

Wright State University

CORE Scholar

Paul Laurence Dunbar Books

Special Collections and Archives

1905

Howdy Honey Howdy

Paul Laurence Dunbar

Follow this and additional works at: <https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/dunbar>



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Dunbar , P. L. (1905). *Howdy Honey Howdy*. : Dodd, Mead and Company.

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections and Archives at CORE Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Paul Laurence Dunbar Books by an authorized administrator of CORE Scholar. For more information, please contact library-corescholar@wright.edu.

Paul Laurence Dunbar

“Howdy Honey Howdy”

Howdy Honey Howdy

Encouragement

De Way T'ings Come

The Delinquent

Accountability

Protest

Possum

Foolin' wid de Seasons

Angelina

A Death Song

A Christmas Folksong

Faith

Hope

A Love Letter

Puttin' the Baby Away

Advice

Dreamin' Town

Scamp

Opportunity

A Summer Night

The Old Cabin

First published by Dodd, Mead and Company

1905

Howdy Honey Howdy

Do' a-stan'in' on a jar, fiah a-shinin' thoo,
Ol' folks drowsin' 'roun' de place, wide awake is Lou,
W'en I tap, she answah, an' I see huh 'mence to grin,
"Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you step right in?"

Den I step erpon de log layin' at de do',
Bless de Lawd, huh mammy an' huh pap's done 'menced to sno',
Now's de time, if evah, ef I's gwine to try an' win,
"Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you step right in?"

No use playin' on de aidge, trimblin' on de brink,
W'en a body love a gal, tell huh whut he t'ink;
W'en huh hea't is open fu' de love you gwine to gin,
Pull yo'se'f togethah, suh, an' step right in.

Sweetes' imbitation dat a body evah hyeahed,
Sweetah den de music of a love-sick mockin'-bird,

Comin' f'om de gal you loves bettah den yo' kin,

"Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you step right in?"

At de gate o' heaven w'en de sto'm o' life is pas',

'Spec' I'll be a-stan'in', 'twell de Mastah say at las',

"Hyeah he stan' all weary, but he winned his fight wid sin.

Howdy, honey, howdy, won't you step right in? "

Encouragement

Who dat knockin' at de do'?

Why, Ike Johnson, — yes, fu' sho!

Come in, Ike. I's mighty glad

You come down. I t'ought you's mad

At me 'bout de othah night,

An' was stayin' 'way fu' spite.

Say, now, was you mad fu' true

W'en I kin' o' laughed at you?

Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

'T ain't no use a-lookin' sad,

An' a-mekin' out you's mad;

Ef you's gwine to be so glum,

Wondah why you evah come.

I don't lak nobody 'roun'

Dat jes' shet dey mouf an' frown,—

Oh, now, man, don't act a dunce!

Cain't you talk? I tol' you once,
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Wha'd you come hyeah fu' to-night?

Body'd t'ink yo' haid ain't right.

I's done all dat I kin do,—

Dressed perticler, jes' fu' you;

Reckon I'd 'a' bettah wo'

My ol' ragged calico.

Aftah all de pains I's took,

Cain't you tell me how I look?

Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Bless my soul! I 'mos' fu'got

Tellin' you 'bout Tildy Scott.

Don't you know, come Thu'sday night,

She gwine ma'y Lucius White?

Miss Lize say I allus wuh

Heap sight laklier 'n huh;

An' she'll git me somep'n new,
Ef I wants to ma'y too.
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

I could ma'y in a week,
Ef de man I wants 'ud speak.
Tildy's presents'll be fine,
But dey would n't ekal mine.
Him whut gits me fu' a wife
'Ll be proud, you bet yo' life.
I's had offers; some ain't quit;
But I has n't ma'ied yit!
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Ike, I loves you,—yes, I does;
You's my choice, and allus was.
Laffin' at you ain't no harm.—
Go 'way, dahky, whah's yo' arm?
Hug me closer—dah, dat's right!

Was n't you a awful sight,

Havin' me to baig you so?

Now ax whut you want to know,—

Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f!

