



Many people often ask me, "Daniel, how did you get over your fear?" It's a long story, so usually I'd brush it off with a, "I manned up." or "It wasn't so scary after all."

But right now, I feel a little open.

And maybe anyone who reads this will get over the same fear I had.



Back then, I was a fragile child in a big yet subtle mansion.

I had everything a child wanted. Flat screen t.v.'s, video games, cool clothes, and good food. I had an easy life and I had some decent friends.

I knew the majority of them were actually in for my cool toys or butler/maid service to look at their panties.

Nevertheless, I was a good kid.

I never talked back to my parents, I learned courtesy and manners, and I always helped out when I could. That was just how I usually was.

One day, at school, perhaps in 2nd grade if I remember correctly, our science teacher brought in various bugs and animals to show us how they survive. Every kid thought it was so cool, including me. There was a bunny, a guinea pig, a snake, and even an armadillo. It was fortunate our teacher came from a organization where they bred and took care of certain animals.

We learned a lot at that time. It was finally then when she moved onto the insects.

Ladybugs, butterflies, stick bugs and praying mantises filled up our minds as we craved more information about the bugs. I remember clearly when the teacher kept laughing and was so excited to know that we wanted to learn for once.

She took out a small clear cage from the cardboard box she brought. It appeared as if there was nothing in it and I was full of curiosity. She said, "Now kids, what I'm taking out isn't actually an insect, it's from a group called arachnids."

It was the first time I ever heard of such a thing, so I was extremely interested.

I kept making up images of what it might have been since it sounded so cool.

The lid bumped off and spilled its contents. Miniature branches, leaves and rocks flew, including the spider. I watched it land on the rug, looking unfazed by the sudden eruption. It crawled quickly as the kids surrounding it gasped and yelled. They ran toward the walls telling the teacher to catch it. I couldn't move. I was scared. So scared, my body wouldn't react.

It crawled looking for shelter. Then it looked at me again, with those horrid, disgusting eyes. It crawled toward me. Step by step it's long distorted limbs coming to get me.

"Daniel, get up!", the teacher shouted.

I couldn't. I just couldn't. The way it kept looking and crawling toward me. I felt as if I was staring at my grave. The last thing I remember was the sight of the spider upon my leg.

After some time, my family told me I passed out and was unconscious for a day after the spider incident. I eventually recovered, but I vowed I never wanted to see another spider again. The doctors laughed at my passing due to the sight of a mere spider.

Years went by and ever since, a spider of some type would pop up out of nowhere every few months. People around me had noticed my fear, and took great precaution about the subject around me. I was thankful for it, but it never stopped the appearances. There was another incident where a spider had bitten me. Unfortunately it was poisonous and I fell into a dangerous state. I grew blue often, threw or hacked up any food the hospital fed me, and I just couldn't even breathe at times.

I was cured later on thankfully, but my fear grew even more. Everyone around me, stranger or friend, was well aware of my condition. Arachnophobia, as my therapist called it, was what I had developed.

By the time I was 15, my friends would sometimes tease me about my fear. It grew to bullying rather than simple teases. But I couldn't help it. Every time, I was just so afraid and scared of just hearing its name. I thought going through pain staking and reputation breaking consequences was well worth being away from spiders.

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My fear got to the point where I refused to learn in class. We were doing a segment about arachnids, and it was mainly about spiders. Poisonous and just scary looking ones, I didn't even bother coming to class. My teacher at the time knew about my fear, but made no exception. I failed the class and my parents were disappointed with me. They planned even more therapy sessions.

They didn't help.

Then something happened. It started when I was almost 17, so I was 16 by then. As I walked home from another endless and boring session with a new set of therapists, I stalked behind a stray black cat. It seemed to have an easy life with nothing to worry about. I felt a bit envious, but shook the feeling off.

It was sunset as I walked at a leisurely pace. It was still a bit early and was a few hours until dinnertime, so I thought I'd hang out alone at the park. Making my way, the orange light from the falling sun adjusted the setting of hues around me, effecting even my black sweater.

