



BY KIDS FOR KIDS

Anansi brings Wisdom to the World

Anansi the Spider was a trickster. He was known for his mischief and clever plans. Well, actually, MOST of his plans were clever! Some of them were actually rather silly! Like the time he decided that he was going to collect all the wisdom of the world. That's right, all of it! He wanted to make sure that there was none left for anyone else. His eyes gleamed as he thought, "I will be the cleverest creature in the world! Everyone will have to come to me for advice! Oh, just imagine. It would be so glorious. Ah, they'll come to me and say, "Oh please Anansi, you are so great!, we need your help" and of course, I will help them, but they will know that I am the wisest of all!"

He laughed to himself, and rubbed his hands together in delight! But then something occurred to him.

"Hmmm.....what am I going to store all the wisdom in?"

He pondered.....and then snapped his fingers, "Aha! I've got it! I'll use a calabash!"

Now, a calabash is like a large pumpkin. It's hard on the outside, and can be hollowed out on the inside, so that one can store all sorts of things, like water, milk..."or wisdom!" said Anansi.



He found a calabash that was just right. He cut off the top and then hollowed it out. Soon, it was ready, so he set off to search for wisdom. He looked everywhere.....under bushes.....in the trees.....on mountains, in rivers, in villages, even at the bottom of the ocean. Wherever he looked, he found wisdom, and put it in his calabash.

Eventually, his calabash was full. There was so much wisdom in it that it was almost splashing out the top. But, he had done it! He had collected ALL the wisdom of the world!!!

"Ha!Ha!" he cried, " I will now be the wisest!"

But then a thought occurred to him, "How can I make sure that nobody takes any wisdom from my calabash. I can't spend all my time guarding it. And I can't carry it around with me forever. That would be ridiculous. No, I need some other plan."

He thought and he thought until at last he clicked his fingers and said, "I've got it! I'll hide it!"

He searched all over for a suitable hiding place. Perhaps a cave? "Naaaah!" Under a large rock? "No that would never work" On the riverbank? No, it will wash away!". He searched and searched until he found a large Baobab tree. "Perfect, "he said, nodding his head in satisfaction! The tree was absolutely enormous! Gigantic! Monumental! Humongous! " The perfect hiding place! No one will ever think to look up there!

But, there was one problem! How was he going to get it up there? He thought for a moment, and then set to work! First, he gathered some vines. He then climbed to the top of the tree and tied the vine to the highest branch. He gave it a tug to make sure it was strongly attached and then scuttled back down the tree again.

Then he picked up the calabash. Now, even though spiders have eight legs, the calabash was so heavy that he had to use six of them. He carefully carried his load to the tree and tried to climb it. It didn't take him long to realize that this was not going to work.

He found some more vines, and tied one end to the top of the calabash. Then he tied the other end of the vine around his neck. He began to carefully climb the tree. The calabash dangled beneath him as he climbed. It was rather heavy, and he grunted and groaned as he hauled it higher and higher.





It swung this way and that with his movements. Halfway up, it knocked on a broken branch and a little bit of wisdom splashed out.

"Oh no!" he groaned, "Oh well, I'll have to climb back down later and collect that last bit of wisdom. He carried on working his way up the giant tree.

With all of his efforts, he was making quite a lot of noise. He attracted the attention of a young girl. She walked up the tree, and was puzzled to see the spider, huffing and puffing, and clearly having a very hard time carrying the heavy calabash up the tree.

Anansi looked rather silly with his huge load tied around his neck. The girl giggled at the silly sight!

"Excuse me," she called out, "you look like you need some help."

"No thanks," cried Anansi, "No, I'm quite alright! Everything is under control. You can just be on your way, little girl. Clever Anansi knows just what he's doing!"

He continued to struggle between the branches. He was almost at the top when the calabash got stuck between two branches. He grunted and groaned as he tried to swing the calabash free. As he did so, more wisdom sloshed out, and some of it even landed on the little girl watching below.

"Hey," she spluttered, wiping the wisdom off her head, "watch what you're doing, Mr.Spider! You know, there might be a better way to do this?"

"Better way?" groaned Anansi, who was by now completely exhausted. "Like what?"

"Well, the calabash is swinging about underneath you. Surely that makes it really hard to carry. And it keeps hitting branches and getting knocked about and stuck."

"Well what do you expect me to do?" asked Anansi.

"Well, if I was you I'd tie it to my back. That way it won't swing about, so it will be much easier to carry."

Anansi had to admit, his plan was not very effective. "You might have a point," he said and clambered down to the calabash. He tied it securely to his back and began to climb the tree again. It was MUCH easier! And he didn't spill a drop! He'd done



it! The wisdom was safely up the tree! Well, most of it. He had to fetch the wisdom that had dropped down. He looked down and saw it at the base of the tree. And he saw the young girl smiling up at him, still wiping her wet head.

That got him thinking.....

"The wisdom spilt from the pot.....and landed on her head.....and then she gave me wise advicethat I had not thought of myself!"

He realised that he was wrong to try to keep all the wisdom to himself! Wisdom is best when it is shared.

"Thank you little girl, " he called from the top of the tree. " That was a very clever idea. But now, will you please stand out of the way?"

The young girl did as she was told. Anansi picked up the calabash of wisdom and raised it above his head. Then he hurled it with all his might from the top of the tree. The girl looked on, amazed to see the huge pot dropping down. And then, it struck the ground with a huge crash. The calabash shattered into thousands of tiny pieces, and the wisdom splashed out and was caught up in the wind and blown all over the world to anyone that wanted some of it. And that is why there is wisdom everywhere, for us all to share!

The End

