

**Contents**

Anansi Tries to Steal All the Wisdom in the World .....	2
Anansi And The Turtle .....	3
Anansi And The Witch.....	5
Anansi: How Stories Came to Earth.....	6
Anansi and the Gub-Gub Peas .....	9
Anansi and the Rope .....	10
Anansi and the Firefly.....	11
Coyote and the Bluebird (Pima) .....	13
Coyote and the Monsters of the Bitterroot Valley (Flathead/Salish).....	14
Coyote Kills a Giant (Dine/Navajo) .....	18
Coyote vs. Duck .....	21
Coyote: Fire Race (Karuk).....	24
Coyote's Adventures in Idaho .....	25
Loki: How Thor Got His Hammer (Norse) .....	28
Loki: The Giant's Bride (Norse) .....	31
Loki: The Golden Apples (Norse).....	33
Hermes & Apollo's Cows (Greek).....	36
Hermes, Slayer Of Argos, Monster Of 100 Eyes (Greek).....	38
Hermes & The Creation Of Pandora (Greek) .....	39
Hermes & Baby Heracles (Greek).....	40
Nasreddin Hodja (Turkey) .....	41
Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby (American Folklore).....	43
Trickster's Buffalo Hunt (Winnebago).....	46

***Anansi Tries to Steal All the Wisdom in the World***

A Fable from the Ashanti People of Africa.

<http://www.iusb.edu/%7Ejournal/1998/2Tale.html>

Adapted by Matt Evans

Anansi the spider knew that he was not wise. He was very clever, and could outwit many different people, but he knew that he did not have very much wisdom. This bothered him a great deal, but he did not know what to do about it. Then one day he had a clever thought. "I know," he said to no one in particular, "if I can get all of the wisdom in the village and put it in a hollow gourd, I will be very wise indeed. In fact, I would be the wisest of all!"

So he set out to find a suitable gourd and then began his journey to collect the village's wisdom. He went from door to door, asking everyone to give some of their wisdom. The people chuckled at poor Anansi, for they knew that of all the creatures, it was he that needed some wisdom the most. So each put a bit in his gourd and wished him well on his search.

Soon Anansi's gourd was overflowing with wisdom and he could hold no more. He now needed to find a place to store it. "I am certainly the wisest person in the world now, but if I don't find a good hiding place for my wisdom I may surely lose it." He looked around and spotted a tall, tall tree. "Ah," he said to himself, "if I could hide my wisdom high in that tree, I would never have to worry about someone stealing it from me!"

So Anansi set out to climb the towering tree. He first took a cloth band and tied it around his waist. Then he tied the heavy gourd to the front of his belly where it would be safe. As he began to climb, however, the gourd full of wisdom kept getting in the way. He tried and tried, but he could not make progress around it.

Soon Anansi's youngest son walked by. "What are you doing Father?" asked the little spider. "I am climbing this tree with my gourd full of wisdom," Anansi replied. "But Father," said the son, "wouldn't it be much easier if you tied the gourd behind you instead of in front?"

Anansi sat there quietly for a very long time before saying, "Shouldn't you be going home now?" The son skipped down the path and when he had disappeared, Anansi moved the gourd so that it was behind him and proceeded up the tree with no problems at all.

When he had reached the top, he cried out, "I walked all over and collected so much wisdom that I am the wisest person ever, but still my baby son is wiser than me. Take back your wisdom!" He lifted the gourd high over his head and spilled its contents into the wind. The wisdom blew far and wide and settled across the land.

And this is how wisdom came to the world.

**Anansi And The Turtle**

<http://www.nigeriannation.com/Explore/Nigeria/FolkTales/AnansiAndTheTurtle.asp>

Author: Unknown

One day Anansi the spider picked some very fat and tasty yams from his garden. He baked them with much care and they came out smelling quite delicious. He could not wait to sit down and eat them.

Just then there was a knock at his door. It was Turtle, who had been traveling all day and was very tired and hungry.

"Hello, Anansi," said Turtle. "I have been walking for so long, and I smelled the most delicious yams I've ever smelled. Would you be so kind as to share your meal with me?"

Anansi could not refuse, as it was the custom in his country to share your meal with visitors at mealtime. But he was not very happy, for Anansi was a little too greedy and wanted the delicious yams all to himself. So Anansi thought to himself and came up with a scheme.

"Please do come in, Turtle. I would be honored to have you as my guest this evening. Sit down, have a chair and help yourself."

Turtle came inside and sat down, but just as he reached for a yam, Anansi yelled, "Turtle, don't you know better than to come to the table with dirty hands?"

Turtle looked down at his hands and saw that they were filthy. He had been crawling all day and had not had a chance to clean up. Turtle got up and went to the river to clean his feet. He walked all the way back up to the house and Anansi had already begun to eat.

"I didn't want these tasty yams to get cold, so I had to begin," said Anansi. "But please do join me now, Turtle."

Turtle sat down again and reached for a yam, but again Anansi yelled at him.

"Turtle, did you not hear me before? It is not polite to come to the table with dirty hands!"

He looked down and saw that his clean hands had turned dirty once more, since he had to crawl on them to get back to the house. So he walked down to the river once more to wash himself off. And when he returned this time, he was careful to walk on the grass so his hands would stay clean. But by the time he sat down at the table, Anansi had finished up the last bit of the tasty yams and not so much as a morsel was left.

Turtle looked at Anansi for a moment and then said, "Thank you for sharing your meal with me. If you ever find yourself near my house, please let me return the favor." And then he slowly walked out the door and continued on his way. The days went by and Anansi thought more and more of that meal that Turtle had offered. He got more and more interested in a free dinner and finally could not stand it anymore. He set off one day to find Turtle's house.

He found Turtle sunning himself on a riverbank just around dinnertime.

Turtle looked up and saw him and said, "Hello, Anansi, have you come to share evening meal with me?"

"Oh yes, yes!" said Anansi, who was growing hungrier and hungrier by the minute. Turtle went underwater to his house to set up the dinner table for the two of them. Soon he came back to the bank and said, "Your place is waiting and the food is ready. Please join me, Anansi."

And then he dived underwater and began to slowly eat his meal.

Anansi jumped into the water, but could not get down to the bottom of the river. He tried to swim down, but he was so light that he kept popping back up to the surface.

He tried diving. He tried belly flops. He tried a running jump, but nothing would help him get down to the river bottom.

In the meantime, Turtle was slowly eating his meal.

Anansi was not about to give up a free meal, and was running around wondering what he would do. Finally he had an idea. He started grabbing stones and rocks and stuffed them into his jacket pockets.

Now when he jumped into the water he sank right down to the bottom and was able to take his place at the table.

The table was so beautiful and full of delicious foods. Anansi could hardly believe how many tasty foods were before him and could not wait to start his meal.

But just as he reached for the first morsel, Turtle stopped eating and spoke. "In my country, we do not wear our jackets to the table." Anansi noticed that Turtle had removed his own jacket before sitting down. Anansi started to remove his jacket, and as soon as it was off of his shoulders, he went zooming back up to the surface and popped out onto the riverbank. He stuck his head down into the water and saw Turtle slowly enjoying that wonderful banquet.

Moral of the story: When you try to outsmart someone, you may find that you're the one outsmarted.

### ***Anansi And The Witch***

<http://www.manteno.k12.il.us/webquest/elementary/LanguageArts/Anasi/anansitrickster.html>

Anansi, the trickster spider, lived in a village where famine and drought were all over the land, and Anansi had to figure out a way to survive.

In the same village was a witch named "Five." She hated her name and cast a spell so that if anyone used her name they would fall asleep for a year.

Anansi said, "AHA! I will trick someone into saying her name and I'll have food for my spider family. He had saved a little bit of corn and made five piles out of it. He sat on one pile and called Mrs. Rabbit, "Hey, Mrs. Rabbit! Would you like some corn for your children?" Of course Mrs. Rabbit came running.

Anansi told her, if you tell me how many piles of corn there are then I'll let you have one of them!"

Mrs. Rabbit counted, "One-Two-Three-Four-Five." When she said the witch's name she fell asleep.

Anansi took the rabbit home to his wife, who cooked it. They had food for weeks. But as the food was running out, Anansi decided to try his trick again. This time he chose Mr. Squirrel. Mr. Squirrel counted the piles and he fell asleep just like Mrs. Rabbit. Anansi took the squirrel home and his family had food for weeks.

Soon the food was running out again. This time he set his sights on Mrs. Goose. Now Mrs. Goose knew Anansi was a trickster and not to be trusted. Sitting on his pile of corn, Anansi told Mrs. Goose to count the piles and she could have them. Mrs. Goose smiled and counted, "One-Two-Three-Four....and the one your sitting on!!" Anansi got angry and said, "NO!NO! That's no the way to count! Do it right!"

Mrs. Goose smiled and counted, "One-Two-Three-Four...and the one you are sitting on!!" Anansi was so angry he jumped up and down shouting, "NO! NO! That's not the way to count!! You were supposed to say one-two-three-four-five!"

As soon as he said the witch's name he fell asleep.

Not only had Mrs. Goose tricked the trickster, she had.....how many piles of corn??

**Anansi: How Stories Came to Earth**

<http://www.anansi.org/webwalker/story1.htm>

An Ashanti Legend

It was long ago in Africa, child, when there was First Spider, Kwaku Anansi. He went everywhere, throughout the world, travelling on his strong web strings - sometimes looking more like a wise old man than a spider.

In that long-ago time, child, there were no stories on Earth for anyone to tell. The sky-god kept all stories to himself, up high in the sky, and locked away in a wooden box.

These the spider wanted, as many creatures had before him, so that he could know the beginnings and endings of things. Yet all who had tried for the stories had returned empty-handed.

