

THE ARACHNIDS OF RICHMOND

By John Poulakos

ACT 1

<Music>

Spiderman: What is it that I see? Why, it's my favorite messenger! Come, you endless source of the new and the unanticipated. Tell me. What's the word?

Messenger: How are you Boss? So very nice to see you. Here, I brought you some string beans.

S: Let us dispense with the typical formalities. Cut to the chase and give me the news.

M: You see, Boss. . . I mean. . . You know. . . The thing is that . . .

S: You are hesitating. You are hesitating. What is the deal?

M: Oh yes, the deal. The deal is like. . . I mean. . . For example. . . I am like. . . You know. . . It's just not fair. You know?

S: You make no sense. You are talking but you are not saying anything. What is the message? Spit it out.

M: I hope that . . . I hope that. . . Like, you won't be like angry at me or anything.

S: Why should I be angry at you?

M: Be. . . be. . . because. . . Well. . . I'll tell you. The news is not good.

S: Give it to me straight. I can take it.

M: Well, here it is. Zeus, the almighty ruler of gods and mortals, the guardian of broccoli and string beans, the protector of video games, joy sticks and widows, is angry.

S: What is he angry about?

M: Humans everywhere are replacing their faith in him with their faculty of reason.

S: I don't get it. Isn't he the one who endowed them with reason?

M: I am not here to reason with you. I only convey the news. And the news is that Zeus is pissed.

S: And how is his pissiness manifesting itself?

M: He is taking out on the acrobats, the little babies, and the space of the world. This is his way of humbling humans for losing faith in him. He wants them to realize that reason has limits.

S: You must tell me more. I need to get the big picture.

M: There is nothing more to say. That's all the news for today, Boss. But if you want more details, you must eavesdrop to a conversation between those two human over there.

S: And suppose I do listen to them. How is that going to appease Zeus' anger?

M: That conversation is about problems humans are trying to solve through their reason. Now, the king of Mount Olympus wants you to show humans that the answer to their problems is to be found in the ways of nature. And it goes without saying that the ways of nature are none other than the ways of Zeus himself.

S: I'll be on my way.

M: Good luck Boss.

ACT 2

Istotle: What I was saying, when you so rudely interrupted me, is that the world is full of problems.

Diktiophanes: What is it now?

I: For god's sake Diktiophanes! Haven't you gotten wind of things?

D: Wind? What wind? How can I get a hold of the wind? The wind cannot be gotten. It has no grabability.

I: You are so literal-minded!

D: This may be. But those using "wind metaphors" need to explain. (a fart sound is heard) See what I mean?

I: Fair enough. What I am saying is that the world is falling apart, and that you are oblivious. I mean, totally self-absorbed by your own private sphere.

D: And you? You, the model citizen? What do YOU do? You always talk about the public world but neglect your own private parts.

I: Now wait a minute. First of all, what I do with my private parts is none of your business. . . . Unless, of course, you want to make it your business.

D: No thanks. I have my own. And they are a handful.

I: Second of all, I concern myself with the public world because we all participate in it. The private world of this or that person is a perfectly subjective matter.

D: I agree. I agree absolutely. But don't forget what Socrates said.

I: What did he say?

D: He said, "Know thyself." He didn't say, "Know the world."

I: Ah, yes! He did say that. But you know what? He went overboard. He fixated on the "know thyself" business and neglected the rest of the world. Result? The rest of the world got together and fixed him. Real good!

D: Look! If I'm not on good terms with my private world, I cannot be on good terms with the public world.

I: By your "private world" do you mean all the points of entry and exit in your body?

D: Exactly. But I also mean this other part that is neither an entry nor an exit.

I: And what might that be?

D: That would be the subconscious.

I: What about the subconscious?

D: When the subconscious is playing games with you, it's not possible to let go of your private world and enter the public world.

I: Are you saying that your subconscious is playing games with you again?

D: Yes, that's what I am saying. My subconscious is messing with me big time.

I: Tell me more, and be more specific.

D: Let's see. . . . Last night I had a nightmare. I dreamt that a rope had been tied from Mt. Olympus to Mt. Ossa. And whoever would do a tightrope walk from the one end to the other, would get a lollypop for a prize. And I, the sucker that I am, decided to go for the lollypop. As I got midway, a bird flew over me and let go, without shame, a huge set of droppings. And guess where the droppings fell.

I: Where?

D: Right in my eyes.

I: No shit!

