

Course Title: *Survey of American Literature from Anne Bradstreet to Walt Whitman*

Course Code: Eng 305

Upon a Spider Catching a Fly

Edward Taylor

Thou sorrow, venom Elfe:

Is this thy play,

To spin a web out of thyselfe

To Catch a Fly?

For Why?

I saw a pettish wasp

Fall foule therein:

Whom yet thy Whorle pins did not clasp

Lest he should fling

His sting.

But as affraid, remote

Didst stand hereat,

And with thy little fingers stroke

And gently tap

His back.

Thus gently him didst treat

Lest he should pet,

And in a froppish, aspish heate

Should greatly fret

Thy net.

Whereas the silly Fly,

Caught by its leg

Thou by the throate tookst hastily

And 'hinde the head

Bite Dead.

This goes to pot, that not

Nature doth call.

Strive not above what strength hath got,

Lest in the brawle

Thou fall.

This Frey seems thus to us.

Hells Spider gets

His intrails spun to whip Cords thus

And wove to nets

And sets.

To tangle Adams race

In's stratigems

To their Destructions, spoil'd, made base

By venom things,

Damn'd Sins.

But mighty, Gracious Lord

Communicate

Thy Grace to breake the Cord, afford

Us Glorys Gate

And State.

We'l Nightingaile sing like

When pearcht on high

In Glories Cage, thy glory, bright,

And thankfully,

For joy.

Upon A Wasp Chilled with Cold

The bear that breathes the northern blast
Did numb, torpedo-like, a wasp
Whose stiffened limbs encramped, lay bathing
In Sol's warm breath and shine as saving,
Which with her hands she chafes and stands
Rubbing her legs, shanks, thighs, and hands.
Her pretty toes, and fingers' ends
Nipped with this breath, she out extends
Unto the sun, in great desire
To warm her digits at that fire.
Doth hold her temples in this state
Where pulse doth beat, and head doth ache.
Doth turn, and stretch her body small,
Doth comb her velvet capital.
As if her little brain pan were
A volume of choice precepts clear.
As if her satin jacket hot
Contained apothecary's shop
Of nature's receipts, that prevails
To remedy all her sad ails,
As if her velvet helmet high
Did turret rationality.

She fans her wing up to the wind
As if her pettycoat were lined,
With reason's fleece, and hoists sails
And humming flies in thankful gales
Unto her dun curled palace hall
Her warm thanks offering for all.

Lord, clear my misted sight that I
May hence view Thy divinity,
Some sparks whereof thou up dost hasp
Within this little downy wasp
In whose small corporation we
A school and a schoolmaster see,
Where we may learn, and easily find
A nimble spirit bravely mind
Her work in every limb: and lace
It up neat with a vital grace,
Acting each part though ne'er so small
Here of this fustian animal.
Till I enravished climb into
The Godhead on this ladder do,
Where all my pipes inspired upraise
An heavenly music furred with praise.

The Wrong Way Home

Edward Taylor

All night a door floated down the river.

It tried to remember little incidents of pleasure

from its former life, like the time the lovers

leaned against it kissing for hours

and whispering those famous words.

Later, there were harsh words and a shoe

was thrown and the door was slammed.

Comings and goings by the thousands,

the early mornings and late nights, years, years.

O they've got big plans, they'll make a bundle.

The door was an island that swayed in its sleep.

The moon turned the doorknob just slightly,

burned its fingers and ran,

and still the door said nothing and slept.

At least that's what they like to say,

the little fishes and so on.

Far away, a bell rang, and then a shot was fired.