

## Ananzi And Quanqua

by Sir George Webbe Dasent  
from *Ananzi Tales*

Quanqua was a very clever fellow, and he had a large house full of all sorts of meat. But you must know he had a way of saying *Quan? qua?* (how? what?) when any one asked him anything and so they called him 'Quanqua'. One day when he was out, he met Atoukama, Ananzi's wife, who was going along driving an ox, but the ox would not walk, so Atoukama asked Quanqua to help her; and they got on pretty well, till they came to a river, when the ox would not cross through the water. Then Atoukama called to Quanqua to drive the ox across, but all she could get out of him was, 'QUAN? QUA? *Quan? qua?*' At last she said, 'Oh! you stupid fellow, you're no good; stop here and mind the ox while I go and get help to drive him across.' So off she went to fetch Ananzi. As soon as Atoukama was gone away, Quanqua killed the ox, and hid it all away, where Ananzi should not see it; but first he cut off the tail, then he dug a hole near the river side and stuck the tail partly in, leaving out the tip. When he saw Ananzi coming, he caught hold of the tail, pretending to tug at it as if he were pulling the ox out of the hole. Ananzi seeing this, ran up as fast as he could, and tugging at the tail with all his might, fell over into the river, but he still had hold of the tail, and contrived to get across the water, when he called out to Quanqua, 'You idle fellow, you couldn't take care of the ox, so you shan't have a bit of the tail', and then on he went. When he was gone quite out of sight, Quanqua took the ox home, and made a very good dinner.

Next day he went to Ananzi's house, and said, Ananzi must give him some of the tail, for he had got plenty of yams, but he had no meat. Then they agreed to cook their pot together. Quanqua was to put in white yams, and Ananzi the tail, and red yams. When they came to put the yams in, Quanqua put in a great many white yams, but Ananzi only put in one little red cush-cush yam. Quanqua asked him if that little yam would be enough, he said, 'Oh! plenty', for I don't eat much.

When the pot boiled, they uncovered it, and sat down to eat their shares, but they couldn't find any white yams at all; the little red one had turned them all red. So Ananzi claimed them all, and Quanqua was glad to take what Ananzi would give him.

Now, when they had done eating, they said they would try which could bear heat best, so they heated two irons, and Ananzi was to try first on Quanqua, but he made so many attempts, that the iron got cold before he got near him; then it was Quanqua's turn, and he pulled the iron out of the fire, and poked it right down Ananzi's throat.