Now Anansi climbed up his web to the sky-god, Nyame, to ask for the sky-god's stories.

Child, when the powerful sky-god saw the thin, spidery, old man crawling up to his throne, he laughed at him, "What makes you think that you, of all creatures, can pay the price I ask for my stories?"

Spider only wanted to know, "What is the price of the stories?"

"My stories have a great price, four fearsome, elusive creatures: Onini, the python that swallows men whole; Osebo, the leopard with teeth like spears; Mmoboro, the hornets that swarm and sting; and Mmoatia, the fairy who is never seen. Bring these to me."

Bowing, the spider quietly turned and crept back down through the clouds. He went to capture the four creatures he needed as price for the stories. He first asked his wife, Aso, how he might capture Onini, the python that swallows men whole.

She told him a plan, saying, "Go and cut off a branch of the palm tree and cut some string-creeper as well. Take these to the stream where python lives."

As Anansi went to the swampy stream, carrying these things, he began arguing aloud, "This is longer than he; You lie, no; it is true; this branch is longer and he is shorter, much shorter."

The python was listening, and asked what spider was talking about, "What are you muttering, Anansi?"

"I tell you that my wife, Aso, is a liar, for she says that you are longer than this palm branch and I say that you are not."

Onini, the python, said, "Come and place the branch next to me and we will see if she is a liar."

And so, Anansi put the palm branch next to the python's body, and saw the large snake stretch himself alongside it. Anansi then bound the python to the branch with the string-creeper and wound it over and over - nwenene! nwenene! nwenene! - until he came to the head. Then the spiderman said to Onini, "Fool, I will now take you to the sky-god."

This Anansi did as he spun a web around the snake to carry him back through the clouds to the sky kingdom.

On seeing the gigantic snake, Nyame merely said, "There remains what still remains."

Spider came back to Earth to find the next creature, Osebo the leopard, with teeth like spears.

His wife, Aso, told him, "Go dig a large hole."

Anansi said, "I understand, say no more."

After following the tracks of the leopard, spider dug a very deep pit. He covered it over with the branches of the trees and came home. Returning in the very early morning, he found a large leopard lying in the pit.

"Leopard, is this how you act? You should not be prowling around at night; look at where you are! Now put your paw here, and here, and I will help you out."

The leopard put his paws up on the sticks that Anansi placed over the pit and began to climb up. Quickly, Anansi hit him over the head with a wooden knife - gao! Leopard fell back into the pit - fom! Anansi quickly spun the leopard to the sticks with his web string.

"Fool, I am taking you to pay for the sky-god's stories."

But the sky-god received the leopard saying, "What remains, still remains."

Next the spiderman went looking for Mmoboro, the hornets that swarm and sting.

Spider told his wife, Aso, what he was looking for and she said, "Look for an empty gourd and fill it with water."

This spider did and he went walking through the bush until he saw a swarm of hornets hanging there in a tree. He poured out some of the water and sprinkled it all over their nest. Cutting a leaf from a nearby banana tree, he held it up and covered his head. He then poured the rest of the water from the gourd all over himself. Then while he was dripping he called out to the hornets,

"The rain has come, do you see me standing here with a leaf to cover my head? Fly inside my empty gourd so that the rain will not beat at your wings."

The hornets flew into the gourd, saying, "Thank you - hhhuummm - Aku; thank you - hhhuummm - Anansi."

Anansi stopped up the mouth of the gourd, and spinning a thick web around it, said, "Fools, I'm taking you to the sky-god as price for his stories."

The sky-god, Nyame, accepted Mmoboro, the hornets that swarm and sting, and said, "What remains, still remains."

Anansi knew very well what remained - it was the fairy, Mmoatia, who is never seen. When the spider came back to Earth, he asked Aso what to do. And so, he carved an Akua's child, a wooden doll with a black, flat face, and covered it with sticky fluid from a tree.

Walking through the bush, he found the odum tree, where the fairies like to play. He then made eto, pounded yams, and put some in the doll's hand and even more of the yams into a brass basin at her feet - there by the odum tree. Anansi next hid in the bushes, with a vine creeper in his hands that was also tied to the doll's neck.

It wasn't long before the fairies came, two sisters, to play. They saw the doll with the eto and asked if they could have some. Anansi made the doll's head nod, "Yes", by pulling on the string-creeper. Soon the fairies had eaten all the eto and so, thanked the doll, but the doll did not reply. The fairies became angry.

One sister said, "When I thank her, she says nothing."

The other sister replied, "Then slap her in her crying place."

This the fairy did, she slapped it's cheek - "pa!" - but her hand stuck there. She slapped it with her other hand - "pa!" - and that hand stuck, too. She kicked it with both one foot, then the other, and both feet stuck to the sticky wooden doll. Finally, she pushed her stomach to it and that stuck.

Then Anansi came from his hiding place, and said, "Fool, I have got you, and now I will take you to the sky-god to buy his stories once and for all."

Anansi spun a web around the last of the four creatures and brought Mmoatia up to Nyame in the sky kingdom. The sky-god, seeing this last catch, called together all his nobles. He put it before them and told them that the spider-man had done what no-one else had been able to do. He said in a loud voice that rang in the sky,

"From now and forever, my sky-god stories belong to you - kose! kose! kose! - my blessing, my blessing, my blessing. We will now call these "Spider Stories"."

And so, child, stories came to Earth because of the great cunning of Kwaku Anansi, and his wife, Aso. When Anansi brought the wooden box of stories to his home, he and his wife eagerly learned each one of them. And you can still see today that Aku and Aso tell their stories. Everywhere you look, they spin their webs for all to see.



**Anansi and the Gub-Gub Peas**

<http://www.mythfolklore.net/3043mythfolklore/reading/jamaica/pages/01.htm>

A man plant a big field of gub-gub peas. He got a watchman put there. This watchman can't read. The peas grow lovely an' bear lovely; everybody pass by, in love with the peas. Anansi himself pass an' want to have some. He beg the watchman, but the watchman refuse to give him. He went an' pick up an' old envelope, present it to the watchman an' say the master say to give the watchman. The watchman say, "The master know that I cannot read an' he sen' this thing come an' give me?" Anansi say, "I will read it for you." He said, "Hear what it say! The master say, 'You mus' tie Mr. Anansi at the fattest part of the gub-gub peas an' when the belly full, let him go.'" The watchman did so; when Anansi belly full, Anansi call to the watchman, an' the watchman let him go.

After Anansi gone, the master of the peas come an' ask the watchman what was the matter with the peas. The watchman tol' him. Master say he see no man, no man came to him an' he send no letter, an' if a man come to him like that, he mus' tie him in the peas but no let him away till he come. The nex' day, Anansi come back with the same letter an' say, "Master say, give you this." Anansi read the same letter, an' watchman tie Anansi in the peas. An' when Anansi belly full, him call to the watchman to let him go, but watchman refuse. Anansi call out a second time, "Come, let me go!" The watchman say, "No, you don' go!" Anansi say, 'If you don' let me go, I spit on the groun' an' you rotten!" Watchman get frighten an' untie him.

Few minutes after that the master came; an' tol' him if he come back the nex' time, no matter what he say, hol' him. The nex' day, Anansi came back with the same letter an' read the same story to the man. The man tie him in the peas, an', after him belly full, he call to the man to let him go; but the man refuse,--all that he say he refuse until the master arrive.

The master take Anansi an' carry him to his yard an' tie him up to a tree, take a big iron an' put it in the fire to hot. Now while the iron was heating, Anansi was crying. Lion was passing then, see Anansi tie up underneath the tree, ask him what cause him to be tied there. Anansi said to Lion from since him born he never hol' knife an' fork, an' de people wan' him now to hol' knife an' fork. Lion said to Anansi, "You too wort'less man! me can hol' it. I will loose you and then you tie me there." So Lion loose Anansi an' Anansi tied Lion to the tree. So Anansi went away, now, far into the bush an' climb upon a tree to see what taking place.

When the master came out, instead of seeing Anansi he see Lion. He took out the hot iron out of the fire an' shove it in in Lion ear. An Lion make a plunge an' pop the rope an' away gallop in the bush an' stan' up underneath the same tree where Anansi was. Anansi got frighten an' begin to tremble an' shake the tree, Lion then hol' up his head an' see Anansi. He called for Anansi to come down. Anansi shout to the people, "See de man who you lookin' fe! see de man underneat' de tree!" An' Lion gallop away an' live in the bush until now, an' Anansi get free.

***Anansi and the Rope***

<http://www.mythfolklore.net/3043mythfolklore/reading/jamaica/pages/14.htm>

Anansi live into a tree with wife and children, then go about and robber the others and they can't find where he live. So Tiger and Bredder Tacoomah dog him and see when he send down the rope and swing up whatever he provide for the family. So Bredder Tiger go to a tin-smith to give him a fine v'ice and went to the tree and him sing,

"Mama, mama, sen' down rope,

Sen' down rope, Brer Nansi deh groun' a!"

Then the mother find out it was not Bredder Nansi from the coarseness of the v'ice. So he go to a gold-smith now, and he come back again and sing again. Now he get a v'ice same as Bredder Nansi.

"Mama, mama, sen' down rope,

Sen' down rope, Brer Nansi deh groun' a!"

Then the mother let the rope down to receive him. Brer Nansi coming from a distance see the mother swinging him up in the tree now and say, "Mama, cut de rope! mama, cut de rope!"

And she cut the rope and Bredder Tiger fell and broke his neck. Bredder Nansi tak him and have him now for him dinner. They couldn't eat Bredder Nansi at all; him was the smartest one of all.

