

THE SPIDER, THE ANT, AND THE GRASSHOPPER

Candelaria Valdez, Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico

There once was a spider who lived in a pine tree. One day while the spider was busy weaving her web, an ant arrived and greeted her warmly. Ant then asked:

—“Spider, what is it you are working on today?”

Spider, looked down at Ant and replied, “Oh, Ant, I am very well, thank you. I am weaving my house and workshop.”

Curious about the work unfolding before her, Ant continued the conversation, asking,

— “Spider, how it is possible you can live in a house made from such delicate threads?”

Smiling at the innocence of Ant, Spider replied:

— “Oh, dear Ant, mine is a tremendous amount of faith in God. In this house woven from that faith and tenacity, I live so comfortably. I can move in all four directions and never once feel cold, not even the slightest bit of wind.”

Perhaps challenged a bit by the invocation of such a fortified structure, Ant invited Spider to visit her as well, so she could witness her own work and she left.

Later, Spider decided she wanted to take Ant up on the offer. She had always heard about how diligent ants were in their work and, though she had never visited, she was now curious. When she arrived, she was astonished at what she saw before her: a small hill of carefully placed stones. Reflecting upon the structure before her, she wondered how it was possible to live in a place where there was no obvious separation of outside and inside, no clear openings.

As she was musing, Ant emerged and saw Spider and again, warmly greeted her, asking her to come into her house. Ant turned around and beckoned for Spider to follow, which she did.

Once she was inside Ant’s house, Spider began to feel strange and said to Ant:

— “Ant, I am afraid it is starting to feel pretty difficult to walk any further, as it feels dangerous.”

— “Oh, no dear Spider, don’t be afraid. It is fine. Please, let’s continue. I want you to see all the work that I have been doing.

Reluctant, Spider followed until she was fully inside the deep cavern Ant began to show her the different nooks and crannies that had been built to store her grains as well as where she lived.

Spider was astonished by what she saw here. Realizing that Ant had a tremendous store of food, then

asked:

— “Ant, how is it possible you have so much food, especially being so very small?”

Puffing out her prideful chest, Ant replied:

— “Dear Spider, I work all summer to gather this food.”

At this point Spider told her host that she would like to go, but Ant asked her to wait, so she could show her more, on her way out, and then outside the house. Once they emerged, Spider also asked:

— “Ant, how it is possible you have been able to gather so many stones, each one the same size as the other, and to make such high piles?”

— “Spider, here too, I work all summer to build this house.”

— “I just realized,” mused Spider, that I hadn’t asked if you store vegetables.”

— “Oh, yes,” replied Ant, I gather a type of grass that is perfect for me.”

— “Oh really, I would love it if you could show me that grass,” said Spider.

When they arrived at the place the grass was securely stored, they discovered that nearby sat Grasshopper. Upon seeing Ant, Grasshopper moaned:

— “Ant, I am very sick, and I would appreciate it if you could spare a grain of wheat for me.”

Turning to her guest Spider, she whispered to her:

— “How is it possible for me to give a grain of wheat to Grasshopper, who is so big?”

But looking closer at Grasshopper, who did indeed look sickly, Ant said:

— “Yes, of course, Grasshopper. I will go bring you a grain of wheat.”

Ant scurried away and soon emerged with a grain and handed it over to Grasshopper. Upon seeing the grain, Grasshopper was immediately happy but asked if it were possible to get more grain from Ant. Although Ant was happy to share one grain, she replied:

— “Grasshopper, there is no more to share. I hope you can be satisfied with what I have given you. Time is very long and I am very little to gather the grain that I have. And what do you do all summer?”

Grasshopper turned to the little ant before it and replied: “Well look, all summer I nourish myself by drinking water.”

— “But how is it that you drink so much water and you cannot save food, given that you’re so big?” Ant asked.

— “I stay alive by drinking water,” Grasshopper said.