D: Yeah, yeah. The droppings fell in my eyes, I became temporarily blinded, I lost my balance, and tumbled into the void.

I: Oh my god! And then what happened?

D: I was falling, falling, falling, but would not hit bottom. Finally, I landed in a room, sitting on an armchair. 'Beautiful,' I thought to myself, 'no damage done.' But as I was sitting on the armchair, I started looking around. Not a single door in sight! The whole room was full of bookshelves with books. What to do, what to do, I picked a book. It was Sophocles' *Antigone*. I opened it randomly, and my eyes fell on the line that says: "Don't now pray at all; as fated, there is no avoiding for mortals any kind of calamity." "Oh, No" I thought to myself, "Might my fate feed me some calamity?" And as I was thinking this, all four walls started closing in on me. Soon the whole room became a shrinking cage. I became so fearful that I felt the need to take a dump. A very cathartic moment, you know?

I: And then, and then?

D: Then I woke up.

I: See? The real world saved you from your weird subconscious.

D: I knew you'd say that, you formidable arguer you. At any rate, I say we let go of my private subconscious and start with the real world. What's going on in the real world?

I: Lots of things. Hard to know where to start... Let's start with the acrobats.

D: What is happening to the acrobats?

I: Awful, awful. They're on a path to extinction. All of them.

D: How so?

I: Listen. The other day, I was at the circus. There were bears, monkeys, clowns, jugglers, elephants, stilt-walkers, acrobats, everything you can imagine. At some point, an acrobat climbed 100 feet up into the air.

D: And what happened?

I: Well, he started throwing himself into the void and grabbing at the very last moment the legs of another acrobat who was swinging back and forth on a swing.

D: It sounds phantasmagoric.

I: Indeed, it was. But at some point, as this acrobat was doing his routine, he jumped at the void, tried to get a hold of the arms of a fellow acrobat, something slipped, and down he went.... He exploded on the pavement like a watermelon.

D: Poor bastard! Still, a single mishap does not mean that all acrobats are disappearing.

I: True. But this acrobat was neither the first nor the last. I am telling you. There is an epidemic out there and they are all dropping like flies. The way things are going, the circus will disappear.

D: So?

I: So, life without circus has no meaning.

D: Come on now!

I: I am serious. When there's no circus in life, everyone's playing it safe. Gone is daring, gone is risk-taking, gone are the great accomplishments of mankind. If that's life, I want no part of it.

D: If it's not life, then what is it?

I: Anti-life, pseudo-life, call it what you will. But life it is not. And if the acrobats were the only problem, I'd say ok.

D: Why? Is there another calamity that's fallen on the real world?

I: Yes, there is. And it's terrible, terrible!

D: What?

I: Little babies.

D: What is happening to lil babies?

I: Haven't you heard about that either?

D: No.

I: You are a crying shame! Haven't you heard that lil babies are totally defenseless from nightmares?

D: I know that.

I: Good thing you know something. But do you know the effect that nightmares have on the development of the lil babies' personalities?

D: No.

I: Then listen, and MAYBE you'll learn something. When lil kids have nightmares, their psychological balance is disturbed.

D: Come again?

I: I mean they start having all sorts of irrational phobias

D: What kinds of phobias?

I: Many kinds.

D: For example?

I: Well, there is darkophobia, batophobia, scoriophobia, arachnophobia, etc. But the biggest phobia in the world is dumpophobia. Believe me, there's nothing worse.

D: And why is that?

I: Because if you're afraid to take a dump, you eventually get poisoned by your own self and then you die.

D: But what shitty nightmare must one have to make one afraid to shit?

I: You fool, haven't you heard how Ephialtes died?

D: Who?

I: Ephialtes, the man who betrayed the Spartans at Thermopylae.

D: No, how did he die?

I: The historian Herodotus says that Ephialtes was killed by Athenandes. Not because he betrayed the Spartans, but for personal reasons.

D: What does he mean by "personal reasons"?

I: Listen. After his betrayal, Ephialtes was fearful that the Spartans would kill him. In fact he was so afraid, that every now and then, he would shit himself. The place didn't

matter. Whether in the agora, the court, the gymnasium, the theatre, he would shit himself. One day, as he was going by a farm, he felt the urge to purge. He drops his pants on the spot, squats royally, and starts doing his duty. At that very moment, he hears right behind him, “Hey, you!” Immediately, the shit shut down. He looks behind and what does he see? It was Athenandes with a bow stretched and ready to shoot at his ass. He collects himself, pulls up trou, and starts running like a bat out of hell.

