



Understanding African American Literature



非裔美国文学赏析

骆洪 著



重庆大学出版社
http://www.cqup.com.cn

Understanding African American Literature



非裔美国文学赏析

骆洪 著

重庆大学出版社

内容提要

《非裔美国文学赏析》是一本研究非裔美国文学的综合性读本,旨在介绍非裔美国文学的基本概况、文学作品分析和文论解读的基本方法。该书主要内容有三大块:第一部分系非裔美国文学简史,勾勒了非裔美国文学的发展历程;第二部分系非裔美国文学作品分析,同时也是文学研究基本方法的样本;第三部分系非裔美国文学批评的研究,主要以文本分析的形式,重点解读、评析了20世纪较有代表性的作家和评论家们的文章,这些文章均出自较有影响的学者之手,发表的时间从20世纪20年代至90年代不等,内容丰富,有很强的思想性,从中可以看到非裔美国学者们对文学、艺术和社会、政治的真知灼见。书中对这些文章进行的解读和评析将有助于进一步了解非裔美国文学批评家们的思想和观点。

《非裔美国文学赏析》凸显文本分析在文学研究中的重要作用。该书以英文写成,既可作为英语专业学生的参考教材,也可作为非裔美国文学爱好者的读物。

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

非裔美国文学赏析 = Understanding African
American Literature; 英文/骆洪著. —重庆:
重庆大学出版社, 2014. 6
ISBN 978-7-5624-8220-8

I. ①非… II. ①骆… III. ①文学欣赏—美国—英文
IV. ①I712.06

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2014)第 098654 号

Understanding African American Literature

非裔美国文学赏析

骆 洪 著

责任编辑:杨 琪 版式设计:杨 琪 谭冬玲

责任校对:贾 梅 责任印制:赵 晟

*

重庆大学出版社出版发行

出版人:邓晓益

社址:重庆市沙坪坝区大学城西路 21 号

邮编:401331

电话:(023) 88617190 88617185(中小学)

传真:(023) 88617186 88617166

网址:<http://www.cqup.com.cn>

邮箱:fxk@cqup.com.cn(营销中心)

全国新华书店经销

重庆升光电力印务有限公司印刷

*

开本:787×1092 1/16 印张:12.75 字数:229 千

2014 年 6 月第 1 版 2014 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

ISBN 978-7-5624-8220-8 定价:45.00 元

本书如有印刷、装订等质量问题,本社负责调换

版权所有,请勿擅自翻印和用本书

制作各类出版物及配套用书,违者必究

前 言

非裔美国文学,俗称美国黑人文学,即美国的非洲裔作家创作的文学的总称。非裔美国文学经过几个世纪的发展,取得了辉煌的成就,在美国文学乃至世界文学中产生了较大的影响。国内外对非裔美国文学的研究已经形成一股浪潮,研究成果层出不穷。尤其是托尼·莫里森在1993年获诺贝尔文学奖之后,学界对非裔美国文学的研究的热情高涨。国内对非裔美国文学的研究已经有了几十年的历史,成果颇丰,大多以期刊文章、学位论文、专题研究专著的形式出现。

《非裔美国文学赏析》是一本研究非裔美国文学的综合性读本,旨在介绍非裔美国文学的基本概况、文学作品分析和文论解读的基本方法。该书主要内容有三大部分。第一部分系非裔美国文学简史,勾勒了非裔美国文学的发展历程。从北美殖民时期出现的口传文学开始,一直到20世纪80年代,该部分清楚地再现了非裔美国文学的兴起、发展和繁荣的历程,并对重要的文学运动、文学思潮、代表性作家进行了介绍和评析。第二部分系非裔美国文学作品分析,同时也是文学研究基本方法的样本。该部分首先探讨了小说(含短篇故事)、诗歌、戏剧三个不同文类的基本研读方法,然后以非裔美国文学名家的作品为例,以文本细读为基础,重点评析了不同作品的思想内容和艺术表现方式。第三部分系非裔美国文学批评的研究。该部分首先介绍了非裔美国文学批评的发展历程,然后仍以文本分析的形式,重点解读、评析了20世纪较有代表性的作家和评论家们的文章。这些文章均出自较有影响的学者之手,发表的时间从20世纪20年代至90年代不等,内容丰富,有很强的思想性,从中可以看到非裔美国学者们对文学、艺术和社会、政治的真知灼见。书中对这些文章进行的解读和评析将有助于进一步了解非裔美国文学批评家们的思想和观点。

《非裔美国文学赏析》凸显文本分析在文学研究中的重要作用。该书以英文写成,既可作为英语专业学生的参考教材,也可作为非裔美国文学爱好者的读物。

由于作者水平有限,书中的内容和语言表达可能会出现不足之处,敬请广大专家、学者批评指正!

