Anansi Poems
Christopher L. Jorgensen
has been writing about spiders for too long.
A brown recluse spider bit his right arm when he was a child, causing it to swell considerably, making him quite sick. No photos of this particular bite exist, but images of other recluse bites are quite graphic and make him feel lucky to still have the arm. He gained no special powers, but still has the scar to prove it. Unfortunately, it's too small to impress women (the story of his life).
Contrary to popular belief, few North American spiders will bite people; only tarantulas, black widows, brown recluses, and daddy longlegs spiders (made angry enough a daddy longlegs can snap off a man's leg at the knee!).
This cycle of poems were written while intoxicated to varying degrees; conception usually done sober, a range of alcohols going into their execution. Some now seem divinely inspired to their author, who often woke to completed poems he could not remember writing. There's a chance this whole collection is plagiarized.
Your mistake if you look for science rather than truth in these poems.
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I live in a world of Serrano peppers and angry Thai chicken, forty thousand *scoville* units denying thought, 151 shots, cherries *flambé*, shit stains and souvlaki, carapaces and capsicum oil, next morning punishment,—too predictable— 
and where spiders belittle me with, “This is a lesson you never learn.”
I’ve seldom cared for the wisdom of spiders.

*Whiskey* like wine, wine like water, water only for recovery!
Too much drink too often. Memory subsumed through alcohol suppresses pain, blessed forgetfulness, easy excuse for—
*everything.*

A binding sticky mess, misunderstood strength, threads of potential offspring lost in yesterday’s still damp sock. There is no shame or *sin* in this!

These lessons I have learned from spiders: It is better to attack than defend, ferocity is not cruelty, if you can't be clever be tricky, be afraid of *fire*, hide when you can, flee if you must, the best food fights back, and it is always best to eat your mate.
**I’ve lost faith in faith (and the faithless).**
There is difference between knowledge and wisdom.
I am still learning from spiders.

These poems are influenced by Neil Gaiman’s books *American Gods* and *Anansi Boys,* inspired by alcohol and one spider in particular.
I live in a world of indentured servitude, long distance infatuations, 77 mph drive-by love at first sight, unrealistic expectations, absolute uncertain knowledge, gray skies and ash, and where spiders jump
and say, “We see beauty in blood and butterflies, twinkling lights, and lonely strangers. Too bad you cannot!”
Spiders offer insincere apologies, have nothing to be sorry for—and know it.
Some words never heal.
But I too see beauty, need no apology, am not foolish enough to expect one.
Dirigibles on fire, magic disguised as science, science pretending to alchemy, elixir of lust, love potions from the clouds, her name and number scrawled inside a matchbook cover discarded in drunkenness, future pain pressing down but averted, a sword of salvation unforged, the last glass of the evening, a soul blackened, and the secret explosive power of powdered coffee creamer!
And for my next trick...I apologize to spiders.
A quick dollop of wax on cold pavement and trapped forever, smashed too quickly with any book or newspaper at hand, washed down a drain, thrown into another’s web, doused with hairspray, encased in glass—a cheap roadside souvenir—available for a pittance of dollars, crushed with boot and laughter.
“I am sorry.”
He perdido la fé en la pluma (y el pene).
Neither have served me well.
Love is the trickiest of webs.
Spiders laugh into the void, a single sticky strand enough to overcome any abyss—knowledge, not confidence. They bite when startled, hungry, or in the midst of copulation; a deadly kiss. And spiders do not care about your life... or how you will live it. “My eight-legged friends aren’t the marrying type,” I say. Some wounds never heal.

But a spider never bites out of boredom.

Inside the old lady— “We’ll get that fly!”—in an abandoned barn still stinking of swine, by porch light glow... such a feast, underground or underwater, in children’s nightmare, darkened caves, and old whiskey bottles, with web and without, hidden leaf-burrow, egg sac in your basement window and under stairs. They’re everywhere. Across your night skin and in your ear waiting for attention. Listen.

