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A Spider's Curiosity

Mary Graham Bonner

"I cannot always tell what people think of me," said Mr. Spider, settling himself comfortably. "But I can tell you what happened last summer.

"I came across a house with the blinds drawn and no one at home, and it looked cool and pleasant, so I went in through a crack under the door. I had expected to have the place to myself, but I found a number of spider friends and cousins had arrived before me.

"'Come to board?' they asked. 'It's an excellent hotel. Meals are fine.'

"'I've come,' I said, 'but I won't be paying board.'

"'Oh?' they said.

"'I will not pay board,' I told them. 'It's a waste of time, and besides, board spoils people. They think they can be rude and measure out everything by the spoonful and watch you to see you don't eat more than you're allowed. I won't have it.'

"'None of us pay either,' they said cheerfully. 'Besides, the family will be glad to know someone is keeping an eye on the house.'

"So I settled in. But after a while I began to feel restless. Everyone around me was working, spinning, building — and I had nothing to do.

"'Did you bring your work?' one of them asked.

"'I did indeed,' I said, and I began looking for a good spot. And then I noticed the telephone.

"'There,' I said.

"'But the telephone is a modern invention,' they said. 'And spinning is an ancient art.'

"'Then I shall combine the old and the new,' I said. 'I will spin my web around the telephone. When the family comes home, they will have to speak to their friends through Spiderland.'"



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