



The Spider and the Fly

**George F. Root
(1820-1895)**

George Frederick Root (1820-1895) was born at Sheffield, Massachusetts, and grew up in North Reading. The son of amateur musicians, he was named after composer George Frideric Handel and showed a love for music from a very early age. At 18, he moved to Boston to work for Artemas N. Johnson, earning room and board and piano lessons. He began to teach piano, sang in the Bowdoin Street choir, was a church organist, studied with Geo. Jas. Webb, and became an associate of Lowell Mason. He taught in many music conventions and normal schools. He went to New York City as organist and choir director of the Mercer Street Church and teacher at taught at Rutgers Female Institute, Haines' School for Young Ladies, Union Theological Seminary, and the New York Institute for the Blind. He met Fanny Crosby and together they eventually composed over fifty popular secular songs. He left his work in New York dedicating his career to teach music conventions and normal schools. He studied in Vienna, Paris, and London, eventually returning to teach in Boston with Lowell Mason, and later Bangor, Maine, where he was director of the Penobscot Musical Association. In 1860, he moved to Chicago and joined his brother Ebenezer T. Root and C. M. Cady in a music publishing company. The company was destroyed in the Chicago fire and he continued in his teaching throughout the Northern states. He died at his summer home in Bailey Island, Maine. He was one of the leading contributors to the development of 19th century American musical education. He also collected and edited volumes of choral music for singing schools, Sunday schools, church choirs and musical institutes. He was a prolific composer of cantatas, songs, Gospel songs, and choral pieces. He is recognized as one of the most significant composers of the Civil War era and was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1970. He also wrote under the pseudonym George Wurzel (German for Root) to capitalize on the popularity of German composers during the 1850s. He wrote the first published Civil War song, "The First Gun is Fired," two days after the bombardment of Fort Sumter. His other famous songs include "The Battle Cry of Freedom" and "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching" the tune of which was later used for "Jesus Loves the Little Children" and "God Save Ireland."

“Will you walk into my parlor?” said a Spider to a Fly,
“It is the prettiest parlor that ever you did spy!
You have only got to pop your head here, just inside the door,
You’ll see, oh, many curious things you never saw before.”

Will you walk in, pretty fly?

“My fine house is always open,” said the Spider to the Fly,
“I’m glad to have a visit from all I see go by;”
“They go in, but don’t come out again— I’ve heard of you before!”
“Oh, yes they do, I always let them out the other door.”

“Will you grant me one sweet kiss, dear,” says the Spider to the Fly,
“To taste your charming lips I’ve a curiosity.”
Says the Fly, “If once our lips did meet, a wager I would lay
Of ten to one, you would not after, let them come away.”

“If not kiss, will you shake hands, then?” says the Spider to the Fly,
“Before you leave me here with my sorrow sad to sigh?”
Says the Fly, “There’s nothing so attractive unto you belongs
That I should let you touch me, even with a pair of tongs!”

“Oh, what handsome wings you’ve got, dear,” says the Spider to the Fly,
“If I had only such wings I in the air would fly;
But ’tis useless my repining, it is only idle talk,
You know that you can fly in air, while I’m obliged to walk.”

“For the last time now I ask you, will you walk in Mister Fly?”
“No, if I do I may be shot; I’m off, so now goodbye.”
Then up he springs, but both his wings were in the web caught fast;
The Spider laughed, “Ah, ah, my boy! I have you safe at last.”

“Tell me, pray, how are you now, dear,” says the Spider to the Fly;
Fools never will get wisdom, unless they dearly buy;
It is vanity that ever makes repentance come too late,
And they who into cobwebs run, right well deserve their fate.

Mary Howitt (1799-1888)

The Spider and the Fly

Geo. F. Root

(Composer's Note: A good way to sing this is to have several quartets, each singing a verse and all coming in with the refrain.)

Allegretto con moto

S *mf* "Will you walk in - to my par - lor?" said a Spi - der to a Fly, "It *p*

A *mf* "Will you walk in - to my par - lor?" said a Spi - der to a Fly, "It *p*

T *mf* "Will you walk in - to my par - lor?" said a Spi - der to a Fly, "It *p*

B *mf* "Will you walk in - to my par - lor?" said a Spi - der to a Fly, "It *p*

S *mf* is the pret - tiest par - lor that ev - er you did spy! You have

A *mf* is the pret - tiest par - lor that ev - er you did spy! You have

T *mf* is the pret - tiest par - lor that ev - er you did spy! You have

B *mf* is the pret - tiest par - lor that ev - er you did spy! You have

The Spider and the Fly

10 *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

S on - ly got to pop your head here, just in - side the door, You'll

A *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

A on - ly got to pop your head here, just in - side the door, You'll

T *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

T on - ly got to pop your head here, just in - side the door, You'll

B *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

B on - ly got to pop your head here, just in - side the door, You'll

14

S see, oh, ma - ny cu - rious things you nev - er saw be - fore."