Some eat bats, lizards, or the occasional smaller monkey. It’s true. But only one wants your mammalian blood. Venom and the overripe cantaloupe scent of infection, necrotic flesh, fever, swelling, hot pus, and eventual proudflesh. Trick them with Benzedrine, tell them only lies, steal their silk and kill them if you must, but never trust a spider.

Zero gravity spiders have no need of spinnerets, and Earthbound spiders have no tolerance for tequila! They’ve lost faith in Jesus (and Jesús).

I prefer predator to prey, and cannot apologize for wanting more.
I live in a world of “grainy dialup pornography and hand lotion, half-realized women, and too quick orgasms,” and where spiders write my opening lines. “You’re a plagiarist, a poor pugilist, and a pussy,” their constant accusation. Spiders do not understand quotation marks. But this does not alter truth.

A tear tasting kiss; cause lost in the touching of lips, words slur...
Rules IV

I keep company with pretentious poets and pretty petty gods,—or perhaps petty pretentious gods and pretty poets—it’s such a difficult distinction, and I pretend spiders fear plosive alliteration.

But, “We’re not afraid of your Pee Pee! We’re not afraid of your Pee Pee!” they chant.

Spiders have a childish sense of humor. And they taunt me!

But spiders too seldom laugh.

An abandoned diary (dusty cache of forgotten deceit), poems faded to illegibility, yesterday’s warm beer swill and cigarette ash, treacherous broken clocks refusing the time, cheek cut scars, fresh plucked mint and peppers, fisticuffs and fornication, rocketships, shiny future fashion, and someday there will be a woman...

understanding people better than me, and she’ll hate spiders. This is my life.

I’ve lost faith in gin (and virgins). And spiders mock me.

Rules I

I live in a world of cat piss and poker, $35 bottles of wine and cheap beer, and where spiders crawl into my ear to tell secrets of the cosmos.

“The world is a screwed up place,” they say, “And just when you think you’ve got it, we change the rules.”

Spiders are tricky that way. And they’re right.

But this isn’t really a secret.

Gone the world of breast milk and broken red bicycles, of vector based video games and stolen pornography. No more quarters for teeth, or shame in masturbation, no goodnight stories, or sticky applesauce stains, gone easy sleep!

I’ve lost faith in poets (and poetry). Now I am just waiting to grow up and no longer care about rules or spiders.
Rules II

I live in a world of knee-jerk reactions and aching testicles, mouthfuls of warm infection and unclean lies, and where spiders take out billboards to shout unquestioned truths, “You don’t deserve half what you got!” they advertise, “And half of yours is ours.”

Spiders have a marketing budget. And they’re stupid.

But no one truly believes.

Gone the easy fucking, the soft, simple, safe, uncomplicated coupling of youth. No more stolen moments with your best friend’s sister or your uncle’s magazines. Gone the guilty touches of your too friendly neighbor.

No longer confused by nipple-flesh!

Alone and uncertain. Surety misplaced in the past.

I’ve lost faith in soup (and superheroes).

Now I am just waiting to get laid, and no longer care about spiders or advertising.

Rules III

Spiders live in a world of too quick shoes, “Eeeeking” women, sleeping pills, anger, and bumper stickers on the back of eco-unfriendly cars, saying, “Support the war!” and “Eat Brats!”

Spiders have few politics to get incorrect.

Spiders say, “People are idiots,” an obvious truth not worth whispering.

Spiders say, “People believe anything,” and daily email a web of words offering to “Increase the Size of UR Unit,” drugs from Mexican pharmacies, replica Rolexes, and up-to-the-second insider trading.

But spiders are easily outwitted.

Childish torments and the tearing of legs, rolled up newspaper, pesticide, water whisking away (to a drain), and afternoon sun through a magnifying glass.

Spiders have reason to hate us, —have faith only in trickery—they were here first.