### ***Anansi and the Firefly***

<http://www.afro.com/children/myths/firefly/page1.html>

One day Firefly came to Anansi the Spider's house and invited him to go egg-hunting. "If you would like to go with me, then come to my house late this evening."

Anansi was very excited and immediately agreed to go.

When it was dark enough, they went out into the fields. Firefly would open his wings a little and his light would illuminate the eggs lying hidden in the grass.

Then Anansi would jump forward and yell, "Mine, I saw it first," and toss it in his sack.

They continued like this for the rest of the evening. Anansi was so rude that he grabbed every single egg and Firefly didn't get a single one.

Soon Anansi's sack was so full he could barely pull it.

Finally Firefly said, "Goodbye, Anansi," and flew quickly back home.

Anansi was left alone in the dark with no idea how to get home. Slowly he began to fumble his way back to his house.

He couldn't see a thing, but eventually he bumped into a house. He didn't know whose house it was, so he thought up a scheme.

"Godfather," he called out.

A deep, gruff voice answered back, "Who is that outside of my house?"

Anansi called out, "It is I, your godson Anansi!"

Just then Tiger stuck his huge hairy head out of the door and glared down on the little spider. Tiger knew that he had no godsons, and he knew that Anansi had tricked him many times in the past.

But Tiger was also clever, and said, "Come in, Godson," and shut the door behind Anansi. Tiger had his wife put a big copper kettle of water on the fire so they could boil the eggs.

When they were ready, Tiger, his wife, and all of their children started to eat them hungrily.

"Anansi, my godson, would you like some eggs?" Tiger asked.

Anansi nervously shook his head. "No thank you, Godfather."

When the eggs were all gone, Tiger put a lobster in the kettle and then covered it in some leftover shells, so that it looked like there were more eggs inside. He then put the kettle

on the floor and said, "You should stay for the night, Godson," and grinned so that all of his sharp, gleaming teeth were showing.

During the night, when everyone fell asleep, Anansi crept over to the kettle and reached inside.

As soon as he did so, the lobster pinched him hard and he yelled out in surprise.

"Godson," Tiger called out, "are you alright?"

Anansi answered back, "I was bitten by a dog-flea. Please excuse me, Godfather!"

After a few minutes he tried again to grab an egg and received another pinch.

"Godson, are you sure that you are alright?"

Anansi responded, "Oh, Godfather, these dog-fleas are eating me alive."

Tiger sat up and shouted at the top of his voice, "Dog-fleas?! How dare you accuse us of having dog-fleas in this fine house, after we have fed you and given you a place to sleep!"

Tiger jumped out of bed roaring and started to come after Anansi.

Anansi then flew out of bed and raced out the door, terrified for his life.

Tiger came to the door and smiled to himself as he watched the poor little spider running away.

Anansi never went back to Tiger's house and every time he went to visit Firefly, his wife told Anansi that her husband was gone and to please come back next month.

Anansi never did figure out where the field was where all of the eggs were hidden, and he had much time to think about how his greediness had left him with nothing.

***Coyote and the Bluebird (Pima)***

<http://www.indians.org/welker/bluebird.htm>

A long time ago the Bluebird's feathers were a very dull ugly colour. It lived near a lake with waters of the most delicate blue which never changed because no stream flowed in or out. Because the bird admired the blue water, it bathed in the lake four times every morning for four days, and every morning it sang:

There's a blue water./ It lies there./ I went in./ I am all blue.

On the fourth morning it shed all its feathers and came out in its bare skin, but on the fifth morning it came out with blue feathers.

All the while, Coyote had been watching the bird. He wanted to jump in and catch it for his dinner, but he was afraid of the blue water. But on the fifth morning he said to the Bluebird: "How is it that all your ugly colour has come out of your feathers, and now you are all blue and sprightly and beautiful? You are more beautiful than anything that flies in the air. I want to be blue, too."

"I went in only four times," replied the Bluebird. It then taught Coyote the song it had sung.

And so Coyote steeled his courage and jumped into the lake. For four mornings he did this, singing the song the Bluebird had taught him, and on the fifth day he turned as blue as the bird.

That made Coyote feel very proud. He was so proud to be a blue coyote that when he walked along he looked about on every side to see if anyone was noticing how fine and blue he was.

Then he started running along very fast, looking at his shadow to see if it also was blue. He was not watching the road, and presently he ran into a stump so hard that it threw him down upon the ground and he became dust-coloured all over. And to this day all coyotes are the colour of dusty earth.

***Coyote and the Monsters of the Bitterroot Valley (Flathead/Salish)***

<http://www.indians.org/welker/bitterro.htm>

This story was recorded from a great-great-grandmother whose name means "Painted-Hem-of-the-Skirt." In the summer of 1955, she was the only person on the Flathead Reservation in western Montana that even an interested interpreter could find who knew the old stories of their people.

The Bitterroot Valley is in western Montana.

After Coyote had killed the monster near the mouth of the Jocko River, he turned south and went up the Bitterroot Valley. Soon he saw two huge monsters, one at each end of a ridge. Coyote killed them, changed them into tall rocks, and said, "You will always be there."

There the tall rocks still stand.

Then he went on. Someone had told him about another monster, an Elk monster, up on a mountain to the east. Coyote said to his wife, Mole, "Dig a tunnel clear to the place where that monster is. Dig several holes in the tunnel. Then move our camp to the other side."

Coyote went through the tunnel Mole had made, got out of it, and saw the Elk monster. The monster was surprised to see him.

"How did you get here?" he asked. "Where did you come from?" The monster was scared.

"I came across the prairie," lied Coyote. "Don't you see my trail? You must be blind if you didn't see me."

The monster became more scared. He thought that Coyote must have greater powers than he himself had.

Coyote's dog was Pine Squirrel, and the Elk monster's dog was Grizzly Bear. Grizzly Bear growled at Pine Squirrel, and Pine Squirrel barked back.

"You'd better stop your dog," said the monster. "If you don't, he'll lose his head."

The dogs wanted to fight. Grizzly Bear jumped at Coyote's dog. Pine Squirrel went under him and killed him with the flint he wore on his head. The flint ripped Grizzly Bear. Bones and flesh flew everywhere.

"Look down there," said Coyote to the Elk monster. "See those people coming along that trail? Let's go after them."

He knew that what he saw was Mole moving their camp, but the monster could not see clearly in the tunnel. Elk monster picked up his shield, his spear, and his knife. "I'm ready," he said.

After they had gone a short distance along the trail, the monster fell into the first hole. Coyote called loudly, as if he were calling to an enemy ahead of them. The monster climbed out of the hole, tried to run, but fell into one hole after another. At last Coyote said to him, "Let me carry your shield. Then you can run faster."

Coyote put the shield on his back, but the monster still had trouble. "Let me carry your spear," Coyote said. Soon he got the monster's knife, also--and all of his equipment. Then Coyote ran round and round, shouting, "This is how we charge the enemy."

And he jabbed the monster with the monster's spear. "I have the enemy's warbonnet!" he yelled. He jabbed the monster four times, each time yelling that he had taken something from the enemy. The fifth time he jabbed the monster, he yelled, "I have stripped the enemy." Then he said to the Elk monster, "You can never kill anyone again."

Coyote went on up the Bitterroot Valley. He heard a baby crying, up on a hill. Coyote went up to the baby, not knowing it was a monster. He put his finger in the baby's mouth, to let it suck. The baby ate the flesh off Coyote's finger, then his hand, and then his arm. The monster baby killed Coyote. Only his skeleton was left.

After a while, Coyote's good friend Fox came along. Fox stepped over the dead body, and Coyote came to life. He began to stretch as if he had been asleep. "I've slept a long time," he said to Fox.

You've been dead," Fox told him. "That baby is a monster, and he killed you."

Coyote looked around, but the baby was gone. He put some flint on his finger and waited for the baby to come back. When he heard it crying, he called out, "Hello, baby! You must be hungry."

Coyote let it have his flinted finger to suck. The baby cut himself and died.

"That's the last of you," said Coyote. "This hill will forever be called Sleeping Child."

And that is what the Indians call it today.

After Coyote had left Sleeping Child, Fox joined him again and they traveled together. Soon Coyote grew tired of carrying his blanket, and so he laid it on a rock. After they had traveled farther, they saw a storm coming. They went back to the rock, Coyote picked up his blanket, and the two friends moved on. When the rain began to fall, he put the blanket over himself and Fox. While lying there, covered by the blanket, they looked out and saw the rock running toward them.

Fox went uphill, but Coyote ran downhill. The rock followed close on Coyote's trail. Coyote crossed the river, sure that he was safe. Spreading his clothes out on a rock, he thought he would rest while they dried. But the rock followed him across the river. When he saw it coming out of the water, Coyote began to run. He saw three women sitting nearby, with stone hammers in their hands.

"If that rock comes here," Coyote said to the women, "you break it with your hammers."

But the rock got away from the women. Coyote ran on to where a creek comes down from the mountains near Darby. There he took some vines--Indians call them "monkey ropes"--and placed them so that the rock would get tangled up in them. He set fire to the monkey ropes. The rock got tangled in the burning ropes and was killed by the heat.

Then Coyote said to the rock, "The Indians will come through here on their way to the buffalo country. They will play with you. They will find you slick and heavy, and they will lift you up."

In my childhood, the rock was still there, but it is gone now, no one knows where.



Coyote left the dead rock and went on farther. Soon he saw a mountain sheep. The sheep insulted Coyote and made him angry. Coyote grabbed him and threw him against a pine tree. The body went clear through the tree, but the head stayed on it. The horns stuck out from the trunk of the tree.

Coyote said to the tree, "When people go by, they will talk to you. They will say, 'I want to have good luck. So I will leave a gift here for you.' They will leave gifts and you will make them lucky--in hunting or in war or in anything they wish to do."