De Way T'ings Come

De way t'ings come, hit seems to me,

Is des' one monst'ous mystery;

De way hit seem to strike a man,

Dey ain't no sense, dey ain't no plan;

Ef trouble sta'ts a pilin' down,

It ain't no use to rage er frown,

It ain't no use to strive er pray,

Hit's mortal boun' to come dat way.

Now, ef you's hongry, an' yo' plate

Des' keep on sayin' to you, "Wait,"

Don't mek no diffunce how you feel,

'T won't do no good to hunt a meal,

Fu' dat ah meal des' boun' to hide

Ontwell de devil's satisfied,

An' 'twell dey's some'p'n by to cyave

You's got to ease yo'se'f an' sta've.

But ef dey's co'n meal on de she'f
You need n't bothah 'roun' yo'se'f,
Somebody's boun' to amble in
An' 'vite you to dey co'n meal bin;
An' ef you's stuffed up to de froat
Wid co'n er middlin', fowl er shoat,
Des' look out an' you'll see fu' sho
A 'possum faint befo' yo' do'.

De way t'ings happen, huhuh, chile,
Dis worl' 's done puzzled me one w'ile;
I's mighty skeered I'll fall in doubt,
I des' won't try to reason out
De reason why folks strive an' plan
A dinnah fu' a full-fed man,
An' shet de do' an' cross de street
F'om one dat raaly needs to eat.

The Delinquent

Goo'-by, Jinks, I got to hump,

Got to mek dis pony jump;

See dat sun a-goin' down

'N' me a-foolin' hyeah in town!

Git up, Suke—go long!

Guess Mirandy'll think I's tight,

Me not home an' comin' on night.

What's dat stan'in' by de fence?

Pshaw! why don't I lu'n some sense?

Git up, Suke—go long!

Guess I spent down dah at Jinks'

Mos' a dollah fu' de drinks.

Bless yo' soul, you see dat star?

Lawd, but won't Mirandy rar?

Git up, Suke—go long!

Went dis mo'nin', hyeah it's night,

Dah's de cabin dah in sight.

Who's dat stan'in' in de do'?

Dat must be Mirandy, sho',

Git up, Suke—go long!

Got de close-stick in huh han',

Dat look funny, goodness lan',

Sakes alibe, but she look glum!

Hyeah, Mirandy, hyeah I come!

Git up, Suke—go long!

Ef't had n't 'a' be'n fur you, you slow ole fool,

I'd a' be'n home long fo' now!

Accountability

Folks ain't got no right to censuah othah folks about dey habits;
Him dat giv' de squir'ls de bushtails made de bobtails fu' de rabbits.
Him dat built de gread big mountains hollered out de little valleys,
Him dat made de streets an' driveways was n't shamed to makede alleys.

We is all constructed diff'ent, d'ain't no two of us de same;
We cain't he'p ouah likes an' dislikes, ef we'se bad we ain't to blame.
Ef we'se good, we need n't show off, case you bet it ain't ouah doin'
We gits into su'ttain channels dat we jes' cain't he'p pu'suin'.

But we all fits into places dat no othah ones could fill,
An' we does the things we has to, big er little, good er ill.
John cain't tek de place o' Henry, Su an' Sally ain't alike;
Bass ain't nuthin' like a suckah, chub ain't nuthin' like a pike.

W'en you come to t'ink about it, how it's all planned out it's splendid.
Nothin's done er evah happens, 'dout hit's somefin' dat's intended;

Don't keer whut you does, you has to, an' hit sholy beats de dickens, —

Viney, go put on de kittle, I got one o' mastah's chickens.

Protest

Who say my hea't ain't true to you?

Dey bettah heish dey mouf.

I knows I loves you thoo an' thoo

In watah time er drouf.

I wush dese people 'd stop dey talkin',

Don't mean no mo' dan chicken's squawkin':

I guess I knows which way I's walkin',

I knows de norf f'om souf.

I does not love Elizy Brown,

I guess I knows my min'.

You allus try to tek me down

Wid evaht'ing you fin'.

Ef dese hyeah folks will keep on fillin'

Yo' haid wid nonsense, an' you's willin'

I bet some day dey'll be a killin'

Somewhaih along de line.

O' cose I buys de gal ice-cream,

Whut else I gwine to do?

I know jes' how de t'ing 'u'd seem

Ef I'd be sho't wid you.

