

A COLLECTION OF
STORIES
FROM
WEST AFRICA

Compiled and Illustrated by
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**SPIDER AND
THE YAM-MOON**



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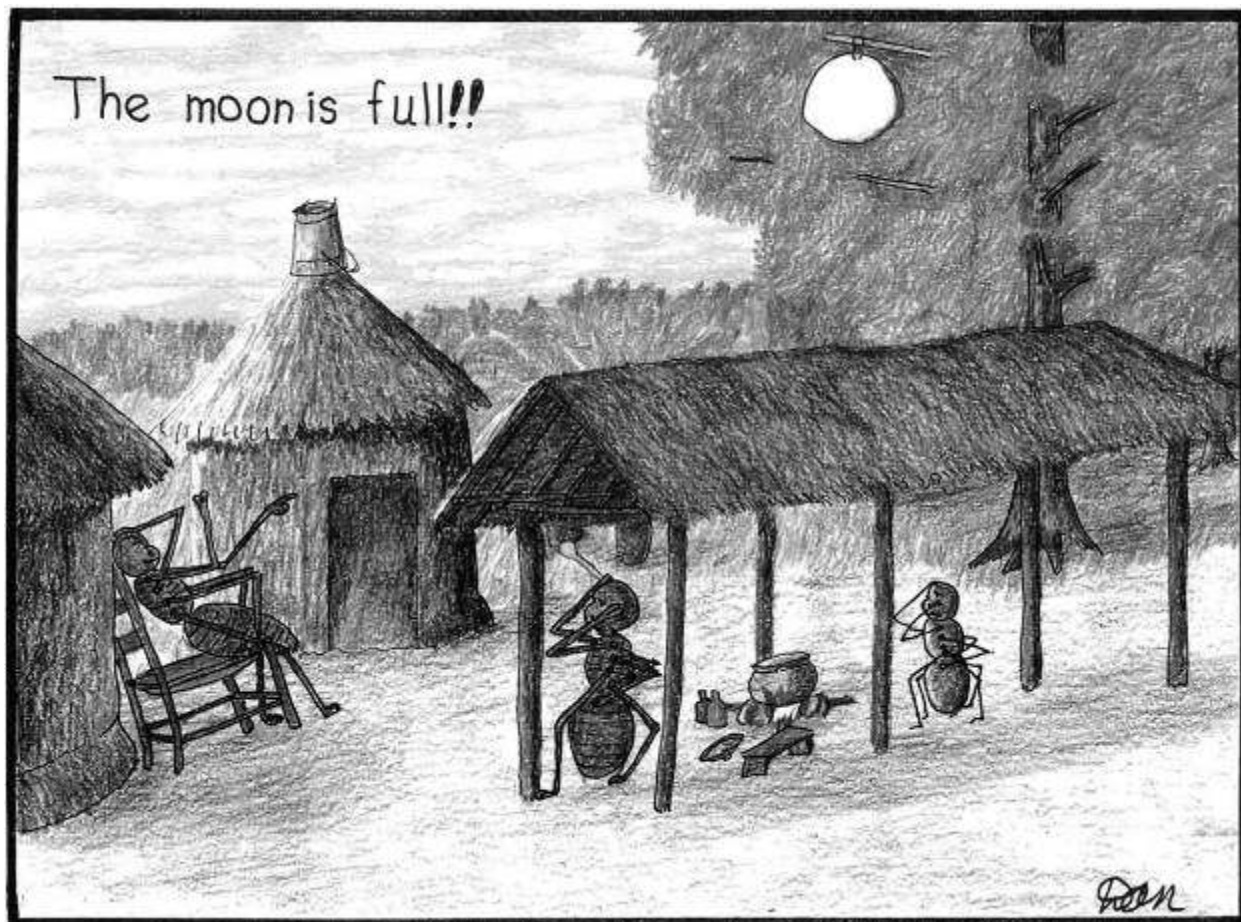
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By Spark Team



SPIDER AND THE YAM-MOON

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

Spider, as everyone knows, loves to eat *too much*. He is always hungry, but he hates to work and he hates to wait. Spider cannot *bear patience* at all.

It was almost time to harvest the new rice. But Spider wanted new rice now. Spider's wife said the rice should not be cut until the moon was full. But the new moon still hung like a small sliver of light following the

sun down in the west every evening. Spider was tired of the old rice. He wanted sweet new rice now.

Spider complained, "It is almost two weeks before the moon is full. I want new rice now."

Many people had already eaten all of last year's rice. They would go hungry until the new rice was ready to cut. Spider should have been thankful to still have some of the old rice left to eat until the new rice was ready. But Spider thought only of his own stomach.

