

**Dialogue Sample from ANANSE, THE AFRICAN SPIDERMAN**

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[A drought plagues the land except for the farm of GRASSHOPPER. CAMEL narrates as ANANSE schemes to trick GRASSHOPPER.]

**ANANSE**

Look, it's raining on Grasshopper's farm and not a drop on mine! I must discover his secret.

(ANANSE exits.)

**CAMEL**

Now Ananse knew that Grasshopper had a kind heart and he knew that many times in the past he had tricked and deceived Grasshopper. So Ananse set to work on another clever plan to deceive Grasshopper once again.

(ANANSE enters with broom, turns it upside down and admires it.)

**ANANSE**

Wife! Wife! Come. I have a plan to save our farm from disaster.

(WIFE enters.)

**WIFE**

At last you are going to the river to bring back buckets of water?

**ANANSE**

What?! Heavens, no! Please give me the veil on your head.

**WIFE**

What?

**ANANSE**

And your necklace, too.

(WIFE gives ANANSE her necklace and veil.)

**ANANSE (Continued)**

And go inside our hut for I assure you it will soon rain heartily on our unhappy farm.

(ANANSE exits with broom and his WIFE's veil and necklace.)

**WIFE**

Rain? Poor Ananse - surely this drought has rattled his brain.

(WIFE exits, shaking her head.  
GRASSHOPPER enters.)

**GRASSHOPPER**

Ah, now the ground is wet and my farm prospers. Oh, no, here comes that fellow, Ananse. But I see he is not alone.

(ANANSE enters with broom which has been "dressed" in his WIFE's veil and necklace.)

**ANANSE**

(Talking to broom)

Come, my dear, only a few steps more. It makes me weep to see you so thin. Ah, Grasshopper, good day. Here is my wife.

**GRASSHOPPER**

Good day to you, Ananse, and to your wife, too.

**ANANSE**

I hope you don't mind that we have come to see you but my wife longed to see the beauty of a happy green farm before -

(ANANSE breaks down, crying.)

**GRASSHOPPER**

Before? Before what?

**ANANSE**

Well, just look at her - as thin as ... Just feel her here at the middle.

(ANANSE takes GRASSHOPPER's hands and puts them around the "waist" of the broom.)

**GRASSHOPPER**

Why, her waist is no bigger than a broomstick!

**ANANSE**

She can't even walk or talk. And look at her hair - like straw.

My dear faded blossom. I'm glad you saw this happy, lush, green farm before ... before --

**GRASSHOPPER**

Oh, stop! I have been so selfish. I will tell you the secret of my success. Weave a web, Ananse, to the sky and there you will meet Camel, the Rainmaker. Gently tap his hump of water and it will rain on your farm, too. And don't forget to take him a basket of tender leaves to thank him.

**ANANSE**

(Overcome with the secret)

Oh, yes, yes, leaves ... tender leaves ... to thank Camel .... Wait for me here, wife. I weave an atwedee to the sky.

(ANANSE tosses the broom to the ground.)

**GRASSHOPPER**

What a way to treat a wife!

(ANANSE takes the veil and necklace off the broom and takes the broom with him while he weaves and climbs his web to the "sky." GRASSHOPPER picks up veil and necklace.)

**GRASSHOPPER (Continued)**

What? Why it was only a broom wearing the veil and necklace of his wife! That Ananse! I have been tricked again!

(Shaking his fist at ANANSE)

Ananse, I swear you are going to pay for your tricks!

(Lights up on ANANSE in the "sky" with CAMEL.)

**ANANSE**

Ah, Rainmaker - great Camel. I have come to tap your hump so that it will rain on my poor farm.

**CAMEL**

From earth to sky

You traveled high  
To ask for falling water.

You bring to me  
No leaves I see  
As you know you ought to.

**ANANSE**

(Feeling guilty)  
Leaves ... Oh, yes, leaves ... well ... You understand, great  
Rainmaker, because of the terrible drought there are no leaves  
left in our part of the earth.

**CAMEL**

Is it so dry?  
Then come here by  
But to Camel give no pain.

And to your farm  
Will come no harm  
For I will send the rain.

**ANANSE**

Oh Camel, great Rainmaker of the sky, let the rain fall on my  
thirsty farm.

(ANANSE gently taps CAMEL on the hump.)

**ANANSE (Continued)**

Look, look, it rains on my farm!  
(HE watches rain on "earth.")  
But it rains so little water and my crops are so thirsty.

(ANANSE hits CAMEL on hump.)

**ANANSE (Continued)**

Ah, more rain for my farm!  
(HE looks to "earth.")  
But still the ponds and rivers are dry. Rain a thunderstorm,  
Camel, on my thirsty land!

**CAMEL**

(Shouting in pain during speech as ANANSE  
hits him with broom)  
And Ananse took the broom which had pretended to be his wife and  
struck the hump of Camel again and again until there was a great  
thunderstorm.

(Rubbing his wounds)  
And then that rascal Ananse stretched himself out on a dark cloud  
and happily watched it rain and rain and rain. And so happy was

Ananse that he did not see me climb down the atwedee, the ladder to the sky.

**CAMEL**

(Shouting over thunder)

From earth to sky  
You traveled high.  
Your tricks have brought me pain.

And to your farm  
Will come great harm  
For I will send no rain.

**ANANSE**

No rain?!

**CAMEL**

Rain stop.  
Not one more drop!

**ANANSE**

No rain?!!!

**CAMEL**

And the rain stopped in this land ... forever. And the sun moved closer to earth to watch over me. And to this day I roam the dry land - always smiling - not thirsty like the rest of you because I carry my water in my hump. And that is how this land came to be a desert and it is all Ananse's fault!