

MY FIRST COCKROACH

As any other girl, I was very afraid of mice and cockroaches. When I was young, I feared them because of their monstrous appearance and the horrifying stories adults told to frighten me. Some years later, as my knowledge increased, I feared the fatal diseases they cause to human. Every time I saw a roach, I would pause and run to seek someone to hit it for me, no matter how hurry I was. Although that was a little inconvenient and weak, I accepted it as a girly characteristic of mine. One night, I don't remember clearly what happened, I was going to the bathroom to brush my teeth did I find a roach behind the door of my bedroom. There I was, facing the disgusting cunning roach one to one, in my bedroom. My hand instinctively rose to the door knob, ready to open the door and shout for help. The upper muscle on my right arm was moving, but the movement stopped right at the elbow. I stared at the roach. I could feel my eyes glowing, my eyebrow knitting, my mouth twisting, expressing anger as if I was facing a human rivalry. My legs were ready to run, but my mind was hesitating whether to hit the roach or call my father. And as anxious as a child touching Mr. Santa Claus in the department store for the first time, I took off my slipper... After struggling to put the roach into the bin with an A4 paper without having to touch it, I washed my hands up to the elbow like what I saw surgeon doctors did on TV. Looking at the bin where the roach was, I took a deep breath. That was amazing!

I never thought that someday I would get rid of a roach by myself, not having to drag people to the place and say: "That's the roach!" My things-to-do list was constantly filled with goals like: "must get SAT 1400" (I still cannot help feeling cloud nine when I got that score), "write the script for the next English club festival" or even "wash the schoolbag, it smells of

fillet-o-fish!”, but “smashing a roach” was a different kettle of fish. I was even more surprised than the first time I went on a plane. I discovered that I was having an unreasonable fear of an insect 100 times smaller than me, having no poison or bite. I realized that if I looked things in a calm and unprejudiced way, I was much stronger than I thought. That was not only a roach, but it helped me understand things better. Things were always edited by concepts, comments, bias that distorted them far from their original shapes, which deterred people from fully understand and achieve them. Entrance into famous American universities and colleges has always been full of rumors of how hard it is, which discouraged me from the hope of getting a scholarship. But after collecting information from professional people and the school themselves, I gained a considerable knowledge about American education system and realized there were many chances for everyone, not only international Olympic gold medalists. It has given me confidence and strength to carry on with the long application process.

The roach was tiny, yet it came in the right place at the right time. It gave me an excellent practice exercise of how to separate the core problem from their surrounding myths. I think that is the key to success in this multimedia era when people are bombarded with information from many sources and viewpoint in every field: music, literature, politics, business, etc. Thank you roach!