bowl, which slides down to the banana slicer, shuffles off to the milk squirter, scoots over to the sugar sprinkler, and zips down to the dispenser window.



MADDIE



Want some OJ with your cereal? Bop the orange button.

But—and this is super important—do NOT push the orange juice and Cap'n Crunch buttons at the same time. Trust me. It's even worse if you push Cap'n Crunch and scrambled eggs.

Maddie and I always have breakfast together before I head off to school. The two of us talk about everything, even though Maddie's two years younger than I am. That means she'd be in the third grade—if she went to school, which she doesn't.

I'll explain later. Promise.

Maddie knows how crazy Mom and Dad can be sometimes. But to be honest, even though she's younger, Maddie keeps things under control *way* better than I do.



“Everything will be okay, Sammy. Promise.”

“But you totally agree that Mom’s new idea is ridiculous, right? I could die of embarrassment!”

“I hope not,” says Maddie. “I’d miss you. Big-time. And yeah, her plan is a little out there...”

“Maddie, it’s so far ‘out there’ it might as well be on Mars with that robot rover. They could dig up red rocks together!”

Okay, now here’s the worst part: My mom told me that this wacko thing she wants me to do is all part of her “most important experiment ever.”

Yep. I’m just Mom’s poor little guinea pig. She probably put lettuce leaves in my lunch box.





CHAPTER 2

MOM'S "TAKE A Robot to School Day" idea is so super nutty, she couldn't even say it out loud in front of Genna Zagoren, a girl in my class who has a peanut allergy, which is why my best buddy, Trip, can never eat his lunch at Genna's table. More about Trip later, too. Promise.

Anyhow, it's time to begin Mom's big, *super-important* experiment: me and a walking, talking trash can going to school. Together.

"Just pretend he's your brother" is what my mom says.

"I don't have a brother."

"You do now."

Can you believe this? I can't.

As for the robot? I don't think he's really going to blend in with the other kids in my class except, maybe, on Halloween.

He's already wearing his costume.



“Good morning, Samuel,” E says when we’re out the front door and on our way up the block to the bus stop. “Lovely weather for matriculating.”

“Huh?”

“To matriculate. To enroll or be enrolled in an institution of learning, especially a college or university.”

I duck my head and hope nobody can tell it’s me walking beside Robo-nerd.



“We’re not going to college,” I mumble. “It’s just school.”

“Excellent. Fabulous. Peachy.”

I guess Mom is still working on E’s word search program. I can hear all sorts of things whirring as the big bulky thing kind of glides up the sidewalk. The robot chugs his arms back and forth like he’s cross-country skiing up the concrete in super-slow motion. Without skis.

I notice that E is lugging an even bigger backpack than I am.

Maybe that’s where he keeps his spare batteries.



CHAPTER 3

ACCORDING TO MY mother—whose name is *Elizabeth*—the robot’s name, E, stands for *Egghead*, which is what a lot of people call my mom, Professor Elizabeth Hayes, PhD, because she’s so super smart (except when she does super-*dumb* stuff like making me take a talking robot to school for anything besides show-and-tell).

My dad, Noah Rodriguez, says the name E stands for *Einstein Jr.* because the robot is such a genius. Ha! Would a genius go to school without wearing underpants? I don’t think so.

My sister, Maddie, thinks E is a perfect name all by itself and stands for nothing except *E*.

I kind of like Maddie’s idea. Even though Maddie doesn’t go to school, she’s so smart it’s almost impossible to fight or argue with her about anything. Trust me. I’ve tried.

But the more time I spend with E, the more I think I know what his name really means: *ERROR!*

“Remember, Samuel,” E says when we reach the bus stop, “always wait for the school bus on the sidewalk. Do not stand, run, or play in the street.”

A lot of my friends from the neighborhood are already at the corner. Most of them are gawking at the clunky machine with the glowing blue eyeballs that’s following behind me like an obedient Saint Bernard.

“What’s with the bright blue eyeballs?” I mumble. “Are those like freeze-ray guns?”

“Let’s form a straight line, children, away from the street,” E chirps. And get this—E can smile. And blink. (But you can hear the mini-motors clicking and purring inside his head when he does.)

“I make these suggestions,” E continues, “in an attempt to enhance your school-bus-boarding safety.”

Everybody stops gawking at E and starts staring at me.

None of the kids are smiling. Or blinking.

E is definitely the biggest ERROR my mother has ever made—worse than the time she designed a litter-box-cleaning robot that flung clumps of kitty poop all over the house.

“What is that thing?” asks Jackson Rehder, one of the kids who ride the bus with me every morning.

“Another one of my mother’s ridiculous robots,” I say, giving E the stink eye.

“What’s his name?”

“E. For *Error*. Just like in baseball.”

“I’m sorry, Samuel,” says E. “You are mistaken. You are imparting incorrect information. Your statement is fallacious.”

Great. Now the stupid robot wants to argue with me? Unbelievable.

