Reconciliation

by Chris Miller

I thought drowning you was the answer. I had barely opened my eyes as I leaned over the sink to brush my teeth, and you were poised near the drain, a furry brown spider, and the largest one I had ever seen up close. I was afraid to smash you, so I flooded you with water and toothpaste foam, and you climbed out of the frothy pool like an adept swimmer, whose stride was barely broken.

I ran to the kitchen, grabbed the empty jelly jar my daughter uses to house caterpillars, trapped you and screwed the lid on tight. Because I was in awe of you — frankly, you looked like an oversized Halloween decoration that hangs from an elastic string — and because I was late for work, I left your jar on the counter. So now it's afternoon, and I'm staring at the same jar, toppled over on its side, the lid lying against the wall on the kitchen floor, and before I can even process your crafty escape, I feel the tap of multiple legs against the back of my neck, like tiny bony fingers.

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