

FULL PERFORMANCE TRANSCRIPT

GREEDY MAN NEVER PROSPER

Told by Marie Wray-Williams

An oral storytelling archive transcript

06:44

ENGLISH + JAMAICAN PATOIS

FAMILY · HERITAGE · COMMUNITY

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ABOUT THIS TRANSCRIPT

This transcript accompanies Marie Wray-Williams's recorded performance of Greedy Man Never Prosper, an Anancy story rooted in Jamaican oral storytelling traditions.

The wording follows the recorded performance. Marie's supplied script has been used as a reference for Jamaican patois, names and culturally specific terms. Punctuation and paragraph breaks have been added only to improve readability.

ACCESS NOTE

The timestamps are section markers designed to help readers navigate the recorded performance.

FULL TRANSCRIPT

00:00

When mi was a likkle girl, mi family did move to a place called Santa Cruz in di parish of St Elizabeth.

Now, fi wi garden was di envy of di community, and when di grudgeful people dem a pass, dem look over di fence and cut dem eye.

Mi madda, she plant ruby-red hibiscus, corn ripened by the sun, ortanique orange—so unique.

00:41

Di Croton dem line either side a di driveway, firm, hairy Renta yam.

As fi di banana dem, is as if dem a salute di entire garden.

Yu si, a night-time di scary, lumpy, croaky lizard dem come alive.

01:07

Dem dance pon di wall, play hide-and-seek behind di picture dem. And when dem croak, is as if dem croak in tune to "Song of the Banana Man":

"Come, Mr Tally Man, tally mi banana. Daylight come an mi waa go home."

01:30

"Mi come ya fi wuk, mi nuh come ya fi idle. Daylight come an mi waa go home."

Now, fi mi madda was a raconteur, an she enjoy telling wi stories.

She tell wi story bout Rolling Calf, Blackheart Man, Jonkonnu, Duppy, an story bout when she was a pickney, an all di tings she used to get up to.

02:02

Now, mi a go tell yu one story bout Anancy the Trickster.

One scorching hot day, Anancy was walking down a country road with a cutlass in him han.

All of a sudden, him look up an him si di tallest and lankiest banana tree him ever see in a him life, full wid banana.

02:33

Him sey to himself, "When dem ya banana a ripe, dem a go sweet."

Licking his lips and rubbing him belly, him tek him cutlass and give di banana dem one big chop.

Boof! Dem fall a groun.

02:54

Anancy pick dem up, balance dem pon him head and went on his way.

Him whistle merrily and couldn't wait fi reach a him yard.

As soon as him get home, him hide di bunch a banana dem in a secret hiding place that not even Duppy could a find.

03:18

Every morning, as soon as daylight, Anancy visit him hiding place.

Him was growing more and more impatient as him count di day dem.

On dis particular day, Anancy go a him hiding spot and joy fill him soul when, all of a sudden, him si yellow specks on some a di banana dem.

03:45

"Woo! A dis mi love fi si. Mi jus a go gi it a few more day before mi nyam dem ya banana ya."

Friday mawning, bright an early, Anancy head towards him hiding place.

04:05

Him look from side to side, up an down, fi mek sure seh nobody spot him.

Him notice seh di hiding place look different, an is as if some a di bush dem root up.

"Lawd a massy! Di ripe banana dem gone. Di tief dem in a dis ya community wicked."

04:33

An as him look across di way, him si banana skin scatter bout di place and birds pecking on some a di banana dem.

"A nuh di bird dem one responsible. Mi sure seh some a di notorious tief inna di community responsible too."

04:57

Anancy kiss him teeth, stamp him foot and headed towards home.

When him get home, Mrs Anancy was on di verandah. She ask him, "Den a how fi yu face look so sour?"

"Dem tief mi sinting dem."

05:21

"Tief yu sinting dem? Anybody more tief dan yu? An to tink of it, even if yu did have yu sinting dem, yu would a never share it with me and di pickney dem."

Anancy mumbled and grumbled.

05:46

"Anancy, yu a mi husband an mi love yu to death, but mi nuh know weh mi a go do with yu. Mi worry bout yu every day weh God sen."

06:00

Anancy start fi tink.

"Mi haffi find di tief. An yu know what? Mi nah stop tief."

06:11

"Cause when mi tief, mi not only have fi miself, but mi wi get more tings from whoever mi tief dem from."

Mrs Anancy look pon Anancy, cut har eye, spread weh har lip, look Anancy straight inna him face and sey with conviction:

"Greedy man never prosper."

— END OF TRANSCRIPT —