The tree became well known as the Medicine Tree. People from several tribes left gifts in it when they passed on their way to the buffalo country that is on the rising-sun side of the mountains.

In my childhood, the skull and face were still there. When I was a young girl, people told me to put some of my hair inside the sheep's horn, so that I would live a long time. I did. That's why I'm nearly ninety years old.

As the interpreter and I were leaving Painted-Hem- of-the-Skirt, she bent low and made a sweeping movement around her ankles and the hem of her long skirt. Then she said a few words and laughed heartily. The interpreter explained: "She says she hopes that she will not find a rattlesnake wrapped around her legs because she told some of the old stories in the summertime."

She had laughed often as she told the tales, but I feel sure that her mother would not have related them in the summertime. "It is good to tell stories in the wintertime," the Indians of the Northwest used to say. "There are long nights in the wintertime."

***Coyote Kills a Giant (Dine/Navajo)***

<http://www.indians.org/welker/coyokill.htm>

Coyote was walking one day when he met Old Woman. She greeted him and asked where he was headed.

"Just roaming around," said Coyote.

"You better stop going that way, or you'll meet a giant who kills everybody."

"Oh, giants don't frighten me," said Coyote (who had never met one). "I always kill them. I'll fight this one too, and make an end of him."

"He's bigger and closer than you think," said Old Woman.

"I don't care," said Coyote, deciding that a giant would be about as big as a bull moose and calculating that he could kill one easily.

So Coyote said good-bye to Old Woman and went ahead, whistling a tune. On his way he saw a large fallen branch that looked like a club. Picking it up, he said to himself, "I'll hit the giant over the head with this. It's big enough and heavy enough to kill him." He walked on and came to a huge cave right in the middle of the path. Whistling merrily, he went in.

Suddenly Coyote met a woman who was crawling along on the ground.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"I'm starving," she said, "and too weak to walk. What are you doing with that stick?"

"I'm going to kill the giant with it," said Coyote, and he asked if she knew where he was hiding.

Feeble as she was, the woman laughed. "You're already in the giant's belly."

"How can I be in his belly?" asked Coyote. "I haven't even met him."

"You probably thought it was a cave when you walked into his mouth," the woman said, and sighed. "It's easy to walk in, but nobody ever walks out. This giant is so big you can't take him in with your eyes. His belly fills a whole valley."

Coyote threw his stick away and kept on walking. What else could he do?

Soon he came across some more people lying around half dead. "Are you sick?" he asked.

"No," they said, "just starving to death. We're trapped inside the giant."

"You're foolish," said Coyote. "If we're really inside this giant, then the cave walls must be the inside of his stomach. We can just cut some meat and fat from him."

"We never thought of that," they said.

"You're not as smart as I am," said Coyote.

Coyote took his hunting knife and started cutting chunks out of the cave walls. As he had guessed, they were indeed the giant's fat and meat, and he used it to feed the starving people. He even went back and gave some meat to the woman he had met first. Then all the people imprisoned in the giant's belly started to feel stronger and happier, but not completely happy. "You've fed us," they said, "and thanks. But how are we going to get out of here?"

"Don't worry," said Coyote. "I'll kill the giant by stabbing him in the heart. Where is his heart? It must be around here someplace."

"Look at the volcano puffing and beating over there," someone said.

"Maybe it's the heart."

"So it is, friend," said Coyote, and began to cut at this mountain.

Then the giant spoke up. "Is that you, Coyote? I've heard of you. Stop this stabbing and cutting and let me alone. You can leave through my mouth; I'll open it for you."

"I'll leave, but not quite yet," said Coyote, hacking at the heart. He told the others to get ready. "As soon as I have him in his death throes, there will be an earthquake. He'll open his jaw to take a last breath, and then his mouth will close forever. So be ready to run out fast!"

Coyote cut a deep hole in the giant's heart, and lava started to flow out. It was the giant's blood. The giant groaned, and the ground under the people's feet trembled.

"Quick, now!" shouted Coyote. The giant's mouth opened and they all ran out. The last one was the wood tick. The giant's teeth were closing on him, but Coyote managed to pull him through at the last moment.

"Look at me," cried the wood tick, "I'm all flat!"

"It happened when I pulled you through," said Coyote. "You'll always be flat from now on. Be glad you're alive."

"I guess I'll get used to it," said the wood tick, and he did.

**Coyote vs. Duck**

<http://www.indians.org/welker/coyoduck.htm>

Coyote became disturbed because he had a sick daughter. He thought Duck had done something against his children in order to make them sick. So Coyote determined to bring harm to Duck. He met Duck at a certain place and ordered that Duck should run to a point with his eyes closed. This Duck did. When he opened them again, he found himself in the hole of a big rock, a little cave high on the face of a cliff. There was no way out for Duck.

Coyote took Duck's wife and children, whom he treated badly. In time, Coyote had more children from this woman, and these he took good care of.

Duck tried constantly to get out of the cave, without success. At last Bat camped nearby, and every day, when he went to hunt rabbits, his children could hear someone crying. They told Bat, and he flew upward to look. On his way he killed rabbits and hung them on his belt. Finally he found Duck, who was very weak from lack of food.

"Who is there?" asked Bat. "I am Duck." Bat asked, "How did you come up here?" Duck said, "Coyote caused me to lose my way with my eyes closed. He got rid of me in order to steal my wife." Then Bat said "Throw yourself down." Duck was afraid to try. So Bat told him, "Throw down a small rock." This Duck did and Bat caught it on his back. He said, "That is exactly the way I will catch you. You will not be hurt."

Duck still feared that Bat would not catch him. Bat continued to urge him to let himself fall. Several times Duck almost let himself go, but drew back. At least he thought, "Suppose I am killed; I shall die here anyway; I am as good as dead now."

Duck closed his eyes as Bat commanded, and let himself fall. Bat caught him gently and put Duck safely on the ground. Bat then took Duck to his home and said, "Do not use the fire-sticks that are near my fireplace, but use those stuck behind the tent poles, at the sides of the tent."

Then he entered, and Duck saw the sticks at the sides of the tent, but only thought them to be fine canes, too handsome for stirring the fire. He saw a number of sticks laying around that were charred on the ends. He took one of these and stirred the embers. Oh,

how the sticks cried. All the other sticks called out, "Duck has burned our younger brother."

These sticks were Bat's children, and they all ran away. Duck became frightened at what he had done, and went out and hid in the brush. Bat came and called to him, "Come back! You have done no harm."

For a long time Duck seemed afraid that Bat would punish him. Then he thought, "I've already been as good as dead, so I have nothing more to fear, even if they should kill me." Duck went back into the tent. But Bat did not hurt him and gave him plenty of rabbit meat to eat. Soon Duck was strong again.

Duck said to Bat, "Coyote took my wife and children; I think I shall go and look for them." Believing him to be strong enough, Bat encouraged him to go. Duck went to his old camp, but he found it deserted. He followed tracks leading from it, and after a while found some tracks other than his own children's.

"I think Coyote has got children from my wife," he thought, and he became very angry. Coyote came along with Duck's wife. She was carrying a very large basket. Inside were Coyote's children, well kept; but Duck's children sat on the outer edge of the basket. Nearly falling off. These were dirty and miserable.

Duck caught the basket with a finger and pulled it back. "What are you doing, children?" the woman said. "Don't do that; you must not catch hold of something and hold me back." Duck continued to pull at the basket. At last she turned to look at the children and saw Duck. He said to her, "Why do you take care of Coyote's children, while my children are dirty and uncared for? Why do you not treat my children properly?"

The woman was ashamed and did not answer. Then he asked her, "Where will you camp now?" When she told him, he said to her, "Go to the place where Coyote told you to camp, but when you put up the shelter, make the grass very thin on one side and very thick on the side on which you are, so I can reach Coyote."

The woman arrived at the camping place. Coyote asked, "To whom have you been talking now?" She replied, "I have not met nor talked with anyone. Why do you always ask me

that?" She then put up the shelter as Duck had directed her. Immediately Duck began to blow. He blew softly, but again, again, and again, until he made it freezing cold.

Coyote could not sleep. He thrust his spear through the sides of the shelter in all directions and nearly speared the Duck. Coyote said to his wife, "I knew that you met someone. It must have been Duck, who is making it so cold." Duck continued to blow and blow. At last Coyote burrowed himself down into the fireplace ashes, hoping to warm himself there. But it was of no use. Coyote froze to death before morning.

Duck let all of Coyote's children go free where they wished. Then he took his wife and his children back to their old home, where they had lived before all of the disruption began.

**Coyote: Fire Race (Karuk)**

<http://www.indians.org/welker/coyofire.htm>

A long time ago, only the three Yellow Jacket sisters had fire. Even though other animals froze, the fire was kept from them. Wise Old Coyote, however, devises a plan to steal the fire, and enlists the other animals to help. Coyote diverts the yellow jackets, seizes a burning stick, and runs away. As the yellow jackets chase him, he hands it off to Eagle, who hands it to Mountain Lion. Several hand-offs later, Frog hides a hot coal in his mouth on a river bottom, and the yellow jackets give up. When Frog spits the coal out, Willow Tree swallows it, and Coyote shows the animals how to extract it: by rubbing two sticks together over dry moss. Now that the animals have fire, each night they gather in a circle while the elders tell stories. An meaningful tale which stresses the importance of the natural world and our need to live cooperatively with it.



***Coyote's Adventures in Idaho***

<http://www.indians.org/welker/coyotead.htm>

Near Spokane one day, Coyote and Fox were travelling together on their way north. When they reached a river, Coyote said to Fox, "I believe I'll get married. I'd like to take one of those Pend d'Oreille women for my wife."

