

BENJI'S REVENGE – Danielle Cerin ©2025

My younger brother sat at the kitchen bench; eyes glued to the Smart Kid trivia show on his device. I crept up behind him and flicked the top of his ear.

‘Oww,’ Benji cried, his hand flying to the sore spot.

I laughed. ‘Smart Kid huh? You’d never make it on this show. You’re so silly; when you throw rocks at the ground, you miss. You’re so silly; you think it takes an hour to cook minute rice.’

Benji’s cheeks flushed red, and his face scrunched up like an angry little monkey.

‘No, I don’t!’ he cried.

He glared at me, then turned back to his show. This was our weekend morning ritual. Him trying to watch his show in peace, and me trying to work out how far I could push him before he started crying like a baby. I peeled a banana and threw the skin at him. It hit him in the face then fell into his lap.

‘GO AWAY!’ Benji screamed just as mum walked into the kitchen.

‘Benji, stop yelling. Be nice to your brother,’ mum said.

‘Yeah, be nice to me,’ I said with a snort.

Benji ignored both of us and hunched over his device.

Once mum left, I scooted back and forth on the rug, building up as much static electricity as I could. I leaned in and touched the back of his neck just as he plugged the device into the power point. The zap of static was like a lightning bolt. The lights in the kitchen flickered and Benji’s body jolted in his chair.

Benji's Revenge

‘Woah! That one was whack,’ I said.

Benji didn't reply. In fact, he didn't move. He sat stiffly upright in his chair, his eyes were wide, and he stared straight ahead.

‘Benj?’ I waved a hand in front of his face. ‘Hellooo? I bet if I gave you a penny for your thoughts, I'd get change.’

His head slowly turned to face me. ‘I will not suffer your taunts any longer,’ he declared in a deep voice that definitely wasn't his.

It almost threw me off my game. Almost. ‘Oh yeah? What you gonna do about it?’

‘Defeat you in a battle of wits,’ he said.

I cracked my knuckles. This should be good. ‘Okay, show me what you got, tough guy.’

Benji tilted his neck to the right and smacked the left side of his head a few times as if trying to tip something out. Like something out of a horror movie, red nerves emerged from his right ear hole, reaching out like little arms. Benji squeezed his eyes shut in discomfort as his ear hole stretched wide. Then his brain fell out of his ear, landing on the bench with a wet thud.

I screamed.

Nerves peeled away from the moist sausage-shaped muscles of his brain, then twined together to form two sturdy legs and two thin arms. As the brain raised itself off the bench and gained its balance on its new limbs, I heard Mum coming down the hallway.

In a panic I sprung up, knocked the brain into the utensils drawer and slammed it shut. I returned to my seat and was pretending to have breakfast just as Mum came back into the kitchen. I hoped that Benji would stay quiet so Mum wouldn't notice anything was wrong with him. And it was all going okay until Benji snapped his hand outward, knocking my arm upwards just as I was about to take a drink (a move I had pulled on him many times before). The jolt

Benji's Revenge

caused the entire glass of juice to splash its contents all over my face. I yelped. Juice dripped from my chin onto my t-shirt, to the bench then down to the floor.

‘Andy!’ Mum exclaimed, spinning around to glare at me. ‘What’s wrong with you? Have you lost your mind?’

‘*I’m* not the one who has!’ I declared, giving Benji a hard stare.

As Mum stormed off to the laundry to get the mop, the utensils drawer flung open.

Benji’s brain burst out, thrusting a fork at me. I sprung off the chair and circled him around the edge of the bench, determined to get the little guy for juicing me. The brain inched over to the dishwashing liquid bottle, knocked it over, then jumped on it. Washing liquid shot out, hitting me in the eye, then spraying downwards to the floor.

I rubbed the soap out of my eye just in time to see the fork flying towards my head. I dodged out of the way, but the floor was so slippery that my feet slid out from under me, and I fell flat on my bum. I managed to get to my feet, but it was hard to stay upright with the soles of my shoes covered in soap.

The brain ran to the end of the bench, leapt to the floor, and ran past me into the garage. It found my sister’s skipping rope on the floor and slung it over the top edge of a metal storage rack. Like a pink hairless alien scaling a cliff, it used the rope to climb up to the top shelf. Then it twirled the skipping rope in the air like a lasso and threw one end out, which wrapped around the handle of the door. It yanked on the rope, pulling the door open.

My feet slid out from under me again and I hit the ground. I ripped off my slippery shoes and threw one at the brain, missing completely.

Benji's Revenge

With the skipping rope secured between the rack and the door handle, it had created a cable line. The brain threw a cleaning rag over it, gripped onto the edges, and ziplined straight out the door to the front of the house.

I raced outside. I was sure I could catch it even in bare feet and with a sore soapy eye. But just as I got close, it jumped onto my skateboard. The board lurched forward then rolled down the driveway. The brain rode that board like a champion, with a relaxed stance and perfect lean. This was surprising, as I had never let Benji ride my skateboard before, even though he had begged for a go many times.

The brain navigated the skateboard over the gutter, around the corner, and out of sight. There was no chance I'd catch up with it on foot. I plonked down to the ground, embarrassed about being defeated by a 9-year old's brain.

I was going to be in SO much trouble for this. Benji would probably get sent away to a medical facility so they could run tests on him for the rest of his life, and it would be my fault for provoking his brain into running away. The truth was, Benji was actually a smart kid. He had taught himself to play the guitar and was at the top of his maths and science classes. As much as I didn't want to cry, tears welled up in my eyes, and I couldn't stop them from springing out.

There was movement at the bottom of the driveway. It had come back!

'Here, little brainy-brainy,' I said, patting the ground next to me, the same way I'd coax our cat over.

The brain waved dismissively at me and started to walk off.

'NO!' I yelled. 'I'm sorry. You're right. I don't treat you with as much respect as I should.'

Benji's Revenge

It stopped, turned back towards me, and did a circular motion with its thin red arm, indicating to go on.

‘You aren't silly at all. In fact, you might even be smarter than me... which isn't great. Anyway, I promise I won't make fun of you again.’

This seemed to do the trick as the brain ran up the driveway, past me and back into the house.

When I got into the kitchen, I saw the end of Benji's brain squeezing itself back in through his ear.

Benji blinked hard a few times as if waking up, then screeched, ‘I'M NOT SILLY!’

‘You could have fooled me,’ tutted Mum, walking back into the kitchen. ‘I don't know what's wrong with you two today. Please go outside while I clean up this mess.’

‘Why don't we practice riding my skateboard?’ I suggested.

Benji looked elated and bounced to his feet. ‘Really? Is it hard? Do you think I'll be able to do it?’

Normally I would have taken this opportunity to make fun of him, but not this time.

‘Something tells me you'll be a natural.’