骆 洪

2014年3月

CONTENTS

Part 1 The Development of African American Literature

▶Early Literary Forms: Oral Tradition, Folktales, and Spirituals	4
Oral Tradition; Folklore; Black Folktales	4
Spirituals	13
▶Literary Writings in the 18th Century	15
Poems	15
Early Prose Writing and Slave Narrative	20
▶Literary Writings in the 19th Century	22
The Ballads of the Enslaved Blacks	22
Abolitionist Writings	25
The Development of Slave Narrative	26
Slave Narrative Writers and Political Activists	26
African American Novel	29
Literary Writings at the Turn of the 19th Century	36
▶Literary Writings in the 20th Century	42
Harlem Renaissance (1920s and 1930s)	42
Urban Realism, Naturalism, and Modernism (1940s-1960s)	55
The Black Arts Movement (the mid-1960s-the mid 1970s)	61
African American Literature since the 1970s	64

Part 2 Reading and Writing about African American Literature

▶Basic Approaches	71
▶Examples of Reading and Writing about African American Literature	73
Reading and Writing about Fiction (Short Story and Novel)	74
Reading and Writing about Poetry	93
Reading and Writing about Play	106

Part 3 African American Literary Criticism

▶A Brief Introduction	120
▶The Development of African American Literary Criticism: A Survey	120
▶A Textual Analysis of the Essays Written by African American Literary Writers and / or Critics	129
References	192
后记	197

Part 1

The Development of African American Literature

This is a survey of the evolution of African American literature. First of all, a few words are necessary as to the concept as well as some issues concerning the nomenclature.

Historians often disagree with each other considering the time when the first Africans arrived at North American Continent. However, it is generally held that the first group of Africans came to North American Continent in early 17th century. Most of them were seized in Africa and sold to North America as slaves. But there were some of the Africans who came to North American Continent as indentured servants. Indentured servants at that time also included some white people. As established in the lease, these Africans, as well as the white indentured servants, worked under their “masters” for a certain period of time. When the service expired, they were free and could live and work like other free people. However, when African Americans are involved in literature and even in history, people generally allude to the ex-slaves and their descendants. In other words, African Americans are taken as a whole group, without detailed differentiations. Here in this survey, they are also taken as a whole, regardless the actual differences among them, for the sake of convenient research.

There are several terms as to the black people in America, such as American blacks, black Americans, Afro-Americans, African-Americans, and African Americans. These terms are often used interchangeably despite the minute differences. For example, the hyphenated nomenclature may connote a sense of “outsiders” who are affiliated to mainstream white people. That is why some immigrants in the US do not like the hyphen in between. This is also the case for African Americans. Meanwhile, a special note should be made on the term of “Negro.” In history, the term “Negro” was prevalent and even Martin Luther King Jr. used the word in his speech of “I have a Dream” (1963). The word was rejected later probably since the late 1960s for it was considered offensive. Therefore, this word should not be used when referring to American blacks. To sum up, when referring to the black people in USA, American blacks, black Americans, Afro-Americans, African-Americans, and African Americans are often used interchangeably. In this book, American blacks, black Americans and African Americans are used to mean the same people.

When the first group of Africans were brought, usually by force, to North American Continent, there was no the country of the United States. In the colonial period, they were put under slavery. Since they were uneducated or illiterate slaves, they had no chance or they were not allowed to learn to read, let alone writing. Later, some liberal whites began to teach them to read but they taught them only religious sermons and poems about salvation considering Christianity. The slaves learned about the white folks' religion, morality and everything they were supposed to obey. Some of the diligent slaves learned well and began to write their version of poems which naturally carried a strong note of religion. However, there were still a few of them who wrote, under the mask of religion, to express their ideas about the world, the society, the relationship between them and their "masters," and the aspiration for freedom.

Meanwhile, their African tradition was not oblivious though the slave-owners intended to indoctrinate them with white folks' doctrines. The Africans in North America carried with them their traditional culture and passed down their cultural heritage generation after generation. Africa is a land rich in folklore. The Africans in North American Continent had also brought with them their customs, storytelling talents, songs, ballads, and folktales. All these became the source of their literary writing in the years afterwards. With the abolitionist movement and the emancipation in the 19th century, more and more African Americans became awakened and their racial consciousness and self-assertion became stronger and stronger. They began to integrate the sense of race and identity into their poems, dramas and fictions.