So they decided to go in search of the Chief of the Pend d'Oreilles. They soon located him with his tribe, and Coyote approached him with a gift of salmon.

"Chief, I would very much like to have one of your tribal women for my wife. Can we talk about which one you would choose for me?"

"Now Coyote, you know we do not approve that our women intermarry with other tribal members. So you cannot have one of our Pend d'Oreille women for your wife."

Coyote and Fox left the Chief. Coyote became so disappointed with the Chief's decision, he began to rage to his partner, Fox.

"Soon the Chief will be sorry for his refusal. I'll make a big waterfall here in his big river. Forevermore, salmon will not be able to get over the falls to feed the Pend d'Oreilles."

Since Coyote had the power for his wishes to be granted, the great falls immediately formed as he had proclaimed. That is how the Spokane Falls began.

From there, Coyote walked north to Ravalli. Soon he met an Old Indian Woman camped close by. Old Woman said to Coyote, "Where are you going?"

"I am on my way to travel all over the world."

"Well, you had better go back and not stay here," Old Woman said to Coyote.

"Why should I turn back and not stay here for a while? I am looking for a wife."

"Because there is a Giant here who kills everyone passing through this valley," replied Old Woman.

"But I am strong, I will fight him and kill him instead."

So Coyote did not heed Old Woman's warning and started walking on the trail again. He noticed a large tamarack tree nearby on a hillside.

"I'll put an end to the Giant with a hard blow from this tree. That's the way I'll kill him," Coyote said to himself. So he pulled the tamarack tree from the ground and swung it onto his shoulder and continued his search for the Giant.

Soon Coyote saw a woman who seemed nearly dead. He asked, "What is the matter, are you sick?"

"No, I am not sick," she replied.

"I am going to kill the Giant with this tamarack tree," said Coyote.

"You might as well throw the tree away. Don't you know the Giant already sees you and you are already a tasty bite in the Giant's belly?" said the woman.

Coyote took her advice and threw the tamarack tree up on a hillside where it is still growing near Arlee, a little station on the Northern Pacific Railroad. All of what was Jocko Valley now fills the Giant's belly.

As Coyote travelled on from there, he observed many people lying here and there. Some were already dead, others seemed about to die, or were nearly dead.

"Tell me what is the trouble with all of you people," asked Coyote of an Old Woman with her eyes open.

"We are all starving to death," she answered.

"How can that be, when I can see plenty to eat here, lots of meat and fat?" said Coyote.

Then Coyote attacked the Giant and cut away large chunks of grease and fat from the sides of the Giant and fed all of the people. Soon all became well again.

"All of you people prepare to run for your lives. I am going to cut out the Giant's heart. When I start cutting, you must all run to O'Keef's Canyon or to Ravalli," called out Coyote.

With his stone knife, Coyote cut out the Giant's heart. The Giant called out, "Please, Coyote, let me alone. Go away from here. Get Out!"

"No I won't go away. I'm going to stay right here until I kill you, said Coyote.

Then he cut out the Giant's heart. As he was dying, the Giant's jaws began to close tightly. Woodtick was the last one to escape from the Giant's belly when Giant's jaws closed. But Coyote caught hold of him and with all his strength pulled Woodtick out of the Giant's mouth.

"We can't help it but you will always be flat headed from your experience," said Coyote as he left and started again on his world trip.

From there the traveller continued on to what is today Missoula, Montana. Coyote walked along between Lolo and Fort Missoula when he thought he heard someone call his name. But he could not see anyone. He trotted forward again, and heard his name called again. He stopped and when he looked into the woods, he saw two women sitting down beside a river.

Coyote swam across the river, and went up the embankment to the women. They were very good-looking women, thought Coyote, maybe he could marry one of them. He sat down between them, but they stood up and danced down to the river.

"Wait for me," called Coyote. "I'll go swimming with you." He took off his jacket beaded with shells, denoting that he was a great Chief.

"We don't want to wait, we are having a good time dancing," replied the two women as they danced on into the river. When Coyote joined them, they pushed him down into the water and tried to drown him.

Later, Coyote's partner, Fox, appeared from around a bend in the river, looking for something to eat. When he looked into the river and saw something lying on the bottom, he said, "This must be my partner, Coyote!"

Fox pulled out the object, and when he was sure it was Coyote, he made a magical jump over him and brought Coyote back to life.

Coyote said, "Oh, I must have had a long sleep."

"You were not asleep, you were dead," replied Fox. "Why did you go near those women, you had no right to be near them, they are from the Shell tribe."

Coyote climbed partway up the hill and set the grass on fire. Later it was discovered that the women could not escape, and died in the fire. Today some shells have a black side, because they had been burned at the same time.

***Loki: How Thor Got His Hammer (Norse)***

Thor was the strongest of all the gods. He had a red beard and fiery eyes and rode in a chariot drawn by two goats. Thor was very quick to lose his temper, but he was equally quick to get it back again.

Thor's wife, Sif, had the most beautiful hair in all the universe. Made of gold, Sif's hair gleamed like summer wheat blowing in the wind.

One night while Sif slept, the mischief-maker, Loki, crept into her chamber and cut off all her hair.

When Sif woke up and discovered her hair was gone, she screamed, then collapsed with grief.

Thor flew into a rage and searched everywhere for Loki, for he knew this was the work of the trickster. When he finally found Loki, Thor threatened to kill him.

"No, please! Spare me!" Loki cried. "I'll restore Sif's hair! I promise it will be more beautiful than before!"

"Do as you promise," growled Thor. "Or I will slay you with my own hands."

Loki scampered away from Thor and hurried to Nidavellir, the world of the dwarves. He went straight to the cave of some dwarves, who were known as Ivaldi's sons.

"You must make new hair for the goddess Sif," Loki commanded Ivaldi's sons.

Eager to win favor with the gods, the dwarves set to work at once and spun beautiful golden hair for Sif.

"We have two other gifts for the gods as well," said one dwarf. He then presented Loki with a ship made of gold and said, "Please give this boat to Frey. On the sea, it will bring forth a good breeze all by itself and will carry as many sailors as Frey wishes. On land, it can be folded up and carried in his pocket."

Another dwarf gave Loki a shining spear. "Take this magic spear to Odin," he said. "Nothing can keep it from hitting its target."

Loki thanked the dwarves, then set off for home.

But on his way back to Asgard, a sneaky idea came to Loki. And he quickly turned around and hurried back to Nidavellir.

Soon he came to the cave of two dwarves named Sindri and Brok. "Look at these amazing gifts!" Loki said to the two dwarves. "The sons of Ivaldi have made them for the gods. I'll bet you cannot do as well. In fact, I'll wager my own head that you can't."

"Your head?"

"Indeed, you may cut off my head, but you must not injure any other part of me."

"Okay, good. Let's get to work," Sindri said to Brok. "Not only will we prove we can do better work than Ivaldi's sons, but we'll have the pleasure of lopping off this mischief-maker's head."

Sindri placed a pig's skin in the furnace, then gave Brok a pair of bellows. "While I'm out of the room, pump the fire," he said. "If you stop, it will not be hot enough and all will be lost."

As Brok pumped the bellows, Loki feared that these dwarves might win the wager. So he quickly changed into a fly and bit Brok's hand.

Brok cried out in pain, but still he kept pumping the bellows. When Sindri returned and lifted the pig's skin from the fire, Loki cried out with astonishment. The pig's skin had been changed into a golden boar with a gleaming mane and bristles.

Sindri then placed a lump of gold into the furnace and commanded Brok to fan the fire.

As Brok pumped the bellows, Loki changed into a fly again and bit Brok's neck.

Though Brok cried out in agony, he kept pumping the bellows.

When Sindri returned, he took the lump of gold from the fire. Loki gasped, for the lump had been changed into a glittering golden armring.

Sindri next placed a piece of iron into the fire. "Pump again," he told Brok.

While Brok pumped the bellows, Loki changed into a fly for the third time and bit Brok on his eyelids.

Brok shouted with pain, but still, he kept working. And when Sindri took the iron from his fire, he held up an enormous silver hammer.

"Take these three gifts to Asgard," said Sindri. "And let the gods say who are the best craftsmen."

When Loki and Brok journeyed together to Asgard, the gods and the goddesses gathered in their council.

"Now you must say which gifts are better," said Loki. "Those made by the sons of Ivaldi. Or those made by Sindri and Brok."

First Loki presented Sif with her new golden hair. "Place this hair on your head," he told her, "and it will magically start growing from your scalp."

Sif did as Loki said, and her new hair gleamed in the torchlight. Indeed, it was more beautiful than her own hair.

Next, Loki gave the magic spear to Odin and the magic boat to Frey, and the gods and goddesses greatly admired both gifts.

But then Brok stepped forward. "These gifts are from Sindri and myself," he said.

First the dwarf presented Frey with the golden boar. "This boar will run through air and over the water faster than any horse. Wherever he goes he will give light to the dark."

Next Brok presented the golden armring to Odin. "This gold will keep making gold for you," he said. "Eight rings of the same weight will drop from this ring every ninth night."

Finally Brok presented the huge hammer to Thor. "You may strike this hammer as hard as you please and it will never be damaged. It never misses its target and it always returns to your hand."

Thor bowed before the dwarf. "Thank you for the most important gift of all," he said. "Now I can protect Asgard from the giants."

"Indeed," said Odin. "It is clear that Brok and Sindri have outdone the sons of Ivaldi."

The gods and goddesses cheered. "And it is also clear that Loki has lost his wager," said Thor.

Before Loki could scamper away, Thor grabbed him by the hair. Then Brok held a knife to Loki's neck.

"I'm afraid Brok must take your head off now," Thor said to Loki.