D: Didn’t the poor son-of-a-bitch know that he was in Athenandes’ property?

I: Whether he knew or didn’t, I don’t know, and the historians of shit don’t agree on this issue. The important point is that from that day on, Ephialtes was so scared that his sewage system stopped working. Every time he wanted to take a shit, he remembered Athenandes and everything would stop. In other words, Athenades had become his permanent nightmare. Literally, he was scared shitless. Well, two days came and went, five, ten, and he just could not go. Result? He got poisoned by his own self and died.

D: So . . . , when we’re talking about the nightmare of Ephialtes, we’re talking about the mother of all nightmares.

I: You got it!

D: But what has this whole story got to do with lil’ babies?

I: As lil babies grow, they carry with them all the phobias they have acquired from their nightmares. And all their phobias end up ruining their lives. Imagine living in a world full of phobias. That’s not life.

D: Things sound very tough, my friend. From what you say, acrobatics is ceasing and assholes are seizing.

I: And if that was all, maybe we could put up with it.

D: Don’t tell me there’s yet another calamity in the world!

I: Oh, yes. In fact, a huge one. Dreadful, dreadful!

D: Tell me, tell me.

I: Information.

D: What is happening to information?

I: Nothing is happened to it; something is happening to us.

D: What is happening to us?

I: We're drowning in information. Anywhere you go, the space is full of documents, periodicals, magazines, journals and books full of information.

D: But info is useful; without it, we can't do anything.

I: You don't get it. The problem is not info itself. The problem is the volume of it. Every day, we're building offices, libraries, storage units, and archives, and stuffing them with info. But no matter how much we build, no matter how fast, we cannot keep up.

D: And why is that?

I: Because every minute that goes by, the info multiplies exponentially. And as it multiplies, the space for people is shrinking. The way things are going, pretty soon there'll be no space anywhere on earth.

D: If what you say is true, space and the meaning of life are disappearing. And soon people, too, will disappear. I simply cannot wrap my head around this catastrophic scenario.

I: People everywhere are putting their reason to work, looking for rational solutions. Some of the most astute acrobatologists, the most brainy nightmarocrats, and the most innovative spacists are working on these problems as we are speaking. But so far they are having lots of trouble.

D: I am beginning to get afraid!

I: Welcome to the real world!

ACT 2

Spiderman: Have no fear! I am here!

D: Istotle! Get a hold of this, will you!

I: What the hell . . .

D: Now, that's one strange bird.

S: No bird. No bird. Deu sex machina.

D: Nice to meet you. I am Phallus Maximus. And my friend here is Bonus Erectus.

I: Give the guy a break, will you?

D: What did you say you are?

S: Deu sex machina.

D: Hey, Istotle. Did you catch that?

I: The only thing I caught was “sex” and “mac.” What did you catch?

D: The only thing I caught was “deu.”

I: Then ask again.

D: Hey man! What does “deu” mean?

S: It’s not “deu;” it’s Deus.

D: OK, but what does it mean?

S: Deus is a good thing. It is omnipotent and benevolent.

D: You are still not telling me what it means.

S: If you must know, it means “god.”

D: Are you saying you are god?

S: No, no, no. I am Deu sex machina.

D: And where does sex fit in, you odd-ball?

S: It doesn’t fit.

D: And why doesn’t it?

S: Because it is ‘ex’. ‘Ex’ is one thing, ‘sex’ is quite another.

D: And which one are you? Are you ‘ex’ or are you ‘sex’?

S: I am neither ‘ex’ nor ‘sex.’ But I am the result of both.

D: What a freakin’ riddle! Hey, Istotle, give me a hand over here, will you?

I: I’ve told you a thousand times. I don’t get involved in perversions.

D: Let’s see.

D: You say ‘deus’ means god, right?

S: Right.

D: And how do we get from Deus to “mac”?

S: No, no, no. It’s not “mac; ” it’s “machina.”

D: And what does “machina” mean, you screwball?

S: It’s a device.

D: What kind of device?

S: The kind that helps to solve problems.

D: Istotle, help! I need help!

I: Could it be that ‘machina’ means “machine”?

S: Yes, Yes! It’s machine! That one understands well, but you’re not too bright.

D: Be done with this bullshit and tell me.

S: I’ll tell you.