At this point, Ant turned back to Spider who had been quiet during this entire conversation, and asked how it was possible that Grasshopper could be nourished on water alone.

—Although the question was not directed to him, Grasshopper replied, “Well, when I go into a field of wheat, I consume as much water as possible until it is gone, but I don’t save any wheat.”

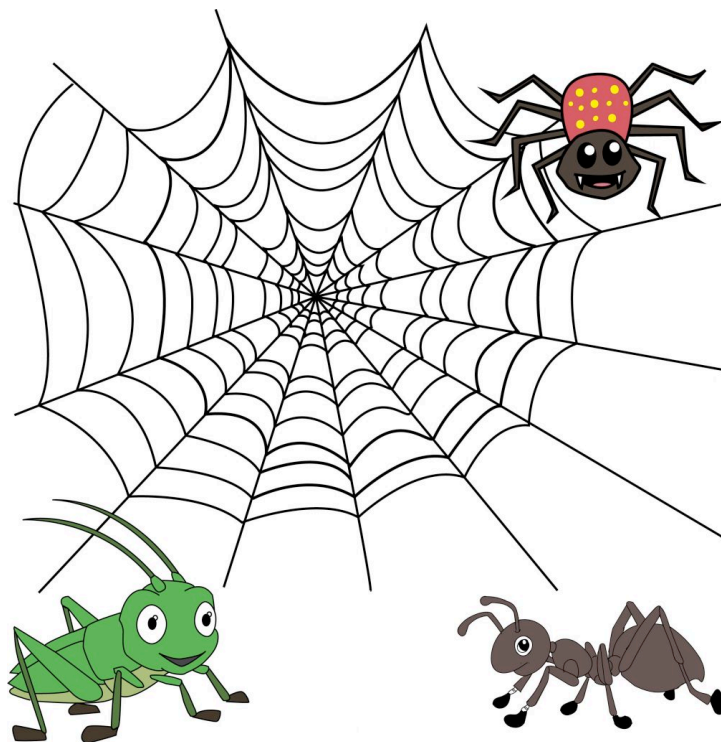
Interested in these conversations, Spider turned to Grasshopper and invited him to visit her, letting him know that she lived in a pine tree high off the ground.

Later that day, realizing that Ant would no longer share any grain, Grasshopper decided to go visit Spider at her house. When he arrived, he jumped up onto a limb of the pine tree very close to Spider’s house. Spider emerged and greeted Grasshopper and asked him to come inside. So slowly Grasshopper began to travel up the tree until he finally arrived inside the web.

But when he was turned around to enter the room of the spider, he unintentionally broke some of the threads of the web. Since they were cut, he grabbed three other threads, but he broke them too as he fell. He then grabbed another three and cut them too. And in a way he destroyed the whole house of the spider.

Spider could not believe that she had invited such destruction into the home she had spent so much time working on and cried out:

— “Grasshopper, it is better if you go away since you have destroyed my house.”



