

“The Gecko” by J.B. Stamper

There was a young man in his twenties, who moved into a new apartment in New York City. The night he moved in, he was lying awake in bed when he heard strange noises coming from his kitchen. When he turned on the lights, he was horrified to see hundreds of tiny cockroaches scurrying under the refrigerator and kitchen cupboards. He realized that his apartment was completely infested with cockroaches.

The next day, he asked one of his co-workers for advice about his cockroach problem. The co-worker said she had a similar problem and bought a pet gecko. She let the gecko loose at night and it took care of all the cockroaches.

That evening, after work, the young man visited a pet store and bought a pet gecko. When he got home, he let the gecko go out of its cage. It immediately scurried into the kitchen and disappeared under the refrigerator. Then he heard a “Gecko-Gecko” sound followed by a loud “Snap” as the gecko’s tongue caught hold of a cockroach and pulled it back into its mouth.

Days went by, and Howard saw fewer and fewer cockroaches. The gecko was doing its job well. Occasionally he would hear the tell-tale “Snap” of the gecko’s tongue and he knew it was catching the cockroaches and gobbling them up.

One day after work, he was making dinner for himself when he saw the gecko chase one of the last cockroaches on the house under the refrigerator. He saw the cockroach scurry under it with the gecko far behind struggling to go under. That’s when the young man realized that the gecko was getting bigger.

He didn’t see the gecko for days after that. Sometimes he would catch a glimpse of it out of the corner of his eye. Each time, it appeared to be bigger and bigger. One night, as he was lying in bed, he heard some strange noises in his room. Then he heard “Gecko, Gecko” and a loud “Snap!”

The next day, the young man was absent from work, but nobody thought anything of it. They just assumed he wasn’t feeling well and decided to take a sick day. When he didn’t show up the next day, or the next, his co-workers became very concerned and called the police. When the police knocked on the young man’s door, they got no answer. They broke down the door and entered the apartment.

In the bedroom, they found no traces of the young man, but were horrified to see an enormous gecko sitting on the bed. Its belly was huge and stretched and it just lay there lazily, regarding them with its big reptilian eyes. When they looked closer, they noticed something horrible. Sticking out of the corner of its mouth, there appeared to be a human foot.