The Mystery of the Weird Beards

Loz and Danny's mum is a brilliant inventor who is entering a competition with her new beard serum. Short beards, big bushy ones—Mum's serum can create them! Only Mum's invention seems to go wrong... When their dad and the Prime Minister grow beards, the beards control them! Can Danny and Loz find a way to return them to normal?



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The Mystery of the Weird Beards Katie Dale Maverick

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Written by Katie Dale

Illustrated by Marina Pérez Luque



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'The Mystery of the Weird Beards'
An original concept by Katie Dale
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Illustrated by Marina Pérez Luque

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For Review Only

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Chapter 1

Danny and Loz gasped as they entered the enormous exhibition hall.

"Wow!" Loz cried. "I've never seen so many inventions!"

Danny's eyes gleamed with excitement. "I wonder what they all do?"

"None of them will be as good as Mum's incredible beard serum," Dad said, smiling as he helped unload Mum's bottle and jars onto her stand. "I can't wait to demonstrate to everyone how it lets me control the length of my beard! It's amazing!"

"Thanks," Mum said, smiling nervously. "But all these inventions look amazing. It's going to be a tough competition."

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"Nonsense!" Dad scoffed, looking around. "Who needs a... a self-stirring saucepan or a... a giggle machine?"

"Not you, Dad!" Danny laughed, tickling him. "I can make you giggle anytime, you're so ticklish!"

"Hahaha!" Dad laughed, squirming and giggling and knocking Mum's table, sending the stack of jars and bottles tumbling to the floor.

"Oops!" Danny and Dad said simultaneously as Mum sighed and Loz rolled her eyes. Danny was always getting into trouble!

"Come on, Danny," Loz said, quickly picking up the dropped bottles and jars. "Let's go and look around, and let Mum and Dad set up in peace."

Mum smiled at her gratefully. Danny and Loz wandered around the hall, their eyes wide in wonder.

"Look! There's the Prime Minister!" Danny cried, pointing. "How exciting!"

"He's the guest judge," Loz replied. "He'll present the trophy to the winning inventor—I hope it's Mum!"

"Of course Mum will win," Danny said confidently. "Her invention is amazing—and the Prime Minister has a beard! He'll love it!"

"I hope so," Loz replied. Mum had been working hard for weeks, perfecting her special beard serum. "There are lots of amazing inventions here though. Look—there's a DNA tracker. I wonder how it works..."

"I'll show you, if you like?" the scientist behind the stand said, smiling.

"That would be wonderful!" Loz smiled, pulling out her mobile phone. "Could I record a video interview for our school paper?"

"Of course!" the scientist agreed.

Danny rolled his eyes. There were *way* more interesting inventions than a DNA tracker! His eyes fell on a stand labelled 'Never-ending toffee!'. Danny licked his lips. Now *that* was more like it! Toffees were his favourite! But could a toffee *really* last *forever*...? There was only one way to find out!

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"So, how does your invention work?" Loz asked the DNA scientist, filming him on her phone.

"Well, it's really very easy," he explained. "You simply put something that has DNA in it—a hair for example—into this tube, and then the screen will show you where that person is."

"Amazing!" Loz beamed. "And how did you—"

"Loz!" Danny ran up suddenly and grabbed her arm. "Run!"

"What?!" Loz looked round to see an angry man running towards Danny. "What've you done *now?*"

"I ate his toffee!" Danny cried as they ran. "I didn't know it was the only one! Quick—*hide!*"

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Chapter 2

Danny and Loz hid behind a curtain just as the angry toffee scientist ran past. Phew!

"Why are you always getting into trouble, Danny?" Loz hissed.

"I didn't know it was his only toffee!" Danny protested. "I wanted to see if it really was never-ending, but I guess now we'll never know—when he started chasing me, I swallowed it!"

"Seriously? A never-ending toffee?" Loz rolled her eyes. "You'd have been better off trying that green potion there—it says it'll increase your brain power! Maybe then you'd think before you act!"