D: Let’s see. So far we’ve got a machine and a god. And sex fits neither with the machine nor with the god. Right?

S: Right.

D: And you are the result of both the machine and the god. Right?

S: Right.

D: So. Let me see if I got this straight. God made a machine, which made you. But there was no sex.

S: No, no, no.

D: Then it must be that a machine made the god, which made you. But still there was no sex. Is that it?

S: No, no, no.

D: Hell, I give up.

I: Ey, Dik, could it be that he means some kind of heavenly miracle?

S: Bravo, bravo! This one understands well, but you're stupid on the whole.

D: Your mama's hole...

S: Holes are a good thing; I like holes.

D: And me, I like broccoli.

I: And what the hell do you want here, you *deus ex machina*, you?

S: I want to help the world overcome its calamities. Acrobats no more splash like a watermelon; children no more scared shitless; and information no more taking all the space.

I: That's what we want, too. But what makes you think you can help?

S: Me, I am a boss. Oh yes!

I: But most bosses are assholes. They don't help people.

S: I am a different kind of boss.

I: What kind of a boss are you?

S: The powerful and benevolent kind.

I: Are you saying you're god?

S: No god. I'm only a boss.

I: And what makes you a boss?

S: I am a boss because I have a shop.

I: And where is that shop?

S: In Richmond, Virginia.

I: And what does that shop sell?

S: It doesn't sell anything.

I: Then what the hell does it do?

S: It makes holes and...

D: Listen, fuckhead, are you working us over?

S: No, I'm a boss, and bosses don't overwork.

I: You said you have a shop that makes holes?

S: Yes, many holes. Thousands of holes.

I: And how do you propose to help us with your holes?

S: It's not just holes.

I: Is there more to it?

S: Yes, yes. Very much more.

I: What else?

S: Threads. Very many and very long threads.

I: In other words, you propose to help us with holes and threads. Is that it?!

S: Yes, both of them together.

D: Listen, you goddamn *deus ex machina*. Why don't you go hide somewhere. If someone overhears us, they'll throw us in the loony bin.

I: Hey, Dik, cut it out. Let the man speak. He might be onto something.

D: But this nut here hasn't got a clue of the magnitude of the disasters of the world. Didn't you hear what he said? Holes and threads. That's totally irrational.

I: And why does that bother you?

D: I don't like getting needled.

I: Tell me, how does this holes-and-threads thing work?

S: When threads are placed horizontally, vertically, diagonally and all around, they make holes. And the whole thing is a good thing.

I: And this good thing, YOU are gonna make it?

S: Not me. You forget, I am the boss.

I: Then who's gonna make it?

S: The shop will make it.

I: How? Do you have machines at your shop?

S: No machines. The shop has many spiders.

D: Does it also have rats?

I: Shut the hell up, Dik. Let the man explain.
Hey, man, what were we talking about?

S: We were saying that my shop has many spiders.

I: Oh yeah, now I remember. And what do the spiders do at the shop?

S: They work on their loom. Everyday. Yes, yes, a lot of loom work.

I: And at the loom, what do they make, them spiders? Do they make carpets?

S: No, no.

I: Runners?

S: No, no.

I: What the hell do they make?

S: They make devices.

I: What kind of devices?

S: The kind that solve problems.

I: Problem-solving devices?

S: Yes.

I: And what kinds of problems do they tackle?

S: Acrobats, nightmares, and info. All these things are problems.

I: And you will bring us these devices?

S: Yes yes.

I: And when are you gonna bring them devices?

S: I'll bring them tomorrow at noon.

I: And how much are these devices going to cost?

S: Nothing.

I: Are you serious?

S: I speak seriously. I only speak seriously. No money.

D: And how does the shop make ends meet? Materials, personnel, transportation, all these things cost money, no?

S: No, no, no. The materials are for free. And my spiders, they work for free. No labor costs.

D: That's very irrational.

S: It may be. But now I must go. I have to go buy some string beans for dinner.

I: Farewell.

D: Oh man! This rogue is impossible!

I: Possible, impossible, there's no rational alternative. But either way, we'll know tomorrow if this weirdo is for real. For now, I say it's time for us to go.

ACT 3

Spider 1:

Once I was a weaver,
Busier than a beaver,
Renowned for my art,
And Zeus' sweetheart.

Spider 2:

In an embroidery contest,
It turned out I was the best,
I even beat Athena,
Who bolted the arena.