On Sunday, you's at chu'ch a-shoutin',

Den all de week you go 'roun' poutin'—

I's mighty tiahed o' all dis doubtin',

I tell you cause I's true.

Possum

Ef dey's anyt'ing dat riles me
An' jes' gits me out o' hitch,
Twell I want to tek my coat off,
So 's to r'ar an' t'ar an' pitch,
Hit 's to see some ign'ant white man
'Mittin' dat owdacious sin—
W'en he want to cook a possum
Tekin' off de possum's skin.

W'y, dey ain't no use in talkin',
Hit jes' hu'ts me to de hea't
Fu' to see dem foolish people
Th'owin' 'way de fines' pa't.
W'y, dat skin is jes' ez tendah
An' ez juicy ez kin be;
I know all erbout de critter—
Hide an' haih—don't talk to me!

Possum skin is jes lak shoat skin;
Jes' you swinge an' scrope it down,
Tek a good sha'p knife an' sco' it,
Den you bake it good an' brown.
Huh-uh! honey, you's so happy
Dat yo' thoughts is 'mos' a sin
When you's settin' dah a-chawin'
On dat possum's cracklin' skin.

White folks t'ink dey know 'bout eatin',
An' I reckon dat dey do
Sometimes git a little idee
Of a middlin' dish er two;
But dey ain't a t'ing dey knows of
Dat I reckon cain't beat
W'en we set down at de table
To a unskun possum's meat!

Foolin' wid de Seasons

Seems lak folks is mighty curus

In de way dey t'inks an' ac's.

Dey jes' spen's dey days a-mixin'

Up de t'ings in almanacs.

Now, I min' my nex' do' neighbour,—

He's a mighty likely man,

But he nevah t'inks o' nuffin

'Ceptin' jes' to plot an' plan.

All de wintah he was plannin'

How he'd gethah sassafras

Jes' ez soon ez evah Springtime

Put some greenness in de grass.

An' he 'lowed a little soonah

He could stan' a coolah breeze

So's to mek a little money

F'om de sugah-watah trees.

In de summah, he'd be waihin'
Out de linin' of his soul,
Try'n' to ca'ci'late an' fashion
How he'd git his wintah coal;
An' I b'lieve he got his judgement
Jes' so tuckahed out an' thinned
Dat he t'ought a robin's whistle
Was de whistle of de wind.

Why won't folks gin up dey plannin',
An' jes' be content to know
Dat dey's gittin' all dat's fu' dem
In de days dat come an' go?
Why won't folks quit movin' forrard?
Ain't hit bettah jes' to stan'
An' be satisfied wid livin'
In de season dat's at han'?

Hit's enough fu' me to listen
W'en de birds is singin' 'roun',
'Dout a-guessin' whut'll happen
W'en de snow is on de groun'.
In de Springtime an' de summah,
I lays sorrer on de she'f;
An' I knows ol' Mistah Wintah
Gwine to hustle fu' hisse'f.

We been put hyeah fu' a pu'pose,
But de questun dat has riz
An' made lots o' people diffah
Is jes' whut dat pu'pose is.
Now, accordin' to my reas'nin',
Hyeah's de p'int whaih I's arriv,
Sence de Lawd put life into us,
We was put hyeah fu' to live!

Angelina

When de fiddle gits to singin' out a ol' Vahginny reel,

An' you 'mence to feel a ticklin' in yo' toe an' in yo' heel;

Ef you t'ink you got 'uligion an' you wants to keep it, too,

You jes' bettah tek a hint an' git yo'self clean out o' view.

Case de time is mighty temptin' when de chune is in de swing,

Fu' a darky, saint or sinner man, to cut de pigeon-wing.

An' you could n't he'p f'om dancin' ef yo' feet was boun' wif twine,

When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

Don't you know Miss Angelina? She's de da'lin' of de place.

W'y, dey ain't no high-toned lady wif sich mannahs an' sich grace.

She kin move across de cabin, wif its planks all rough an' wo';

Jes' de same 's ef she was dancin' on ol' mistus' ball-room flo'.

