

# “A BANJO SONG”

BY

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Oh, dere 's lots o' keer an' trouble  
In dis world to swaller down;  
An' ol' Sorrer 's purty lively  
In her way o' gittin' roun'.  
Yet dere's times when I furgit em,—  
Aches an' pains an' troubles all,—  
An' it's when I tek at ebenin'  
My ol' banjo f'om de wall.

'Bout de time dat night is fallin'  
An' my daily wu'k is done,  
An' above de shady hilltops  
I kin see de settin' sun;  
When de quiet, restful shadders  
Is beginnin' jes' to fall,—  
Den I take de little banjo  
F'om its place upon de wall.

Den my fam'ly gadders roun' me  
In de fadin' o' de light,  
Ez I strike de strings to try 'em  
Ef dey all is tuned er-right.  
An' it seems we 're so nigh heaben  
We kin hyeah de angels sing  
When de music o' dat banjo  
Sets my cabin all er-ring.

An' my wife an' all de othahs,—  
Male an' female, small an' big,—  
Even up to gray-haired granny,  
Seem jes' boun' to do a jig;  
'Twell I change de style o' music,  
Change de movement an' de time,  
An' de ringin' little banjo  
Plays an ol' hea't-feelin' hime.

An' somehow my th'oat gits choky,  
An' a lump keeps tryin' to rise  
Lak it wan'ed to ketch de water  
Dat was flowin' to my eyes;  
An' I feel dat I could sorter  
Knock de socks clean off o' sin

Ez I hyeah my po' ol' granny  
Wif huh tremblin' voice jine in.

Den we all th'ow in our voices  
Fu' to he'p de chune out too,  
Lak a big camp-meetin' choiry  
Tryin' to sing a mou'nah th'oo.  
An' our th'oahts let out de music,  
Sweet an' solemn, loud an' free,  
'Twell de raftahs o' my cabin  
Echo wif de melody.

Oh, de music o' de banjo,  
Quick an' deb'lish, solemn, slow,  
Is de greates' joy an' solace  
Dat a weary slave kin know!  
So jes' let me hyeah it ringin',  
Dough de chune be po' an' rough,  
It's a pleasure; an' de pleasures  
O' dis life is few enough.

Now, de blessed little angels  
Up in heaben, we are told,  
Don't do nothin' all dere lifetime

‘Ceptin’ play on ha’ps o’ gold.  
Now I think heaben ‘d be mo’ homelike  
Ef we ‘d hyeah some music fall  
F’om a real ol’-fashioned banjo,  
Like dat one upon de wall.