

Tryout's Lament for the Vanished Spider

Szerző: Howard Phillips Lovecraft • Év: 1920

Dear humble friend in labour and in play,
Say to what region thou hast fled away!
Week after week thy busy life was spent
Within these classic walls in calm content.
Thy noble patience, like the Muse's beams,
Inspired my efforts, and adorned my themes;
Till I had grown to hold thee as a guide,
To all my hopes and ventures close ally'd.
How well my thoughts thy talents could engage!
How shone thy magic on the *Tryout's* page!
Thou' calm thy manner, and thy speeches brief,
Well might I call thee Editor-in-Chief!
Shall any say thy place was slight or low,
Or doubt the lustre of thy heav'nly glow?
Let such consider with observant eye
The annals of the myriad years gone by.
A spider 'twas that rescued Islam's head
When from the foe within a cave he fled;
Nor can proud Scotia venture to despise
The lowly beast that helped her monarch rise.
Ev'n the curs'd Hun must speak with bated breath
Of him who saved old Frederick from death.
In short, we find the spider thron'd in state;
Friend of the Nine, and guardian of the great!
But thou, tried comrade of my busy hours—
Whither hast crept with all thy magic powers?
Hath some strange vision of thy spider-brain
Moved thee to quit our sordid sphere of pain?
Warm was thy home, and well-arranged thy lair;
Thy meat and drink supplied with tender care;
Were juicy flies too few and far between,
Or was aught lacking in the kerosene?
Sadly I view thy vacant dwelling-place—
Thou transient traveller of an ancient race!
Would that I might, with Fancy's curious power,
Trace thy meanderings to thy hidden bow'r;
Mark every secret step, and see thee stand
A sceptred potentate of spider-land!
What wonders unsuspected may exist
In those far provinces of web and mist!
Gossamer castles with their moats of dew;
And fairy palaces too small to view;
Or is thine Empire of a darker kind—
Some buried spot the world hath left behind?
Own'st thou some temple, where thy strands embrace
The crumbling substance of a Pharaoh's face,
Or some black crypt beneath the shifting sand
Where a forgotten city used to stand?
In Tyre and Carthage, Babylon and Ur,
Luxor and Karnak, do thy legions stir;
For thee and such as thou the world was made—

Thy reign commences when our own's decay'd.
Down immemorial steps, to man unknown,
Thy spinning tribes drape many a gilded throne;
Ram-headed gods; objects too dark to name,
Altars that bore of old an impious flame,
Wing'd shadowy lions wrought of rock and brass,
And all the treasures despots can amass—
These thy dominions, vanish'd wand'ring one
Who lately bask'd 'neath *Haverhill's* bright sun!
But whilst I mourn, or thro' my fancy grope,
Within my heart bestirs a thrill of hope;
For bounteous Pan, who rules the vernal wold,
Can oft restore the blessings lost of old:
Content I'll wait, and trust that he will bring
My faithful spider with returning Spring!