

Yuh Memba Anancy Stories?

When last yuh reminisce bout Jamaica and think bout some good ol time Anancy Story? See dem yah.

We grew up hearing Anancy stories. But which part dem really come from? how dem start? (The accepted Jamaican spelling is 'Anancy', and the West African spelling is 'Anansi'.) Anancy and Anancy stories have been part of the staple of most Jamaicans and there are as many variations of stories as there are stories themselves. For many, Anancy is simply a trickster, who lives by his wits and most times gets his way. This image of Anancy is so strong that there have been calls for a ban on Anancy stories in Jamaican schools. Fortunately, some calls fall on deaf ears. But who is this Anancy and how did he become so tightly woven into the fabric of Jamaica. When enslaved Africans were transported to Jamaica during the transatlantic trade in Africans they brought with them many aspects of their culture and philosophy. Anancy stories was one such. For enslaved Africans in Jamaica, Anancy stories also ensured their own survival under the harsh conditions of slavery. In West African folklore Anancy, spelt Anansi, the spider god was the son of the Ashanti sky god Nyame. Among the Ashanti people the stories were called Anansesem, and among the Akan people, they were called Anansi tori.

Anansi would operate as an agent of his father bringing rain to put out bush fires, putting more fish in the sea etc. His mother's name was Asase Ya, and his wife's name was Aso, though most times she was referred to as Mrs. Anansi. As the spider god, Anansi had the ability to transform himself into several different forms: man, spider, animals, inanimate objects, or a combination thereof. This is usually his method of survival, adapting to his environment and ensuring that for the most part, he comes out the winner. This has led to the view that Anancy is lazy, and a trickster, and the recommendation by some that the values taught by Anancy stories are not wholesome. But Anancy is a survivor, and transforms and adapts at will, in order to survive.

Anancy is also said to be responsible for many aspects of how the world around us operates. It is because of Anancy that patoo (owl) lives in a tree, that pigs have long mouths and why tigers live in woodland In Jamaica, The words 'Jack Mandora, mi no choose none' are often used at the end of Anancy stories. This was popularized by the late Dr. Honourable Louise Bennett Coverley, Miss Lou, Jamaican poet and folklorist. Jack Mandora was said to be the keeper of the gates of heaven, who had the power to prevent those who were not so good, from entering. By telling him 'Mi nuh choose none', the storyteller is absolving himself or herself from any of the bad deeds that Anancy may have committed. Yuh waan fi hear some Anancy (Anansi) story?

{mp3}pigmouth{/mp3}Why pig have long mouth

{mp3}bud{/mp3}Anancy and Bud and Hole

{mp3}pig{/mp3}Mrs Anancy Pig

{mp3}tiger{/mp3}Anancy and Tiger

If yuh memba any, tell us bout it. Email us at chat-bout@chat-bout.net