"Ah, of course," said Loki. "But remember, Brok, I said you could only cut off my head as long as you did not injure any other part of me — and that includes my neck!"

When Brok realized that this feat was impossible, he was forced to let Loki go.

Indeed, the gods and goddesses were even a bit grateful to Loki. Though he'd brought them terrible grief, he'd made up for it by bringing them many amazing gifts, including the most wondrous gift of all — Thor's mighty hammer.

***Loki: The Giant's Bride (Norse)***

Mighty Thor carried his magic hammer everywhere he went. Whenever he swung it, lightning bolts streaked across the sky. When he struck it against the rocks, thunder rumbled, shaking the earth. For this reason, Thor was called the Thunder God.

But one day Thor woke up and discovered that his precious hammer was missing. Believing Loki might be up to his mischief again, he quickly called for the trickster.

Loki assured Thor that he was innocent, and to prove it, he said he would travel to the world of the frost-giants.

Loki borrowed Freya's falcon disguise. Then he lifted into the air and flew far over the nine worlds to the land of the giants.

There, Loki found Thrym, the king of the giants, sitting on top of a hill, stroking his horse.

"What's the matter?" Thrym said. "Why have you come alone to our land?"

"Because I believe you have Thor's hammer," said Loki.

"Yes, I have it," said Thrym. "I've hidden it eight miles under the earth. I'll only give it back if you give me Freya for my wife."

Loki flew back to the realm of the gods and delivered this news to Thor. Then the two hurried to Freya.

"Put on your bridal veil!" Loki ordered the beautiful goddess. "You must marry the giant Thrym or the gods will come to a terrible end!"

"Never!" cried Freya. "I will never marry that hideous giant!"

The gods and goddesses were quickly called together in a council.

"How can we get my hammer back?" asked Thor.

"You yourself must go to the giants wearing bridal clothes," Heimdall answered.

"Me?" roared Thor. "You want me to dress up as a bride?"

"Silence, Thor," said Odin. "You must do as Heimdall says, or the giants will conquer Asgard with your hammer."

Thor's face grew red as the gods dressed him in a wedding dress. They placed a pretty cap on his head and put Freya's necklace around his neck. Then they hung a woman's house keys from his waist.

"I will go with you as your maidservant," said Loki and disguised himself in woman's clothing.

Thor hitched his two goats to his chariot. Then he and Loki soared over the mountains to the land of the giants.

"Hearken, giants!" cried Thrym to his kin. "Put straw on the benches! I see my bride is arriving!"

The king of the giants gloated as he escorted Thor from the goat-driven chariot. "Gold-horned cattle I have," said Thrym. "Jet-black oxen and many gems and jewels I have. You, my dear, were the only treasure I did not have until now."

As the sun set over the kingdom of Thrym, the giants guzzled kegs of ale and ate a whole ox. All the while, Thrym could not keep his eyes off his new bride.

"Whoever saw a bride eat more?" he said to his men. "Or a maiden drink more?"

"My mistress has not eaten in eight days," Loki said in a high voice. "She was too excited about her impending marriage."

Longing to kiss Freya, Thrym peeked beneath her veil.

But when the giant saw his new bride's eyes, he screamed and leapt back the entire length of his hall. "Her eyes!" he said, trembling. "Her eyes burn like fire!"

Again Loki spoke in his high voice: "Her eyes burn because she has not slept for eight nights, and because her desire for you is so great.

Thrym relaxed a bit. "Very well then," he said, "bring forth Thor's hammer. Give it to me so I can bless my bride."

The giants brought Thor's mighty hammer into the hall, and the god's heart leapt with joy when he saw his magic weapon again.

"Let it rest on my bride's knees while we promise our marriage vows to one another," said Thrym.

As soon as the giants placed the hammer on Thor's knees, Thor grabbed it. He bellowed with rage; then he stood up and began swinging. The Thunder God killed Thrym first, then one giant after the next.

After Thor had slain many giants, he and Loki jumped into the goat chariot and carried Thor's precious hammer back to the land of the gods.



**Loki: The Golden Apples (Norse)**

*Thrymheim 'tis called  
Where Thiazi dwelt  
He the hideous giant*

One day, Odin and Loki were returning to Asgard from a trip over the mountains. Since they were having trouble finding food, they were thrilled when they finally came upon a herd of oxen in the valley. Immediately they killed an ox and prepared a fire to cook it.

But a strange thing happened. As the gods roasted the ox over the fire, they discovered that no matter how long they cooked it, it remained raw.

"What does this mean?" said Odin.

"It means I have prevented your fire from cooking the ox," said a deep voice.

The voice seemed to be coming from an enormous eagle sitting in a nearby tree. Actually, the eagle was the giant Thiazi in disguise.

"If you let me eat my fill," said the eagle, "I will make the fire cook your ox."

The gods were so hungry that they quickly agreed. And the eagle coasted down to the ground, then made the fire burn the ox. When the ox was cooked, Thiazi began to eat. He ate and ate and ate.

Angered by such greediness, Loki snatched a long, sharp stick and stabbed the eagle. Loki's weapon stuck into the bird's back, and as the eagle flew up from the ground, he carried Loki away.

The eagle dragged Loki over rock heaps and trees. Afraid his arms might be ripped from his body, Loki begged for help.

"I'll free you only under one condition," said the eagle.

"Anything!" cried Loki.

"You must lure Idun out of Asgard with her basket of apples."

"I can't do that!" said Loki. The goddess Idun guarded the golden apples of youth. Whenever the gods and goddesses started to grow old, they took a bite of Idun's apples and were instantly made young again.

"Do as I say or you will die!" said Thiazi.

Loki did not want to die, so he agreed to help Thiazi if Thiazi would first release him.

The eagle released him, and Loki tumbled to earth.

Soon after the gods returned home, Loki went to Idun. "I've found some wonderful apples in the forest," he said.

"Indeed?" said she.

"Yes, bring your apples and we'll compare them. If those apples are better than yours, we'll pick them and carry them home."

Idun agreed to do as the trickster said, and she carried her basket of apples into the forest.

Idun and Loki had not traveled far when Thiazi suddenly swooped down in his eagle disguise. The giant snatched Idun and her apples.

Then he carried them back to Thrymheim, his hall in the land of the giants.

The gods were horrified when Idun failed to return home that night. Since her golden apples of youth were no longer in Asgard, the gods all began to wither and wrinkle with age.

In a panic, they met in their council.

"When did you last see Idun?" each asked the other.

"I saw her walking into the woods with Loki," said one.

"Seize the scoundrel!" said Odin.

When Loki was brought before the council, he shook with fear. "You will be put to a slow tortuous death, Loki, if you do not tell us what happened to Idun," said Odin.

"She's imprisoned in Thrymheim," said Loki, trembling, "but I promise I'll save her."

"You must save her at once, or we'll all die soon of old age!" cried a god.

"Lend me your falcon suit, Freya," said Loki, "so I can fly to Jotunheim as quickly as possible."

The goddess Freya handed over her feather suit, and Loki put it on and flew to the land of the giants.

When Loki arrived at Thrymheim, the home of Thiazi, he found Idun there alone. Thiazi was out at sea.

As soon as Loki saw Idun, he cast a spell over her and changed her into a nut. He then clutched the nut with his talons and started back to Asgard.

When Thiazi returned home and found Idun missing, he became enraged. He donned his own plumage and flew after Loki. Thiazi's wings made a terrible rushing sound as he soared through the air to Asgard.

When the gods and goddesses heard the sound of Thiazi's wings, they looked up at the sky and saw an eagle chasing a falcon. They knew at once the eagle was Thiazi and the falcon, Loki; and they quickly built a woodpile.

As soon as Loki passed beyond the walls of Asgard, the gods set fire to their wood.

Flames roared skyward, but Thiazi was flying so swiftly he couldn't stop himself in time, and he sailed directly into the fire.

His bright feathers in flames, Thiazi fell to the ground. When he landed within the walls of Asgard, Odin killed him.

Loki pulled off his falcon costume. He said a spell over the enchanted nut, and it instantly changed back into Idun.

The guardian of the magic apples was saved - and so was the eternal youth of the gods and goddesses.

***Hermes & Apollo's Cows (Greek)***

Hermes was the son of Zeus and Maia, a wood-nymph. He was born in a cave in Arcadia on Mount Cyllene, and as soon as he was born he wanted to get up to mischief. His anxiety to find something to do, rather than just lie around in his cot, provoked him to get up and explore the world.

At this time, Hermes was probably only a few hours old. As he walked out of the cave into the bright spring air his first encounter was with a tortoise. Gazing at the beautiful shell, Hermes decided that there were far better things he could do with it than just look at it. Killing the poor tortoise, he proceeded to remove the shell, stretched some cow-hide across it and plaited some grass to make the strings. Maia never scolded him for killing the animal because he played the lyre so well.

Eventually Hermes got bored with the lyre, threw it into his cot and went in search of something else to amuse him. By now he was feeling hungry, and he came across a field of cattle belonging to his brother Apollo. The cattle were guarded by two watchdogs, so Hermes drugged the dogs and led the cattle backwards out of the field, so that their footprints were pointing in the opposite direction to the way that he was leading them. He dragged them by their tails all the way to a cave at Pylos, disguising his own footprints by making a pair of grass sandals so that he left no trace behind.

He killed two of the cattle to cook, divided them up into twelve portions to make a sacrifice to each of the gods, and kept a bit for himself. After he had devoured his sacrificial supper, Hermes wandered back, turned into a wisp of cloud and entered his home through the keyhole. He climbed into his cot and cuddled his tortoiseshell lyre under his arm as if it were a soft toy.