Spider 3:

Full of hurt and full of fury,
She flipped out, told the jury:
“Piss on you! You stupid fools”
Then run away, threw her tools.

Spider 4:

And I the winner, and full of air,
Thought the verdict was fully fair.
Told Athena she fell short,
Called her a loser n’ poor sport.

Spider 5:

On this she went ape,
And tore my piece apart.
She bent me out of shape
And broke my little heart.

Spider 6:

Distraught and full of pain
I asked: What can she gain?
I pulled my hair side to side
And then I tried ...suicide

Spider 7:

Athena saw me on the noose
She ran and turned it loose
She loved in me the fighter
So, rendered me a spider

Spider 8:

That’s our story, story of old
It’s a story that must be told.
We are no bugs, we are no idlers
We are no insects, WE ARE THE SPIDERS.

Spider Chorus:

We weave every hour
That’s our glory and our power
With the marvels we conceive
And the wonders we achieve.

Our techne is notorious
Our craft the most laborious
The threads we sew, the knots we tie
We are the best, that is no lie.

Eight legs that work like arms
Eight fingers that make charms
Charms to please our foolish prey
That come to visit but always stay.

Spider 1: So, girls, how did the weekend go?

Spider 2: Oh my God! Yet another weekend without the most poignant instrument of the male anatomy! What a total bummer! This kind of shortage, we didn't have even during the Great Depression! I don't mean to badmouth my boyfriend. He's a very nice guy. We go out often, we have fun talking, walking and dancing. But damn it, he never rises to . . . the occasion.

1: What does he do instead?

2: That's just it; he doesn't do anything. Not a thing. He just lets it and its subordinates hang there. Like grapes on the vine. Good thing I'm not a fox.

1: Why is that?

2: Everyone would be thinking "sour grapes."

1: Ha ha ha.

2: This is not a laughing matter my dear.

1: Sorry. I meant no insult. But I cannot help wondering: When you guys get together, do you do anything to get him to stand tall?

2: There's nothing that I don't do. I tickle him, I caress him, I kiss him, you name it. The result? Always the same. Rationalization after rationalization.

1: What do you mean?

2: The same old recipe. Two parts impotence, one part inertia, a splash of guilt and a twist of self-consciousness.

1: What a shame! Especially for a beautiful woman like you.

2: Thanks for the compliment, but it's not playing. The entrance to my being hasn't seen any action for some time now. All I've been doing is hanging out at my own web.

1: By the way. Have you read any Aristophanes?

2: No, should I?

1: Yeah, he has some racy ideas on how to find joy between your legs.

1: Speaking of joy, how did the weekend go with you? Did you get lucky?

3: You guys, I feel guilty.

1: And why is that?

3: Because it just isn't fair. My poor sister there was caught in the dynamics of lack when I had a weekend full of excess.

1: Well good for you! As for your sister, don't worry about her; she too had a good time. She just run into an organ that was out of tune. That's all.

3: Whatever. So, girls. Friday night I went out with Arachnades, and we went to Arachnopolis. What a beautiful place!

1: And where did you stay?

3: At the 8-point resort. We're talking about a super luxurious, 8-star hotel.

1: I've heard of it, but haven't been there.

3: Saturday night we went to this famous club..... its name escapes me.

1: The Octagon?

3: Yes, yes, the Octagon! Have you ever been there?

1: No, but I've heard some wild revels are afoot there.

3: You should've seen the arachnorgies! So many legs sticking up in the air!

1: And the main subject, how did that go?

3: Oh my god! The whole weekend he had his organ out and I was playing it all day long. And the bed acrobatics, Oh my god ... you would've lost your mind!

1: Sounds like a good time.

3: Good time is an understatement. The only bad thing was that he would not stop. A true sex fiend. At some point I asked him, 'How 'bout a little break?' He would have none of it. He had his ninth extremity going like nobody's business.

1: Sounds like fun.

3: It was fun alright. But by the end of it I was exhausted. Totally out of energy.

1: So what did you do?

3: I ate him. What about you? How was YOUR weekend?

1: Me? One opportunity for cheers, two for tears.

3: I say you tell us the cheery bit first and save the tears for later.

1: Well, Friday night I got a message on my cell phone: "Tomorrow I'm going to Arachnoville. If you want to get to know each other, let me know. Kisses, Arachnodares." I jumped from joy! I had met the character two weeks ago at a reception of the Society of Webbers. We didn't talk much, but he seemed full of himself, somewhat persistent, forward, even imposing. All in all, he seemed well-spoken, well-built, and well-to-do.

