



## **Anansi the Spider and Turtle Retold by Nicky Rafferty**

Anansi had cooked a fine meal of Yams and rice and peas and was just about to sit down and eat when there was a knock at his door. Anansi knew the rules, if someone knocked at your door when you were about to have food, then you must offer to share it with them.

“Ohhhh, I don’t want to share, I was looking forward to having all this food to myself.”

Anansi opened the door and there stood Turtle.

“Hello, Anansi. Something smells good.”

“Well do come in and join me,” said Anansi, “I was just about to eat and there is a fine feast here.”

Turtle sat down and reached out for a yam but Anansi cried,

“Turtle stop! Your hands are dirty and you can’t eat food with dirty hands. Go down to the river and wash them clean.”

“You’re right Anansi, I’ll go at once,” said Turtle

Turtle climbed down from his chair and made his way down to the river where he gave his hands a good wash. While he was gone Anansi crammed as much of the rice and peas and yams into his mouth as he could manage and gobbled them down fast.

When Turtle returned he said, “Anansi, you’ve eaten so much food already.”

“Well you’d better get stuck in then,” said Anansi, “because I’m really hungry.”

Turtle reached for the yams again and again Anansi cried,

**“Turtle stop! Look at your hands, they’re still dirty and you have to wash them before you can eat the food.”**

**Turtle looked at his hands, they were indeed dirty again.**

**“I’m sorry, Anansi, it must be from walking back through the dirt and dust, I’ll go back to the river at once and make my hands clean”**

**When Turtle had finished washing his hands he rummaged around for his slippers so he could keep his hands clean as he made his way back.**

**As soon as Turtle had left the house however, Anansi had gobbled up all the food as fast as he could so when Turtle returned it was all gone.**

**“Thank you for joining me for dinner, Turtle, we must do this again sometime, but next time please wash your hands before you come.”**

**Turtle knew he had been tricked but he said the polite thing,**

**“Thank you Anansi and you must let me do the same for you sometime, it’s my turn to cook dinner for you.”**

**Anansi liked that idea and a few days later he decided to pay Turtle a visit. He saw that Turtle had laid a fine table of food at the bottom of the river and Turtle called Anansi to come and join him.**

**Anansi jumped into the river, but he didn’t sink, he just floated on the surface, kicking his eight legs and trying his best to go down to the food.**

**“I need to do a proper dive,” Anansi said to himself.**

He ran at the river, jumped up into the air and dived in. He did go down a little way but then he just floated back up to the top again.

Next, Anansi climbed to the top of a tall tree and jumped in and this time he went down much further and almost reached the table before he began floating back up to the surface again.

Then Anansi had a brilliant idea. He was wearing his best jacket with two deep pockets and he filled his pockets with stones.

“These should help me to sink to the bottom of the river,” said Anansi.

It worked and this time, when Anansi jumped in, he sank all the way down to the table, sat down opposite Turtle and reached out for a yam.

“Anansi, stop!” cried Turtle. “You must take off your jacket before you eat.”

“Oh, of course,” said Anansi, “I was forgetting my manners.”

Anansi slipped his jacket off and as soon as he did so he began to float back up to the top.

“Oh no, the food is getting further and further away from me.”

“Oh, are you leaving so soon, Anansi?” said Turtle, “Well thank you for joining me for dinner, we must do this again sometime.”

As Anansi made his way home, he knew he’d got just what he’d deserved and decided that next time he would be more generous with his friends because, as his grandmother always said, what goes around, comes around.

The End