



### **STORY: JEAN SOTTE (“FOOLISH JOHN”)**

A Louisiana Folktale

Adapted and Retold by Dianne de Las Casas

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- Storyteller 1: Jean Sotte - Foolish John - worried his mama because he was always being... foolish! One day, his mama sent him to borrow a neighbor's black pot. On the way home, he came to a fork in the road.
- Storyteller 2: He said to the pot, “You have three legs. I have two. Let's race to see who gets home faster.” When he put the pot down, it ran away.  
When he got home, his mama asked, “Where is the pot?”
- Storyteller 3: Jean Sotte said, “We had a race but it ran away.” His mama said,
- Chorus: Jean, oh, Jean, I'm losing my cool  
Why, oh, why, are you such a fool?
- Storyteller 4: Jean Sotte's mama said, “That pot belonged to our neighbor and he will have to buy a new one. Here is seven dollars to bring to him.”
- Storyteller 5: So Jean Sotte set out for the neighbor's house. On the way, he heard frogs singing in the pond,
- Chorus: ‘Tite huit, ‘tite huit, ‘tite huit, ‘tite huit
- Storyteller 6: Jean Sotte said, “I do not have huit, eight, dollars! I have seven. Here, count them!” He threw the money into the pond.
- Storyteller 7: When he got home, his mama asked, “Did you give the money to our neighbor?”

Jean Sotte said, "No, I gave it to the frogs to count." His mama said,

Chorus: Jean, oh, Jean, I'm losing my cool  
Why, oh, why, are you such a fool?

Storyteller 8: The next day, Jean Sotte's mama sent him to borrow flour from another neighbor. On his way home, he saw a hill of ants. He said, "These poor ants look so hungry." So he gave them the flour.

Storyteller 9: When he got home, his mama asked, "Where is the flour?"

Jean Sotte said, "I gave it to the ants because they were hungry." His mama said,

Chorus: Jean, oh, Jean, I'm losing my cool  
Why, oh, why, are you such a fool?

Storyteller 10: The next day, Jean Sotte's mama sent him to borrow some lard from another neighbor. On his way home, he saw that the ground was cracked. He said, "This ground is so dry it needs greasing." He put lard in all the cracks.

Storyteller 11: When he got home, his mama asked, "Where is the lard?"

Jean Sotte said, "I gave it to the ground because it was cracked." His mama said,

Chorus: Jean, oh, Jean, I'm losing my cool  
Why, oh, why, are you such a fool?

Storyteller 12: The next day, Jean Sotte's mama sent him to tend to the sick cow. Hearing that moss could be used as medicine, Jean said, "The roof is covered with moss. I'll put the cow up there."

Storyteller 13: As Jean pushed the cow up the ladder, the cow began mooing.

Chorus: MOOOOO! MOOOOO! MOOOOO!

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Storyteller 13: Jean Sotte's mama saw Jean trying to get the cow on the roof. Jean was pushing the cow up the ladder but lost his balance. The ladder, the cow, and Jean Sotte all came tumbling down.

Storyteller 14: Jean Sotte's mama began laughing so hard.

Chorus: Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

Storyteller 14: This time Jean Sotte's mama said,

Chorus: Jean, oh, Jean, you might be a fool  
But whatever would I do without you?!

Storyteller 15: She gave Jean Sotte a great big hug. From that time on, when she wanted something done right, Jean Sotte's mama did it... HERSELF! The end.

