

Tommy sat rigid on the counter and stared at the drop of blood seeping from the wound on his leg until Meg wiped it clean and applied a flesh-colored bandage that clashed with his dark skin. Instead of climbing down and scampering off to play, Tommy remained on the counter, scrutinizing his hands. He glanced at Meg and waited while she discarded the bandaid wrapper. Friends stood in the doorway, keeping a wary eye on him.

“You’re all set,” she said, returning.

Baleful brown eyes, filled with silent contemplation, stared up at her. “How long until I turn into Spiderman?”



The writing prompt “The diagnosis” inspired this week’s story. Considering the theme, my mind wandered, envisioning numerous stories I could compose. In the end, I wanted to stay light hearted and remembered when a friend’s little one got bitten by a spider. Unfazed by the hum of parents wondering what type of spider bit him, the child’s only concern was how long until he became Spiderman. He couldn’t wait to walk up walls and shoot webs. Nothing his mother said could convince him otherwise. Days later, when there was still no change, he decided the wrong kind of spider had bitten him.

Over the years, I’ve known a few children who waited for the phenomenon to occur to them after spider bites. In the meantime, my youngest remembers that time Mom was reading to him when she leaped out of her chair and slapped his cheek. In total shock, he gaped at me, horrified until I picked the somewhat squashed wolf spider off him. Such is life when you live on an island teeming with venomous spiders.

# The Reluctant Author

A simple line drawing of a pen nib, positioned horizontally and centered under the word "Author" in the title.