

GRADED HOME READING BOOKS

SECOND SERIES

THE SPIDER

Approved, Vide D. P. I's Order

No. L. Dis. 1995/56/A 13 dated 24-10-'56

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GRADED HOME READING
BOOKS



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FIRST LEVEL PRACTICE READERS
BOOK I

335

THE SPIDER

Edited by

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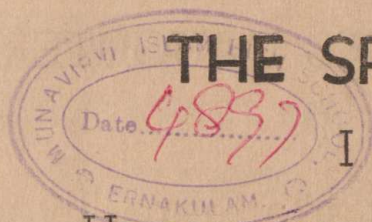
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THE SPIDER

Have you not seen the spider ?

It weaves beautiful webs which shine in the sun. The thread is finer than the best silk.

How beautiful is the spider's web !

Is it not finer than the finest cloth that man has ever made ?

There is a story about the spider. It is a Greek story and it tells us how the gods changed a proud woman into a spider.

THE SPINNER'S DAUGHTER

II

Long long ago there lived in Greece an old man who was a good spinner. All day long he would sit spinning by the road side.

He spun fine yarn. It was so good and strong that many people came to buy it. Before long he became well known all over Greece as the best spinner in the land.

The old man had a good wife who loved him dearly. For a long time they had no children.

At last a child was born to them. She was a sweet

little baby and her father and mother loved her dearly.

They named her Arachne. The spinner's daughter was very beautiful and her father was very proud of her.

The years went by.

Arachne grew up into a beautiful girl.

Every day she would sit by her father watching him spin.

"I wish I could spin like you," said she to her father.

The old man was glad when he heard it.

"I shall teach you how to spin," said he.

He made her sit by his side and taught her how to spin.

Arachne was clever like her father. She liked spinning.

All day long she would sit by her father's side and spin. He showed her how to spin well and before long she became a clever spinner like her father.

The people who lived nearby often came to see her spin.

"How well she spins!" said one of them.

"She spins better than her father," said another.

"She is the best spinner in all Greece," said they.

Arachne heard their words and felt very proud.

The old spinner was also very proud of his daughter.

"Arachne is the cleverest spinner in all Greece," said he "and I must teach her how to weave."

So he called his daughter to his side and told her she must learn to weave.

"Yes, father," said she, "I shall learn weaving too."

From that day she began to learn weaving. Soon she became very clever at weaving. She wove fine cloth.

"How fine!" said her friends when they saw the cloth she had made.

Before long Arachne could weave beautiful pictures on cloth. Some were the pictures of handsome men. Others were those of beautiful women. Sometimes she wove pictures of trees and flowers.

"How beautiful!" cried those who saw the pictures.

Arachne heard their words and was very happy.

As days went by, she became much more clever. But she also grew more and more proud.

TEST: Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Arachne was the daughter of a clever—
(king, spinner, soldier)
2. They were—
(Romans, Indians, Greeks)

3. Her father taught her to——and——.
(read, spin, write, weave)
4. She could spin fine——and weave fine——
(silk, cloth, cotton, yarn)
5. She wove beautiful——on cloth——
(pictures, stories, women)

THE GODDESS

III

When Arachne became very famous, many people came to see her. They came from far and near.

They came to Arachne to see her spin and weave.

They would stand by watching her at work. They loved to see her spin.



Many people came to see her weave. As she sat at her loom weaving beautiful cloth with fine pictures, they said, "How clever Arachne is! No one can weave like her."

Even the gods came to see her at work. They would stand by her side watching her weave fine pictures.

But Arachne could not see them.

One of the goddesses who came there often was Minerva. She was the daughter of Zeus and was the wisest of the gods and goddesses. The people of the city of Athens looked upon her as their own goddess and called her Pallas Athene. She

was the friend of great heroes and helped them whenever they needed help.

Minerva was the goddess of spinning and weaving. She could spin and weave better than all other people. She liked good spinners. When she learned that Arachne was a famous spinner, she went to see her spin.

Minerva stood by the side of Arachne looking at her work. When the goddess saw how clever she was, she was very much pleased. Arachne could not see Minerva and she did not know that the goddess was standing by her side.

