



## A Sister's Revenge

*Writing prompts, discussion questions, and audio transcript*

### ABOUT THE STORYTELLER

Sarah Weeks has written more than fifty picture books and novels for children and young adults, including the bestselling novels *PIE* and *SO B. IT* - which is now a feature-length film. Two of her most recent works are *SAVE ME A SEAT*, a novel, and *GLAMOURPUSS*, a picture book. In addition to writing, Sarah is an adjunct faculty member in the prestigious Writing Program at the New School University in New York City and a founding member of ART, a traveling troupe of authors who perform reader's theatre at conventions and conferences across the country. <http://www.sarahweeks.com>

### Talk it Out

On a scale of one to five, with one being "absolutely unforgiveable" and five being "just harmless fun," rate the severity of the following incidents described in the audio clip and explain your answers:

- the snorkel incident;
- the ground-up dog biscuit in a milkshake incident;
- the chase/roof incident.

Now imagine that the people involved in the pranks described in the audio segment were NOT siblings. Imagine, instead, that they were classmates. Would your rankings above change if two classmates were involved? How? Why?

Next, read the following quote from Jeffrey Kluger, the senior writer of *Time* magazine and author of *The Sibling Effect: What the Bonds Among Brothers and Sisters Reveal About Us*:

*There may be no relationship ... that's closer, finer, harder, sweeter, happier, sadder, more filled with joy or fraught with woe, than the relationship we have with our brothers and sisters.*

## Now discuss:

Do you agree with Kluger's statement? Choose three of the adjectives Kluger uses to describe sibling relationships and explain using your own experiences, experiences of others you know, and/or the experiences described in the audio segment.

## Write it Out

Choose one of the following prompts and write 1-2 pages, double-spaced:

- Write a story in which Sarah makes a milkshake containing ground-up dog biscuits for her older brother because he has been mean to her. But in your version, have Sarah reveal to her brother the truth about what's in the milkshake as soon as he's finished drinking it. What do you think would happen next? Be sure to include dialogue and description of both setting and emotions in your story.
- Write a poem that begins,

"I love my brother [or sister], and I know that s/he loves me.  
But still, the truth is, ..."

Then keep going. The poem does NOT have to rhyme. And it can be entirely fictional. (You may replace "I" with a character's name if you wish.)

- Write an ad for the perfect sibling.

## TRANSCRIPT OF THE AUDIO MEMORY

*Sarah: [M]y brother Tom is six years older than me. And he was very clever. And he would ... What are the kinds of things that he did? We used to have this little swimming pool in our back yard, above the ground, a small one. I would get in that. I think it was about six feet across. It was really little. And I had a snorkel. And so I would swim around in a circle with a snorkel, not that there was anything to look at on the bottom other than maybe a leaf or something, but I loved doing this. And he would sneak out there and put his hand over the top of the snorkel so that I would go, "Urk." That kind of thing. He did that stuff all the time. And so I remember once saying to him, "Do you want me to make you a milk shake?" And he said, "Yeah." And I took a milk bone from the dog, and I ground it up in the blender. And I put it in the milkshake. And he drank it. And I just sat and watched it. It gave me such pleasure. Just watched him suck that down. And he was crunching on it. I said, "Yeah, those are nuts." [Laughs] Is that as bad as stealing a notebook?*

*Julie: I was just thinking. You might have me beat. That's kind of diabolical.*

*Sarah: That was pretty bad. It was. And I think if I could picture my own ... Now ... I'm picturing my own face in my head, which isn't possible, 'cause I wasn't looking in a mirror, but I was definitely smiling.*

*Julie: Did you ever tell him?*

*Sarah: Yeah. Years later.*

*Julie: Oh, years later.*

*Sarah: Not then. That was just like a silent like, "Um-hmm. Here you go. Eat that." [Laughs]*

*Julie: That is so interesting. Wow. I have a chocolate dairy-product-related story about my older brother, too, but yours puts mine to shame. So, we were pretty young. I would say I was in sixth grade, he was in seventh grade. And he had been collecting bugs all over the city of Baton Rouge with a net, a big butterfly net. He was collecting bugs for a school project. And he decided, one day, while I was holding a glass of chocolate milk, that he would put that butterfly net over my head. And in truly my most vicious act, I took my glass of milk, and I threw it on him. That's it. That's all I've got. It's not nearly as good as grounding up dog biscuits.*

*Sarah: In my own defense, here's the other memory I have of something that he did. He said, "Come on. Chase me. See if you can catch me." And my sister and I were chasing him around the house. And we just couldn't catch up with him. He was just ... he's so fast that he was already around the corner. We ran around, ran around, ran around. Then ... only then did we hear him laughing, and realized he had crawled up onto the roof. So he was just watching us run around the house, the outside of the house, trying to catch him, when he was up on the roof. He's clever. He deserved to eat a dog biscuit, don't you think?*

*Julie: What does your brother do, now?*

*Sarah: He's a lawyer. He's a legal aid lawyer. So he's not only a lawyer, he's a good guy. He's kind of a god in my family. Even though he held my snorkel. [Laughter]*

*Sarah: He once visited and said something to my kids about ... they said, "What was my mom like when she was little?" And he said, "She was really cute, and really sweet, and I should have been nicer to her than I was." That was a great moment.*

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