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S.W.I.T.C.H. 6
Beetle Blast

Written by

Ali Sparkes

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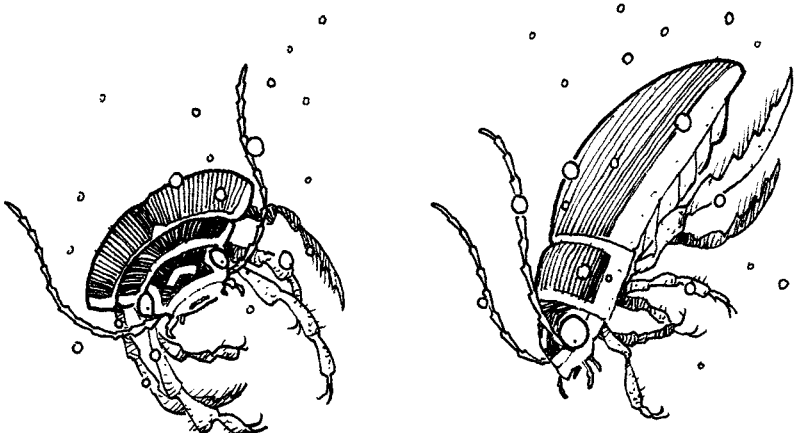
Beetle Blast

Ali Sparkes



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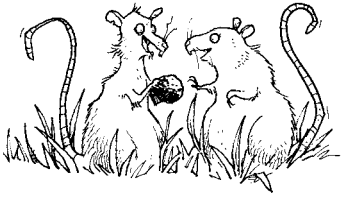


For Freddie (junior)

Danny and Josh (and Piddle)

They might be twins but they're NOT the same! Josh loves insects, spiders, beetles and bugs. Danny can't stand them. Anything little with multiple legs freaks him out. So sharing a bedroom with Josh can be . . . erm . . . interesting. Mind you, they both love putting earwigs in big sister Jenny's pants drawer . . .

Danny

- FULL NAME: Danny Phillips
- AGE: 8 years
- HEIGHT: Taller than Josh
- FAVOURITE THING: Skateboarding
- WORST THING: Creepy-crawlies and tidying
- AMBITION: To be a stunt man

Josh

- FULL NAME: Josh Phillips
- AGE: 8 years
- HEIGHT: Taller than Danny
- FAVOURITE THING: Collecting insects
- WORST THING: Skateboarding
- AMBITION: To be an entomologist

Piddle

- FULL NAME: Piddle the dog Phillips
- AGE: 2 dog years (14 in human years)
- HEIGHT: Not very
- FAVOURITE THING: Chasing sticks
- WORST THING: Cats
- AMBITION: To bite a squirrel

CONTENTS

Let Them Eat Cake	**11**
Bottom Breathers	**27**
Evil Wet Ones	**37**
Dippy Chick	**49**
Important Points	**59**
Jarring Moments	**67**
Victor-y	**75**
Whose Grandad?	**85**

Let Them Eat Cake

By the time the toxic cloud reached him it was already too late. Josh went cross-eyed, grabbed his throat and gurgled. He slumped onto the bed, his face going purple.

'Mmm—mmm—muuu,' he rasped.

His poisoner stood over him, smirking; immune to the gas.

'Muuu—' gasped Josh, falling off the bed and crawling towards the door. 'MUM! Danny's guffing at me again!'

Danny grinned proudly as his twin brother fell out onto the landing, sucking in grateful breaths of clean air.

Mum was less amused. She put her head round their bedroom door and then withdrew it again, smartish.

'Danny! That's revolting! Go to the toilet at once!' she called from the other side of the door. 'Good grief! What is going on in your innards?'

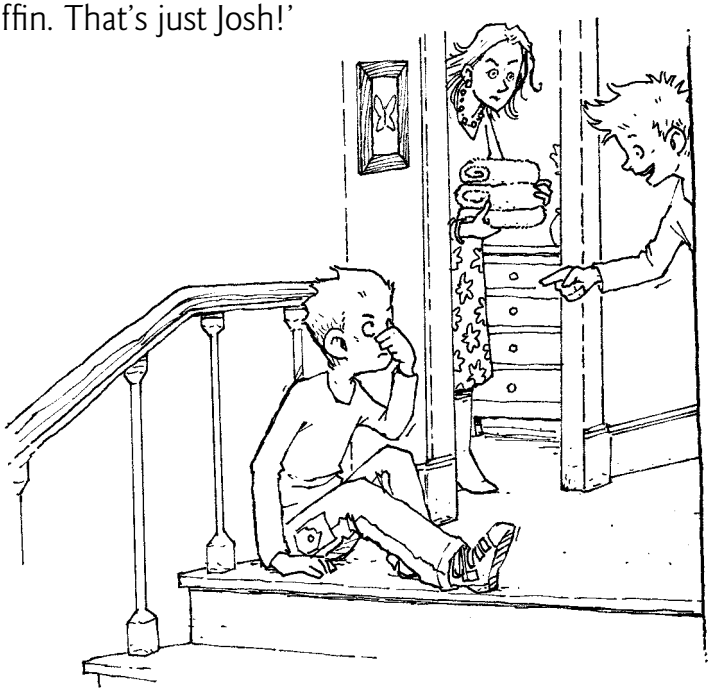
'It's you that feeds me,' pointed out Danny.

'Don't be cheeky!' snapped Mum.

'It's OK—I've stopped now,' said Danny, stepping out to see his twin slumped against the banisters, flapping a hand in front of his face.

'Well I hope so!' said Mum. 'I don't want you embarrassing Josh at the Wild Things meeting.'

Danny blinked in surprise. 'Wild Things? I don't go to Wild Things! *I'm* not the freaky little bug boffin. That's just Josh!'



Josh might be identical to Danny on the outside (although a lot less fluffy on the hair front and without the skater-boy clothes) but on the inside the brothers couldn't have been more different, thought Danny. He loved loud music and skateboarding and kicking footballs around, while Josh loved peering at nature through a magnifying glass. That's why he'd signed up for Wild Things and had started to go every week, with a load of other freaky little bug boffins. Danny had no intention of joining him!

'I'm sorry, but you *have* to go,' said Mum, taking some towels into the bathroom. 'Your football coach rang to say practice is cancelled and I'm going to pick up my new car, so there's nobody to look after you. You're going with Josh.'

'Oh *no*!' wailed Josh. 'He's going to guff all the way through!'

'Ah well,' sighed Danny. 'I'll just have to set up my own Wild Things gang—the Stink Bugs.'

'Just *try* to act interested,' hissed Josh as he and Danny joined the other Wild Things at the

Blackthorn Wildlife Centre. They met every Monday after school to do experiments and nature trails and look at things through microscopes. Today they were going pond dipping to see what they could find.

'Danny, meet Ollie, Milo, Biff, and Poppy,' said Josh, pointing to each of his fellow bug boffins in turn. They all wore 'nature freak' clothes, Danny noticed. Lots of green and brown and little sleeveless jackets with loads of pockets—just like Josh. Danny, in his bright orange sweatshirt and baseball cap, looked like a traffic cone by a hedgerow.