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Milton the Mighty: the Teeniest Superhero

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

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Milton is a false widow spider, and, in this adventure story for children, he shows readers that spiders are capable of very much more than spinning webs and creepy crawling.

This story is a real celebration of spiders, and provides a window into their tiny world. There are big ones, tiny ones, elegant ones, ones who are paranoid about the size of their cephalothoraxes... and all of them are a lot more worldly and informed than we might imagine. Milton, the story's hero, for example, can read and understand human speech - a skill that proves extremely useful when he is threatened with extinction! It is a celebration of humanity as well, though, as Milton and his chums rely upon the kindness of Zoe, the young girl with whom they share a house.

The wonderful world of arachnids is not really appreciated by all human beings, including Zoe's dad, who screams pathetically every time he even hears a rumour of spiders. And there are rumours of spiders - rumours of deadly venomous beasts lurking in British households, everywhere. This drives him to employ the help of BugKILL, who promise to eliminate every minibeast in the house.

Milton soon realises that he has been miscast as a genuine black widow, and that he has brought armageddon to his home and to his friends. Drastic measures are necessary and an adventure begins, which requires him to step out of the shadows and somehow enlist Zoe to help him keep BugKILL at bay.

This takes a very long time (communication between spiders and humans is not easy) and the pace of the action is more of a snail's pace than a spider's scurry. There is some dangerous fun to be had as Milton enlists some deadly comrades, and arachnophiles will enjoy the inclusion of some geeky science details, but Milton the Mighty would benefit from an extra injection of excitement.

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