

# IRISH DAILY Mirror COMMENT

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## Only matter of time to get Meg's killer

**FORENSIC** science has come long way since the days of Sherlock Holmes.

The master detective's exploits were based on an observation by his creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, that everyone leaves a trail as they move through the world.

And keen observation can trace a culprit to the scene of a crime.

Sherlock had only a magnifying glass to help him, but the theory did open the way for finding scientific clues at a crime scene.

Recent years have made very precise observations possible in the shape of DNA samples.

They have been the downfall of killers, rapists and robbers, and the tragic case of Meg Walsh may be their latest triumph.

Any detective will admit that it doesn't work quite like television's CSI.

But when it does, the results are spectacular. It may take a while to have the results analysed.

*But that's only longer for a killer to sweat it out.*

## Aisle support the revolution

**EVEN** the most rabid republican will have to admit that the British Embassy finally came in useful for something.

Even if it's only to conduct gay weddings.

Or is it some sinister plot by the folk that Sinn Fein like to call securocrats to undermine Irish society?

If modern morals accept same-sex partnerships, there's no reason to formalise them in some diplomatic plot of ground that is forever England.

Gays who want to live together need some kind of legal status in the litigious jungle that we all live in.

Moral purists and religious zealots may disagree.

But since most of society is learning to live with the gay revolution, they are entitled to the same rights as the rest of us.

*And the sooner that happens the better for all of us.*

## Midnight feast

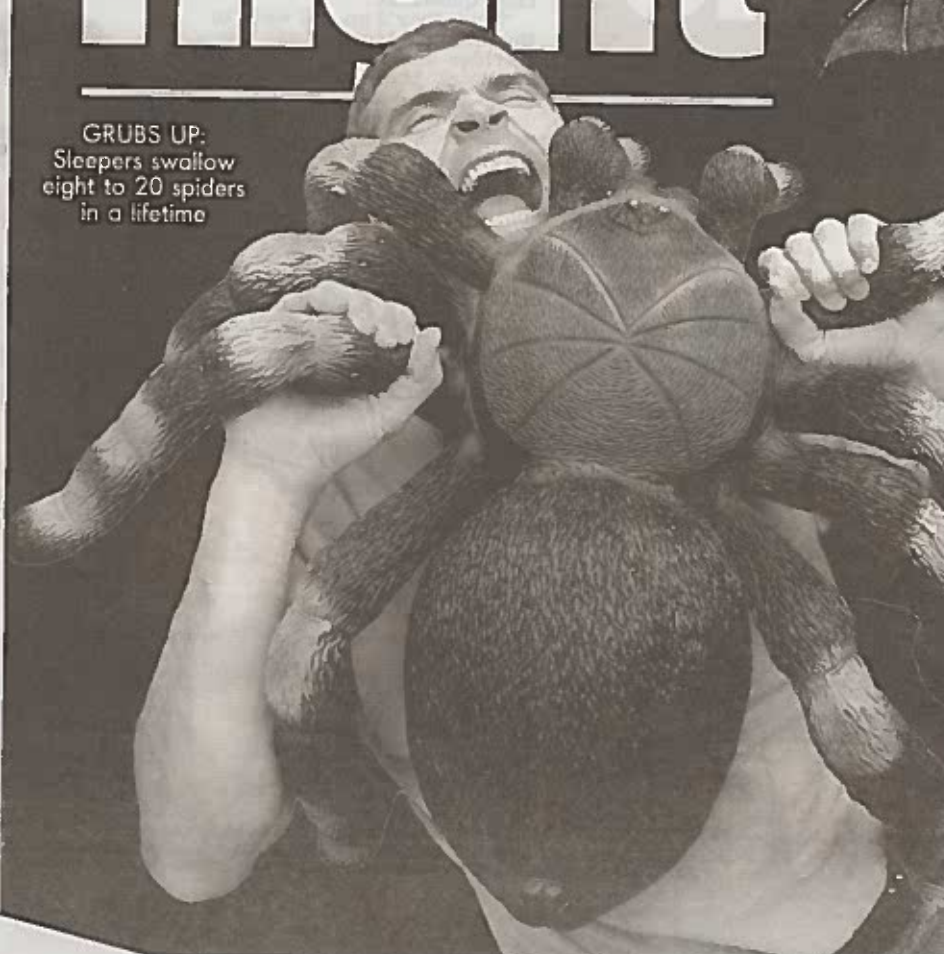
...when we thought it was safe to ... we discover the animal ... to pounce.

