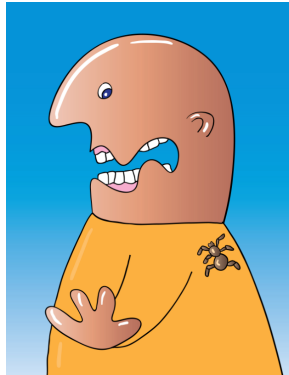


# Extreme Arachnophobia Arachnid - Wanted Dead or Alive

by C. T. Martin



One morning while driving to work, I felt something crawling on my left arm. I looked down and saw that it was a BIG brown spider. Immediately I yelled "AAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHH!!!" and then flung it across the car while making a u-turn under the freeway. Then I put on my hazard lights and jumped out to look for it from a standing position. Just then, a big semitruck pulled up behind me, disturbing my frantic search. Although too arachnophobified to get back into the car, I jumped in anyway and raced off to the nearest parking lot. It was dark mind you, about 6:00 AM, and I still couldn't find the spider even with the interior light on.

*What should I do?* I jumped back in and sped off to a restaurant parking lot which had more light. As I drove, I saw the vile arachnid crawling on the passenger side door. I was mad! I jumped out again, but by the time I opened the door on the other side it was nowhere to be found. Fortunately, I happened to have an old hand towel and started slapping the inside of the car everywhere to make it come out of its hiding place. There was no way I was going to drive 22 miles to work waiting for a spider bite.

Still unable to find the beast, I went to a gas station to get change for a twenty dollar bill. Why, you ask? So I could use one of those car vacuums at a do it yourself car wash, which of course only gave out tokens for dollars. The first gas station - Exxon, wouldn't give me change, even if I bought something they claimed they didn't have change for a twenty. Infuriated, I raced across the street to Texaco all the while looking all over the car for the spider (it was a large one believe me). Instead of asking for change I simply picked up a 25 cent pack

of gum. The clerk there didn't have change either, but offered to buy the gum for me. So now, I had a free pack of Juicy Fruit but still had a spider in my car and no change for tokens to vacuum it out. I had to keep driving around with the risk of it gliding across my skin yet again! The horror of it all!

Now the search for change went to a local grocery store. I entered and asked for insecticide. "Isle eight," the man said. As I looked over the various poisons I tried to find a nice small can that would be inconspicuous, something designed for a freaked out man fighting a spider in his car. Of course, there was no such thing. So in order to kill the spider and to get change for the vacuum, I bought a huge can of spider/scorpion killer for \$2.89 plus tax. This stuff is potent - if it gets on your skin or clothes you have to wash thoroughly, etc, etc ...The man gave me a ten, a five, and a one in change. Only one, one dollar bill! *I'll need more than that.* "Excuse me, can I get change for this five?" I said to the clerk. He asked a young girl behind the customer service counter, but she said no (she was too busy flirting with some man at the counter). Finally the man came up with some change. *At last, the dollar bills needed to finally put this creature to rest!*

As I raced to the vacuums I more than twice jolted, thinking I saw the wretched crawl of the eight legged nightmare. At long last I reached my destination, ran to the token machine, and inserted my dollar. *Why won't it take my dollar? I'll try another, and another. NO! Oh, okay, I had it in the wrong way. Ah, here come my tokens.*

Then I pulled everything out of my car and turned on the MIGHTY VACUUM. "Make no mistake spider, you have awakened a sleeping giant! This was an act of war against my body and you are going to meet dire consequences."

The mighty tentacle swept across all surfaces of the car's interior, a threat surely no spider could survive. But what if it did? There was still the spider killer. I tested it, spraying it on the ground. One squirt and it was everywhere. *Too dangerous to risk dying by self inflicted chemical poisoning in my own car.* I decided to use the new car smell gun. *That should do it, just in case he wasn't sucked into the vacuum.* I had finally won the war against the self-exalted arachnid!

What was the cost of this little war? Three dollars on spider killer (unused mind you), minus the free gum, three more dollars for the vacuuming and car fragrance, and two dollars for the tollway since I was late for work.

But now, I was safe.