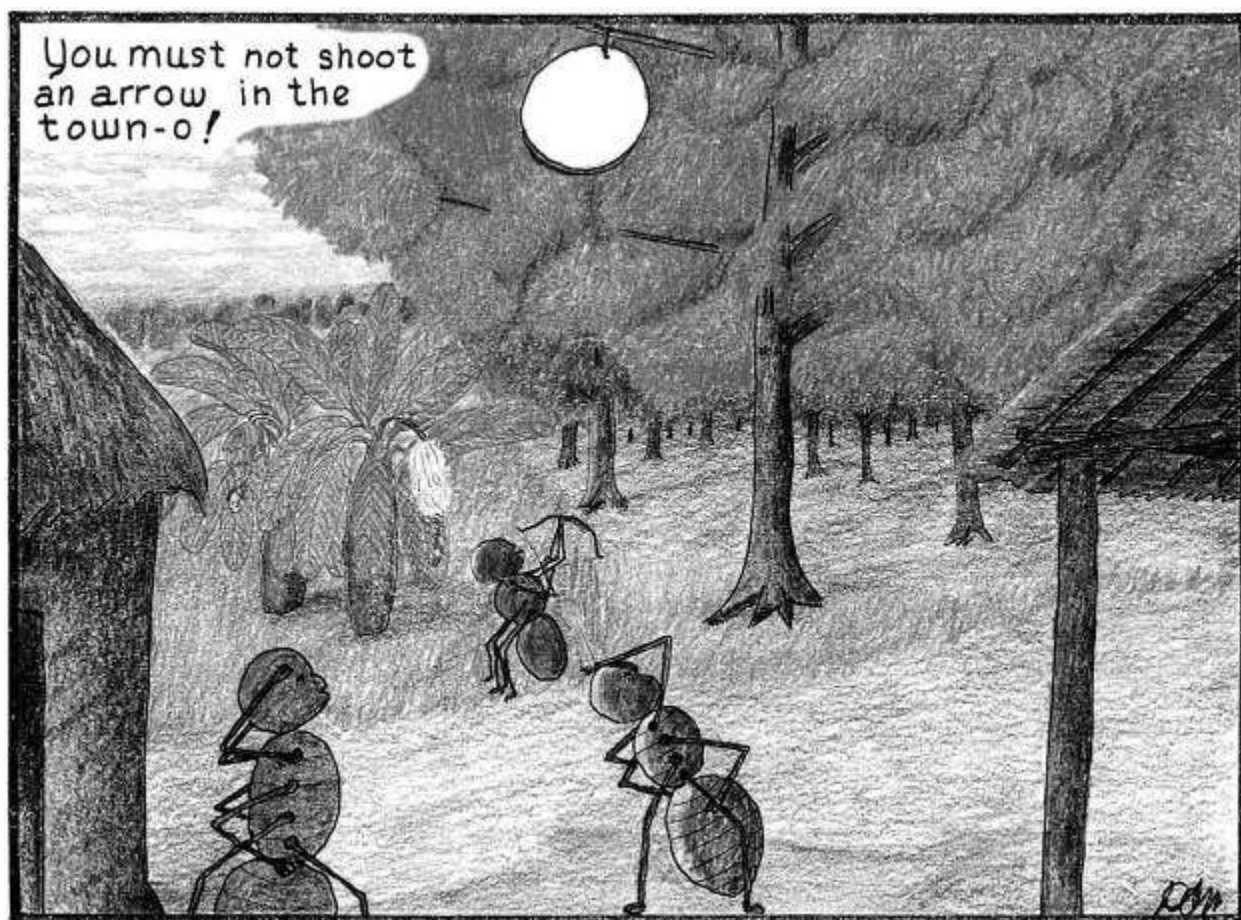
Spider decided to hurry things up. He took a very large white yam. He cut a round slice right out of the middle where it was the largest. Then he climbed up into a tall tree and hung the piece of yam on a high limb.

That evening Spider was sitting near the kitchen while the food was cooking. As the sun was setting, it made the piece of yam shine bright and white. Suddenly, Spider looked up as if in surprise.

"Look, Wife!" he called. "See! The moon is full! We must cut the new rice tomorrow."

Mrs. Spider looked up in surprise. It was too soon for the full moon to be seen. Besides it did not look exactly like the full moon.

One of Spider's sons also thought that the moon looked strange. He took his bow and an arrow and was about to shoot at the moon.



Spider yelled, "Stop that! What is the thing you are doing? Do you not know it is dangerous to shoot arrow when you cannot see where it will go?"

"Pa, I am only shooting into the bush. Nobody is there."

