Upon A Spider Catching A Fly
by Edward Taylor
1642-1729, written in 1684

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 treate
   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.