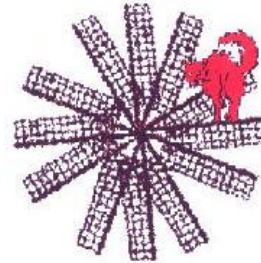


A Cat's Worst Nightmare !

The unimaginable happened yesterday after work as I went to switch parking spots with my wife. A few seconds after starting the car, I heard and felt noise as if something under the hood was breaking apart. It was a loud, violent sound and when it stopped, I started to back up the car. That's when I felt the steering was out. Thinking that the power steering unit had burst and come loose from its mounting, I got out and opened the hood. What I saw at first I thought was insulation from underneath the hood all over the air filter and around the belts. I noticed that a couple of the belts had broken and fallen off as well as the housing around the fan. At the same time there was a really bad odor. I let the hood close, and when I looked under the car I saw a Siamese cat. What I thought were pieces of insulation inside the hood was fur and I knew then that this poor animal had been inside the engine compartment for warmth. It was horrible to think how the fan and the belts must have thrashed this cat. My wife started to walk towards my car and I stopped her and said, "You don't want to see this." That's when I noticed that the cat was still alive and twitching. I went upstairs to call the Humane Society. I was told that they received a call the previous day from a person in our building that she had lost her Siamese cat.



Knowing that the damage to the car was substantial and would require towing, I called the Auto Club. By the time the tow truck arrived, the cat had died and the animal control officer had not come. When we returned home from the repair shop in my wife's car, the animal was still on the ground where my car had been parked. There were phone messages on my machine that the animal control officer was unable to find it. I had to give them the address again and be ready to show the officer the spot.

It turned out that the auto repair bill was less than the amount of my comprehensive insurance deductible, so the insurance company closed the claim. I got my car back already, paid the bill this afternoon and spent what remaining daylight I had today trying to clean up under the hood.

And how was your day? Click on the graphics for sound bites!