

The Spider from The Gwydir by R.I.J. Blumer

By the sluggish River Gwydir,
 Lived a wicked reedbacked spider,
 He was just about as vicious as could be;
 And the place that he was camped in
 Was a rusty Jones's jam-tin,
 In a paddock by the showground at Moree.
 Near him lay a shearer snoozing,
 He had been on the grog and boozing,
 All the night and all the previous day;
 And the "kooking of the kookas
 And the noise of showground spruikers,
 Failed to wake him from the trance in which he lay.
 Then a crafty looking spieler,
 With a dainty little Sheila,
 Came along collecting wood to make a fire;
 Said the spieler, "There's a boozer,
 And he's going to be a loser.
 If he isn't you can christen me a liar!"
 Wriggle round and keep nit, honey,
 While I fan the mug for money,
 And we'll have some luxuries for tea."
 She answered "Don't be silly!
 You go back and boil the billy.
 You can safely leave the mug to little me."
 So she circled ever nearer.
 Till she reached the dopey shearer,
 With his pocket bulging, fast asleep and snug;
 But she didn't see the spider,
 That was ringing just beside her,
 For her mind was on the money and the mug
 Now the spider wanted dinner,
 He was daily growing thinner,
 He'd been fasting and was hollow as an urn;
 As she eyed the bulging pocket,
 He just darted like a rocket
 And he bit the spieler's Sheila on the stern.

Like a flash she raced off squealing,
 And her clothes began unpeeling,
 While to hear her yells would make you feel forlorn;
 On the bite one hand was pressing,
 While the other was undressing,
 And she reached the camp the same as she was born.
 Then the shearer, pale and haggard,
 Woke, and back to town he staggered,
 Where he caught the train and gave the booze a rest,
 And he'll never know a spider,
 That was camping by the Gwydir
 Had saved him sixty-seven of the best.



A FORGOTTEN figure — the bush "reciter" at his zenith. (Illustration by Lanka.)

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