

Spider Legs

Poetry — Macy Petty

I saved a spider in the bathroom this morning
Slid this piece of paper underneath a cup
And watched as he sprang back to life
From a little black tangle
Into eight perfectly arched legs
That tapped lightly against the plastic
I could almost hear the sound
Gentle and insistent
Soft like those first saltshaker raindrops in a nighttime storm
Like your voice
Sometimes when you talk it is so low that I can barely hear you
I try not to talk over you, to be a good listener
I am a singer and my voice projects
The wind from my belly blows careless notes up to my lips
That jump onto everyone in my path
Sometimes the sound can be so loud and harsh that I fear for the
children
Who might one day suffer my lullabies
But your sentences are something like blown dandelion seeds
Floating to the ground, landing in just the right place
Just where I need them
Saving this ugly little knot is something you would do
I prefer an ambush with hairspray
I hold the glass up to my face
And observe his sizable fangs
I am not sure why I give him mercy
I wonder what I would do if it were a big wolf spider with eyes I
could see
Babies on her back

I am scared at this precedent for kindness
It is rich for me to consider the worthiness of big things to live
I have always been a big girl
Who likes skinny boys
And as I tiptoe to the door
I am considering my worthiness to love
To love you
But not for that reason
I would not normally go out on the porch in my gown
And take care lifting the cup, jumping back before he moves
I play at this kind of sweetness
Because you could always find a prettier girl
But you pretend nothing
You are as real as the sun warming the cold morning
The wind playing sighs on the empty tree branches
Thinking of you makes me want to build a home in the gentleness
Of those tapping legs
And I laugh at my morning visitor scurrying away across the lines
of this paper
Where I will write silk words
And try to sound just like you