I stopped and relaxed at the swings, sighing and felt a bit of weight being released from my shoulders. My body was lifted slightly off the ground, letting the swing take away my worries. I felt some peace with the world for once in a while, and I enjoyed every bit of it.

"Hey, you're Daniel Ash, aren't you?", a voice asked.

I whipped my head around to see a distant figure covered in the shadow of trees.

"Who are you?", I questioned quickly.

"I'm, uh, a teacher from your school. Er-, Mr.White is what they call me.", the stranger said.

"May... I see you?", I hesitated.

"Oh! Well excuse me. I didn't notice you couldn't see me.", the man replied with a polite tone.

He stepped closer to the swing set, and I could see why they called him Mr.White. His hair was like pure snow (it was bit long for the average man), framing his pale skinned face, which looked of porcelain. His eyes were different colors. Heterochromia Iridium as they called it colored his left eye an icy-electric blue as the other was a bright crimson similar to a rich magenta. Not a wrinkle seemed to stretch on his face, showing a young man who could possibly be in his mid-20's. He was tall and his shoulders were broad. His face also bore a smile, revealing pearly white teeth. He wore a bright white suit which could be easily spotted a mile away (and also must have added to his reputation.) Although being a male myself, I had to admit he was quite handsome.

I felt my face heat up and on impulse said, "You have white hair!"

"... I do indeed."

"O-oh! I didn't mean to offend you or anything. I-I just..."

"Hahaha, it's ok. I get that a lot. Even my mother was surprised."

"What are you doing here?", I asked.

"I just happened to be walking in this park, then I saw you."

"I see..."

"Say, you're the one with the big fear of spiders, right?"

"I-I...."

"It's ok. I've noticed you don't have many friends now. Still, you're quite famous for it too."

"..."

"It's ok if you don't want to talk. You must live a hard life because of your fear, if I'm thinking about this correctly."

I nodded in silence, not wanting to dare to look into his eyes again. I thought about how strange it was for him to know my situation so well.

"You know, I could help you with that."

I was a bit shocked at the sudden words. Some random stranger who claimed to be a teacher at my school said he could help me. It was surprising,

I chuckled, "Lots of people say that. However, I don't think anybody can help me."

"Well, I think I can.", Mr.White played back.

I finally took the moment to look at Mr.White's face. His eyes were filled with confidence and gleamed with mischief while that smirk stayed plastered to his face. I didn't know how to respond.

"Let's see... have you ever tried hypnosis?", he queried.

"N-no, I haven't."

"Would you like to try it?"

"I don't really like the idea and my parents don't think it's so good either."

"Hmm. How about instead of a command, I'll just give you a lingering thought."

"A... Lingering Thought?"

That sounded funny and a bit pathetic if you asked me.

"Yes, it's a lame name, I know. But it's the only thing I've got.", he laughed.

The mood was awkward, as anyone who entered could tell. I really wished something would just happen so I could have an excuse to get away. The sun's orange streaks had faded slightly, inviting an indigo-like color to seep in. Mr.White was still looking at me with those strange eyes and unwavering smile.

"I guess I could give it a shot.", I mumbled.

"That's great.", he said ecstatically.

He walked over and plopped down on the swing beside me. The rust on the chains added an extra squeak as the grown man slightly pushed himself off the ground. Our shadows have intersected to the side due to the breathing sun. His tireless smile remained and quietly hummed a tune.

I sat on my swing not knowing what to do. Don't they usually use a watch or something to get us sleepy? I didn't get it, so I sat to myself waiting for Mr.White. His humming got louder and became more sweet and pleasant. Eventually I felt lost to the melody and my thoughts spread themselves. I felt at ease, topping my remaining aches with relaxation. My regrets and worries... my guilt and precious pride... slipped away, as I sighed in an isolated paradise.

"Daniel, the next time you see a spider, do exactly what you think it will do to you...", a voice cooed.

So... the next time I see one...