But Minerva gave her new ideas and taught her to spin and weave better. Whenever she wove beautiful pictures, Minerva helped her. Every new idea she had, came from Minerva though Arachne did not know it.

One day Arachne sat working at her loom. Many men and women had come to see her weave. Among them were the water nymphs.

The nymphs were filled with wonder when they saw the fine cloth she made.

"How beautiful!" cried they as Arachne wove beautiful pictures on cloth.

"Only Minerva can weave like this," said the nymphs.

When Arachne heard this she stopped her work and said, "I can spin and weave better than Minerva. Let her come and try if she can weave like me."

Everyone was afraid when she said this. The gods punish those who are proud. So it was feared that they would punish the proud girl.

The water nymphs were afraid and left the place. The men and women who had come to see her weave went away.

"Minerva will get angry,"

they said, "and Arachne will be punished for her pride."

TEST:—Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Minerva was a great—
(king, queen, god, goddess)
 2. She taught—to spin and weave well.
(the gods, men, Arachne)
 3. But Arachne said she could weave better than—
(her father, Minerva, Zeus)
 4. People thought that Minerva would—her for saying it.
(punish, punished, punishes)
-

THE OLD WOMAN

Date.....IV.....

When Arachne's father heard her words, he was very much afraid.

"The gods punish the proud," said he to himself.

So he went up to his daughter and said, "Arachne, what have you done? Don't you know that Minerva is a great goddess? Why did you say you could weave better than she? You have done a great wrong. It will bring great punishment upon you. Go to the temple of Minerva and pray to the goddess to forgive you."

But Arachne answered, "What wrong have I done? I am sure I can weave better than Minerva. If I can't let her punish me."

The old man was **very** sad when he heard his daughter's answer.

"Pride goes before a fall," said he. "Think well, Arachne. Do you think you can do better than the gods?"

"I am sure," said Arachne again, "I can spin and weave better than any god or goddess."

"O daughter," said the old man, "don't say anything which will make the gods

angry. Pray to Minerva to forgive you.

But Arachne would not beg the goddess to forgive her.

She was so proud that she did not fear even the gods.

When Arachne's father left her room, an old woman came that way. Her hair was white. She had a staff in her hand and she walked very slowly.

She went up to Arachne and said, "Dear daughter, I am an old woman who is a hundred years old."

Arachne asked her to sit down.

"Sit down, mother," said she.

"What can I do for you?"

"I heard what you said about Minerva," said the old woman.

"I have not said anything wrong," said Arachne. "I think I can spin and weave better than Minerva."

"Don't say so, dear daughter," said the old woman. "You do not know Minerva."

"I am not afraid of her," said Arachne.

"Don't you know that Minerva is your friend?" asked the old woman. "Has she not helped you?"

"How has she helped me?" asked Arachne.

"It was Minerva who taught you to weave so well?" said the old woman.

"She did not teach me anything," said Arachne.

"Whenever you sat at your loom, Minerva stood by your side," said the old woman. "It was she who taught you to weave so cleverly."

"Minerva never came to me and she never taught me anything," said Arachne.

"You cannot see Minerva when she stands by your side," said the old woman. "But I tell you, she was always with you.

It was she who taught you to weave so well. Therefore ask the great goddess to forgive you. "

Arachne got angry when she said this.

"Old woman, " cried she, "go your way. I won't do as you say, "

"The goddess will punish you, " said the woman.

"I am not afraid of the goddess, " said Arachne proudly, "and I will speak as I please. "

When she said this, the old woman turned red with anger.

At that moment a bright light filled the room. It was so bright that Arachne had to shut her eyes.

When she opened her eyes, the old woman was gone.

In her place there was a tall and beautiful lady !

Her eyes were blue and she had golden hair.

It was the great goddess Minerva !

TEST: Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Arachne's—was afraid that Minerva would punish her.