But it wasn't long before Apollo found out that Hermes had stolen his cattle. On his way home, in his usual boastful fashion, Hermes had told an old man that he had robbed his brother of his herd. Unfortunately for Hermes, this old man was none other than Battus, the god of gossip. Apollo arrived at the cave and confronted the sleeping Hermes who protested his innocence from the safety of his cradle.

"Do I look like a cattle thief? I'm only two days old and all I want is sleep and milk. Newborn babies don't steal cows, my feet are too soft to run, and I don't even know what a cow looks like yet".

But Apollo was not convinced by Hermes's lies. "You're a deceiver and you speak like a thief. You'd better come with me to see Zeus, our father. It will be for him to decide your fate."

So Apollo snatched Hermes out of the cot and dragged him kicking and screaming to Zeus. Hermes cursed every cow in the world and behaved like the brat he was. But when Zeus saw them together, he was charmed by Hermes naiveté and couldn't believe that he had stolen anything.

Apollo pleaded his case, but Hermes just carried on telling his lies, until Zeus, who was finding the whole thing highly amusing, ordered the brothers to be friends and to make

up. Hermes agreed to take Apollo to where the cattle were hidden, and when they arrived Hermes began to play his magical lyre. Apollo was enchanted by the music of the lyre and asked Hermes if he would share its secret. Hermes agreed only if he were to have a share of Apollo's cattle. So the bargain was struck, and Apollo and Hermes became close friends. It was, in fact, Apollo who taught Hermes how to tell the future by reading the patterns that ripples made on water.

***Hermes, Slayer Of Argos, Monster Of 100 Eyes (Greek)***

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1. 583 ff (trans. Melville):

Zeus could no more endure his the distress of his lover, Io, a captive of Hera's guard, the hundred-eyed giant Argos, and summoned his son, Hermes, and charged him to accomplish Argos' death. Promptly he fastened on his ankle-wings, grasped in his fist the wand that charms to sleep, put on his magic cap, and thus arrayed Hermes sprang from his father's citadel down to earth. There he removed his cap, laid by his wings; only his wand he kept.

A herdsman now, he drove a flock of goats through the green byways, gathered as he went, and played his pipes of reed. The strange sweet skill charmed Hera's guardian.

'My friend', he called, 'whoever you are, well might you sit with me here on this rock, and see how cool the shade extends congenial for a shepherd's seat.'

So Hermes joined him, and with many a tale he stayed the passing hours and on his reeds played soft refrains to lull the watching eyes. But Argos fought to keep at bay the charms of slumber and, though many of his eyes were closed in sleep, still many kept their guard. He asked too by what means this new design (for new it was), the pipe of reeds, was found. Then the god told this story of Pan and his pursuit of the Nymph, Syrinx . . .

The tale remained untold; for Hermes saw all Argos' eyelids closed and every eye vanquished in sleep. He stopped and with his wand, his magic wand, soothed the tired resting eyes and sealed their slumber; quick then with his sword he struck off the nodding head and from the rock threw it all bloody, spattering the cliff with gore. Argos lay dead; so many eyes, so bright quenched, and all hundred shrouded in one night.

***Hermes & The Creation Of Pandora (Greek)***

*Hesiod, Works and Days 60 ff (trans. Evelyn-White) (Greek epic C8th or 7th B.C.):*

When Zeus commissioned that the first woman, Pandora, be crafted by the gods, Hermes bestowed upon her guile and deceitfulness, and delivered her to mankind.

Zeus bade famous Hephaestus make haste and mix earth with water and to put in it the voice and strength of human kind, and fashion a sweet, lovely maiden-shape, like to the immortal goddesses in face [the first woman Pandora]; and Athena to teach her needlework and the weaving of the varied web; and golden Aphrodite to shed grace upon her head and cruel longing and cares that weary the limbs. And he charged Hermes the guide to put in her a shameless mind and a deceitful nature.

So he ordered, and they obeyed the lord Zeus. Forthwith Hephaestus moulded clay in the likeness of a modest maid, as Zeus purposed . . . and the Guide Hermes contrived within her lies and crafty words and a deceitful nature at the will of loud thundering Zeus, and the Herald of the gods put speech in her. And he called this woman Pandora (All-gifts), because all they who dwelt on Olympus gave each a gift, a plague to men who eat bread.

But when he had finished the sheer, hopeless snare, Zeus sent glorious Hermes, the swift messenger of the gods, to take it to Epimetheus as a gift. And Epimetheus did not think on what Prometheus had said to him, bidding him never take a gift of Olympian Zeus, but to send it back for fear it might prove to be something harmful to men. But he took the gift, and afterwards, when the evil thing was already his, he understood.

***Hermes & Baby Heracles (Greek)***

Hermes was not a robber, but a thief. The subtle distinction here was that he became the patron of stealth, rather than of outright burglary or mugging. Zeus would often use him to rescue others, particularly divine children, from danger. He became the messenger of the gods, flying between heaven, earth and the underworld, the only god who could travel freely between these places. He was the supreme trickster, and because no one could cheat him and get away with it, he was given the job of accompanying the souls of the dead on their way to the underworld.

Hermes's trickery was invaluable when it came to rescuing and saving others, as when he came to the aid of the child, Heracles.

Heracles was the son of Zeus and a mortal woman, Alcmena. Because he was not wholly divine, Heracles was in danger from Hera's malicious jealousy. The consequences of Hera ever finding out that her husband Zeus had slept with a mortal who subsequently bore him a child were usually murderous. Hermes decided to help Heracles.

If Heracles were to become divine, Hera could not harm him. The only way he could do so was to suckle the milk of a goddess. This is when Hermes came up with one of his better plans.

He lay the baby Heracles on a path in the woods and asked Hera if she would like to go for a walk with him. Hermes was a bit of a flirt and as they talked and walked, he idly commented upon the beauty of Hera's body and breasts. Hera was, of course, flattered by the youthful Hermes and his complimentary words.

They came across the crying baby lying on the path. Heracles had been wrapped up well so that Hera couldn't recognize him. If she knew the child to be mortal or one of Zeus's offspring, she would have killed it.

Hermes looked down at the poor thing and said: "This baby seems so hungry, and you, Hera, with your beautiful breasts, you could give this child such wonderful milk."

Hera, still flattered by the attention from the young god, agreed and proudly took the baby to her breast. She began to feed Heracles, but as he suckled she guessed that this was no divine child.

She pulled her breast away from the child and drops of milk spurted out into the sky to form the Milky Way.

As for Heracles, thanks to the intervention of Hermes, he had received just enough divine milk to become god-like and to follow his own heroic path.



### ***Nasreddin Hodja (Turkey)***

Notes: Nasreddin Hodja's legendary wit and trickery were possibly based on the exploits of a historical imam. Hodja (a title meaning teacher or scholar) was reputedly born in 1208 and died in 1284. As many as 350 anecdotes have been attributed to him. He is known for his wit, common sense, frankness, ridicule... and the kind of humor that reflects human psychology, exposes the shortcomings of a society, criticizes even state and religious affairs yet always settles matters amicably.

- Nasreddin Hodja was walking down the street one day when he noticed something shining in the dirt. He walked over and picked it up. It was a small mirror. He looked in it, saw himself, and then threw it away, saying to his neighbor who was watching him, "It is not surprising, my friend, that someone threw that thing away. Who would keep such an ugly picture?"
- One day Hodja went to the market and bought a fine piece of meat. On the way home he met a friend who gave him a special recipe for the meat. Hodja was very happy. But then, before he got home, a large crow stole the meat from Hodja's hands and flew off with it. "You thief!" Hodja angrily called after the departing crow. "You have stolen my meat! But you won't enjoy it; I've got the recipe!"
- One day Hodja went to a hamam (Turkish bath) but as he was dressed so poorly, the attendants didn't pay much attention to him. They gave him only a scrap of soap, a rag for a loincloth and an old towel. When Hodja left, he gave each of the two attendants a gold coin. As he had not complained of their poor service, they were very surprised. They wondered had they treated him better whether he would have given them even a larger tip. The next week, Hodja came again. This time, they treated him like royalty and gave him embroidered towels and a loin cloth of silk. After being massaged and perfumed, he left the bath, handing each attendant the smallest copper coin possible. - This, said Hodja, is for the last visit. The gold coins were for today.
- Hodja was once a judge. One day a man came to his house to complain about his neighbor. Hodja listened carefully and then said to him, "My good man, you are right." The man went away happily. In a little while the first man's neighbor came to see Hodja. He complained about the first man. Hodja listened carefully to him, too, and then said, "My good man, you are right." Hodja's wife had been listening to all this, and when the second man left, she turned to Hodja and said, "Hodja, you told both men that they were right. That's impossible. They both can't be right." Hodja listened carefully to his wife and then said to her, "My dear, you are right."
- Nasreddin Hodja was standing in the marketplace when a stranger stepped up to him and slapped him in the face, but then said, "I beg your pardon. I thought that you were someone else." This explanation did not satisfy the Hodja, so he brought the stranger before the qadi and demanded compensation.

The Hodja soon perceived that the qadi and the defendant were friends. The latter admitted his guilt, and the judge pronounced the sentence: "The settlement for this offense is one piaster, to be paid to the plaintiff. If you do not have a piaster with you, then you may bring it here to the plaintiff at your convenience."

Hearing this sentence, the defendant went on his way. The Hodja waited for him to return with the piaster. And he waited. And he waited. Some time later the Hodja said to the qadi, "Do I understand correctly that one piaster is sufficient payment for a slap?"

"Yes," answered the qadi.

Hearing this answer, the Hodja slapped the judge in the face and said, "You may keep my piaster when the defendant returns with it," then walked away.