3: And?

1: That was the cheer. Now the tears. We got together and went to the movies.

3: What did you see?

1: Spiderman II.

3: And?

1: As soon as we sat down at the theatre, there goes his first hand on my knee. I thought, 'Ok, no biggie.' Soon thereafter I felt his second hand on my neck. And before I could figure out what was going on, he put his third hand around my waist and the fourth on my ass.

3: Beautiful!

1: But this was our first date!

3: Well, what did you do?

1: What *could* I do? I pulled slightly to the right, but he kept playing the same tune. He grabbed here, squeezed there, groped further down, etc. etc.

3: Oh, how romantic!

1: What the hell are you talking about? I want to be adored, not whored! At no time flat, he had gone from my knee to my thigh, from my neck to my back, and from my waist to my belly.

3: And from the ass? Where did he go from the ass?

1: No movement there. He parked his fourth hand there and was just rubbing it.

3: Oh, how wonderful!

1: Maybe for you. But for me, these things are unacceptable. . . . At least on the first date.

3: Was that all?

1: No. Afterward, we went to a dark bar and...

3: What happened there?

1: The same and worse. I'm telling you, he put me in an awkward situation.

3: Well, and what did you tell him?

1: I told him this, that and everything, but he was playing deaf. At some point, I told him, 'Stop! Stop before all hell breaks loose!' It was as if I had told him, 'Keep on doing what you're doing!'

3: Well, you never know. With all the commotion at the bar, maybe instead of 'Stop before all hell breaks loose!' he heard 'Keep it up, I'm all loose'?

1: Whatever!

3: Please do not misunderstand me, but you remind me of Nausica in the *Odyssey*.

1: The *Odyssey*'s great, but what do I have to do with Nausica?

3: Don't you remember? As soon as she saw Odysseus buck-naked there at the beach, Nausica started running.

1: Me, I'm not afraid of the instrument that rises and falls.

3: But from what I see, you prefer fairy tales to men's tails.

1: I prefer fairy tales because they have a certain kind of plot development; by contrast, Arachnodares does not understand the concept of the gradual. He jumps/humps right to the finish.

2: The boss, the boss, look out!

ACT 4

S: Good morning, girls!

All 3: Good morning, mister boss.

S: Today, we have lots of work. Yes, lots of work.

1: But, mister boss, every day you say the same thing.

S: Today is different. Yes, very different.

3: What has changed today?

S: Today we've got many problems. Yes, many problems.

2: What problems?

S: We're almost at the point where all acrobats are going to die and circuses are going to go extinct!

All 3: Oh , nooo!

S: And nightmares are creating lots of phobias. To the point where people will no longer be able to take a dump.

All 3: Oh, noooooooooo!

S: And information is engulfing us all!

All 3: Oh nooooooooooooooooooooo!

S: Yes, yes. We've got a triple disaster in our hands!

All 3: And what do you want us to do about it?

S: You girls have to come up with some clever devices. You've got to come up with smart solutions to these problems.

All 3: Don't you worry about a thing, Mr. Boss.

S: Good. Now I must go. I have to go buy some string beans.

All 3: Godspeed.

Sp.1: Ok, girls, we've had our girly talk; now it's time to get to work.

Spider Chorus:

Bring me, bring me
All the strands
Turn them turn them
In your hands.

Put them here, next to me,
In this very room
Here, here, right here
In my hanging loom.

One thread, two, and three,
Come to help me and you'll see
It's a wonder, I conclude,
How I do it, I'm sooooo good.

A knot here a knot there
Lots of knots are everywhere
I concoct a thousand curves,
What I do I do with nerves.

The warp I hold it tight
The woof I throw alight
The spools I turn and turn,
My living thus I earn.

I weave organza, nice lace
And give it all to a pretty face
To collect a thousand claps
And create a million traps.

I adorn them with shiny beads
And I catch the dudes and steeds.
And after much of loop de loop,

I put them all in the chicken coop.

(Enter Spiderman)

S: Did you girls finish?

All 3: Yes, mister boss.

S: What did you (**either Spider #3 or group #3**) make?

3: I/We made a safety net.

S: Bravo, bravo, good thing. And what did you make?

1: Mister boss, I/We made a dream-catcher.

S: Bravo, bravo, it 's a good thing. What about you?