(mother, father, friend)

2. He told her to pray to the—to forgive her.

(king, priest, goddess)

3. But she—do so:
(will, would, would not)
 4. Then—came to her.
(a man, an old woman, the king)
 5. She also told her to beg Minerva to
—her.
(help, give, forgive)
 6. But Arachne said she would not ask
—to forgive her.
(her father, the king, the goddess)
 7. The old woman changed herself into
the goddess—
(Juno, Hera, Minerva)
-
-

THE SPIDER

V

4837
Arachne was filled with fear when she saw the goddess Minerva standing before her.

The goddess was angry and Arachne knew she would punish her.

Yet she was proud and did not beg Minerva to forgive her.

"What did you say?" asked the goddess. "Did you not say that you can spin and weave better than I?"

"Yes, I did," answered Arachne,

"Do you think you can out-do me in spinning and weaving?" asked Minerva.

"I think I can spin and weave better than you," answered Arachne.

"All right," said Minerva. "Let us sit down at the loom and weave. Then we shall see who weaves better."

"I am ready," said Arachne.

"Then get ready to weave," said the goddess.

Arachne set the loom and was ready to begin work.

The goddess also got a loom set for her. The two looms were side by side and

each could see what the other was weaving.

Then both of them sat down and began to work at the loom. Both Minerva and Arachne could weave well. The goddess was angry and Arachne was proud.

Both of them wove fine cloth. Both of them wove beautiful pictures on cloth.

Minerva's weaving showed pictures of proud men and women. They tried to out-do the gods and in the end they were punished.

Arachne saw the pictures. She knew why the goddess wove them. "Minerva wants

to show that she will punish me," said Arachne. "But I will show her that I can weave better."

She wove very fine cloth. She also wove beautiful pictures. They were the pictures of gods who made mistakes. She wanted to show Minerva that even the gods might go wrong,

Arachne's work was very beautiful and it filled Minerva with wonder.

But when she saw the pictures she became very angry.

Arachne made fun of the gods and goddesses in those pictures!

At once Minerva jumped up from the loom.

"What!" cried she, "Do you think you can make fun of the gods!"

She took the cloth that Arachne had woven and tore it to pieces.

Then she took the spindle from Arachne's hand and threw it on her head.

"You think you can spin and weave better than the gods and goddesses," cried she. "So you and yours shall spin and weave for ever."

When the spindle fell on Arachne's head, she grew small. Her hair fell from her

head. Her head and body grew very small. Her hands and legs too became small.

She was no longer a woman.

In the place of Arachne there was a little spider !

There had been no spiders in the world before Minerva turned the proud girl into a spider.

As a spider Arachne went on spinning and weaving day after day.

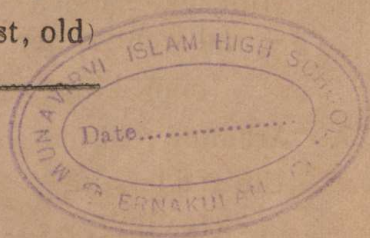
Even today you can see her children making beautiful webs that shine in the sun,

How beautiful they are !

Don't you think that the spider is a clever spinner and weaver ?

TEST:-Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Minerva's weaving showed pictures of—.
(gods, men, animals)
2. Arachne's weaving showed the gods making—.
(cloth, mistakes, wings)
3. Minerva got angry and changed Arachne into a—.
(cat, spider, woman)
4. She was the—spider in the world.
(last, first, old)



FINAL TEST

Complete the following sentences choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Arachne was the daughter of a clever—
(king, spinner, god)
2. She learned to spin and—well.
(read, weave, write)
3. She said that she could spin and weave better than—.
(Zeus, Minerva, Juno)
4. Her father asked her to pray to Minerva to—her.
(help, try, forgive)
5. But she—do it.
(would, would not, will)
6. Minerva changed herself into an old —and went to her.
(man, king, woman)
7. Arachne told her that she could out-do the goddess in—
(reading, weaving, spinning)
8. Minerva became —and they sat down to weave.
(ill, angry, clever)

9. Minerva wove pictures of —whom the gods had punished.
(kings, men, animals)
10. Arachne drew pictures of gods who made—.
(books, mistakes, cloth)
11. Minerva grew angry and —them to pieces.
(tear, tore, torn)
12. She changed Arachne into a —.
(crow, cat, spider)
13. This was how—came into the world.
(gods, men, spiders)



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