

Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock

Part two



Anansi's trick to get food from Snake and Lion had worked so well he couldn't wait to play the trick again. Before long Anansi had played his trick on every single creature. Except one.

Little Deer was small and could move quickly through the forest without being seen. And Little Deer had been watching each time Anansi had tricked the other animals for their food.



'It makes me feel sad to see the animals going hungry. It's time to do something about it. I'm going to play Anansi at his own game!'

First Little Deer went to the moss-covered rock. She walked around the rock. Hmm. Unusual coloured moss...knobbly bits...it did indeed look rather strange!



Next Little Deer lowered her head to feel the moss with her nose.

'Ouch!' This moss wasn't soft like ordinary moss. This moss felt sharp and prickly!

It felt very strange indeed. In fact, it felt so strange, it gave Little Deer an idea...



Next Little Deer went to a secret place in the forest where watermelons grew. She knew Anansi loved these sweet, juicy fruits, so she collected as many as she could, returned home and settled down to wait...

All this time, Anansi was just a short distance away, at his own home in the forest.

‘He! He! So far I have tricked Snake, Lion, Monkey, Elephant, Hippo and Turtle! That leaves just one creature - Little Deer.



I shall have to be careful though. Little Deer is clever - nearly as clever as I am!’

Anansi made his way through the forest to where Little Deer lived.

‘Ah, good afternoon, Anansi! I’ve been expecting you...’



‘Uh-oh, this isn’t a good start,’ thought Anansi. ‘If Little Deer has been expecting me, she must know what I’ve been up to.’

But when Anansi saw the watermelons he forgot about all else!

‘Little Deer, it is rather hot in the forest today, isn’t it? But I’ve found a lovely soft, cool place. Would you like me to show you?’



Anansi folded two of his legs. ‘Oh yes you do! Isn’t this a strange, moss-covered...’

Just in time Anansi stopped himself from saying the last word!

‘I know you’re trying to trick me, Little Deer. But I’m not going to say the words you want me to say.’

‘I would indeed, Anansi. Do please lead the way.’

Anansi took Little Deer through the forest to the moss-covered rock.

‘Oh look!’ he said. ‘What’s this?’

Little Deer took a good look. ‘I don’t know,’ she replied.

‘Yes, you do!’

‘No, I don’t!’



‘And what words are they?’

‘Isn’t this a strange, moss-covered...’

Anansi nearly said the words again right there and then! He would have to be very careful indeed!

‘I won’t say the words, no matter how hard you make me try!’





Little Deer moved closer. 'You're quite right. I do know about the magic words. Indeed, I have tried to trick you into saying them. But, Anansi, you're just too clever to do that.'

Anansi gave a little smile. 'Yes, I am rather clever, aren't I?'

Little Deer nodded her head and then she pointed to the moss-covered rock.

'I'm so tired! And that moss looks so lovely and soft. Won't you sit down with me?'



It had been a long day and Anansi felt rather tired too. 'That's a good idea, Little Deer,' he said, as he lowered himself onto the rock...

'Yee-ow!' Anansi was back on his feet in a moment. 'How very odd! That moss is prickly like brambles! Isn't this a strange, moss-covered rock!'



Crash! Bang! As soon as the words came from Anansi's mouth he flopped down fast asleep and he slept and slept and slept!

And when Anansi finally woke up, one whole night and a day later, all the animals were gathered round, laughing. But did Anansi frown and scowl? Not at all! Anansi joined in! The joke was on him for now...but Anansi knew that soon he'd be back to his tricks!