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The Unpopular Spider

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The Unpopular Spider

Quoth the spider to the fly,
"Thou'rt the apple of mine eye!"
Said friend Muses, "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 Apian 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!"
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," 7
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."

DePuy: The Unpopular Spider

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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?"13

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.23  
Who shakes the web?" "It's me — Gertrude."17

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

8An itching skin condition caused, actually, by a bacterium. Hell, who's fussy?
9Admittedly, the term "motley" may be just a bit too dashing here.
10"No definite shape." Used loosely here, of course.
11Any port in a storm. If you can rhyme them better — go ahead.
12He really doesn't know he is. Sad!
13Ants 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?
14Entire line lifted from someone's poem on Benedict Arnold.
15Some Romantic he'd make with that attitude.
16Cf. Hamlet.
17Cf. Hamlet.
18Relax — it wasn't Friday.
Alas! that Machiavellian spider
Came to rest, at length, inside her.  
Provided he the wherewithal
To make his wife a cannibal.

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

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20 Any sport in a dorm.
21 So quoth Beowulf and Everyman.
22 "Pun." 18th century. Dr. Johnson detested quibbles. I detest Dr. Johnson.
23 Ice 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.