

ARACHNE

Silence hung over the cottage in Hypaipa,
The only sound was the regular click and scrape of a shuttle,
Arachne had a joyous smile etched on her delicate lips,
She felt the happiness that was being woven through the fine threads.

A gentle knock at the door, barely audible,
Arachne, flustered, abandoned her tapestry and scuttled over,
A gnarled woman started to praise her work,
And Arachne, flattered, started to boast of her talent and skill.

She gloated that she could weave better than the mighty goddess Athena,
The woman eyed her, and told Arachne that she should respect the gods,
Arachne twisted inside, feeling the gods watching her,
But instead she just laughed good-naturedly at her, hiding her annoyance,

Suddenly, the woman stood straighter, her wrinkles faded,
Arachne gasped in a mixture of horror and amazement,
The woman had elegant flowing hair and flawless skin,
The gnarled old woman was the goddess Athena.

Arachne, however, looked at Athena straight in the eye,
Feeling bold, she declared again that she had more skill,
Athena reddened, and challenged Arachne to a weaving
competition,
Arachne faltered, she knew that she could never compete
with a goddess,

They set up their looms in focused silence,
Arachne took her seat and started to move the shuttle,
Her tapestry was a shimmering work of humans, challenging
the confident gods,
Athena watched her with a hint of jealousy, humans should
not have this skill.

As Arachne finished, Athena began to sing as she worked,
Her tapestry seemed to glow with emotions,
It showed powerful gods putting humans in their place,
But as Athena completed her work, she knew that Arachne's
was better.

Athena, furious, tore apart poor Arachne's tapestry,
She ripped it into a thousand tiny pieces and they blew away
in the wind,
Arachne dared not to look at the angry goddess,
Athena did not look like the goddess of wisdom at all.

A finger was thrust at Arachne,
And Athena threatened to take her talent,
Arachne begged for the goddess not to,
And Athena, satisfied with the punishment, transformed
Arachne into a spider.