

Story 20: The Three Fools

Story shared by: *Cheikh*

Representing: *Senegalese*

The Story:

Once upon a time, three men were walking down the street, each determined to prove that he was the smartest of the group. As they strolled along, they began to discuss how they might settle this question once and for all. One of the men had an idea. "Let's test each other's intelligence by asking about something simple—like how to drive a car!"

The others agreed, and so the first man asked the second, "How does a car start?" The second man thought for a moment before confidently replying, "A car starts if you fill it with water. Once it's full, you just turn the faucet, and off it goes!" The third man burst out laughing, shaking his head. "No, no, that's not how a car starts!" he said. "Everyone knows you need to put the key into the exhaust pipe and blow into the tailpipe to get the car moving. The more air you blow, the faster it goes!" The first man grinned, certain that he could outsmart both of them. "Well," he said, "I'm the smartest because I can actually show you how to start a car!" With that, he reached into his pocket and pulled out his hand, completely empty, but waved it around like it held something important. The other two stared at him, puzzled. "But you don't have a key!" they both exclaimed.

The first man looked down at his hand and shrugged. "Huh. I guess that explains why the car never starts."

And so, the three men continued their walk, each convinced that they were the cleverest of the bunch, even though none of their answers made any sense. They laughed and joked, happy in their shared madness, leaving anyone who overheard them to wonder who, if anyone, was truly the smartest of them all.

From that day forward, the people in the village would tell stories of the three fools, each time coming up with new and funnier variations. It became a game—who could tell the most ridiculous version of the tale? And though the details changed with each telling, the laughter it brought always stayed the same.

Story Moral: *Do not brag about being the smartest, stay humble.*



