

The Man-Eater

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Native AmericanNorth American

Advanced
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Once upon a time, long, long ago, Grandmother Spider lived in a little Indian village, called a Pueblo. She lived with her two little grandsons, Po-kong-who-yer (youth) and Pah-loong-ah-who-yer.

Grandmother Spider was friendly with the fairies and with the sun-god and with the moon-man and all of the animals. She used to talk to them and they helped her to do many things. She did so many things, which the other Indians did not understand, that they called her a witch and drove her with her two little grandsons outside of the village. Outside she built a little mud house where she and her little grandsons lived happily; for the fairies and the kind old Sun-God brought them food to eat.

Soon after the Indians drove Grandmother Spider out of their pueblo, a huge Man-Eater came to live near there. Whenever the men went out to hunt game, or to gather wood; and whenever the women or children went to fill their jars with water, the Man-Eater caught them and swallowed them alive. The poor Indians began to cry and to sing songs while they beat sad music on their drums. They did not know what to do! If they stayed inside the pueblo where there were no corn fields, no buffalo, no deer, no rabbits and no squashes, they would surely starve to death; and if they went outside the village the Man-Eater would swallow them alive.

One day the Indian chief remembered what wonderful things Grandmother Spider used to do before the Indians drove her from the pueblo; so he decided to take presents to her to see if she could not help them out of their trouble, and drive the Man-Eater away. The next day he made a ball and two little bows and arrows. He

took them out to Po-kong-who-yer and Pah-loong-ah-who-yer.

When old Grandmother Spider saw the arrows, she was pleased and she asked the kind fairies to rub magic on them, so that the arrows might kill all things that harmed her little boys.

That same afternoon Po-kong-who-yer and Pah-loong-ah-who-yer, with their bows and arrows slung over their shoulders, were playing with their ball outside their mud-house. One of them threw the ball too high for the other to catch and it bounced away off over the prairie. They both ran after it as fast as they could. Each one was trying to see who could get the ball first. They did not know until too late that they were running right up to the spot where the Man-Eater was. They stopped running and turned around, but before they could get away, the Man-Eater opened his big mouth and swallowed them down. And down there in the Man-Eater's stomach they found all the other people he had swallowed still living and crying to get out.

Po-kong-who-yer and Pah-loong-ah-who-yer drew their bows and shot their magic arrows right through the Man-Eater's heart. The Man-Eater opened his mouth and yelled, just like thunder, and then he fell over dead.

Po-kong-who-yer and Pah-loong-ah-who-yer and all of the people inside him came out and returned to their homes.

All that night the Indians beat their drums fast and danced and sang their happiest songs, for the old Man-Eater was dead and could not trouble them any more.

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