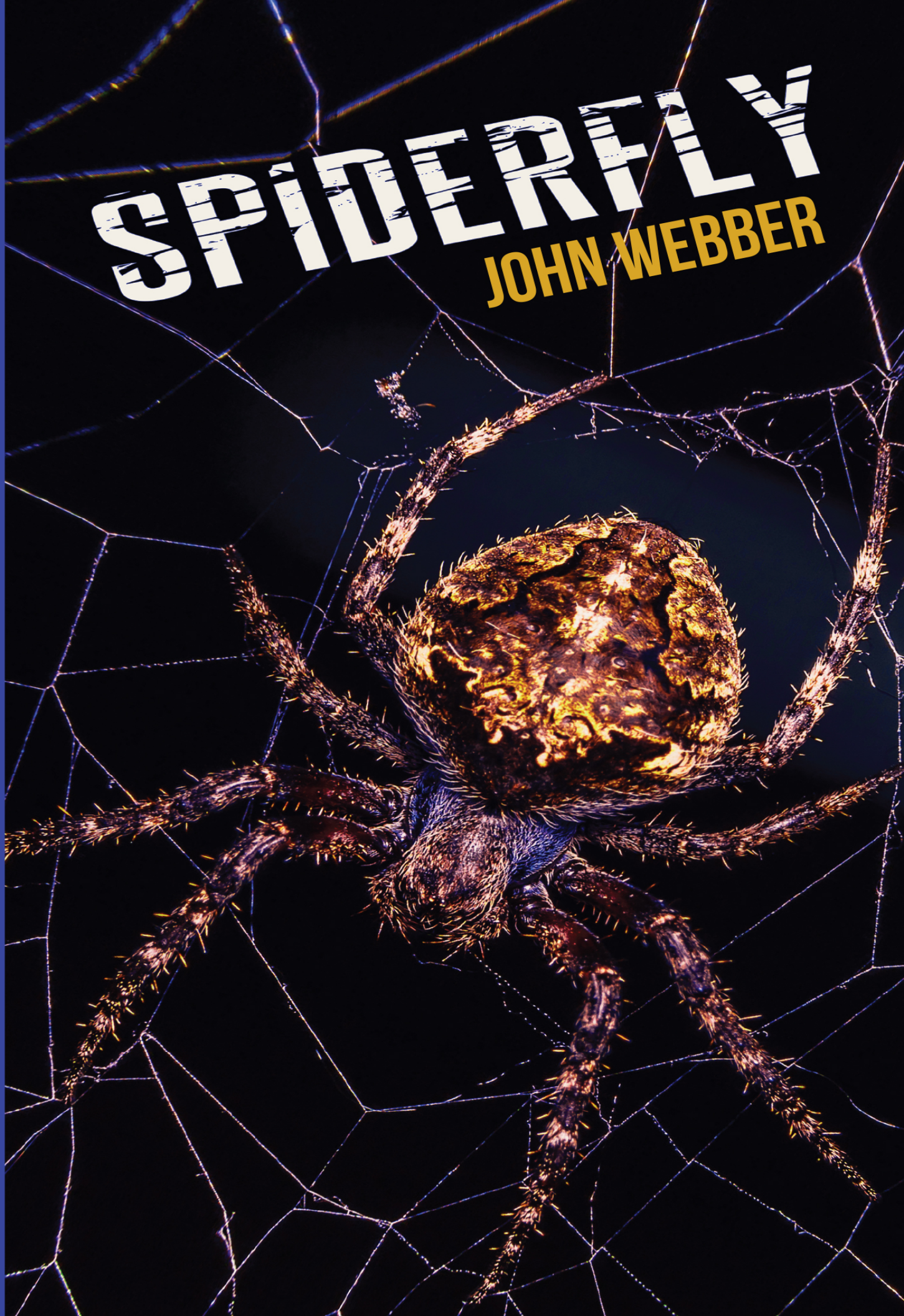


SPIDERFLY

JOHN WEBBER



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John Webber
SPIDERFLY



NICK HERN BOOKS

London

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Copyright and Performing Rights Information

Spiderfly was produced by Metal Rabbit and Theatre503, and first performed at Theatre503, London, on 6 November 2019, with the following cast:

ESTHER

Lia Burge

CHRIS / KEITH

Matt Whitchurch

Director:

Kirsty Patrick Ward

Set & Costume Design

Lizzy Leech

Lighting Design

Peter Small

Sound Design

Dominic Brennan

Stage Manager

Rose Hockaday

Assistant Director

Lucy Grace McCann

Casting Director

Christopher Worrall

Note on Play

When we were at the later stages of getting this play ready, I was asked to explain what a spiderfly was, which kind of flummoxed me.

It's a made-up word – I thought – obvs. And also, it clearly refers to the outlook of one of the characters in the play – if you'd read it – that some relationships have a predatory dynamic which may be dangerous for at least one of the people involved and this is pre-ordained. My triggered reaction to the question clearly says more about me than the question itself.

But thinking about it more afterwards, the word spiderfly started to mean more to me than just being a cool title for a play – which is all I thought it was, tbh. Maybe it describes – actually – the mood that settled over us all back in 2016 when the play's first draft was written, the year of the EU referendum and the Trump victory, then the warmest year on record. Maybe it's a word that perfectly describes two fixed and oppositional world views smashing together and being held in a toxic and tangled co-existence. And maybe it resembles how many of us feel now – that due to our own beliefs feeling so true and inherent and immovable, we've become stuck in some knotty grip with our similarly motivated opponents and now are faced with the possibility that it's in fact all of us who might end up dead in a ditch.

And if this is true, maybe collectively we need to go on a journey much like Esther in *Spiderfly* and like her understand that many of our absolute certainties are not that certain nor can they survive seismic changes to our worlds – and only by letting go of some of them, even some

deeply held certainties around how we see ourselves, like Esther does, can we imagine and then create some new truths together.

*John Webber,
October 2019*

Acknowledgements

For their help in bringing this play to the stage, I'd like to give special thanks to: George Warren, Sofi Berenger, Oli Seymour and all at Metal Rabbit; Ruth D'Silva, Eduard Lewis, Felix Scott, Lily McLeish, Tom Mothersdale and Kirsty Patrick Ward; Melli Marie and the Park Theatre Script Accelerator; Old Vic New Voices and Old Vic Workrooms; Lisa Spirling, Steve Harper and all at Theatre503.

J.W.

Characters

ESTHER, *early thirties*

KEITH, *late twenties*

CHRIS, *early thirties*

Chris and Keith can be played by the same actor.

This ebook was created before the end of rehearsals and so may differ slightly from the play as performed.

1.

Evening.

ESTHER *stands*.

ESTHER. I'm nervous.

Beat.

I'm waiting. I'm –

Beat.

and it's –

Beat.

I want a cigarette.

Beat.

I really want a cigarette.

Beat.

I'm not going to – I don't smoke – I'm not a smoker. Any more.

Beat.

You're right by the way. Showing too much cleavage is – you know what I mean? I've gone for something – I need to look nice, create the right impression, show myself to be, you know – whatever I'm feeling inside, I need to look – well – I don't want to look like – I don't want to look dumb. Who wants to meet someone who looks dumb? Actually, lots of guys. I need to look intelligent but not too scary. Happy. I need to look happy. I need to look happy. Nicotine-free, obviously. Free – just – free of stuff and

baggage, you know? Look free, happy and in the moment. Look like everything has been left behind. Look like – new. A new start. That's what I've got to look like.

Beat.

That's who I've got to be now.

Beat.

Jesus.

Beat.

Okay.

Beat.