

It's Just a Spider

Kayla hated spiders. No, that was not true. She didn't really hate them. She was afraid of them, so very afraid of them! Even a picture of a spider in a book would make her scream.

When Kayla was five years old she had gone to visit her cousins in Lake City. They had been exploring an old abandoned house when a spider bit her. She had walked into its web in the dark room. The spider had fallen from its web onto her arm and bit her. Her aunt had taken her to the hospital when her arm started burning and swelling up. The shot had helped, but her arm hurt for days.



Now she was afraid of spiders and never went anywhere near them. If she saw a spider web, she walked out of her way to keep from being close to it.

Right now, though, Kayla was thinking about the spider web that a tiny spider had spun across the corner of her front door sometime in the night a week ago. When she had opened the door, she had screamed and run back into the house. She had used a broom to knock down the web, and then had run out the door without looking back.

The next morning there had been two webs and two spiders in the corners of the door. This time Kayla's mother had helped her knock down the webs. Kayla's mother had laughed and said the spiders were getting back at her for knocking down the first web. Kayla really didn't think her mother was very funny.

There hadn't been any spiders or webs for the next few days, and Kayla had almost forgotten about them. She was excited about being on the soccer team, so the spiders didn't seem so important. This morning, though, she had to think about them. She was terrified. When she had opened the door to go to school, there had been five spiders as big as half dollars sitting in webs that almost covered the doorway!

Were they out to get her? What if they just kept coming back and coming back? What if they got bigger and bigger?

"No!" Kayla said out loud. "No! I can't keep thinking that way. It's silly. They're just tiny little animals. They don't think the way we do. I'm just imagining things!"

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Kayla felt a little bit better but not much. By the time she arrived at school, she was thinking mostly about the boy in her math class and the soccer game at 3:30. Just once in a while she felt a little shiver when she remembered those spiders right in front of her face that morning.

Her team won the soccer game, the boy in her math class came to the game, and she scored the winning goal! What a wonderful day! Spiders were the furthest thing from Kayla's mind as she drifted off to sleep.

Several hours later Kayla woke up just enough to decide she felt too warm. She tried to kick the blanket off her legs, but she couldn't move them.

"I must be tangled up in the blanket," she thought.

She reached down to pull the blanket off and, instead of the soft, fuzzy blanket, she felt something very smooth and a little sticky. She pulled at it, but she couldn't move it at all. It seemed to be wrapped all the way around her and she couldn't find the edge.

Fear began to thread its way into her brain. Her hands shook as she tried over and over to get out of whatever was wrapped around her. She couldn't budge it.

Wide awake now, Kayla reached for her lamp and switched it on. At first her mind couldn't understand what her eyes saw. She was tightly wrapped in some kind of thread. It looked just like something she had seen before. But what was it? What was it?

And then she remembered. It looked like the wrapping on moths that had been caught in spider webs!

"No, no, no!" Kayla screamed and tried to turn over to get out of the bed.

But when she turned her head, she was eye to eye with the biggest spider she had ever seen!

"Nooooooooooooooooo!" she screamed one last time.

And then she was still and quiet and the spider continued her work. It only took her another minute to finish wrapping the cold and silent body that had been Kayla.

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1. Why was Kayla afraid of spiders?

- A. A spider had once bitten her.
- B. Spiders are ugly.
- C. Spiders carry disease.
- D. Spiders are bugs, and she didn't like bugs.



2. From the story we can tell that Kayla was probably allergic to spiders because

- A. When a spider bit her, other spiders came.
- B. When a spider bit her, she got very afraid.
- C. When a spider bit her, her arm started to burn and swell up.
- D. When a spider bit her, she killed it.

3. How many spiders had built webs across the doorway on the morning of Kayla's soccer game?

- A. 1 B. 2 C. 4 D. 5

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4. What was different about the spiders the morning of the soccer game?

- A. They were dead.
- B. They were completely white.
- C. They were black widow spiders.
- D. They were bigger.

5. What woke Kayla up that night?

- A. She had a nightmare.
- B. She felt a little too warm.
- C. She felt something crawling on her.
- D. A loud noise woke her up.

6. What was wrapped around her legs?

- A. rope
- B. spider web
- C. yarn
- D. her blanket

7. What did Kayla remember seeing all wrapped up like she was? A. A leg wrapped in a bandage

- B. A moth in a spider's web
- C. Her mother's knitting needles
- D. A butterfly in a cocoon

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8. What did the spider do after Kayla's last scream?

- A. The spider died.
- B. The spider bit her.
- C. The spider finished wrapping her up.
- D. The spider was frightened and ran away.

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