

## Mawu and Lisa

In the very beginning of time, Nana Baluku created the form of the universe, and held that form in place. From her emerged Maowu and Lisa. Lisa didn't have much to do at first; but Maowu, the giver of souls, the creator, she had a lot of work. She got on the back of the great rainbow serpent, Ido-Huedo, and they tore off through the universe creating everything that there is today, including the Earth.

When it came time to create the Earth she crawled into Ido-Huedo's mouth. And when she crept back out, there it was, the beginnings of our planet. Everywhere that they stopped on the planet and rested arose great mountains that they then molded into stream beds and rivers and canyons and valleys. They also created the sky. They created the Sun and the Moon. And when they were finished, they stood back to survey their work.

Unfortunately they found that they created the world too big, and too unbalanced, so that it looked like at any moment the world might topple, and fall, and break. Concerned, Maowu asked Ido-Huedo if he had any ideas. Ido-Huedo said, 'Let me try this'. He then wrapped his massive rainbow coils around the planet and he began to squeeze, 'GRRRRRROOOAN'. It wasn't enough!

Maowu was watching from the outside and she said, 'Squeeze harder! Squeeze harder!'. And he squeezed tighter and tighter and tighter. Eventually the world started to compress just to the right size and shape. But even for a great rainbow serpent this was a tremendous exertion. And as much as he tried he couldn't hold it, and eventually it slipped, and the world returned to its unstable form. Maowu said, 'Ido-Huedo can you do it again? Can you do it longer?'. Ido-Huedo tried again. He wrapped himself once more around the world and squeezed and squeezed. He got the earth back to the right place but he was unable to hold it.

But then Ido-Huedo had another idea. So he tried again, and this time when he got his serpentine form wrapped around the world and squeezed and squeezed, and the earth was at the perfect size and shape, he took his tail in his mouth and he bit down! And holding his tail in his mouth like that he was able to keep everything contained. Maowu was very grateful but she immediately could see that Ido-Huedo's skin was being burnt in the bright sunlight. And so, she wanted to help him and make him as comfortable as possible, and created the oceans to cover him so he would have a nice dwelling place.

After all of this was done. It was time for Lisa to step in. Maowu called back to the beginning of creation and summoned fourth Lisa who came and joined her on the earth. And the happy couple immediately started having children. They gave birth to the gods and the goddesses. They had animals, plants, trees, and everything was going fine until they finally had a certain... difficult child... the human being.

And then they had a few more. And this increasingly became a problem because they had no respect for their creators. They didn't have any gratitude for the gift of life they had been given, as well as for the place they had been allowed to live in. And so it was that they started to make a mess of everything. They were making a mess, OHH they were making a mess!

Maowu seemed to bear the brunt of this the worst. For she for example would be walking around a settlement of humans and one of them would decide to throw out a huge amount of dirty water and SPLASH! She would be soaked and filthy. No sooner than she had dried herself off and cleaned up, another human being would come by and SPLASH! Toss their dirty water all over her again. This was becoming too much. She started to wonder if this was something personal. Were they specifically attacking her? She became convinced of this in fact when after a while people started coming up to her, and not saying hello, not thanking her for their existence, not saying anything. They walked up to her and wiped their dirty greasy fingers all over her as if she was nothing but a towel.

This was the last straw. She had had enough. She was going to leave this place behind. She decided to go up to the sky where she wouldn't have to deal with all these pesky humans. So her spirit rose up and inhabited the moon.

Once she was up there she got a good view of everything that was happening on the Earth and she realized that truly the humans weren't in a good way. They really were having all sorts of problems. And even if they annoyed her they were still her children and she really wanted them to be well off. The rest of creation was also suffering because of the indiscretion of the humans.

Maowu called to Lisa once more and he rose up to the moon. Maowu said to him, 'Lisa, I'm not going back down to the world, but I need your help.', 'Would you be willing to go there and teach those people'? And Lisa agreed. So Maowu gave him a magic wand and said to him, 'They need to learn respect. But first and foremost, any creature, before they can live harmoniously with the rest of the world, has to know how to properly care for themselves. Go teach the humans how to do that'.

So Lisa chose to go down to the Earth holding this magic wand and take with him an assistant. He knew the humans could be very difficult so he brought Goo, the god of war. Fearsome stone body, Iron head, god of metal working as well. The two of them came down to the planet and began instructing the humans how to build shelters, how to make clothing, how to make tools, how to solve problems so they weren't at the mercy of their environment. The humans, after a while, began picking up on these abilities. And they began to see how much these abilities influenced the goodness of their life. And they were really grateful. They actually were grateful. Towards Lisa, towards Goo, and because Maowu had sent them, they were grateful for her too.

From the gratefulness eventually grew up a certain love for their creators. And from this, well, they started having respect. And oh they had a good amount of respect. Lisa saw this and he realized his work on the planet was coming to a close. But one last thing he needed to teach them; agriculture. So he showed them how to create fields.

He told the humans he would return, and he went back up to the moon. He returned his wand to Maowu. Maowu looked down on the earth that things were much improved. She said, 'Lisa, you have done a wonderful job!' She was so impressed that her love for Lisa re-awakened again. Maowu said, 'I don't like it that you're so far away. Why don't you move up to the sky with me?'. 'That would be great Maowu', said Lisa, 'but where would I live?'. Maowu suggested that he live in the Sun since she was living in the moon. So Lisa moved into the Sun.

Maowu was so excited to have Lisa living close by that she immediately paid him a visit and gave him a big hug. They spent a bit of time together and then went their separate ways. Each of them had their separate duties. The Sun creating the light, giving clarity, giving sustenance to the world. The Moon creating the cycles of the months. Well, after that visit, Maowu became pregnant, and from that, she had their next set of children. All of the seeds that the humans would need to plant the food that they would grow as farmers. And when finally those seeds were ready, Lisa gathered them up and returned to the world.

But he was surprised to see that the humans weren't quite the same as when he had left them. Suddenly, they were very skittish and frightened. And he went to them and asked them what was wrong? What was the problem? Well, we're scared because not too long ago the Sun disappeared behind a dark shadow of doom. And Lisa thought, what could they be talking about? Oh...he realized it must have been that time that Maowu paid him a visit. It must have been while she was giving him that hug. Ahh he said my friends, listen. You should know that I have recently taken up habitation in the Sun. And not too long after that, Maowu had paid me a visit. And when she did so, you probably saw that as the Sun growing dark But you shouldn't be afraid because look – afterwards, we have these seeds for you from that eclipse. And he showed them how to take those seeds and plant them in the field. And he said, Goo will stay with you and show you the rest of how to farm. And I will leave. But remember, these seeds from that eclipse will provide the sustenance you will need now that I am going to be up in the Sun.

And with that, he disappeared once more, and he moved permanently into the Sun. And the people waited, and they waited, and soon Maowu sent the rains. The plants grew, and Goo showed them how to take care of them. And not too long after that, they had their first harvest. And it was bountiful. They were so happy! These seeds, these plants, these foods and fruits! They were wonderful, they really, really enhanced their lives. Once more, they were so grateful towards Lisa, towards Maowu. They were so happy! And from then on, every time that

there was an eclipse, They weren't afraid anymore. Because part of them hoped that maybe they would get a gift as good as the one that came after the first eclipse. But also, simply, they were happy for their creators, Maowu and Lisa, because they know at that moment, the two of them had taken a break out of there busy schedule to pay each other a visit, and enjoy each others loving company.