

# *Ant Wars*

*by Catherine Tucker*

No, I'm not talking about when your TV goes fuzzy and it looks like black and white ants are having an epic battle on your screen (even though that was awesome when you were 9). I'm talking about the legitimate war I am waging with the infesting, and uber aggravating little red ants that have taken over my house. I've had it up to here with those little red perpetrators and THIS MEANS WAR!

It all started on the very first day I was in Thailand. Wen took me to my new house, the "new house," and showed me to my room. Looking inside, my eyes fell upon a brand new mattress, still in the plastic, just for me. Upon closer inspection I got my first glimpse at my arch nemesis. There they were, under the plastic, routin' around on MY bed. MY BED! Well, this was the start of our first battle.

Realizing the unpleasantness of this sighting, I told Wen what I saw and she helped me take the plastic off my mattress and then just brushed the ants off like it was no big deal. Prior to coming to Thailand I had read in the articles on the Super English website, about finding bugs in your room upon first arrival. Thus, I didn't think this incident was a big deal. I was wrong.

After being in Thailand for a little while, I started noticing little bites around my ankles all the time. No big deal, happens to everyone. Then there was the day I went to take a shower and the ants had taken over my towel. Let me tell you, there is nothing more unpleasant than looking down at your naked body and seeing ants crawling all around, biting you. Yay Thailand!

Telling this story to others, I found that this kind of thing happens in the new house. Ants love towels. Okay, maybe I can deal with that. Then there was the time when I was laying in my bed taking a nap, and yes, I was a bit sluggish from drinking the night before, when I was awoken to a swarm of ants on my arm. Thanks guys, I wasn't enjoying my nap or anything.

Unfortunately, this was not the last time I found a massive amount of ants in my bed. One evening after work, I pulled back my covers to discover swarms of ants all up in my bedding. Oh h-e-double hockey sticks no! I immediately ripped my bedding off, hung it over the wall outside, and sprayed it with bug spray. I then shoved it into a bag and took it to the laundry. Luckily, Gary had extra bedding for me to borrow. Thanks Gary!

After having experiencing so many ant related incidents in one bedroom, I decided to switch. Well, and because I wanted a slightly bigger room. So this brings me to battle #2.

Moving into my new room I expected things to be a lot better. So far, so good. It's a little bigger, I can actually open my wardrobe doors all the way, and the ants aren't infesting my bedding all the time. Not too shabby...yet.

A month or so ago I became really sick with some kind of stomach bug. I'm not sure what it was, but I came home from school early because my afternoon classes were cancelled and enjoyed being able to relax and sleep off some of my illness. I was feeling better when I decided it was time to get dressed and ready to teach at Super. Having just bought new leggings, I wanted to wear those. Putting them on was an odd experience. As soon as they were on, my

legs started stinging. My first thought was, "Am I allergic to this fabric? What's going on?" I then took off the leggings to discover I had ants in my pants. Sounds funny, but it wasn't fun.

Because of this atrocity, I decided to check out my wardrobe, and to my horror, ants were everywhere! They were on my clothes, on my hangers, on the bar my clothes hang from. When I opened my underwear drawer, they were in there too! One of my worst nightmares had come alive...ants in my underwear! I'm just glad I didn't put them on! Well, this was the straw that broke the camels back. I sat down on my bed, in my underwear and started crying. Why was this happening to me?! Why do the ants always bite me?! AH Thailand!

After a bit of this, I started fighting back. I took most of my clothes off of the hangers and put them into a bag. Everything in my underwear drawer went in there as well, accompanied by my towels. The inside of the bags were sprayed with bug spray and taken to the laundry. When I got back home, I cleaned everything out of my wardrobe, sprayed everything with bug spray and then cleaned out the entire thing. Then, I put baby powder on every flat surface in my wardrobe, including my drawers, and lined them with trash bags. Finishing this preventative technique, I finally felt comfortable enough to put my things back inside.

Baby powder is supposed to deter ants from crawling up your things. So, I put that stuff everywhere I thought would be helpful. If you look in my room, you will see little mounds of smelly white powder at the base of all of my furniture. If anything touches the ground or the trash bag lining moves just a tad, then there will be white smears of powder on my things. But, I'll take the powder over the ants any day.

I may have won these two epic battles, but the war still wages on. Every now and then I will see an ant crawling around on my bed, and about once a week my towel still gets covered by them. When I go into the kitchen, I see them crawling on the walls and on surfaces that hold our dishes. I like to spray them sometimes with spray just for the fun of it, those little bastards. They have even taken a liking to crawling around the edge of the lining of the refrigerator so that when you open it, there is a moving line where the lining would be. There's no way you can leave any food out at my house, or it WILL be attacked by ants.

All of these ANTrocities have made me conjure a theory about our house. I say our house because it seems we have it worse than others on the ant front. My theory is that our house was built on an ANTcient ant burial mound and the ANTcient ANTcestors are punishing us by having their live relatives do their bidding. I just hope they don't win the war.

Well, after hearing about these ANTrocities, our super boss, Peter, from Super English came to the rescue with an exterminator. Take that ants! I call this battle number 3: Ants versus the Exterminator. Unfortunately the ants may have won the first battle as they came back, mostly attracted to our bathroom. It must be all the sweet smelling stuff in the bathroom I share with two other girls. Us ladies need to smell our best after all! Once again, our super boss stepped up and had his most noble soldier, the exterminator, come back into the house for what I will call The Final Battle. Spraying the house again and paying special attention to the bathroom, the ants have finally lost the war. They are no longer seen in the house except for the occasional meanderers who soon find their demise when entering the war zone. A big thanks to Peter, our super Super boss, for making this happen. Ants: 0, Super: 1; Score!