

Lethal Embrace

A short play

By

Bruce Shearer

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Contact: Bruce Shearer

3 Young Street

Ivanhoe 3079

Australia

(613) 9499 1239

0409998112

email; bruce.shearer@lexisnexis.com.au

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Synopsis

Gilgrel and Zilmar two enormous black widow spiders discuss the state of their relationships. Zilmar is in love with Ziff and thinks her relationship with Ziff will be forever. Gilgrel is in love with Quat for now, but something tells her things are going to change.

(**ZILMAR** AND **GILGREL**, TWO HUGE FEMALE BLACK WIDOW SPIDERS ARE CHATTING TOGETHER AT THE TOP OF A WEB, WHILE THEIR LITTLE MALE PARTNERS, **ZIFF** AND **QUAT** GRIN AMIABLY AT THE EDGE.)

Gilgrel You'll eat him in the end.

Zilmar No way, I love him.
 He's such a nice little fellow.
 So polite, and I like the way he skitters round the web.

(**ZILMAR** TWANGS HER WEB JUST SLIGHTLY AND **ZIFF** JUMPS AND RUNS AROUND FOR A MOMENT.)

 See, isn't he a little cutey!

Gilgrel That's what I think we do.

(**GILGREL** SMILES AT **QUAT** AND THEN SPEAKS SLOWLY.)

 We love them (PAUSE) and then we eat them.

Zilmar No, I like him.

Gilgrel Sure we like them.

(**GILGREL** PAUSES AND GRINS.)

 Then we eat them.

Zilmar I don't like it.

Gilgrel I've just got this feeling.
 I'm not sure why.
 I guess it's just an inkling!

Zilmar Would you do it?

Gilgrel I think I might.

Zilmar Do you want to?

Gilgrel No, not now.
I'm in love as well.

(LONG PAUSE.)
But I think that changes.

Zilmar It sounds dreadful!

Gilgrel That's what you used to say about flies.

Zilmar Did I?

Gilgrel And the moths, even the mosquitoes.

Zilmar I'm amazed!

Gilgrel Things change.

Zilmar Perhaps they do.
But I love my furry little fellow!

Gilgrel You might love eating him when the time comes.

Zilmar No way, it turns my stomach.
When I say I love him, I mean it.
I don't love him to death.
We're doing it every night.

Gilgrel Do you think we're not?
That's part of it somehow.

Zilmar Part of what?

Gilgrel The change in attitude.

Zilmar This is something special.

Gilgrel I know it feels that way, because I love mine as well.
But I know I love him enough to eat him!

Zilmar Yuk!

Gilgrel Would it be any different to a fly?

Zilmar It's like eating a relative.

Gilgrel Yes.

But not a blood relative.

Zilmar Skinny little things are hardly worth eating.

Gilgrel I just have this feeling that we eat them.
I know I can't quite explain it.

Zilmar That's right, you can't!
I'm keeping mine!

(LIGHTS GO DOWN ON **ZILMAR** AND **GILGREL** AND COME UP ON **QUAT** AND **ZIFF**
CHATting ON THE EDGE OF THE WEB.)

Quat I haven't got much time.

Ziff I understand.

Quat She needs me so much.

Ziff They all do.

Quat Couldn't do a thing without me.

Ziff Really.

Quat Oh yes, we're a perfect pair, but without me, she's useless.

Ziff You don't tell her.

Quat Oh no, I couldn't.
She's very sensitive.

(QUAT AND ZIFF NOD AT ONE ANOTHER.)

Ziff Looking forward to the kids?

Quat Of course I am
We've made so many plans.

Ziff It will be a lot of work.
All those hungry mouths to feed.

Quat It will all be worth it when I'm sitting in the bosom of my family.

(LIGHTS GO DOWN AND COME UP ON GILGREL AND ZILMAR WHO ARE ENDURING THE AGONY OF LAYING THEIR EGGS, WHILE ZIFF AND QUAT SCURRY AROUND TRYING TO ASSIST, BUT MERELY GET IN THE WAY.)

Gilgrell Get out of my way.

Zilmar Thanks for trying.

Gilgrell That's no help.

Zilmar He is trying, they both are.

Gilgrel He's no use.

Zilmar Really.

Gilgrel Not any more.

Zilmar I love mine.

(GILGREL LOOKS AT THE SCURRYING LITTLE MALES MALICIOUSLY.)

Gilgrel Are you sure?

Zilmar I think so. (PAUSE)

Of course I am.

Gilgrel They make me . . .
Angry, very angry.
I could just tear one apart.

Zilmar Keep your hands off mine.
I don't know how you could do it.

Gilgrel Nor do I.

Zilmar To your own kind.
They're not flies you know!

Gilgrel Don't worry, yours is safe.
From me.
Even mine's still safe for a little while.
But the annoying wretch is trying too hard!

(GILGREL LASHES OUT A LONG BLACK LEG AT QUAT.)

And it won't save him!

(LIGHTS GO DOWN ON **ZILMAR** AND **GILGREL** AND COME UP ON **QUAT** AND **ZIFF** CHATTING ON THE EDGE OF THE WEB.)

Ziff Things are changing.

Quat Of course, we'll soon be fathers.

Ziff There's something else.

Quat I don't know what you mean?

Ziff The atmosphere, feels strange and tense.

(LONG PAUSE)

Quat Pregnant mothers can be irritable.

Ziff Is that it?

Quat They'll get over it when the babies come.

Ziff I hope you're right.

Quat Aren't I always.
Tomorrow we'll be daddies.
The best day of our lives!

Ziff I hope so, but I'm a bit nervous.

Quat You can trust me.
I have a sense of these things!

(LIGHTS GO DOWN ON AND COME UP ON **GILGREL** AND **ZILMAR** LOOKING MORE AGED AND BATTERED THAN THEY DID PREVIOUSLY AS DOES **ZIFF** WHO IS SKINNIER THAN EVER. **QUAT** CANNOT BE SEEN.)

Gilgrel That was a delicious and delicate experience.

Zilmar I don't want to know about it.

Gilgrel It's over now.

Yet I still savour that exquisite parting.

Zilmar Please, I said no more.

Gilgrel As you will.

I will digest.

(THERE IS A LONG PAUSE WHILE **GILGREL** MOVES TO THE FAR CORNER OF THE WEB AND **ZILMAR** CONTEMPLATES **ZIFF** WHO AS ALWAYS IS HOVERING NEAR.)

Zilmar You tire my sweetness!

As do we all.

Our little ones are spreading out all over the place.

The job is done.

(**ZILMAR** SURPRISES HERSELF BY SUDDENLY HOLDING OUT A SILKY FORELEG.)

Come here my lover.

(**ZIFF** COMES CLOSER.)

Closer

(**ZIFF** COMES UP A STEP.)

Closer still my darling

(**ZIFF** COMES UP A STEP FURTHER.)

Let me embrace you one more time.

(**ZILMAR** AND **ZIFF** EMBRACE.)

Yes

Zilmar Yes, it is time.

Time to say goodbye my lover!

Rest well little one.

(ZILMAR ENVELOPS ZIFF WHO HAS NEITHER THE STRENGTH NOR THE WILL TO RESIST. SHE BITES HIM ALMOST GENTLY AND THEN SLOWLY, ALMOST REVERENTLY WRAPS HIM.)