... get a

# TALES OF THE SLEEPERS CREEPERS

# Things that go GULP! in the night

**GRUBS UP:**  
Sleepers swallow  
eight to 20 spiders  
in a lifetime



By GERALDINE COMISKEY

**I**T is a familiar sign-off as you head off to bed for the night: "Sleep tight, and don't let the bedbugs bite".

But you will be horrified to learn the warning is pointless for the average person will swallow anything from eight to 20 spiders before they die.

A spider is also likely to drink from your eye at least THREE times in your life. In fact, there is some truth in the old rhyme about the old woman who swallowed a fly, then a spider... and so on.

Earwigs, ants, cockroaches, beetles and moths may be the stuff of nightmares - but they certainly beat alarm clocks for making you jump out of bed.

Some experts have suggested they are attracted by the vibrations of snoring and the smell of undigested food - a good reason to floss your teeth before bedtime.

But all that pales in comparison with the experience of an Italian man two years ago, who returned from an African safari holiday to find a nest of spiders living inside his arm.

The man felt his arm swell up on the plane back to Milan. Other passengers said he looked "like Popeye".

Doctors cut him open and hundreds of deadly spiders crawled out. Hospital staff said it was like a scene from the movie Aliens.

He had to be treated for blood poisoning.

But even that story lost its bite this week, when a Co Armagh pensioner told how a STOAT had weasled its head into his mouth.

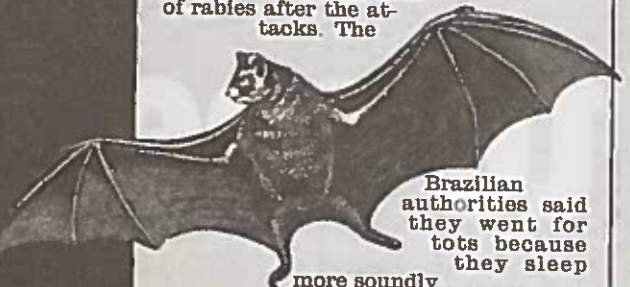
John Kelly, 89, spoke of his horror on waking up and finding the animal chewing at his gums.

Mr Kelly fought off the animal and flung it across the room and later needed hospital treatment for facial injuries which left him unable to eat for a week.

His ordeal was nothing to that of a baby girl from Tver, Russia, whose face was mauled by a rat in her sleep. Luckily, doctors were able to save the infant's life.

But the scariest night-attacker has to be a cross between a rat and Dracula - a vampire bat.

Last year, in Maranhao, Brazil, 1,350 babies and toddlers were bitten in their cots in just two months. Eighteen people, mostly kids, died of rabies after the attacks. The



Brazilian authorities said they went for tots because they sleep

more soundly.

Parents were told to cover children with mosquito nets but the poorest people could not afford the nets.

Brazilian towns have been plagued by the bats since 1985. Naturalists say the creatures have been forced to live among humans because their forest habitats have been chopped down.

British zoologist Tony Fooks, head of a rabies clinic in Surrey, told New Scientist magazine: "A vampire bat bite does not leave a gaping wound - it's more like a small graze. Many people don't even realise they've been bitten."

And even a pack of hyenas won't give you any laughs. Table-manners won't give you any laughs, Table-manners are a no-no to these howlers, whose powerful jaws tear the flesh from the face even as they giggle.

They hunt singly and in packs and have attacked people sleeping in huts.

While a mosquito net will not protect you from the gnashers of a hyena, it will at least ensure you won't get malaria.

In fact, humans have more to fear from mosquitoes which can give you the dreaded West Nile virus.

If you find mosquito repellent repulsive on your skin, keep a fan by the bedside or stock up on Mozzie Patches which are supplied with a pendant.

Macho types can scare them off by smoking and drinking strong whiskey.

Continental repel mozzies with citronella plants and red gerania - and eating garlic.

Trouble is, it also scares away anyone who might want to invite you out for a bite.

Irish Mirror Comment



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BITER:  
Stoat