LA ARAÑA, LA HORMIGA y EL CHAPULIN

Pues éste era una araña que vivía en un pinabete y un día estaba la araña trabajando, haciendo su tela y llegó la hormiga y la saludó y le dice que si qué es lo que está trabajando y le dice ella que está trabajando su casa, su taller. Entonces le dice la hormiga que cómo es posible que sea su casa onde ha de habitar en aquellos hilos tan delgaditos. Y le dice la araña que ella tiene mucha fe en Dios y que en aquella casa vive ella muy a gusto, que ella corre a los cuatro rumbos y ella no siente frío, ella no siente aigre. Entonces le dice la hormiga a la araña que ella espera de que la vaya a visitar pa que ella conozca el trabajo que ella hace en su casa. En donde jué la araña a pasarse. Cuando llegó la araña onde habitaba la hormiga, yavido que era como un cerro de piedritas muy menuditas y empezó la araña a reflejar que allí no se vía ajuera nada, y pensó que cómo sería posible que viviera allí la hormiguita. No había más de puras piedritas. Entonces salió la hormiga y vió a la araña. Entonces la hormiguita la saluda y le dice que entre para su casa. Por donde la siguió la araña a la hormiguita. Cuando ya entró la araña a la casa de la hormiguita, extrañó ella mucho y le dice que se le hace muy dificultoso caminar más pa adentro porque está de mucho peligro. Bueno, entonces le dice la hormiguita que no, que no tenga miedo, que entre para que vea todo el trabajo que la hormiguita había hecho. Cuando ya entró, que entró la araña bien, empezó la hormiguita a enseñarle diferentes lugarcitos que tenía la hormiguita onde tenía su grano, onde tenía su triguito, onde vivía la hormiguita. Vió la arañita todo lo que tenía para comer la hormiguita, de modo que muy contenta y le dice que si cómo es posible que ella tenga guardada tanta comida, siendo tan pequeñita. Entonces le dice la hormiguita que ella trabaja todo el verano pa meter comidita pa adentro. Entonces le dice la arañita que ya ella se quiere ir y le dice ella que se aguarde poquito pa salir ella pa ajuera pa enseñarle el trabajo que ella ha hecho. Por donde salieron al fin ajuera y le empezó a enseñar todo el trabajo de ajuera de su habitación y le dijo que si cómo es posible que traiga tanta piedra y hacer tan elevada la pila de piedra y casidel mismo tamaño. Y le dice la hormiguita que trabaja todo el verano. Entonces le dice la araña a la hormiguita cuando salieron ajuera que si no encierra verduras, y le dice la hormiguita que sí, que hay una clase de zacate que es el propio para ella.

—Pues tengo deseo de que me enseñes ese zacate— le dice la araña.

Cuando ya llegaron onde estaba encerrao el zacate, estaba un

chapulín y ai se queja como enfermo el chapulín y aclama:

—¡Ay, ay, hormiguita! ¿Por qué no me dan un grano de trigo? Y entonces le dice la araña a la hormiguita:

—¿Cómo es posible que yo le dé un grano de trigo a este chapulín, siendo él tan grande?

Entonces se conduce la hormiguita y le dice:

—Pues yo voy a traite un grano de trigo.

Y jué corriendo la hormiguita y le trajo un grano de trigo. Cuando vino y le entregó su grano de trigo, muy contento el chapulín con su grano de trigo. Entonces le dice que si puede dale todavía más. Y le

dice la hormiguita:

—No, ya no más. Confórmate con ese grano de trigo. El tiempo es muy largo y yo soy muy pequeñita para conseguir el grano que tengo y tú, pues, ¿qué es lo que haces todo el verano?

—Pues mira, yo el tiempo del verano me mantengo bebiendo agua.

—Pero ¿cómo bebes tanta agua y no puedes guardar comida siendo tan grande?

Y el chapulin le dice que si; se mantiene bebiendo agua. Entonces le pregunta la hormiguita a la arañita que si cómo es posible que se pueda mantener con pura agua.

—Pues si, porque si yo entro a un campo de trigo, ai le chupe la agua hasta que ya lo acabo y no guardo nada trigo.

Pues de al lo convidó la arañita al chapulin, que esperaba que la juera a visitar, que su habitación de la arañita era arriba de un pinabete. Cuando se jué el chapulin, se jué la arañita a su casa y el chapulín pegó un saltido y jué a un brazó del pinabete, cercano a la habitación de la arañita. Salió la arañita y le dice que pase, que llegue. Bueno, y ya jué el chapulin y subió muy poco a poquito y subió en una de las hebritas onde tenía su casa la arañita. Cuando iba dando la vuelta para entrar al cuarto de la arañita, córtase una de las telas de la arañita y como se cortó, ya se agarró de tres hilos más y córtalos y como iba cayéndose, se prendió de otros tres y cortalos también, de modo que le destruyó toda su casita a la arañita. De modo que le gritó la arañita:

—Es mucho mejor que te retires porque me has destruido mi habitación.