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The Unpopular Spider

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The Unpopular Spider

Cover Page Footnote

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The Unpopular Spider

Quoth the spider to the fly,
"Thou'rt the apple of mine eye!"
Said friend Musca, "O, Arachnid,
As a poet you're a hack, kid!"²

Quoth the spider to the bee,
"Come, my love, and dwell with me."
"Spider, not for all your money
Would I "bee" your Apian³ honey."⁴

Quoth the spider to the ant,
"O, for you with love I pant."⁵
Said the Worker to the suitor,
"Change your glasses, Mac; I'm neuter!"⁶

Quoth the spider to the wasp,
"Your slender waist just makes me gasp!"⁷
Replied irascible Hymenoptera,
"What gall! I shouldn't even talk to ya."

Quoth the spider to the worm,
"I like your shape: well-stacked and firm."
"I'm sure you'd find me much too gelid,"⁸
Said that Lumbricoid Annelid.

FOOTNOTES*

* If a "good" poet like Eliot can use footnotes, why can't a rotten one?

¹He packed a '38; used Safeguard, gummy roll-ons, messy creams, dripping sprays—and he still stunk.

²Note the difficulty of sounding the double consonant. That's English for you!

³The epithets, by the way, are generic rather than Homeric.

⁴I've got a million of them!

⁵According to a noted entomologist who studies his bio. during English novel classes, spiders don't pant. But what does *he* know?

⁶Very sad condition, really.

⁷Don't look at me — they rhyme in New England

⁸"Cold; frozen." Poetic license for "cold-blooded."

Quoth the spider to the flea,
"Would you my parlor like to see?"
Answered leaping Ctenocephalis,
"Sure — if you like erysipelas."⁹

"Your dashing motley¹⁰ strikes my eye,"
Quoth spider to the butterfly.
Said Lepidoptera amorphous,¹¹
"Sorry, I've gotta metamorphose."

Quoth the spider, "Come to supper,"
To a springy, fat grasshopper.¹²
Answered him the wise Romalea,
"You must be sick. Come, now, what ails ya?"¹²

Quoth the spider to the aphid,
"Come in. Don't act as if I'm rabid."¹³
The louse replied, "I really can't,
You see. I'm wet-nurse to an ant."¹⁴

Quoth the spider to himself,
"Despite my titles, power, pelf,¹⁵
I'm doomed to cursed solitude.¹⁶
Who shakes the web?" "It's me — Gertrude."¹⁷

Quoth the spider to his mate,
"Let's get to bed; it's growing late."
"Claudins,¹⁸ dear, that suits me fine;
But first, on you, I think I'll dine."¹⁹

⁹Au itching skin condition caused, actually, by a bacterium. Hell, who's fussy?

¹⁰Admittedly, the term "motley" may be just a *bit* too dashing here.

¹¹"No definite shape." Used loosely here, of course.

¹²Any port in a storm. If you can rhyme them better — go ahead.

¹³He really doesn't know he is. Sad!

¹⁴Ants are said to milk aphids like cows. Among cynical young ants there is said to be a proverb: if aphid juice is so cheap, why buy the aphid?

¹⁵Entire line lifted from someone's poem on Benedict Arnold.

¹⁶Some Romantic he'd make with *that* attitude.

¹⁷*Cf. Hamlet.*

¹⁸*Cf. Hamlet.*

¹⁹Relax — it wasn't Friday.

Alas! that Machiavellian spider
Came to rest, at length, inside her.²⁰
Provided he the wherewithal
To make his wife a cannibal.

There is no moral to this story
Except — that life is transitory.²¹
I'll finish with a quibble²² old:
Remove the ice²³ — my tale is told.

²⁰Any sport in a dorm.

²¹So quoth Beowulf and Everyman.

²²"Pun." 18th century. Dr. Johnson detested quibbles. I detest Dr. Johnson.

²³Ice *is* gelid. So, there!

HAROLD DEPUY

Rain, Now

Rain, now.
And bringing down, like men's ideas,
all the loose leaves.
Patterning
the pavement:
collage.