

Adun, the baboon, tricks Ananse

Retold by Helen Brain

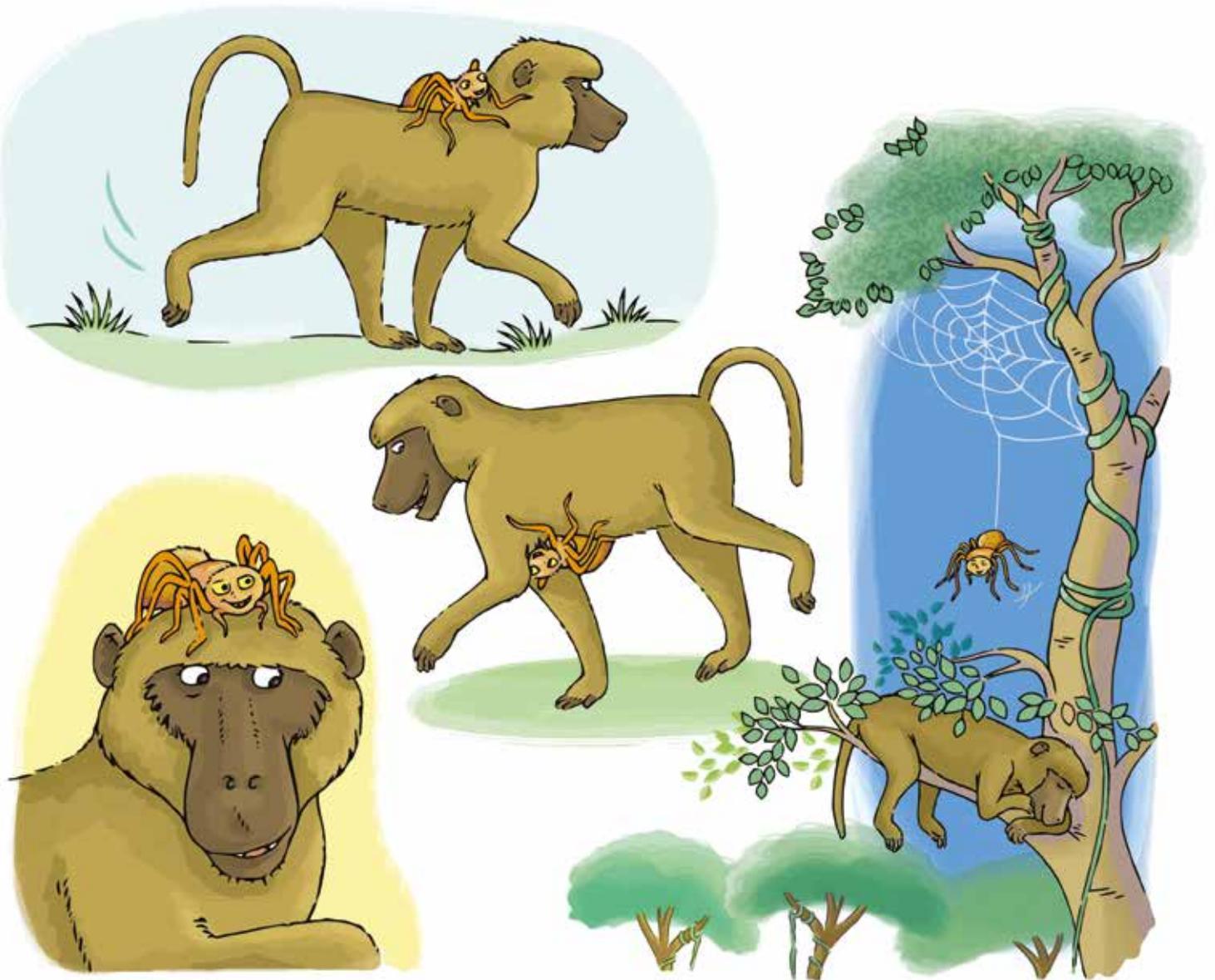
Illustrations by Jiggs Snaddon-Wood

Kweku was Ananse the spider's first name because he was born on a Wednesday, but everyone just called him Ananse. He was very clever, and not many animals could trick him.

