

THE SHORTEST-LIVED SONG EVER WRITTEN AND HOW IT WAS SALVAGED

Patriotic ballyhoo makes me nervous, and I don't follow sports. But that Friday night race in Seoul in September 1988 was different. I went nuts!

Saturday morning, I woke up still high on Ben's victory, and wrote a one-verse celebration in song called "Ben's Revenge". That evening, I sang it as my contribution to the Calgary Singers' Circle, a group of friends who meet monthly to exchange songs. The same night, Calgary folksinger Lyn Luft performed "Ben's Revenge" at a coffeehouse for peace. The song went over well with both groups.

Sunday, the words to "Ben's Revenge" were posted conspicuously on the wall of a federal election campaign office. Apparently, morale improved.

Monday, the steroid scandal broke. It was bad news for Ben, Canada, and my song. Forty-eight hours after being written, "Ben's Revenge" was outdated and unfunny.

The campaign manager removed the words from the wall and thanked me for the effort. My friends from the Singers' Circle phoned to offer condolences. It was no use. "Ben's Revenge" was dead.

In February 1989, Lyn called and asked for the second verse of "Ben's Revenge". She wanted to perform the song at Teacher's Convention the following day. I told her I'd get back to her with the second verse. Then, to make good on the promise, I sat down and wrote it. History had proven that "Ben's Revenge" was not the right title. So I changed it to "There's Gold in Them Thar Pills". And here it is.

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