- A beggar was given a piece of bread, but nothing to put on it. Hoping to get something to go with his bread, he went to a nearby inn and asked for a handout. The innkeeper turned him away with nothing, but the beggar sneaked into the kitchen where he saw a large pot of soup cooking over the fire. He held his piece of bread over the steaming pot, hoping to thus capture a bit of flavor from the good-smelling vapor. Suddenly the innkeeper seized him by the arm and accused him of stealing soup. "I took no soup," said the beggar. "I was only smelling the vapor."

"Then you must pay for the smell," answered the innkeeper.

The poor beggar had no money, so the angry innkeeper dragged him before the qadi.

Now Nasreddin Hodja was at that time serving as qadi, and he heard the innkeeper's complaint and the beggar's explanation.

"So you demand payment for the smell of your soup?" summarized the Hodja after the hearing.

"Yes!" insisted the innkeeper.

"Then I myself will pay you," said the Hodja, "and I will pay for the smell of your soup with the sound of money."

Thus saying, the Hodja drew two coins from his pocket, rang them together loudly, put them back into his pocket, and sent the beggar and the innkeeper each on his own way.

Sources: various; [www.pitt.edu/~dash/hodja.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/hodja.html)

### **Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby (American Folklore)**

From: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~UG97/remus/atlanta.html> (August 31, 2004)

*Uncle Remus did not just serve Joel Chandler Harris as a vehicle for relating the African-American folk tales he collected. Remus, in fact, was actually born before those tales began to appear. Beginning in the late 1870s, Harris wrote semi-serious stories involving the old ex-slave in a contemporary setting. The stories, which appeared in the Constitution, used Remus to comment on issues of the day, including religion, race and social movement. Some apparently offer little more than attempts at humor. Even those tales, however, shed light on Harris' opinions on race relations - and cast a shadow on claims that he was a secret egalitarian using the Remus folklore stories for subversive ends, as some recent scholarship has suggested. Joel Chandler Harris, 1848-1908*

One day Brer Fox thought of how Brer Rabbit had been cutting up his capers and bouncing around until he'd come to believe that he was the boss of the whole gang. Brer Fox thought of a way to lay some bait for that uppity Brer Rabbit.

He went to work and got some tar and mixed it with some turpentine. He fixed up a contraption that he called a Tar-Baby. When he finished making her, he put a straw hat on her head and sat the little thing in the middle of the road. Brer Fox, he lay off in the bushes to see what would happen.

Well, he didn't have to wait long either, 'cause by and by Brer Rabbit came pacing down the road--lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity--just as sassy as a jaybird. Brer Fox, he lay low. Brer Rabbit came prancing along until he saw the Tar-Baby and then he sat back on his hind legs like he was astonished. The Tar-Baby just sat there, she did, and Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Good morning!" says Brer Rabbit, says he. "Nice weather we're having this morning," says he.

Tar-Baby didn't say a word, and Brer Fox, he lay low.

"How are you feeling this morning?" says Brer Rabbit, says he.

Brer Fox, he winked his eye real slow and lay low and the Tar-Baby didn't say a thing.

"What is the matter with you then? Are you deaf?" says Brer Rabbit, says he. "Cause if you are, I can holler louder," says he.

The Tar-Baby stayed still and Brer Fox, he lay low.

"You're stuck-up, that's what's wrong with you. You think you're too good to talk to me," says Brer Rabbit, says he. "And I'm going to cure you, that's what I'm going to do," says he.

Brer Fox started to chuckle in his stomach, he did, but Tar-Baby didn't say a word.

"I'm going to teach you how to talk to respectable folks if it's my last act," says Brer Rabbit, says he. "If you don't take off that hat and say howdy, I'm going to bust you wide open," says he.

Tar-Baby stayed still and Brer Fox, he lay low.

Brer Rabbit kept on asking her why she wouldn't talk and the Tar-Baby kept on saying nothing until Brer Rabbit finally drew back his fist, he did, and blip--he hit the Tar-Baby on the jaw. But his fist stuck and he couldn't pull it loose. The tar held him. But Tar-Baby, she stayed still, and Brer Fox, he lay low.

"If you don't let me loose, I'm going to hit you again," says Brer Rabbit, says he, and with that he drew back his other fist and blap--he hit the Tar-Baby with the other hand and that one stuck fast too.

Tar-Baby she stayed still, and Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Turn me loose, before I kick the natural stuffing out of you," says Brer Rabbit, says he, but the Tar-Baby just sat there.

She just held on and then Brer Rabbit jumped her with both his feet. Brer Fox, he lay low. Then Brer Rabbit yelled out that if that Tar-Baby didn't turn him loose, he was going to butt her crank-sided. Then he butted her and his head got stuck.

Brer Box walked out from behind the bushes and strolled over to Brer Rabbit, looking as innocent as a mockingbird.

"Howdy, Brer Rabbit," says Brer Fox, says he. "You look sort of stuck up this morning," says he. And he rolled on the ground and laughed and laughed until he couldn't laugh anymore.

By and by he said, "Well, I expect I got you this time, Brer Rabbit," says he. "Maybe I don't, but I expect I do. You've been around here sassing after me a mighty long time, but now it's the end.

And then you're always getting into something that's none of your business," says Brer Fox, says he. "Who asked you to come and strike up a conversation with this Tar-Baby? And who stuck you up the way you are? Nobody in the round world. You just jammed yourself into that Tar-Baby without waiting for an invitation," says Brer Fox, says he. "There you are and there you'll stay until I fix up a brushpile and fire it up, 'cause I'm going to barbecue you today, for sure," says Brer Fox, says he.

Then Brer Rabbit started talking mighty humble.

"I don't care what you do with me, Brer Fox, says he, "Just so you don't fling me in that briar patch. Roast me, Brer Fox, says he, "But don't fling me in that briar patch."

"It's so much trouble to kindle a fire," says Brer Fox, says he, "that I expect I'd better hang you," says he.

"Hang me just as high as you please, Brer Fox, says Brer Rabbit, says he, "but for the Lord's sake, don't fling me in that briar patch," says he.

"I don't have any string, " says Brer Fox, says he, "Now I expect I had better drown you, " says he.

"Drown me just as deep as you please, Brer Fox," says Brer Rabbit, says he, "But please do not fling me in that briar patch, " says he.

"There's no water near here," says Brer Fox, says he, "And now I reckon I'd better skin you," says he.

"Skin me Brer Fox," says he. "Snatch out my eyeballs, tear out my ears by the roots," says he, "But please, Brer Fox, don't fling me in that briar patch, " says he.

Of course, Brer Fox wanted to get Brer Rabbit as bad as he could, so he caught him by the behind legs and slung him right in the middle of the briar patch. There was a considerable flutter when Brer Rabbit struck the bushes, and Brer Fox hung around to see what was going to happen.

By and by he heard someone call his name and 'way up on the hill he saw Brer Rabbit sitting cross-legged on a chinquapin log combing the tar pitch out of his hair with a chip. Then Brer Fox knew he had been tricked.

Brer Rabbit hollered out, "Born and bred in the briar patch. I was born and bred in the briar patch!" And with that he skipped out just as lively as a cricket in the embers of a fire.

## ***Trickster's Buffalo Hunt (Winnebago)***

After everyone deserted him, Trickster forged on ahead by himself. In those days all the objects in the world could communicate with one another, as they understood each other's language. When Trickster talked to anything, he would always address it as "younger brother."

As he was walking along, he looked up at the top of a knoll ahead of him, and there he saw buffalo. He thought to himself, "Too bad I throw away my arrows, otherwise I could kill this animal and make a fine meal of him."

However, he still had his knife, so he took it out and began cutting down the tall grass. He took the grass and formed it into the shapes of men, which he set in a circle with one end open. In front of the opening the ground was a morass of mud.

He then walked to where he had seen the buffalo, and called out to it, "Oho! Younger brother, here you are grazing without a thing to worry about. Continue on, and don't worry about intruders, I'll stand guard here. Say, younger brothers, you know don't you that this place is completely surrounded by human beings. But look over there, there's a gap through which you can escape."

The buffalo looked up, and much to his surprise he saw that he was indeed completely surrounded by human beings; but he could see the opening Trickster showed him, and made a mad dash to escape. He no sooner cleared the circle of people, than he fell into the field of mud and became completely mired in it.

Trickster rushed him with his knife and killed him. He dragged the body over to a cluster of trees where he skinned it. As he butchered the carcass, he used the knife only in his right hand.

While all this is going on, suddenly as if it had a mind of its own, his left hand seized the buffalo. The right hand became indignant and exclaimed, "That buffalo is mine, either let go of it, or I'll use this knife to cut you to ribbons!"

So the left arm relinquished its grip. However, just as the right arm returned to skinning the buffalo, the left arm suddenly seized it at the wrist. Every time the right arm freed itself and set back to its task, the left arm would renew its attack. Thus did Trickster allow his arms to struggle against one another.

Finally, the right arm began to wield its knife, and the left arm was pretty badly cut up. When Trickster saw how badly his left arm was bleeding, he said "Oh no, why have I done this? Why have I acted thus, to cause myself to suffer so?" The arms bled a great deal.

When he was done dressing the buffalo, he started on his trek again. However, wherever he would go, the birds would call out, "Look, there goes Trickster walking around!" Then they would fly away.

Trickster would always say, "Those nasty little birds, I wonder what they are saying?"

Nevertheless, they continued to call out, "There's Trickster walking around, look!"

They would do thus whenever they saw him.

*[This strange "ending" provides a segue into the third story in the Trickster Cycle].*

*[hotcakencyclopedia.com/ho.TrickstersBuffaloHunt.html](http://hotcakencyclopedia.com/ho.TrickstersBuffaloHunt.html)*