A Noiseless Patient Spider
By Walt Whitman

A noiseless, patient spider,
I mark'd, where, on a little promontory, it stood, isolated;
Mark'd how, to explore the vacant, vast surrounding,
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself;
Ever unreeling them—ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you, O my Soul, where you stand,
Surrounded, surrounded, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres, to connect them;
Till the bridge you will need, be form'd—till the ductile anchor hold;
Till the gossamer thread you fling, catch somewhere, O my Soul.

What is this poem about? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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ANSWERS

The speaker of the poem compares himself to a spider spinning a web (Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres, to connect them; Till the bridge you will need, be form'd—till the ductile anchor hold); while the spider is casting out of himself into the vastness of space in an attempt to create something that can support him, the speaker of the poem is looking for something to which he can belong (till the gossamer thread you fling, catch somewhere, O my soul).