One morning, Stuart Samsa awoke from uneasy dreams and found that he had turned into a verminous black mamba. Lifting his head, a look of panic flashed across his face as he watched himself writhe. His black scales gleamed in the light that flowed through the window. Patches of torn skin were regular along his thinning body. Stuart tried to scream, but only a raspy hiss came out. He lay on the bed and wondered what he did to become this.

“What has happened to me?” he thought to himself. Stuart glanced around the room. Everything else seemed normal; the wardrobe was standing in the right place, all the paintings were neatly aligned with one another and the armchair still beckoned. His fossil finds – Stuart was an archaeologist- were displayed in his showcase. Stuart looked at the picture that hung above his bed. This picture was of a lady with a fur hat and wrap sitting upright and holding out to the viewer a snake. However, on the second glance, he noticed a couple of unusual things – a mug of coffee was knocked over, still dripping and the bedroom door was ajar. A noise coming from downstairs told Stuart that his wife was watching the news.

He wanted to do his normal routine of going down and getting a cup of tea. However, as he peered over the side of the bed, he noted a problem. The floor seemed much more of a drop away than when he got into bed last night. Stuart drew himself up and braced himself for the fall. Thud.

“Stuart? Are you OK?” his wife called up, “I heard a noise.”

Stuart wanted to say, “Yes, I’m fine,” but his voice was initiating a hiss. Instead, he quietly slithered out of the room and stopped at the top of the stairs. Stuart carefully lowered himself onto the first step, then the second…..

10 minutes later, he had reached the bottom. Pounding footsteps shocked Stuart. Thinking fast, he climbed up the bannister pole and onto the rail. He flattened himself and hoped his wife hadn’t improved her senses. A few seconds later, his wife appeared.

“I could’ve sworn I heard his get up, lazy man,” she walked away. Anger boiled up inside him as he thought, “How dare she. I work twelve hours a day in the heat, risking being bitten by snake,” he stopped there. “That’s it,” he thought. Excited, he clambered back up the stairs and to his bedroom. He slunk in between the clothes on the floor. He wriggled his way over to the wardrobe and opened it with his mouth. Stuart pulled out a vile and peered at it. A label read: SNAKE BITE ANTIDOTE. He tipped the contents into his mouth. Nightmarishly, he started to morph back into his usual self.