

Anansi Poems



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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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Rules VIII

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.

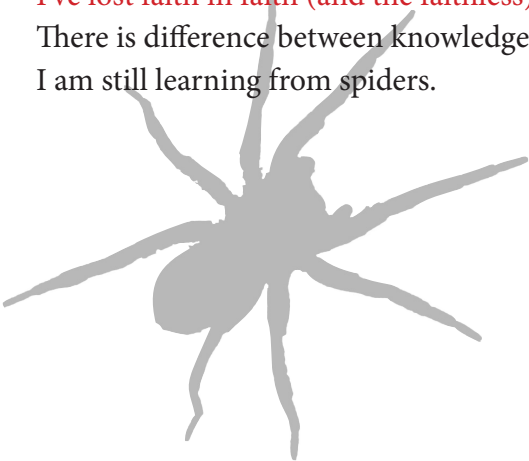
I’ve lost faith in faith (and the faithless).

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.



Rules VII

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.

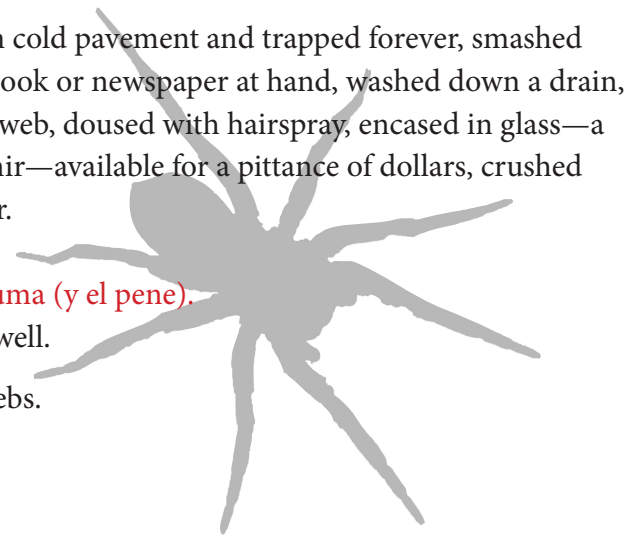
A quick dollop of wax on cold pavement and trapped forever, smashed
too quickly with any book or newspaper at hand, washed down a drain,
thrown into another’s web, doused with hairspray, encased in glass—a
cheap roadside souvenir—available for a pittance of dollars, crushed
with boot and laughter.

“*I am sorry.*”

He perdido la fé en la pluma (y el pene).

Neither have served me well.

Love is the trickiest of webs.



Rules VI

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,

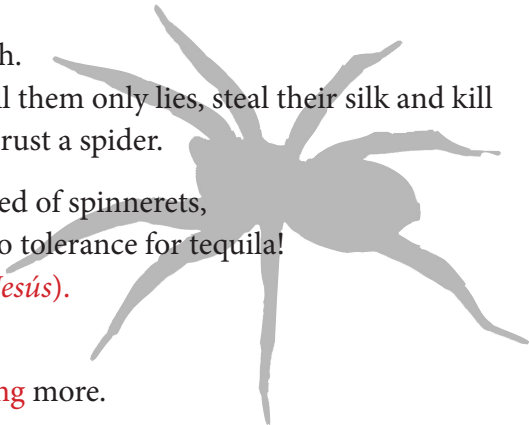
hot pus, and eventual proudflesh.

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.



Rules I ⁶
Rules II ⁴
Rules III
Rules IV ²
Rules V ⁸
Rules VI ⁷
Rules VII ¹
Rules VIII ⁵

Rules V

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 slurred and *the right thing* left unsaid, confusion,

drunken phone calls, images of *her* unlikely to be forgotten

regardless of quantity consumed, a precarious pyramid

of overturned shot-glasses, liquid memory, insomnia,

black eyes and confession without forgiveness.

It is too difficult to forget **cowardice**.

“You will never get the girl,” spiders say, “until you build
a better web. You can keep her if you fill her with *venom*.”

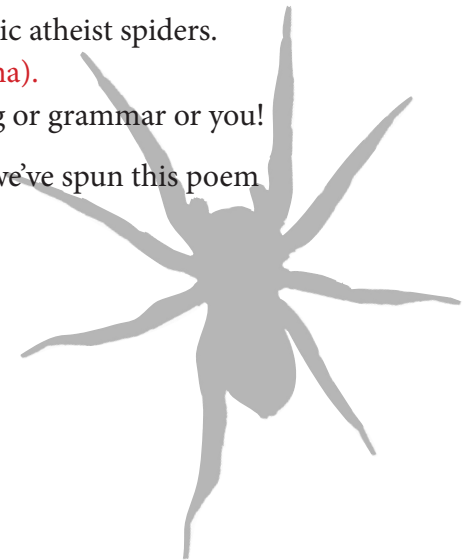
They cannot understand loneliness or why I will not give up a leg
to escape a place I no longer wish to be.

But on all else I agree with dyslexic atheist spiders.

We’ve lost faith in dog (and godma).

Spiders do not care about reading or grammar or you!

And you are wrong if you think we’ve spun this poem
about you.



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.

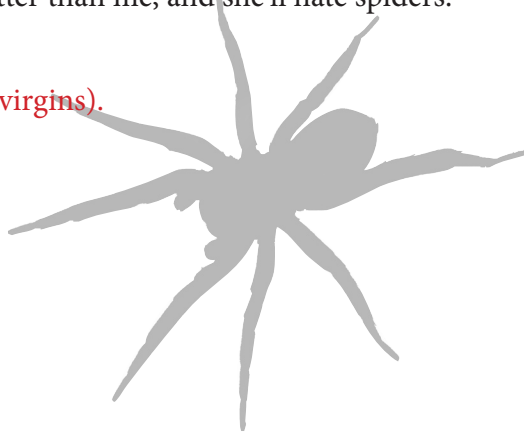
But, "*We're not afraid of your Pee Pee! We're not afraid
of your Pee Pee!*" they chant.

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."

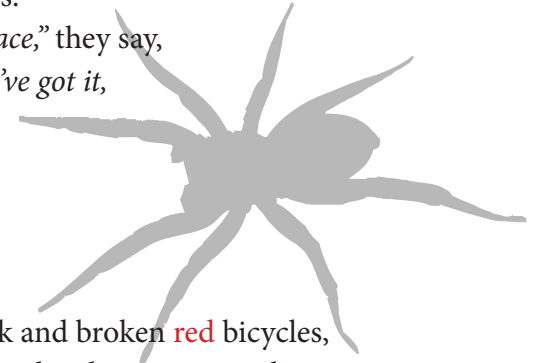
Spiders are **tricky** that way.
And they're right.

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**.