A very, very long time ago, the story goes, Kweku Ananse, the spider, and Adun Baboon were best friends. They did everything together. Wherever one went, the other went too. Ananse would hitch a ride on Adun Baboon, clinging onto his fur. Sometimes he rode on

Adun's back, sometimes on his tummy, and sometimes he perched in the fur between Adun's ears, looking ahead to see what was coming.

They were a happy pair of friends. They looked after each other. They ate together and played together every day among the trees. At night, Adun would climb a large tree and make a bed between the leaves. Ananse would hang from the highest branch so that nothing could catch him.



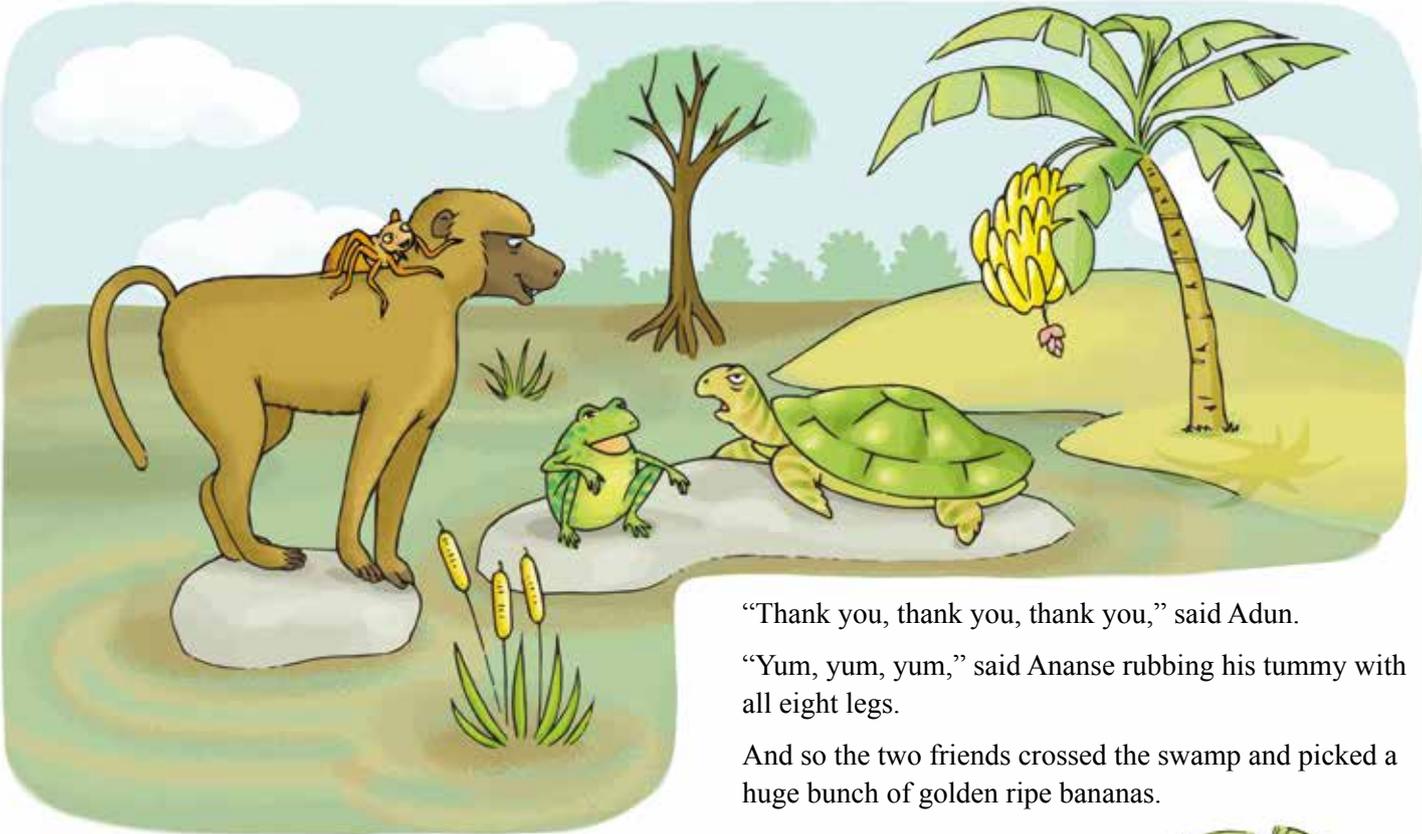
One very hot day as the friends were out looking for food, they came to a muddy swamp. On the other side of the swamp they saw a banana tree. Now, everyone knows just how much baboons like to feed on ripe bananas, and in those days spiders loved them too. So Ananse hung onto Adun's back and then the baboon crossed the swamp by jumping from rock to rock so his feet wouldn't get dirty.

