

A COLLECTION OF  
**STORIES**  
FROM  
**WEST AFRICA**

Compiled and Illustrated by  
David A. Naff



**THE MONKEYS'**  
**FINE HOUSE**



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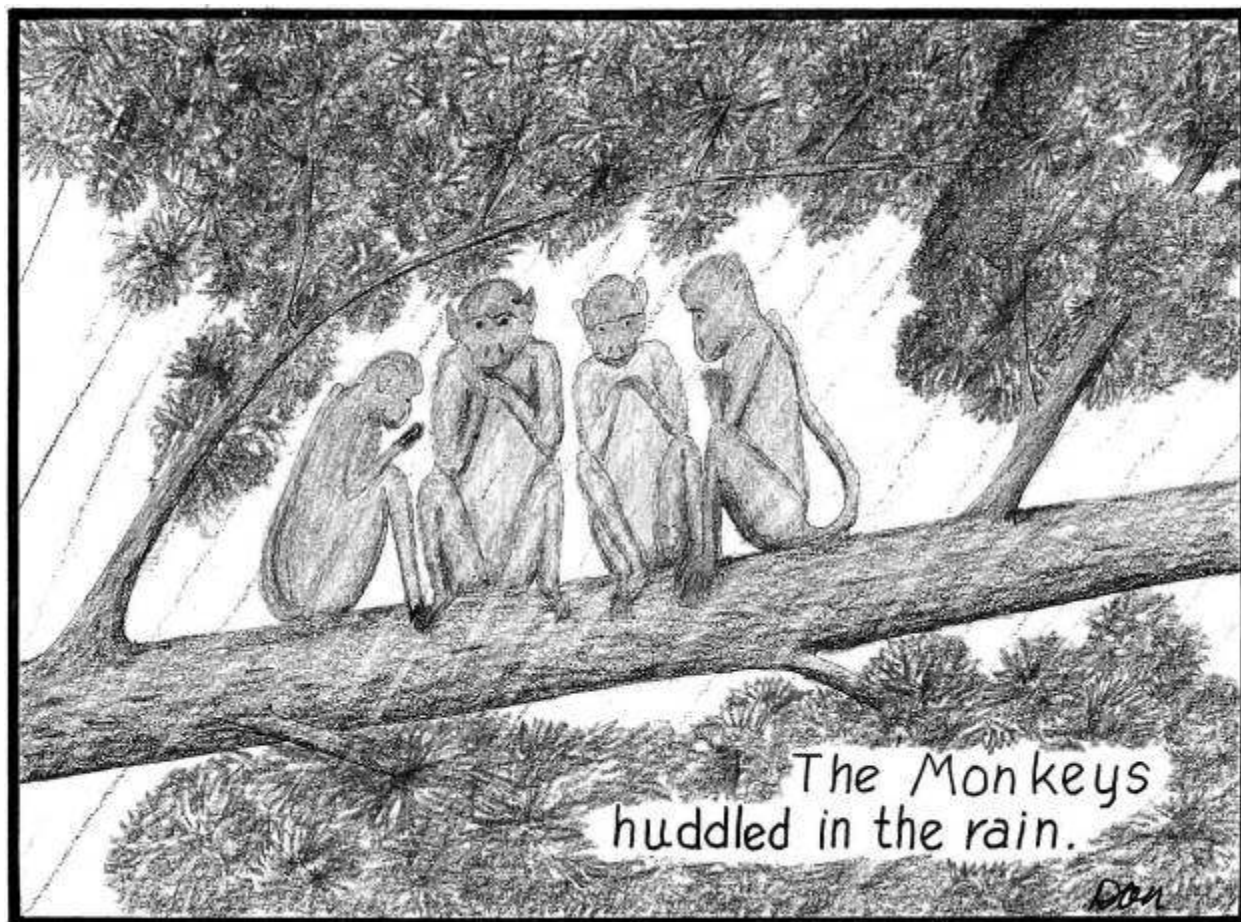
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**By Spark Team**



## THE MONKEYS' FINE HOUSE

Note to the reader: Words and phrases typical of West Africa are retained and indicated by italics.

The eye is afraid of the length and breadth of a job. Make up the mind and go ahead. (Bassa proverb)

Four Monkeys sat huddled together as the rain poured down in torrents. They were cold and wet and were shivering as the cold water trickled down their backs.

"Why should we *suffer* in the rain like this. Come, *let we* build us a fine house. Then we can be dry and warm when it rains," said First Monkey.

"Ah yes, we can make four sleeping rooms in it so that we can be very comfortable with lots of space," said Second Monkey.

"Yes," said Third Monkey, "but we should also have a nice parlor for whenever *strangers* come."

"And, of course, we must have a good kitchen so we can eat *sweet chop*," said Fourth Monkey.

"We must plaster it with strong plaster," added First Monkey, "so it will not be *quick to spoil*."

"We will start to build it as soon as this rain stops," put in Second Monkey.

Third Monkey volunteered, "I know where we can cut lots of good strong straight sticks to make the walls and rafters."

"I think it would be good to build it by those big trees over there. They would shelter it from the strong winds and there is good dirt nearby for daubing it," suggested Fourth Monkey.

