

The earthworm that cost me my sanity

People used to wonder how I could live alone. Was I not afraid? No; only when there are bugs. This is what it is like to be single. There are great parts about it, eat when you want, what you want, down side, have no one to kill insects that you are afraid of.

BY ANNE KINTU

The other night, around 11 p.m., I got up to use the bathroom. Normally, I do this in the dark—you know, so I do not chase the sleep out of my eyes. But for some reason, on this night, I switched on the light.

And there it was. Wedged between the glass bathroom door.

A snake.

My heart stopped. My brain went blank. I stood there, frozen, staring at this creature that had no business being in my bathroom, in my house, in my life. Then I took a closer look.

It was not a snake, but an earthworm. A very ambitious earthworm that had slithered its way through the drainage vent and somehow scaled the glass door like it was auditioning for some nature documentary I never signed up for.

I did what any rational person would do: I marched to the kitchen and mixed a generous amount of vinegar with some water. Why vinegar? No idea. In

that moment, my brain had apparently decided I was running a pest control operation out of my pantry.

I returned to the bathroom, armed with my homemade potion, but the worm was gone.

Nowhere to be seen. Vanished. As if it had never existed.

I poured the vinegar solution on the screen anyway, for good measure, or out of principle, I still cannot tell you which. I even considered boiling some hot water. But then I thought better of it. Because worse than dealing with whatever that thing was, was dealing with it dead. How was I supposed to carry a corpse out of my bathroom? With what dignity? With what tools?

So I stood there. Vinegar in hand. No worm in sight. Just me, a damp bathroom floor, and the lingering question of whether I had imagined the whole thing.

But now my survival instincts had been awakened and I was not backing down. I got the insecticide which I keep around me at all times because bugs



I stood there, frozen, staring at this creature that had no business being in my bathroom. PHOTO/ COURTESY.

are the enemy and sprayed the entire place.

For some reason, I honestly could not tell you why. I have an old mosquito net lying around. It is one of those things that just exists in your home, taking up space, serving no purpose, yet you never quite throw it away. After spraying the bathroom with insecticide, I finally found a use for it.

Having secured the perimeter, I went to sleep.

Morning came. I sat up in bed, groggy, and the events of the previous night slowly resurfaced. And then it hit me. This is what boyfriends and husbands are made for, right?

Did I want a man in my bed to come and slay the worm? God yes! I imagine that I would go and gently wake him up and say, 'There is a scary worm in the bathroom' I would never scream to create an alarm because I hate to be woken with a start.

He would come out of the bed in his shorts and no shirt, see the worm and chastise me over 'Just this worm?' I would go back to bed and leave him to deal with the monster in whatever the appropriate man way to deal with worms is.

I must add that I once called a guy I was 'seeing' to help me get rid of a lizard that had died in the house and he responded by chasing me around the house with it. A story for another day.

When I posted my thoughts on our group chat, my married friend responded to the story by saying her husband is terrified of bugs and it is she who kills them instead.

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