"Then why are you crossing the swamp?" croaked Frog so loudly that his voice echoed over the water.

"There's a banana tree full of delicious ripe bananas on the other side. We want to eat them. We love bananas," explained the baboon.

"Take the whole tree for all I care," grumbled Turtle.

"We don't like bananas," said Frog. "But be quick. We're trying to sleep."



"Thank you, thank you, thank you," said Adun.

"Yum, yum, yum," said Ananse rubbing his tummy with all eight legs.

And so the two friends crossed the swamp and picked a huge bunch of golden ripe bananas.

Meanwhile, Frog and Turtle were lying on a large rock in the swamp getting warm in the sun.

"Who goes there?" croaked Frog, opening one eye to look at Adun.

"Only me," answered the baboon.

"You're not alone," croaked Frog. "Who is that with you?"

"Well, this is Kweku Ananse," said Adun pointing to the spider. "But everyone just calls him Ananse. He is my best friend."

"And what are you two doing here?" asked Frog.

"Yes," added Turtle who had just woken up. "Why are you two disturbing us? We need our rest in the sun, you know."

"Sorry, Frog and sorry, Turtle. We didn't mean to disturb you," replied Adun and Ananse together.



They carried the bananas back to the tall tree they called home.

But the minute they climbed onto their favourite branch, the trouble started.

“The bananas are mine,” declared Ananse. “I’m going to eat them all.”

“You can’t,” said Adun. “You have to share.”

“No, I don’t! I’m not sharing!” shouted Ananse, cramming a banana into his mouth. “They’re all mine, and I’m not giving you any.”

“You’re not my friend anymore,” said Adun as he started to cry. “You’re mean and I hate you.”



“Fine,” said Ananse. “If you’re going to be a cry baby I’ll give you something. You can have the stump. It tastes just as good as the bananas.” And he broke all the fruit off the stump and threw it to the baboon.

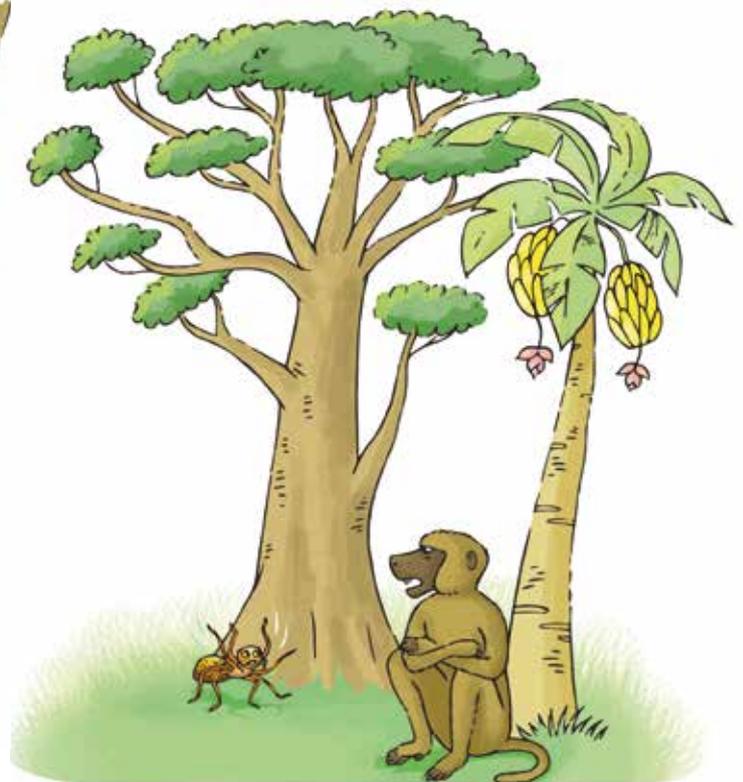
Ananse was very pleased with himself. He had all the bananas to feast on, and he didn’t have to share them – not even one. He chortled as he watched Adun take the stump away. “He’s going to try and eat that horrible stump. I’ve tricked him. Ha, ha,” he thought.

