



Anansi and the Yam Hill (A Story about Greed)

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NARRATOR 1:

Once upon a time, there lived a woman named 5. She was an evil woman with magical powers.

NARRATOR 2:

The woman named 5 did *not* like her name. When she was a child, other children made fun of it.

NARRATOR 3:

The children would slap their hands together, yell “Gimme 5!,” and burst out laughing.

NARRATOR 4:

That made 5 mad, so one day she decided to cast a spell on the townspeople:

5:

From this day forward, anyone who says “5” will disappear!

NARRATOR 1:

The spell caused a huge problem in the town. No one could say “5” without disappearing. Children could not say their five times tables. Shopkeepers could not name the price of anything that had 5 in it.

NARRATOR 2:

One time, when a shopper asked the shopkeeper the price of a toy. ..

SHOPKEEPER:

It is 5 doll.....

NARRATOR 3:

WOOSH! The shop keeper disappeared!

NARRATOR 4:

A sneaky spider named Anansi also lived in the town. Times were hard for Anansi. His family had no food to eat. He was too small to work so he had to use his brain to get what he needed to live.

NARRATOR 1:

When Anansi heard about the spell the woman had cast, he tried to think of a way to use the spell to get what he needed.

ANANSI:

Hmmmm.. These are tough times. How can I make this spell work for me?

NARRATOR 2:

Finally, Anansi had an idea. First, he piled up five hills of rich brown dirt along the road.

NARRATOR 3: In each hill, Anansi planted yellow yams. He watered the yams and they soon began to grow.

NARRATOR 4:

Anansi then sat down by the yam hills and waited. Soon, along came Dog with a basket of ribs. The sneaky spider spoke in his sweetest voice.

ANANSI:

Good morning, Brother Dog. I know you are busy, but can you help me? I am not as smart as you. Would you help me count how many yam hills I have planted?

BROTHER DOG:

Don't bother me, spider. You should have learned to count long ago.

NARRATOR 1:

The grumpy dog walked away. Anansi sat down to wait for.

NARRATOR 2:

Soon, Bull came by. He carried a basket of fruit.

ANANSI:

Brother Bull, Brother Bull, would you lend me a hand?

BROTHER BULL:

What 's the problem, Spider?

ANANSI:

I was a sickly child and never went to school. Can you help me count the yam hills I have planted?

BULL:

Chill, Spider! Let's see. You have 1..2..3..4..5.....

NARRATOR 3:

Poof! Brother Bull disappeared and his fruit spilled on the ground. Anansi grabbed up the sweet treats and rushed home.

NARRATOR 4:

During the next few months, Anansi tricked many others in the town. He tricked Turtle and Owl. He tricked Rabbit and Scorpion.

NARRATOR 1:

He grew very fat from all the food he stole and ate.

NARRATOR 2:

One day, Mrs. Hen passed by with a basket of vegetables. A nice young mother of newly hatched chicks, Mrs. Hen was on her way to the market to sell her vegetables.

NARRATOR 3:

As Mrs. Hen passed yam hill number 4, Anansi dropped down from his web.

ANANSI:

Good morning, Mrs. Hen. Can you help me with a problem?

MRS. HEN:

Of course, Mr. Spider, what can I do?

ANANSI:

I have planted these yam hills. But I don't know how many I have. Would you count them for me, PLEEEZZ?

NARRATOR 4:

Mrs. Hen was onto Anansi's tricks, however! A few weeks before, she had seen him fool Brother Scorpion.

NARRATOR 1:

Mrs. Hen walked over to the last yam hill and climbed on top.

MRS. HEN:

Let's see, Spider. You have 1...2...3...4 yam hills -- and the one I'm standing on.

NARRATOR 2:

Anansi was angry!

ANANSI:

What are you doing? That is not how you count!

MRS. HEN:

Why, what do you mean, Mr. Spider?

ANANSI:

I don't know of a number called "the one I'm standing on."
Start again!

NARRATOR 3:

So Mrs. Hen began again.

MRS. HEN:

You have 1...2...3...4 yam hills -- and the one I'm standing on.

NARRATOR 4:

Anansi became even angrier. He shouted...

ANANSI:

That is not what you're supposed to say!!

MRS. HEN:

Well, if you are so smart, tell me what I *am* supposed to say?

NARRATOR 1:

Now Anansi was really shouting.

ANANSI:

You are supposed to say 1...2...3...4...5...Oops...

NARRATOR 2:

BAM! Anansi disappeared, leaving Mrs. Hen with her vegetables as well as all the leftovers in Anansi's kitchen.

NARRATOR 3:

And what are the lessons of the story?

1. It never pays to be a "Greedy Gus" er...spider!
2. Being greedy gets you "nowhere."

