

Warrington Minge – Monologue 4

Minge here!! No time for the Aaaaargghs on this occasion. Today's enrage for those of you still sober enough to emasculate a donkey is the subject of creepy crawlies. I was going to speak to you about the state of my socks but they, as ever will have to FEND FOR THEMSELVES.. Creepy crawlies. Taking their name, or course, from the fact that they creep and do a fair amount of crawling too. And I cannot stand them! How embarrassing do you think it is for a fully grown actor to find himself leaping three feet into the air and holding on to the nearest blanket simply because of a spider bounding like the very devil it is towards him? When surrounded by air and the promise of God it's embarrassing enough but when you're surrounded by a small fan named Gerald and a sound engineer it's almost unbearable. Why oh why do I fear them so? I'm bigger than they, I can do my 3 times table, I look marvellous in Khaki. Admittedly I can't build a web with my bottom but I think I've got the upper hand when it comes to climbing the old evolutionary ladder. Several times nightly do they enter your mouth whilst you're asleep, spray the roof of your mouth with their backsides, have a party and then arive derce without so much as a thankyou note and a bottle of brandy.

No doubt an astrologer would be able to examine my bumps and tell you that this fear of the creepies is in fact the fear of invasion. I am like Switzerland in this respect. Unlike so many of my fellow thespeens I do not wish to have something small and disgusting wiggling about in me. I realise in my profession I am something of an oddity. Perhaps I can trace this revulsion to a story I heard concerning the stupidest woman ever to live. An air hostess, aaaargh the irony, who one day fell out of an aero-plane some 24,000 feet in the air and survived! Miraculous you cry. No! Damn silly if you ask me. 24,000 feet straight down. No sensible person would have lived. The silly girl not only had the damn bad manners to live, but bruised, egg whisked and generally crunched she began crawling through the jungle back to Kent. Whilst on her hands and knees, which reminds me I must phone my agent, little buggy doo dabs burrowed underneath her burst acne and laid eggs there. Eventually the progeny of those little buggers hatched and began promenading underneath her skin. I would have decided at this point to do the decent thing and drown myself in the nearest whisky, but no she lives to this day, a living exhibit in the National Heritage Museum, with the same responsibilities as a grade three listed bungalow. Not good enough!! If we can't fall out of aeroplanes and die, what's the point of being British, I ask you.

I remember being a small pig in a theatrical version of Charlotte's Web. A charming tale of infant mortality. And I have to say I came to loath the actress that played the spider. She sent a shiver down my spine every time she waved her eight spindly hands at me. Ironically, like a spider, she was renowned for her bottom in most of the watering holes of the West End and very good with the baby spiders on stage, but try asking that actress back to your dressing room for a crème de menthe and an Eccles cake. Many nights did I ask and many nights did I sit alone, my little pig costume unwashed and unwanted on the back of the dressing room door.

A pig is an awfully difficult thing to pull off, when your throat is dry and you've been oinking away for the best part of two hours. That woman would never hit

her cues. I would have to extemporise furiously until she remembered, which is no fun if you're a pig. By the end of the tour I knew my lifelong hatred of spiders had been well founded indeed. Of course I do try not to be so Joan Crawford about them. I realise it's not their fault that they're the spawn of Satan; I mean you never really have the choice to be a spider, because if you had the choice you wouldn't be. Some of them scuttle too, have you noticed. Nothing on this planet should scuttle, except a boat. Every time I see a spider now I have a flashback to my Macbeth in Colwyn Bay. Disastrous tour. The critics were most unkind. CRITICS! THAT'S IT! THAT'S WHAT SPIDERS REMIND ME OF! Crawly, nasty, scuttly little people. And you never know when they are there love. One night, nothing and you give the best darn Macbeth that's ever been seen on the border of Cornwall and the next night Ophelia actually dies on stage far too early to be covered, I bravely soldier on telling Mercutio and Puck to carry her off stage fantastically dressed in wild begonias and then strike me if Caliban doesn't fall into the hole he's dug for the graveyard scene. Absolute disaster and every critic this side of the Perinnesse is in. And as they scuttled, crept and crawled back to their quills and their typewriters I knew that spiders and I were never going to get on. Or am I confused. Anyway, the point remains all spiders and creepy crawlies should be wiped from the earth with all the tact of the Japanese at Pearl Harbour. They serve no earthly purpose except to eat flies and what on earth is wrong with the good British Bluetit. People in India love flies. Of course that may have been the beneficial influence of the Raj. We saved Wales, when all those pits were closed, I say we should save the fly. Lovely buzzy little things they are, which is damn polite if you wish to swat them because you can just follow the buzz. Spiders are far too quiet for my liking. They're up to something. They hatch plots in your mouths when you're asleep which may one day bring about the downfall of mankind. Let us heed the warnings we see every day. If a spider can make a web with its bottom, what can it do with its head I ask you?

Your thanks are noted to save you time. Well, until you've twiddled with your knobs again.

Announcer: You have been listening to Warrington Minge. We apologise.