



Lazy Anansi

Ghanaian folktale
English



Once upon a time, there was a spider called Anansi. He was too lazy to cook his own food. Instead, he used to visit his friends and eat the delicious food they had cooked.

One day, he was walking past Rabbit's house when he smelled something cooking.

"Greens!" he said excitedly.

"They're not quite ready yet," said Rabbit. "You can help me with the washing up in the mean time."

"Sorry, I have things to do. I'll come back later," said Anansi.





“How will I call you when they’re ready?” asked Rabbit.

Anansi thought for a minute.

“I’ll spin a web,” he said, “and tie one end around my leg and one end to your pot. When the greens are ready, pull on the web string and I’ll come right away.”

So Anansi tied the web to the pot, and walked on.

A short while later he saw Monkey and his wife, cooking some beans in a large pot.

“Come and join us!” they said. “The beans are nearly ready.”

“Sorry, I have things to do,” said Anansi before they could ask him to help.

“But let me tie one end of this web around my leg and one end to your pot. When the beans are ready, pull on the web string, and I’ll come.”





He walked on until he smelled sweet potatoes.

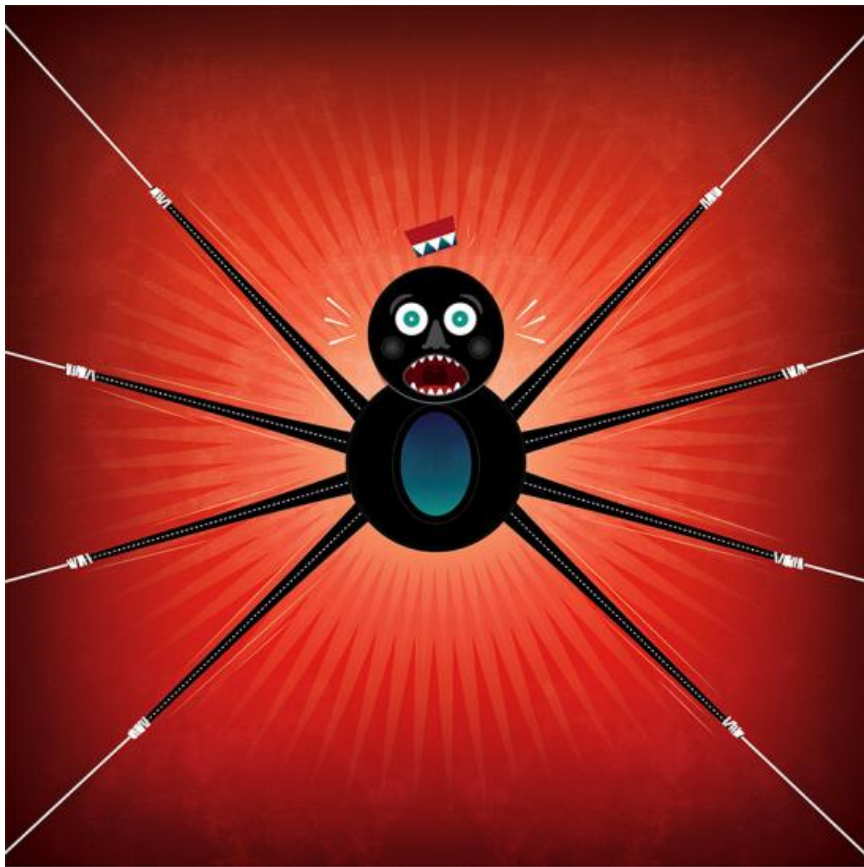
"Anansi," called his friend Warthog. "My pot is full of sweet potatoes and honey! Come and share my food with me. Here's a fork for you to help me stir."

"I'll come back later," said Anansi quickly. "But let me tie one end of this web around my leg and one end to your pot. When the sweet potatoes are ready, pull on the web string, and I'll come."

By the time Anansi arrived at the river, each of his eight legs was tied to a different pot of delicious food. Just then, Anansi felt a tug on one of his legs.

“Rabbit’s food is ready!” he said, licking his lips.





He felt a second tug.
And a third.
And a fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh,
eighth...
Everyone was pulling on the web
strings at the same time!
“Stop! Stop!” he cried in pain, as
his legs were stretched thinner and
thinner.
But no one could hear him.

Finally, the web strings could hold no longer. They snapped one by one.

Anansi rolled into the river to soothe his painful legs. But his legs would not return to their normal shape.

And he was too embarrassed to go to any of his friends and share their food that day.

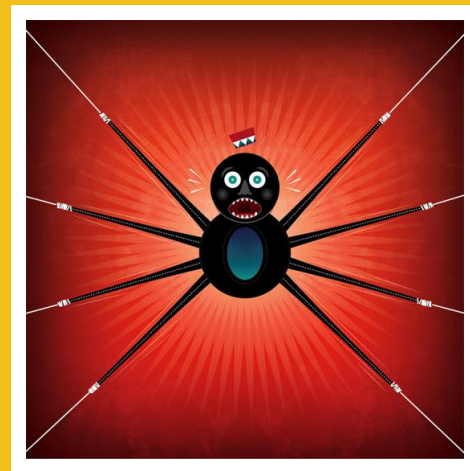


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