"But ancient law of our ancestors is against shooting arrow after it is dark. You will vex our ancestors. Put that bow and arrow away," commanded Spider.

"It is not dark yet." The boy said and shot at the moon.

The arrow hit the yam-moon. It broke into many pieces. Everyone started to laugh at Spider.

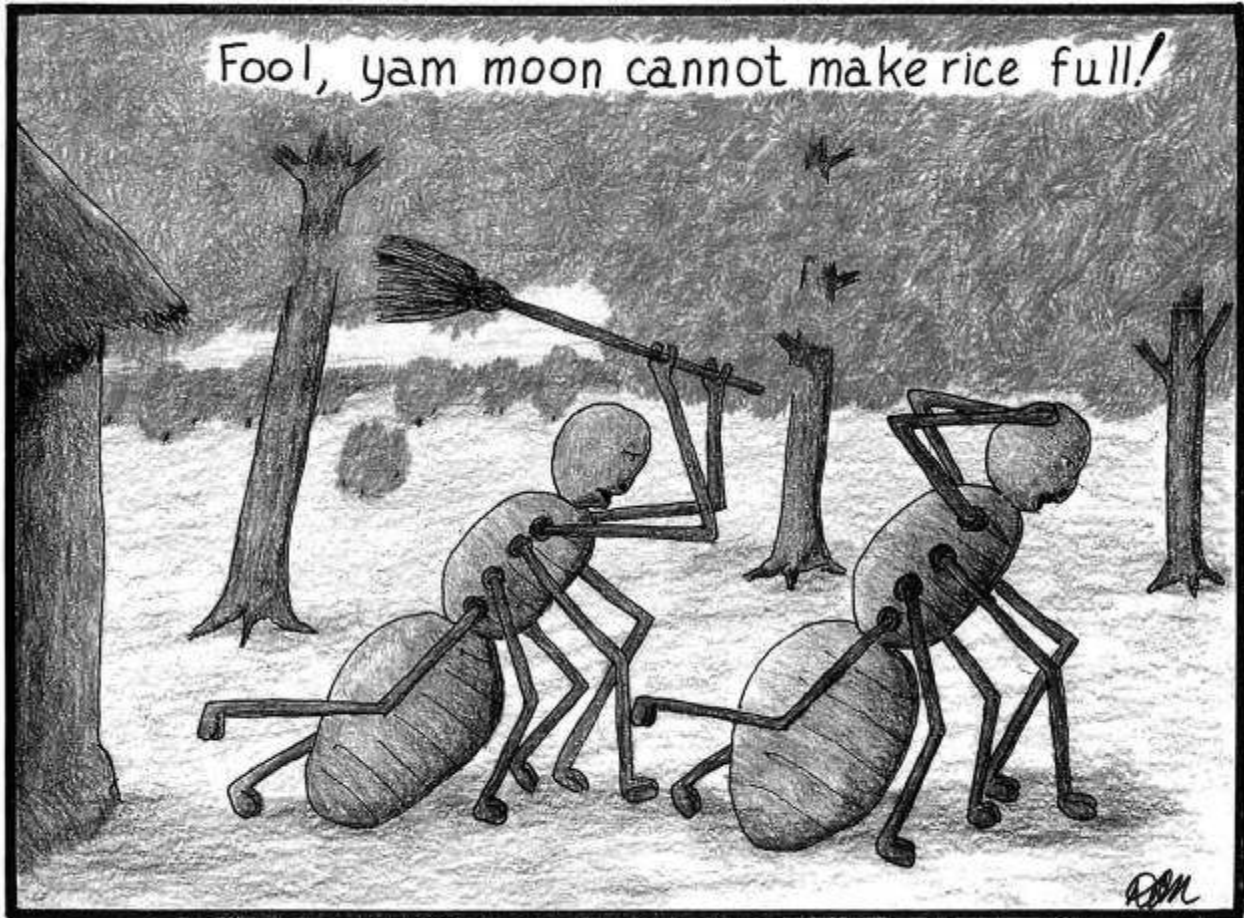


Spider's wife was *vexed*. She picked up the broom and began to beat him.

"Fool!" she said. "Piece of yam cannot make rice full!"

She chased Spider through the town beating him with the broom. All the people laughed at Spider, and he was *shamed too much*.

How often are we too impatient for something? It is not yet God's time for us to have it; but we cannot wait. We do some foolish thing to try to make God do what we want. Psalm 27:14 tells us. "Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD."



Spider should have been patient, rejoicing that he would soon have new rice. James 5:7-8 says “Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm because the Lord’s coming is near.” See also Romans 12:12 and Hebrews 12:1-15.

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