

Dat 'Skeeter

(A NARRATIVE BY BRUDDER GRIPPER, WITH CHORUS)

I 's 'quainted wid a 'skeeter—oh, he hab a hard heart!
 (Listen, now, Brudder Grip, listen, now!)
 He do sting me in the forehead an' ebery tender part.
 (Gracious Dow, Brudder Grip, gracious Dow!)
 W'en I rise up in de mo'nin', w'en I lay me down fer sleep,
 (Oh, cry, Brudder Gripper, oh, cry!)
 Dat 'skeeter he beside me, an' a studdy watch he 'll keep—
 (Till yer die, Brudder Grip, till yer die!)
 He foller me ter meetin', where de preacher talkin' tall,
 (Dat 's so, Brudder Gripper, dat 's so!)
 An' w'en I rise ter cogitate an' 'terrogate dem all,
 (Don't we know, Brudder Grip, don't we know?)
 Dat 'skeeter he sneak close ter me, he crawl up by my side,
 (He do, Brudder Gripper, he do!)
 An' de mo' dat I does appetite de wuss do he deride.
 (Dat 's true, Brudder Gripper, dat 's true!)
 Well, one night w'en de moon been high, an' watermelons fine,
 (You bet, Brudder Gripper, you bet!)
 I sneak down ter de Big House, jest fer *look* at maussa's vine.
 (Don't fret, Brudder Gripper, don't fret!)

I jest been wished fer test dem, so I 'blige ter eat a few—
 (*We* know, Brudder Gripper, *we* know!)
 Old maussa hab so many he can't grudge me one or two;
 (Dat 's so, Brudder Gripper, dat 's so!)
 But when I kinder runnin' home, 'c'ase maussa might be by,
 (Understan', Brudder Gripper, understand!),
 Dat 'skeeter come behind me, an' I light out wid a cry.
 (Oh, land, Brudder Gripper, oh, land!)
 De for'man he been ketched me, an' he licked me black an' blue.
 (What a row, Brudder Grip, what a row!)
 Lor'! W'en I grabbed dat 'skeeter I killed him troo an' troo.
 (I swow, Brudder Gripper, I swow!)
 But dere ain't no use in killin'—dat 'skeeter 's livin' now!
 (Take keer, Brudder Gripper, take keer!)
 An' w'en I die, an' Peter plant dat crown upon my brow—
 (He 'll be dere, Brudder Grip, he 'll be dere!)
 Yas! He 'll settle down beside me upon dat pu' white t'rone,
 An' w'en I ride dat chariot, I ain't gwine ter be alone:
 Dat 'skeeter 'll sting in Paradise as sho as you is bo'n.
 ('T ain't fair, Brudder Gripper, 't ain't fair!)

Margaret Rutherford Willett.



Drawn by E. W. Kemble

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