

ANASASI AND THE PEOPLE

(Southwest)

Once, long ago, there were beings on the earth but they were alone. These beings had no name. Some beings walked, some swam, some flew, some swayed back and forth and some beings did not move at all. But no being could recognize another and they were all alone on the face of the earth.

One day, Grandmother Spider, Anasi, was sitting trying to count her children. But since there was no name such as "spider" or "grandmother" or "children" she could never tell if she was counting a spider or a bear or a fox or a porpoise or a rock. So Anasi decided to weave her web to the crown of each of her children's heads so that she could count them. Unfortunately she found that when she wove her web to the crown of each of her children's heads they got tangled up in one another. In the tangle, she could not tell if she counted her children for "ox" or "fish" or "eagle". She could not tell them from her own children. So, she cut threads and began again.

This time, Anasi climbed high up into the heavens and wove a web from the heavens to the crown of the head of the first being she met, in the hope it was one of her children. The first thread was love. Where the web attached to the heavens a single star appeared. Anasi climbed into the heavens again with a thread attached to another being and attached this thread to the heavens. This thread was laughter. Anasi wove a third thread from the heavens to an earthbound being. The third thread was language. Back and forth, Anasi moved between the earth and the heavens attaching each being one to another and to the heavens.

Threads of mathematics and mercy, curiosity and culture, soul and story tied each being one to another. As each thread touched the heavens another star was lit. As each thread touched a being that being was named.

Bear and Tree and Rock and Ant and Fish and Eagle and Spider and Grandmother and Children so many more recognized one another. In that recognition, each being realized that they were no longer alone.

As the web was woven, no single being was attached to a single thread, but all beings were woven into the web. Some beings sought out more threads. Other beings clipped threads from their crown.

As Anasi continued weaving, each thread contributed another gift to all the beings. When Anasi finished weaving her web she sat down, tired and contented, to count her children. Since the first thread was love and all the other threads were built upon love, her children recognized Anasi and honored her by attaching the thread of wisdom to the crown of Anasi's head.

And so it has been generation after generation, that the Spider has spun webs and that the wisdom of her threads are used for healing - Even unto today.