"And it will not be hard to make chairs and tables and other things out of reed and rattan. As soon as the rains stop we must begin," returned First Monkey.

"Yes." "Yes." "Yes." They all agreed and went on talking about how they could make a fine *kwi* (civilized) house.

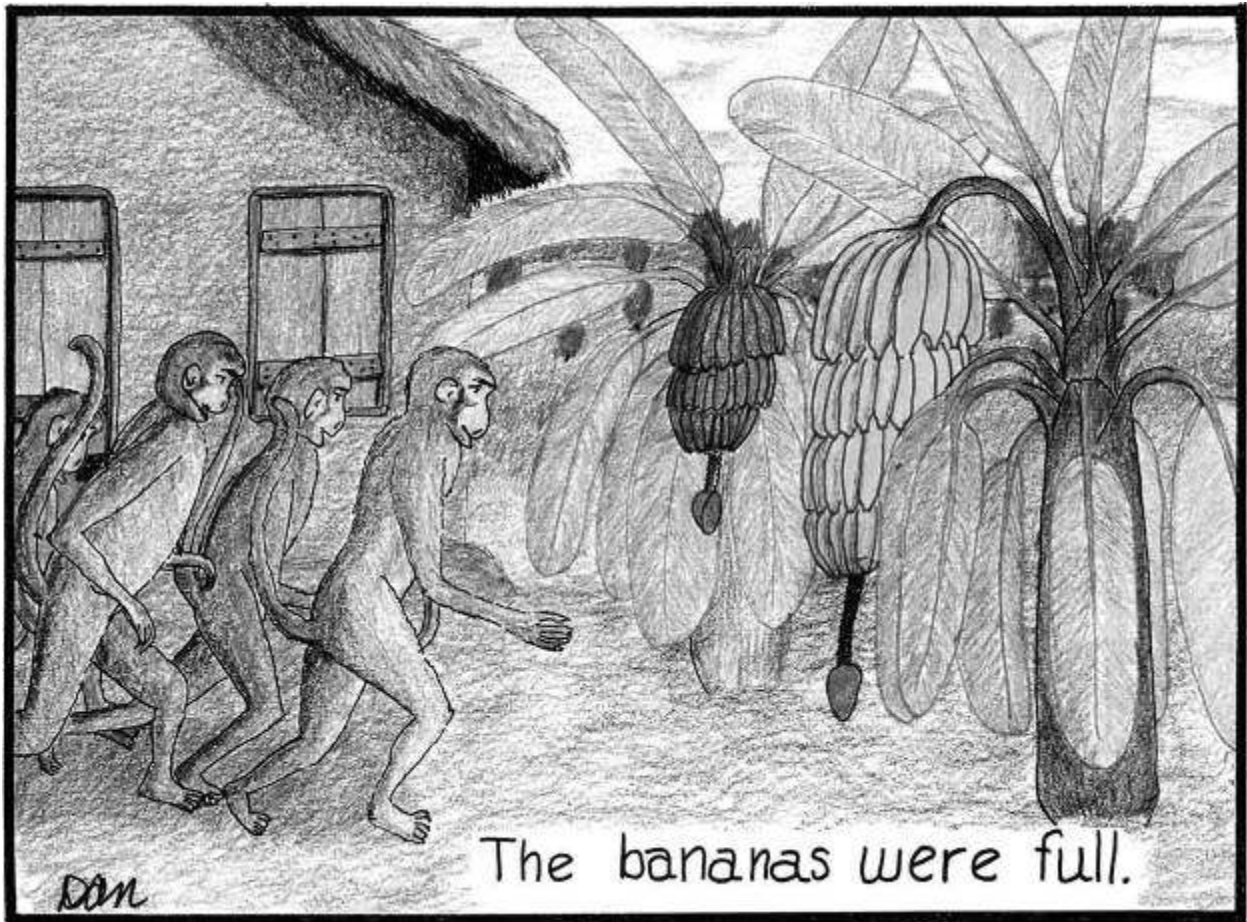
Then the rain stopped and the sun began to shine.

"Hey, the rain is *coming to stop*," exclaimed First Monkey.

"So it has," said Second Monkey. "I'm *too hungry*."

"Yes, me too," put in Third Monkey, "Let us find some *chop*."

"I know where there is a nice big stalk of bananas that should be full now," declared Fourth Monkey.



*"Let we go!"* they all shouted at once.  
Away they all ran to see who could get to the bananas first.

As the sun shone brightly they forgot all about getting sticks to make their fine house. They did not again give the fine house even one thought until the next time a hard rain came. Then they made plans for a fine house all over again, only to forget their plans as soon as the rain stopped. So they made many beautiful plans; but never, to this very day, did they ever build even one fine house.

Many of us make great plans about how we will serve Jesus. Many times we put off doing what we feel He wants us to do.

We just keep waiting for a better time. Sometimes we tell Him what we will do if He helps us out of trouble. However, when the trouble is past we forget all about our wonderful plans. Jesus' work is forgotten. Jesus said in Luke 9:62, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God." When God asks us to do a work for Him we should start right then and stick with it until He says it is finished.

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