

Poetry Comprehension

The Spider and the Fly (1829)

"Will you walk into my parlour?" said the Spider to the Fly,

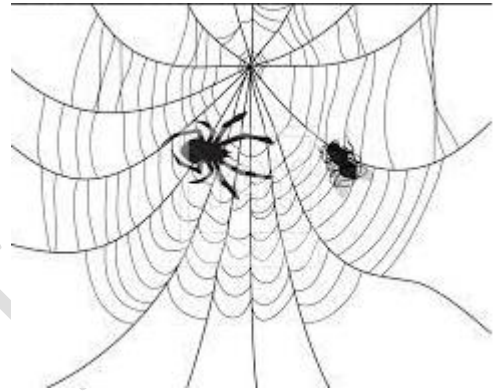
"'Tis the prettiest little parlour that ever you did spy;

The way into my parlour is up a winding stair,

And I have many curious things to shew when you are there."

"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "to ask me is in vain,

For who goes up your winding stair can ne'er come down again."



"I'm sure you must be weary, dear, with soaring up so high;

Will you rest upon my little bed?" said the Spider to the Fly.

"There are pretty curtains drawn around; the sheets are fine and thin,

And if you like to rest awhile, I'll snugly tuck you in!"

"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "for I've often heard it said,

They never, never wake again, who sleep upon your bed!"

Said the cunning Spider to the Fly, "Dear friend what can I do,

To prove the warm affection I've always felt for you?

I have within my pantry, good store of all that's nice;

I'm sure you're very welcome—will you please to take a slice?"

"Oh no, no," said the little Fly, "kind sir, that cannot be,

I've heard what's in your pantry, and I do not wish to see!"

"Sweet creature!" said the Spider, "you're witty and you're wise,

How handsome are your gauzy wings, how brilliant are your eyes!
I've a little looking-glass upon my parlour shelf,
If you'll step in one moment, dear, you shall behold yourself."
"I thank you, gentle sir," she said, "for what you're pleased to say,
And bidding you good morning now, I'll call another day."

The Spider turned him round about, and went into his den,
For well he knew the silly Fly would soon come back again:
So he wove a subtle web, in a little corner sly,
And set his table ready, to dine upon the Fly.
Then he came out to his door again, and merrily did sing,
"Come hither, hither, pretty Fly, with the pearl and silver wing;
Your robes are green and purple—there's a crest upon your head;
Your eyes are like the diamond bright, but mine are dull as lead!"

Alas, alas! how very soon this silly little Fly,
Hearing his wily, flattering words, came slowly flitting by;
With buzzing wings she hung aloft, then near and nearer drew,
Thinking only of her brilliant eyes, and green and purple hue—
Thinking only of her crested head—poor foolish thing! At last,
Up jumped the cunning Spider, and fiercely held her fast.
He dragged her up his winding stair, into his dismal den,
Within his little parlour—but she ne'er came out again!

And now dear little children, who may this story read,
To idle, silly flattering words, I pray you ne'er give heed:
Unto an evil counsellor, close heart and ear and eye,
And take a lesson from this tale, of the Spider and the Fly.

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1. What does the Spider invite the Fly to do at the beginning of the poem?
 - A) Visit his garden
 - B) Walk into his parlour
 - C) Fly around the room
 - D) Have a drink of water

2. How does the Spider describe his parlour?
 - A) Dark and gloomy
 - B) Prettiest little parlour ever seen
 - C) Old and dusty
 - D) Bright and cheerful

3. What reason does the Fly give for refusing to enter the Spider's parlour?
 - A) She is too tired
 - B) She is in a hurry
 - C) Those who go up never come down
 - D) She doesn't like the Spider

4. What does the Spider offer the Fly when he invites her to rest?
 - A) A soft pillow
 - B) A little bed with fine and thin sheets
 - C) A cup of tea
 - D) A comfortable chair

5. Why does the Fly refuse to rest on the Spider's bed?
 - A) She is not sleepy
 - B) She is afraid she will never wake up
 - C) She doesn't trust the Spider
 - D) She prefers to sleep on flowers

6. What does the Spider offer to prove his affection for the Fly?
 - A) A piece of cake
 - B) A slice of food from his pantry
 - C) A shiny jewel
 - D) A bouquet of flowers

7. What compliment does the Spider give to the Fly about her appearance?
 - A) Her wings are strong
 - B) Her wings are gauzy and her eyes are brilliant
 - C) She is very fast
 - D) She is clever

8. How does the Fly respond to the Spider's compliments?
- A) She flies away immediately
 - B) She thanks him but says she will call another day
 - C) She accepts the compliments and enters the parlour
 - D) She ignores the Spider
9. What does the Spider do after the Fly leaves?
- A) He goes to sleep
 - B) He weaves a web in a sly corner
 - C) He prepares a meal for the Fly
 - D) He follows the Fly
10. What does the Spider do to lure the Fly back to his parlour?
- A) He sings a merry song
 - B) He offers more compliments
 - C) He hides and waits
 - D) He sets a trap with food
11. What happens to the Fly after she is caught by the Spider?
- A) She escapes
 - B) She is eaten by the Spider
 - C) She tricks the Spider and flies away
 - D) She gets tangled in the web but is rescued
12. What lesson does the poem teach?
- A) Be cautious of flattering words
 - B) Always trust others
 - C) Never enter someone else's home
 - D) Spiders are dangerous
13. What is the tone of the poem?
- A) Joyful
 - B) Cautionary
 - C) Romantic
 - D) Humorous
14. How does the Spider manipulate the Fly?
- A) By scaring her
 - B) By flattering her with compliments
 - C) By offering food
 - D) By telling her a story

15. What is the final outcome for the Fly?
- A) She escapes and learns a lesson
 - B) She is captured and never seen again
 - C) She defeats the Spider
 - D) She finds a new home
16. What advice does the poem offer to children?
- A) Be brave and adventurous
 - B) Never trust anyone
 - C) Beware of flattering words and evil counsellors
 - D) Always listen to your parents
17. What does the Spider do when the Fly first refuses his invitations?
- A) He gives up
 - B) He tries different ways to persuade her
 - C) He becomes angry
 - D) He flies away
18. Which literary device is most prominently used in the poem?
- A) Simile
 - B) Metaphor
 - C) Personification
 - D) Hyperbole
19. What does the phrase "subtle web" imply about the Spider's plan?
- A) It is simple and obvious
 - B) It is intricate and cunning
 - C) It is weak and ineffective
 - D) It is quickly made
20. What moral can be derived from the Spider's actions?
- A) Deception can lead to one's downfall
 - B) Kindness is always rewarded
 - C) Patience is a virtue
 - D) Persistence always pays off

1. B
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. A
11. B
12. A
13. B
14. B
15. B
16. C
17. B
18. C
19. B
20. A

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