Fact is, you do' see no cabin—evaht'ing you see look grand,

An' dat one ol' squeaky fiddle soun' to you jes' lak a ban';

Cotton britches look lak broadclof an' a linsey dress look fine,

When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

Some folks say dat dancin's sinful, an' de blessed Lawd, dey say,

Gwine to purnish us fu' steppin' w'en we hyeah de music play.

But I tell you I don' b'lieve it, fu' de Lawd is wise and good,

An' he made de banjo's metal an' he made de fiddle's wood,

An' he made de music in dem, so I don' quite t'ink he'll keer

Ef our feet keeps time a little to de melodies we hyeah.

W'y, dey's somep'n' downright holy in de way our faces shine,

When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

Angelina steps so gentle, Angelina bows so low,

An' she lif' huh sku't so dainty dat huh shoetop skacely show:

An' dem teef o' huh'n a-shinin', ez she tek you by de han'—

Go 'way, people, d' ain't nothah sich a lady in de lan'!

When she's movin' thoo de figgers er a-daincin' by huhse'f,

Folks jes' stan' stock-still a-sta'in', an' dey mos' nigh hol's dey bref;

An' de young mens, dey's a-sayin', "I's gwine mek dat damsel mine,"

When Angelina Johnson comes a-swingin' down de line.

A Death Song

Lay me down beneaf de willers in de grass,

Whah de branch 'll go a-singin' as it pass.

An' w'en I's a-layin' low,

I kin hyeah it as it go

Singin', "Sleep, my honey, tek yo' res' at las'."

Lay me nigh to whah hit meks a little pool,

An' de watah stan's so quiet lak an' cool,

Whah de little birds in spring,

Ust to come an' drink an' sing,

An' de chillen waded on dey way to school.

Let me settle w'en my shouldahs draps dey load

Nigh enough to hyeah de noises in de road;

Fu' I t'ink de las' long res'

Gwine to soothe my sperrit bes'

Ef I's layin' 'mong de t'ings I's allus knowed.

A Christmas Folksong

De win' is blowin' wahmah,

An hit's blowin' f'om de bay;

Dey's a so't o' mist a-risin'

All erlong de meddah way;

Dey ain't a hint o' frostin'

On de groun' ner in de sky,

An' dey ain't no use in hopin'

Dat de snow'll 'mence to fly.

It's goin' to be a green Christmas,

An' sad de day fu' me.

I wish dis was de las' one

Dat evah I should see.

Dey's dancin' in de cabin,

Dey's spahkin' by de tree;

But dancin' times an' spahkin'

Are all done pas' fur me.

Dey's feastin' in de big house,
Wid all de windahs wide—
Is dat de way fu' people
To meet de Christmas-tide?
It's goin' to be a green Christmas,
No mattah what you say.
Dey's us dat will remembah
An' grieve de comin' day.

Dey's des a bref o' dampness
A-clingin' to my cheek;
De aih's been dahk an' heavy
An' threatnin' fu' a week,
But not wid signs o' wintah,
Dough wintah'dseem so deah—
De wintah's out o' season,
An' Christmas eve is heah.
It's goin' to be a green Christmas,
An' oh, how sad de day!

Go ax de hungry chu'chya'd,

An' see what hit will say.

Dey's Allen on de hillside,

An' Marfy in de plain;

Fu' Christmas was like springtime,

An' come wid sun an' rain.

Dey's Ca'line, John, an' Susie,

Wid only dis one lef':

An' now de curse is comin'

Wid murder in hits bref.

It's goin' to be a green Christmas—

Des hyeah my words an' see:

Befo' de summah beckons

Dey's many'll weep wid me.

Faith

I's a-gittin' weary of de way dat people do,
De folks dat's got dey 'ligion in dey fiah-place an' flue;
Dey's allus somep'n' comin' so de spit'll have to tu'n,
An' hit tain't no p'osition fu' to mek de hickory bu'n.
Ef de sweet pertater fails us an' de go'geous yallah yam,
We kin tek a bit o' comfo't f'om ouah sto' o' summah jam.
W'en de snow hit git to flyin', dat's de Mastah's own desiah,
De Lawd'll run de wintah an' yo' mammy'll run de fiah.