A see, oh, ma - ny cu - rious things you nev - er saw be - fore."

T see, oh, ma - ny cu - rious things you nev - er saw be - fore."

B see, oh, ma - ny cu - rious things you nev - er saw be - fore."

The Spider and the Fly

REFRAIN

18

S *p* Will you, will you, will you, will you *mp* walk in, pret - ty fly?

A *p* Will you, will you *mp* walk in, pret - ty fly?

T *p* Will you, will you *mp* walk in, pret - ty fly?

B *p* Will you, will you *mp* walk in, pret - ty fly?

22

S *p* Will you, will you, will you will you *mp* walk in, pret - ty fly, *dim.*

A *p* Will you, will you *mp* you — walk in, pret - ty fly, pret - ty *dim.*

T *p* Will you, will you *mp* you — walk in, pret - ty fly, pret - ty *dim.*

B *p* Will you, will you *mp* you — walk in, pret - ty fly, pret - ty *dim.*

26

S *pp* — pret - ty fly, pret - ty fly?"

A *pp* fly, — pret - ty fly?"

T *pp* fly, — pret - ty fly?"

B *pp* fly, — pret - ty fly?"

The Spider and the Fly

VERSE 2

30 *mf* *p*

S "My fine house is al - ways o - pen," said the Spi - der to the Fly, "I'm

A "My fine house is al - ways o - pen," said the Spi - der to the Fly, "I'm

T "My fine house is al - ways o - pen," said the Spi - der to the Fly, "I'm

B "My fine house is al - ways o - pen," said the Spi - der to the Fly, "I'm

35 *mf*

S glad to have a vis - it from all I see go by;" "They go

A glad to have a vis - it from all I see go by;" "They go

T glad to have a vis - it from all I see go by;" "They go

B glad to have a vis - it from all I see go by;" "They go

39 *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

S in, but don't come out a - gain— I've heard of you be - fore!" "Oh,

A in, but don't come out a - gain— I've heard of you be - fore!" "Oh,

T in, but don't come out a - gain— I've heard of you be - fore!" "Oh,

B in, but don't come out a - gain— I've heard of you be - fore!" "Oh,

The Spider and the Fly

43

S yes they do, I al - ways let them out the oth - er door."

A yes they do, I al - ways let them out the oth - er door."

T yes they do, I al - ways let them out the oth - er door."

B yes they do, I al - ways let them out the oth - er door."

VERSE 3

47

S *mf* "Will you grant me one sweet kiss, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, *p* "To

A *mf* "Will you grant me one sweet kiss, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, *p* "To

T *mf* "Will you grant me one sweet kiss, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, *p* "To

B *mf* "Will you grant me one sweet kiss, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, *p* "To

52

S taste your charm - ing lips I've a cu - ri - os - i - ty." Says the *mf*

A taste your charm - ing lips I've a cu - ri - os - i - ty." Says the *mf*

T taste your charm - ing lips I've a cu - ri - os - i - ty." Says the *mf*

B taste your charm - ing lips I've a cu - ri - os - i - ty." Says the *mf*

The Spider and the Fly

56 *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

S Fly, "If once our lips did meet, a wag - er I would lay Of

A Fly, "If once our lips did meet, a wag - er I would lay Of

T Fly, "If once our lips did meet, a wag - er I would lay Of

B Fly, "If once our lips did meet, a wag - er I would lay Of

60

S ten to one, you would not af - ter, let them come a - way."

A ten to one, you would not af - ter, let them come a - way."

T ten to one, you would not af - ter, let them come a - way."

B ten to one, you would not af - ter, let them come a - way."

