

Wine has bite and body

QUESTION: what could possibly make a modest bottle of 1998 Victorian shiraz worth \$4000?

ANSWER: a small, lightly pickled huntsman spider. Yum.

This matter came to light yesterday when a school teacher from the La Trobe Valley triumphantly deposited a cheque for \$4000.

The cheque was from one of our larger wine companies. No names, no pack drill. That, not surprisingly, was a condition of the payment.

It happened like this:

Recently, the school teacher set off to dine with a group of thirsty colleagues.

Each of them took wine: hers was the aforementioned bottle of shiraz, for which she paid less than \$20, a fair price.

Lee Flanagan, who runs the Traralgon office of no-win-no-fee



law firm [redacted] takes up the story:

"The woman opened her bottle and shared it around, pouring the last glass for herself.

"She took a mouthful and felt something on her tongue. When she checked she found a small, but intact, huntsman spider.

"For about 30 seconds she was too stunned to speak. But then she let out a loud shriek. And when she told her colleagues what the problem was, they also shrieked. And lost interest in their red wine."

The teacher took her bottle, complete with pickled spider, home with her and thought long and hard about it.

She then took it to Slater & Gordon with the idea that if they wrote to the wine company on her behalf, she might score a case or two of spider-free wine.

"But she did better than that," said Flanagan.

"I wrote to the wine company, did some negotiating, and the woman is delighted with her payment."

Of \$500 a leg for a small, non-venomous spider? I should think so.

Me, I like a bit of body in a shiraz. Don't you?