I ain' skeered because de win' hit staht to raih an' blow,
I ain't bothahed w'en he come er rattlin' at de do',
Let him taih hisse'f an' shout, let him blow an' bawl,
Dat's de time de branches shek an' bresh-wood 'mence to fall.
W'en de st'om's er-railin' an' de shettahs blowin' 'bout,
Dat de time de fiah-place crack hits welcome out.
Tain' my livin' business fu' to trouble ner enquiah,
De Lawd'll min' de wintah an' my mammy'll min' de fiah.

Ash-cake allus gits ez brown w'en February's hyeah

Ez it does in bakin' any othah time o' yeah.

De bacon smell ez callin'-like, de kittle rock an' sing,

De same way in de wintah dat dey do it in de spring;

Dey ain't no use in mopin' 'round an' lookin' mad an' glum

Erbout de wintah season, fu' hit's des plumb boun' to come;

An' ef it comes to runnin' t'ings I's willin' to retiah,

De Lawd'll min' de wintah an' my mammy'll min' de fiah.

Hope

De dog go howlin' 'long de road,

De night come shiverin' down;

My back is tiahed of its load,

I cain't be fu' f'om town.

No mattah ef de way is long

My haht is swellin' wid a song,

No mattah 'bout de frownin' skies,

I'll soon be home to see my Lize.

My shadder staggah on de way,

It's monstrous col' to-night;

But I kin hyeah my honey say

"W'y bless me if de sight

O' you ain't good fu' my so' eyes."

(Dat talk's dis lak my lady Lize)

I's so'y case de way was long

But Lawd you bring me love an' song.

No mattah ef de way is long,

An' ef I trimbles so'

I knows de fiah's burnin' strong,

Behime my Lizy's do'.

An' daih my res' an' joy shell be,

Whaih my ol' wife's awaitin' me—

Why what I keer fu' stingin' blas',

I see huh windah light at las'.

A Love Letter

Oh, I des received a letter f'om de sweetes' little gal;

Oh, my; oh, my.

She's my lovely little sweethaht an' her name is Sal:

Oh, my; oh, my.

She writes me dat she loves me an' she loves me true,

She wonders ef I'll tell huh dat I loves huh, too;

An' my h'aht's so full o' music dat I do' know what to do;

Oh, my; oh, my.

I got a man to read it an' he read it fine;

Oh, my; oh, my.

Dey ain' no use denyin' dat her love is mine;

Oh, my; oh, my.

But hyeah's de t'ing dat's puttin' me in such a awful plight,

I t'ink of huh at mornin' an' I dream of huh at night;

But how's I gwine to cou't huh w'en I do' know how to write?

Oh, my; oh, my.

My h'aht is bubblin' ovah wid de t'ings I want to say;

Oh, my; oh, my.

An' dey's lots of folks to copy what I tell 'em fu' de pay;

Oh, my; oh, my.

But dey's t'ings dat I's a-t'inkin' dat is only fu' huh eaahs,

An' I could n't lu'n to write 'em ef I took a dozen yeahs;

So to go down daih an' tell huh is de only way, it 'peahs;

Oh, my; oh, my.

Puttin' the Baby Away

Eight of 'em hyeah all tol' an' yet
Dese eyes o' mine is wringin' wet;
My haht's a-achin' ha'd an' so',
De way hit nevah ached befo';
My soul's a-pleadin', "Lawd give back
Dis little lonesome baby black,
Dis one, dis las' po' he'pless one
Whose little race was too soon run."

Po' Little Jim, des fo' yeahs' ol'
A-layin' down so still an' col'.
Somehow hit don' seem haidly faih,
To have my baby lyin' daih
Wi'dout a smile upon his face,
Wi'dout a look erbout de de place;
He ust to be so full o' fun
Hit don' seem right dat all's done, done.

Des eight in all but I don' caih,
Dey wa'nt a single one to spaih;
De worl' was big, so was hy haht,
An' dis hyeah baby owned hit's paht;
De house was po', dey clothes was rough,
But daih was meat an' meal enough;
An' daih was room fu' little Jim;
Oh! Lawd, what made you call fu' him?