VERSE 4

64 *mf* *p*

S "If not kiss, will you shake hands, then?" says the Spi - der to the Fly, "Be -

A "If not kiss, will you shake hands, then?" says the Spi - der to the Fly, "Be -

T "If not kiss, will you shake hands, then?" says the Spi - der to the Fly, "Be -

B "If not kiss, will you shake hands, then?" says the Spi - der to the Fly, "Be -

The Spider and the Fly

69

S fore you leave me here with my sor - row sad to sigh?" Says the *mf*

A fore you leave me here with my sor - row sad to sigh?" Says the *mf*

T fore you leave me here with my sor - row sad to sigh?" Says the *mf*

B fore you leave me here with my sor - row sad to sigh?" Says the *mf*

73 *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

S Fly, "There's noth - ing so at - tract - ive un - to you be - longs That *a tempo*

A Fly, "There's noth - ing so at - tract - ive un - to you be - longs That *a tempo*

T Fly, "There's noth - ing so at - tract - ive un - to you be - longs That *a tempo*

B Fly, "There's noth - ing so at - tract - ive un - to you be - longs That *a tempo*

77

S I should let you touch me, ev - en with a pair of tongs!"

A I should let you touch me, ev - en with a pair of tongs!"

T I should let you touch me, ev - en with a pair of tongs!"

B I should let you touch me, ev - en with a pair of tongs!"

The Spider and the Fly

VERSE 5

81 *mf* *p*

S "Oh, what hand - some wings you've got, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, "If

A "Oh, what hand - some wings you've got, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, "If

T "Oh, what hand - some wings you've got, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, "If

B "Oh, what hand - some wings you've got, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly, "If

86 *mf*

S I had on - ly such wings I in the air would fly; But 'tis

A I had on - ly such wings I in the air would fly; But 'tis

T I had on - ly such wings I in the air would fly; But 'tis

B I had on - ly such wings I in the air would fly; But 'tis

90 *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

S use - less my re - pin - ing, it is on - ly i - dle talk, You *a tempo*

A use - less my re - pin - ing, it is on - ly i - dle talk, You *a tempo*

T use - less my re - pin - ing, it is on - ly i - dle talk, You *a tempo*

B use - less my re - pin - ing, it is on - ly i - dle talk, You

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94

S know that you can fly in air, while I'm o - bliged to walk."

A know that you can fly in air, while I'm o - bliged to walk."

T know that you can fly in air, while I'm o - bliged to walk."

B know that you can fly in air, while I'm o - bliged to walk."

VERSE 6

98

S *mf* "For the last time now I ask you, will you walk in Mis - ter Fly?" *p* "No,

A *mf* "For the last time now I ask you, will you walk in Mis - ter Fly?" *p* "No,

T *mf* "For the last time now I ask you, will you walk in Mis - ter Fly?" *p* "No,

B *mf* "For the last time now I ask you, will you walk in Mis - ter Fly?" *p* "No,

103

S if I do I may be shot; I'm off, so now good - bye." *mf* Then

A if I do I may be shot; I'm off, so now good - bye." *mf* Then

T if I do I may be shot; I'm off, so now good - bye." *mf* Then

B if I do I may be shot; I'm off, so now good - bye." *mf* Then

The Spider and the Fly

107 *cresc.* *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

S up he springs, but both his wings were in the web caught fast; The

A up he springs, but both his wings were in the web caught fast; The

T up he springs, but both his wings were in the web caught fast; The

B up he springs, but both his wings were in the web caught fast; The

111

S Spi - der laughed, "Ah, ah, my boy! I have you safe at last."

A Spi - der laughed, "Ah, ah, my boy! I have you safe at last."

T Spi - der laughed, "Ah, ah, my boy! I have you safe at last."

B Spi - der laughed, "Ah, ah, my boy! I have you safe at last."

VERSE 7

115 *mf* *p*

S "Tell me, pray, how are you now, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly; Fools

A "Tell me, pray, how are you now, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly; Fools

T "Tell me, pray, how are you now, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly; Fools

B "Tell me, pray, how are you now, dear," says the Spi - der to the Fly; Fools

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120

S
nev - er will get wis - dom, un - less they dear - ly buy; It is

A
nev - er will get wis - dom, un - less they dear - ly buy; It is

T
nev - er will get wis - dom, un - less they dear - ly buy; It is

B
nev - er will get wis - dom, un - less they dear - ly buy; It is

mf

124

S
van - i - ty that ev - er makes re - pent - ance come too late, And

A
van - i - ty that ev - er makes re - pent - ance come too late, And

T
van - i - ty that ev - er makes re - pent - ance come too late, And

B
van - i - ty that ev - er makes re - pent - ance come too late, And

cresc. *rit. e dim.* *a tempo*

128

S
they who in - to cob - webs run, right well de - serve their fate.

A
they who in - to cob - webs run, right well de - serve their fate.

T
they who in - to cob - webs run, right well de - serve their fate.

B
they who in - to cob - webs run, right well de - serve their fate.

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David Anderson
SHORCHOR Music
1706 NE 177th St.
Shoreline, WA 98155 USA

