

CREEPY SPIDERS, LOVING CREATURES by Caterina Marsilli

I really hate spiders.

They are creepy – still, one day I couldn't help but watch a program about their lives on TV. Do you know when you have that sort of “masochistic” attitude? The more details the documentary provided, the more I grew disgusted; nevertheless, I was... glued to that Nature channel.

At one point, the ... “sadist” presenter started providing comprehensive videos on the reproductive method for *Latrodectus Hesperus*, a black widow variety particularly famous because the males are usually eaten by female partners following to the reproductive act. Simply dis-gus-ting!! I was feeling sick now, so that I successfully broke the sort of hypnotic status I had fallen into and switched off the TV.

...and quickly tried to make myself busy in order to forget the whole beady-eyed thing.

Since that day, I often recalled that documentary, and, little by little, my judgement started changing: I was now considering the meaning of that behavior, rather than the fact per se. Nature is always true, and nothing in the Animal world happens by chance. What if such a behavior was the only chance for female spiders to gain enough energy to successfully lay their eggs, and continue their circle of life? I did recall that the males were accepting their destiny: no acts of rebellion or escape attempts were ever displayed while I was watching the videos. Somehow the males were aware of the consequences, and yet, still alive, they were quietly letting their lovers slowly eat their own body. Without any fight, almost as if they were saying that yes, they were forgiving them, they were aware that this sacrifice was inevitable.

I was now able to see some sort of beauty in these horrendous creatures: because they were alive, they'd bear the responsibility to do anything to go on living as species, handing over this awareness to the next generations, at any price.

All of this without drama, because Death was accepted as an essential part of Life: there was nothing to be afraid of.

Are these animals capable of feelings? I really don't think so, but, if this were the case, those creepy little black things would be giving me the most powerful example of unconditional love ever.