It do seem monst'ous ha'd to-day,
To lay dis baby boy away;
I'd learn to love his teasin' smile,
He mought o' des been lef' erwhile;
You wouldn't t'ought wid all de folks,
Dat's roun' hyeah mixin' teahs an' jokes,
De Lawd u'd had de time to see
Dis chile an' tek him 'way f'om me.

But let it go, I reckon Jim,
'll des go right straight up to Him
Dat took him f'om his mammy's nest
An' lef' dis achin' in my breas',
An' lookin' in dat fathah's face
An' 'memberin' dis lone sorrerin' place,
He'll say, "Good Lawd, you ought to had
Do sumpin' fu' to comfo't dad!"

Advice

W'en you full o' worry
'Bout yo' wo'k an' sich,
W'en you kind o' bothahed
Case you cain't get rich,
An' yo' neighboh p'ospah
Past his jest desu'ts,
An' de sneer of comerds
Stuhs yo' haht an' hu'ts,
Des don' pet yo' worries,
Lay 'em on de she'f,
Tek a little trouble
Brothah, wid yo'se'f.

Ef a frien' comes mou'nin'
'Bout his awful case,
You know you don' grieve him
Wid a gloomy face,

But you wrassle wid him,

Try to tek him in;

Dough hit cracks yo' features,

Law, you smile lak sin.

Ain't you good ez he is?

Don' you pine to def;

Tek a little trouble

Brothah, wid yo'se'f.

Ef de chillun pestahs,

An' de baby's bad,

Ef yo' wife gits narvous,

An' you're getting' mad,

Des you grab yo' boot-strops,

Hol' yo' body down,

Stop a-tinkin' cuss-w'rds,

Chase away de frown,

Knock de haid o' worry,

Twel dey ain' none lef';

Tek a little trouble,
Brothah, wid yo'se'f.

Dreamin' Town

Come away to dreamin' town,

Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,

Whaih de skies don' nevah frown,

Mandy Lou;

Whaih de streets is paved with gol',

Whaih de days is nevah col',

An' no sheep strays f'om de fol',

Mandy Lou.

Ain't you tiahed of every day,

Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,

Tek my han' an' come away,

Mandy Lou,

To de place whaih dreams is King,

Whaih my heart hol's everyt'ing,

An' my soul can allus sing,

Mandy Lou.

Come away to dream wid me,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Whaih our hands an' hahts are free,
Mandy Lou;
Whaih de sands is shinin' white,
Whaih de rivahs glistens bright,
In dat dreamland of delight,
Mandy Lou.

Come away to dreamin' town,
Mandy Lou, Mandy Lou,
Whaih de fruit is bendin' down
Des fu' you.
Smooth your brow of lovin' brown,
An' my love will be its crown;
Come away to dreamin' town,
Mandy Lou.

Scamp

Ain't it nice to have a mammy

W'en you kin' o' tiahed out

Wid a-playin' in de meddah,

An' a-runnin' roun' about

Till hit's made you moughty hongry,

An' yo' nose hit gits to know

What de smell means dat's a-comin'

F'om de open cabin do'?

She wash yo' face,

An' mek yo' place,

You's hongry as a tramp;

Den hit's eat you suppah right away,

You sta'vin' little scamp.

W'en you's full o' braid an' bacon,

An' dey ain't no mo' to eat,

An' de lasses dat's a-stickin'

On yo' face ta'se kin' o' sweet,
Don' you t'ink hit's kin' o' pleasin'
Fu' to have som'body neah
Dat'll wipe yo' han's an' kiss you
Fo' dey lif' you f'om yo cheah?
To smile so sweet,
An' wash yo' feet,
An' leave 'em co'l an' damp;
Den hit's come let me undress you, now
You lazy little scamp.

Don' yo' eyes git awful heavy,
An' yo' lip git awful slack,
Ain't dey som'p'n kin' o' weaknin'
In de backbone of yo' back?
Don' yo' knees feel kin' o' trimbly,
An' yo' head go bobbin' roun',
W'en you says yo' "Now I lay me,"
An' is sno'in' on de "down"?

She kiss yo' nose,

She kiss yo' toes,

An' den tu'n out de lamp,

Den hit's creep into yo' trunnel baid,

You sleepy little scamp.

Opportunity

Granny's gone a-visitin',

Seen huh git huh shawl

W'en I was a-hidin' down

Hime de gyahden wall.