Stick around. This should be fun.





CHAPTER
4

I AM SORRY, Samuel. *Error* is an absurd name for a technologically advanced machine that is able to sense, think, and act on its own.”

“Then go *be* on your own and leave me and my friends alone!”

“I am sorry, Samuel. I have been programmed to attend school. It is my primary function.”

“Well, go attend one where I’m not a student.”

“I am sorry, Samuel—”

“Hey, Sammy,” cracks Jackson, “maybe that’s his name: *Sorry!* He sure says ‘I’m sorry’ a lot.”

E rotates his head thirty degrees to the left, tilts down, and locks in on Jackson Rehder’s eyes. “I am sorry, Jackson. My name is E. Your suggestion is totally illogical. For one thing, the word *sorry* does not begin with the letter *e*.”



E swivels back to face me.

"I must go to school with you, Samuel. It is what Mother told me to do."

"Mom?"

"Professor Elizabeth Hayes, PhD."

"I know Mom's name! And she's not your mother, she's *mine!*"

E actually grins. "Of course Elizabeth is my mother. Perhaps not in the limited way you look at the world, Samuel. But most certainly Professor Elizabeth Hayes, PhD, is my creator and, therefore, my mother."

"So the robot *is* your brother?" snaps Jackson. "He's your robo-bro? Your bro-bot?"

Everybody at the bus stop picks up on that: "Robo-bro! Ha! Bro-bot!"

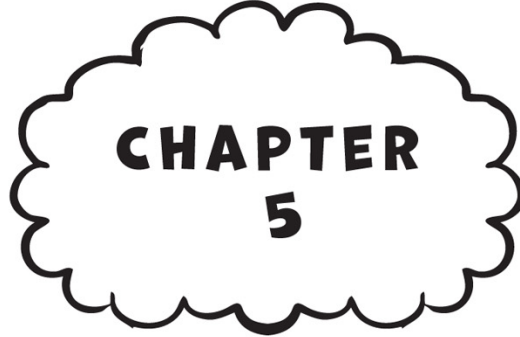
What a great start for "Error" and me, huh? I'm beginning to think I might actually hate this thing.

Finally, the big yellow school bus comes rumbling down the street, and I happily realize that there's no way E will be coming to school with me today.

Robots can't climb steps, right? They roll around on tank treads or bounce off walls. Well, you have to scale three giant steps to board the school bus. Something E won't be able to do.

You're going *down*, Bot Boy!





CHAPTER 5

ONCE WE ARE safely on board the bus,” E peeps as the driver swings open the folding doors to reveal the steep little staircase, “go directly to a seat and remain seated and facing forward for the entire ride.”

“*Riiiiight*,” I say, hopping up the three steps lickety-split.

When I reach the little landing at the top, I spin around to wave buh-bye to E, who will be spending the rest of his day stranded on the sidewalk, totally ruining his shot at a perfect-attendance medal on his very first day of school.

“See ya...wouldn’t want to be ya!”

Yes. I am gloating. Just a little.

But the robot has the last laugh. Well, he doesn’t actually laugh, because I think Mom forgot to give the thing a sense of humor.

What E *does* do (I hate to admit) is pretty amazing.

He lifts one foot and places it on the first step and—*CLICK, CLUNK, CLICK, CLUNK, CLICK*—he climbs up those steps faster than I can.

“Why have you not taken your seat, Samuel?” E asks, because I’m standing there with my mouth hanging open, blocking the aisle.

“Yeah, little dude,” says Mr. Hessler, the school bus driver. “Sit down.”

The door closes. The air brakes make a gassy noise as if they’ve been eating bean burritos all morning.



Yep. I'm on my way to school.

And E is coming with me.

Did I mention that I might hate this thing?

Well, I decided that I do.

I really, *really* do.



CHAPTER 6

I DON'T WANT to be obnoxious here or brag...but guess who was absolutely *right* about E going to school being a huge mistake? A colossal ERROR?

Yep. It was me. Sammy Hayes-Rodriguez.

Day one of Mom's experiment is a total bust, just as I predicted it would be.

My reward for being so smart?

A chance to take part in the *first-ever* parent-student-teacher-robot conference in the principal's office.

Since our house in the Sunnymede section of South Bend, Indiana, is all of nine minutes away from Creekside Elementary (and because our hybrid is equipped with an enhanced GPS Mom designed that picks the quickest route by somehow communicating with all the stoplights along the way), both Mom and Dad were able to attend the cozy little conference.

I couldn't wait for Mrs. Reyes, our school principal, to expel E—forever.

It's not Mom's fault, really. Some experiments just don't work out. Like that mad scientist in the old movie who ended up as a human fly. Major fail.

"I am so, so sorry about the...incidents," my mom says to Mrs. Reyes, who's pretty cool most of the time, but if you ask me, she's way too lenient with my mother. Maybe that's because they play together in a terrible rock band. (More on that later.)