In the 20th century, along with the "New Negro Movement" and Harlem Renaissance, African American literature began to flourish. From then on, there have appeared many famous writers such as Alain Locke, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks, Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison, Alex Haley, Maya Angelou, Rita Dove, and Alice Walker. The list is even longer. They write to express the African American voice, to portray their social situation, to disclose the sufferings from racial and gender discrimination and oppression, to denounce the social injustice, to awaken the African American consciousness, to assert their African American identity, and to explore the ways

for their future development. Considering the themes of their writings, a predominant one is the construction of African American identity. As both Americans and African descendants, the writers are inevitably influenced by the “double consciousness” as put forward by W. E. B. Du Bois. This is particular the case since the emancipation. The research on these writings indicates that there is a high correlation between African American literary writings and African American social and psychological culture. African American literary writings since the emancipation reveal a sense of “Double Consciousness” of the writers and imply their explorations for the cultural identity of the American blacks. During this course, three inclinations are evident, the orientation to white mainstream society, the assertion of the African American identity, highlighting the African Americanness to improve racial pride and to strengthen racial unity against the white racism and ethnocentrism, and the claim of being both American and African American. These orientations are also the case on the part of the ordinary African Americans. Cultural identity is objective and natural and meanwhile subjective and constructional. “Double Consciousness” sheds light on the psychology of the African Americans. Ideas of cultural identity by African American writers may vary or converge along with the changes in time, society and personal experiences.

►Early Literary Forms: Oral Tradition, Folktales, and Spirituals

Early literary writings of Black Americans started with oral tradition. They told stories, hummed songs, and sang and performed Spirituals. The oral tradition had been passed down from their forebears.

⇒Oral Tradition: Folklore; Black Folktales

Folklore is the original source for African American literary creation. Black folktales are an integral part of African American folklore. They play an important function in literary writing of African American writers. These tales mostly originate from Africa, and some come from Europe. In the colonial period of North American Continent, and later in the early period of the United States of

America, the enslaved black people took advantage of the folklore to enrich their life. As is known, slave-owners did not allow slaves to learn to read and they forced on the slaves everything of the white doctrine, intending to intimidate them, to make them obedient and tractable, and to control them physically and spiritually. Life was hard, labor was arduous, and the cruelty of slavery permeated in every aspect of their life. But the enslaved blacks never took their fate lying down. Moreover, nothing could stop them from giving a full play of their imagination. They tried and sometimes managed to live the life in their way. This is particularly found in their daily life and in their psychic activities. The enslaved blacks learned from their forefathers their folklore and they used the folktales, as well as other forms of expression such as Spirituals and songs, to get relaxed from the hard labor, to give themselves some amusement, to console their soul, and to heal their wound from the cruelty of slavery. Most importantly, these tales, with vernacular words or expressions, became the way for the enslaved blacks to communicate their ideas secretly with each other, to show their defiance against the slave owners, and to imply their aspiration for freedom. Thus, their folktales teem with humor, thought-provoking lessons, and sometimes the protest against the slave owners. African American folktales and Spirituals quite often connote something secretly, beyond the literal meanings. They are the products of the African American experiences in North America.

Here are some examples of the tales.

Anansi Goes Fishing^①

(A Tale from West Africa)

Foolish Anansi thought he could trick a fisherman into doing his work for him. "Let's go fishing," he suggested.

"Very well," said the fisherman, who was clever and quite wise to Anansi's tricks. "I'll make the nets and you can get tired for me."

"Wait," said Anansi, "I'll make the nets and you can get tired for me!" Anansi made nets as his friend pretended to be tired. They caught four fish.

The fisherman said, "Anansi, you take these. I'll take tomorrow's catch. It

① <http://www.storyarts.org/library/nutshell/stories/anansi.html> Accessed May 6, 2012

might be bigger.”

Greedy imagining the next day’s catch, Anansi said, “No, you take these and I’ll take tomorrow’s fish.”

But the next day, the nets were rotting away and no fish were caught. The fisherman said, “Anansi, take these rotten nets to market. You can sell them for much money.”

When Anansi shouted, “Rotten nets for sale!” in the marketplace, people beat him with sticks.

“Some partner you are,” Anansi said to the fisherman as he rubbed his bruises. “I took the beatings. At least you could have taken the pain.”