Seen huh put her bonnet on,

Seen huh tie de strings,

An' I's gone to dreamin' now

'Bout dem cakes an' t'ings.

On de she'f behime de do'—

Mussy, what a feas'!

Soon ez she gits out o' sight,

I kin eat in peace.

I bin watchin' fu' a week

Des fu' dis hyeah chance.

Mussy, w'en I gits in daih,

I'll des sholy dance.

Lemon pie an' gingham-cake,

Let me set an' t'ink—

Vinegah an' sugah, too,

Dat'll mek a drink;

Ef dey's one t'ing dat I loves

Mos' pu'ticlahly,

It is eatin' sweet t'ings an'

A-drinkin' Sangaree.

Lawdy, won' po' granny raih

W'en she see de she'f;

W'en I t'ink erbout huh face,

I's mos' 'shamed myse'f.

Well, she gone, an' hyeah I is,

back behime de do'—

Look hyeah! gran' 's done 'spected me,

Dain't no sweets no mo'.

Evah sweet is hid erway,
Job des done up brown;
Pusson t'ink dat someun t'ought
Dey was t'eves erroun';
Dat des breaks my haht in two,
Oh how bad I feel!
Des to t'ink my own gramma
B'lieved dat I 'u'd steal!

A Summer Night

Summah is de lovin' time—

Don' keer what you say.

Night is allus peart an' prime,

Bettah dan de day.

Do de day is sweet an' good,

Birds a-singin' fine,

Pines a-smellin' in de wood,—

But de night is mine.

Rivah whisperin' "howdy do,"

Ez it pass you by—

Moon a-lookin' down at you,

Winkin' on de sly.

Frogs a-croakin' f'om de pon',

Singin' bass dey fill,

An' you listen way beyon'

Ol' man whippo'will.

Hush up, honey, tek my han',

Mek yo' footsteps light;

Somep'n' kin' o' hol's de lan'

On a summah night.

Somep'n' dat you nevah sees

An' you nevah hyeahs,

But you feels it in de breeze,

Somep'n' nigh to teahs.

Somep'n' nigh to teahs? dat's so;

But hit's nigh to smiles.

An' you feels it ez you go

Down de shinin' miles.

Tek my han', my little dove;

Hush an' come erway—

Summah is de time fu' love,

Night-time beats de day!

The Old Cabin

In de dead of night I sometimes

Git to t'inkin' of de pas',

An' de days w'en slavery helt me

In my mis'ry—ha'd an' fas'.

Dough de time was mighty tryin',

In dese houahs somehow hit seem

Dat a brightah light come slippin'

Thoo de kivahs of my dream.

An' my min' fu'gits de whuppins,

Draps de feah o' block an' lash,

An' flies straight to somep'n' joyful

In a secon's light'nin' flash.

Den hit seems I see a vision

Of a dearah long ago

Of de childern tumblin' roun' me

By my rough ol' cabin do'.

Talk about yo' go'geous mansions

An' yo' big house great an' gran',

Des bring up de fines' palace

Dat you know in all de lan'.

But dey's somep'n' dearah to me,

Somep'n' faihah to my eyes

In dat cabin, less you bring me

To yo' mansion in de skies.

I kin see de light a-shinin'

Thoo de chinks atween de logs,

I kin hyeah de way-off bayin'

Of my mastah's huntin' dogs,

An' de neighin' of de hosses

Stampin' on de ol' bahn flo',

But above dese soun's de laughin'

At my deah ol' cabin do'.

We could gethah daih at evenin',
All my frien's 'u'd come erroun',
An' hit wan't no time, twell, bless you,
You could hyeah de banjo's soun'.
You could see de dahkies dancin'
Pigeon-wing an' heel an' toe,—
Joyous times I tell you people
Roun' dat same ol' cabin do'.

But at times my t'oughts gits saddah,
Ez I riccolec' de folks,
An' dey frolickin' an' talkin',
Wid dey laughin' an' dey jokes.
An' hit hu'ts me w'en I membahs
Dat I'll nevah see no mo'
Dem ah faces gethahed smilin'
Roun' dat po' ol' cabin do'.