After that fight, the friends went their separate ways and didn’t see each other. They didn’t speak to each other and they didn’t play together.

Then one day Ananse wondered how Adun was. It had been a long time since their fight over the bananas. So Ananse wandered through the forest until he came to Adun’s new house. It was an old, tall tree and there, right next to it, was a great big banana tree full of ripe, yellow bananas.

“Goodness me!” exclaimed Ananse. “You’ve got your own banana tree, and it’s full of fruit. Can I have some?”

Adun looked the spider up and down. “No,” he said coldly. “You had your share. You chose the bananas and gave me the stump. Well, I came here and planted the stump, and it grew into this tree. Now I have bunches and bunches of bananas all year round, but you can’t have any. Not even one. Sorry.”



“You’re a mean, nasty, horrible baboon!” shrieked Ananse, wagging his eight legs in rage. “You tricked me! Now you’ve got lots of bananas and I don’t have any. I’m never going to talk to you ever again, and I’ll never ever eat another banana until the day I die! I hope you get the itches and have to scratch, scratch, scratch, day in and day out.” And then the spider ran back to his home, still muttering about the trickster Adun Baboon. They never spoke to each other again.

And do you know that to this day spiders don’t eat bananas, and baboons scratch themselves day and night!

Get story active!

Here are some ideas for using the story on pages 1 to 3 with the children in your class and/or your reading club. Choose the ideas that best suit the ages and interests of the children.

- ★ Before you read the story, ask the children, "Have you ever heard of someone being tricked?" Invite them to share what happened.
- ★ After you have read the story, draw the children's attention to the title of the story and then together discuss questions like these.
 - Is the baboon the only one who tricks someone? Who else in the story tricks someone?
 - Who is the first character to trick someone?
 - Is it okay to trick someone if they tricked you first?
 - Is it okay for friends to trick each other? How would you feel if

you found out that a friend has tricked you?

- Ask the children to suggest other titles for the story.
- ★ Help the children to make links to other stories they know that have a similar theme to this one. Ask them, "Do you know any other stories in which one of the characters tried to trick someone? What happened in that story?" You can extend this activity by encouraging the children to write or tell their own stories about tricking someone.
- ★ Let the children use different scrap materials (like bottle tops, egg cartons, pieces of fabric, wool and string) and paint, paper and glue to make Ananse. (Remember that it doesn't have to look exactly like the spider from the story – encourage your children to use their imaginations!)

About the Story Powered Schools project

Nal'ibali (isiXhosa for "here's the story") is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark children's potential through storytelling and reading.

Story Powered Schools is a pilot project bringing the Nal'ibali reading-for-enjoyment campaign's proven approach to literacy development to selected schools in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Endorsed by the Department of Education, it has been made possible by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The schools that are part of the Story Powered Schools project are committed to sparking their learners' potential through storytelling and reading. They use the power of stories to inspire their learners to want to read and write.