2: I/We made the world wide web.

S: Bravo, bravo, good thing. Now you all must go and explain these devices.

1: To whom?

S: There's these two fools who are bemoaning their fate and lamenting the state of the world.

All 3: Why are we waiting then? Let's all go.

ACT 5

D: You seem very anxious.

I: It looks like the *deus ex machina* dude has stood us up.

D: Calm down. Our meeting was at noon. And now it's only 2 minutes past noon.

I: Do you think this whack job might pull it off?

D: We'll see. Besides, there's no other solution. Isn't that what you said?

I: There he is, there he is, he is coming.

D: From what I see, he's also brought his entourage.

I: Welcome, *deus ex machina*.

S: Sorry for the delay but there were long lines at the supermarket.

I: I see you've brought your groupies with you.

S: Yes, yes. These beautiful girls have made good things. They will now explain the "holes and threads" thing to you.

I: So, tell us, girls, what have you brought us?

3:I/We brought you a safety net. It's the best thing for all acrobats.

I: And how does that net work?

3: Look, first you spread it. Then you tie the four ends to four posts. And you put it right under the place where the acrobats do their routines. In the event that one of them falls, he's gonna fall into the net, not the pavement. Starting today, acrobats will be totally safe. And one more thing. This net will make them more daring and their daring will enrich the meaning of life.

I and D: Beautiful!

S: Now, you show (**points to Spider # 1 or group #1**).

1: I/We brought you a dream-catcher.

I: And how does this dream-catcher work?

1: It's very simple. You put it over the babies' crib and it works by itself. It ensnares the nightmares and lets only sweet dreams go through. With this dream-catcher, all lil babies will stop having nightmares. No more phobias, no more difficulties in the sewage system. From today on, you can have all the sweet dreams and all the shit you want.

I and D: Beautiful!

S: Now you show them, 2.

2: I/We brought you a World Wide Web.

I: And how does this internet work?

2: This artifact has infinite space and as such can contain an infinite amount of information. From today forward, all the libraries in the world and all the buildings for storage of information will be useless.

I: And how does that work?

2: The WWW is like the safety net and the dream-catcher. But instead of catching acrobats or nightmares, it catches information. Now, whatever info you might have, you put it into the WWW, and when you want to find it, you go in and find it.

I: And how do you put it in and out?

2: Manually. Here you go <hands over manual>, here you'll find all the directions for its use.

I and D: Beautiful!

I: We don't know how to thank you.

#2: Don't mention it.

I: Not even a little present for your troubles?

#2: Please, please, I said don't mention it, it's nothing.

I: But we insist!

#2: Well, if you insist, I 'd like you to do me a favor.

I: Anything you want.

#2: I want you to tell my boyfriend that Eros requires some standing up.

I: Consider it done. What about you, 3?

#3: I want you to tell my boyfriend that Eros requires a break once in a while.

I: Consider it done. And what about you, 1?

#1: I want to you tell my boyfriend that Eros without some kind of introduction is an oxymoron.

I: Consider it done.

S: Now I have to go. I need to get some string beans at the store. And the girls have to go back to the shop.

I and D: So long.

ACT 6

Messenger: Good work, Boss. Zeus is happy again. In fact he is so happy that he has decided to upgrade your workshop into a University.

Spiderman: You are kidding, right?

M: Do I look like I am kidding?

S: WAW!

M: Aaaand. He has decided to upgrade your name.

S: To what?

M: To **(the name of the President of the University)**

S: These honors aside, I am glad I could help.

M: You helped out alright. But more importantly, you have restored people's faith in the ways of nature.

S: For this you have to thank the spiders.

M: How do you think I should do that?

S: A little poetry wouldn't hurt.

M: Me? Poetry? Are you forgetting that I am only a carrier of flatfooted prose?

S: Come now. Everyone has a poetic side.

M: In that case, I'll give it a try.

S: Let's hear it.

M: To these octopedes
That work without pause
We owe mucho gratitude
And rounds of applause

Chorus of Spiders

For centuries and centuries
We're happy to inspire
Computer geeks and fishermen

And acts of high wire

Destined to be weavers
We do our nature's bidding
Webs that are spectacular
On this there is no kidding

And when you come to Richmond
You'll see we are the catch
Like others you'll discover
We really have no match

We are no bugs
We are no idlers
We are no insects
WE ARE THE SPIDERS.

<Music>

C U R T A I N