

## **Andrea Niederman Writing Sample: “Bed Bug Guy” From Storytelling Night at the People’s Improv Theater, NYC**

Exactly one week after I finally made the move out of my childhood home (much to the chagrin of my incredibly loving and overbearing parents), I came to the harsh realization my new apartment in the big city came with an unpublicized amenity; bedbugs.

Frustrated with the situation but determined not to fail (as I had *just* moved), I immediately bagged all my belongings and schlepped them to the local 24-hour laundry mat. My landlord sent an exterminator the next morning. Dressed head to toe in sweatpants (to avoid getting bitten by the bedbugs), I proceeded to welcome in the most attractive, handsome, hottest exterminator I have ever seen. This man was better suited to model for an Urban Outfitters than kill bugs in my apartment. Moving my furniture around like he owned the place, I sat and watched in awe while flirting with him on and off. Basically, I would start to flirt and then suddenly realize I was wearing Bar Mitzvah boxers over a pair of hot pink sweatpants tucked into soccer socks – not attractive.

Once the extermination was complete my bug-killing crush surprisingly gave me his number. “Just in case,” he said and then left the room in a foggy, chemical-filled haze.

One week later the bugs returned, this time with a vengeance. Through the red itchy bulges on my face and hands, I managed to dial his number to tell him the news. When my exterminator crush arrived the following day, I wasn’t as ecstatic to see him. I wondered if he ever received proper training in the art of insect removal. I watched intently as he sloppily sprayed his chemicals over and around my bed. With no flirting this time around I let him leave my place without so much as a goodbye. Two minutes later I received a text, “U OK?” it read. The text was from “Bed Bug Guy,” and I didn’t respond. “U Seem Mad.” Finally, he asked, “Wuz Up?” I responded, “Hopefully not bed bugs.” We were now in a fight. He responded with “Ur Cute.” I then proceeded to delete his number from my phone.

At this point, I had told absolutely no one about the bugs. I thought I was finally free from the horrendous stress and strain and could move on with my life in my new apartment – yet just when I let my guard down, I woke up with more bites. They were back and I couldn’t trust “Bed Bug Guy” to get rid of my worries. I decided to really invest in someone who could get the job done. I used most of my paycheck and hired a professional. Once the treatment was completed, I slept better than I had in a month! The bugs were gone and even though part of me wished I could have met “Bed Bug Guy” under different circumstances, I realized this whole experience was integral in welcoming me to New York City. Had I not gone through hell and back in this ordeal I would never have gained the guts and stamina it takes to live in this city. My initiation was complete. I was now a New Yorker and there was no turning back.