Anansi never tried to trick the fisherman again!

The tale is funny and humorous. Anansi the trickster is a spider, an important character of West African folklore. The tale is probably from Ghana. Anansi is greedy and he intends to take advantage of others but eventually he throws the helve after the hatchet and pays a double penalty. Moreover, he keeps up appearance to cover up his predicament.

The Snake and the Frog^①

(A Folktale from Africa)

Some time ago in the African rainforest a baby snake set out to play. As he slithered away his mother chanted words of caution:

“Watch out young son,
For things with claws,
For things with a beak,
For things with strong jaws.”

“Claws, beak, jaws. Claws, beak, jaws,” Snake Baby replied.

At the same time baby frog set out to play. As he slithered away his mother chanted words of caution:

“Watch out for the hiss,
Watch out for the coil,

① <http://hypermedia.educ.psu.edu/k-12/edpgs/su95/beasts/folktale.html> Accessed May 6, 2012

Watch out for the squeeze,
They will cause turmoil.”

“Hiss, coil, squeeze. Hiss, coil, squeeze,” Frog Baby replied.

Baby snake and Baby frog met in the rainforest and played the day away. What good games they played! First they played Leap Frog. Then they played Hide and Hug.

That night Frog Baby told Frog Mama about his fun and the games he played.

“No, no, Frog Baby! Hide and Hug is not a game for you. It is the game of the hiss, coil, and squeeze. Promise you will never play with him again.”

Also that night Snake Baby told Snake Mama about his fun and the games he played.

“No, no, Snake Baby! Hide and Hug is not a game for you. Hide and Hug is what you must do. This is the way you get your meals! Promise me you will hiss, coil, and squeeze. It will feel so good and then your belly will become full.”

The next day as Frog Baby set out he fearfully recited his words of caution, “Hiss, coil, and squeeze.” But as Snake Baby set out his tongue lashed out as he happily sang, “Hiss, coil, and squeeze. Makes a meal for me.”

Now we know why frog and snake won’t be found playing games together; it is against their nature.

This possibly connotes the idea that slave and slave owners are incompatible as fire and water.

African American folktales were popular throughout their history. The first collection of African American folktales appeared in the late nineteenth century. Joel Chandler Harris, a white American journalist and folklorist had his book *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings* published in 1880, recording some of the oral literature of the enslaved blacks. Uncle Remus was a senior slave who enjoyed a favorable position in the plantation. He told animal tales to little kids, white and black, in vernacular English.

The Wonderful Tar Baby Story^①

“Didn’t the fox never catch the rabbit, Uncle Remus?” asked the little boy the

① <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ug97/remus/tar-baby.html> Accessed May 6, 2012

next evening.

“He come mighty nigh it, honey, sho’s you born — Brer Fox did. One day atter Brer Rabbit fool ’im wid dat calamus root, Brer Fox went ter wuk en got ’im some tar, en mix it wid some turkentime, en fix up a contrapshun w’at he call a Tar-Baby, en he tuck dish yer Tar-Baby en he sot ’er in de big road, en den he lay off in de bushes fer to see what de news wuz gwine ter be. En he didn’t hatter wait long, nudder, kaze bimeby here come Brer Rabbit pacin’ down de road — lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity — dez ez sassy ez a jay-bird. Brer Fox, he lay low. Brer Rabbit come prancin’ ’long twel he spy de Tar-Baby, en den he fotch up on his behime legs like he wuz ’stonished. De Tar Baby, she sot dar, she did, en Brer Fox, he lay low.”

“ ‘Mawnin’! ’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee- ’ nice wedder dis mawnin’ ,’ sezee.”

“Tar-Baby ain’t sayin’ nuthin’ , en Brer Fox he lay low.”

“ ‘How duz yo’ sym’tums seem ter segashuate?’” sez Brer Rabbit, sezee.

“Brer Fox, he wink his eye slow, en lay low, en de Tar-Baby, she ain’t sayin’ nuthin’ .”

“ ‘How you come on, den? Is you deaf?’ ” sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. “ ‘Kaze if you is, I kin holler louder,’ ” sezee.

Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“You er stuck up, dat’s w’at you is,” says Brer Rabbit, sezee, “en I’m gwine ter kyore you, dat’s w’at I’m a gwine ter do,” sezee.

Brer Fox, he sorter chuckle in his stummick, he did, but Tar-Baby ain’t sayin’ nothin’ .

“I’m gwine ter larn you how ter talk ter ’spectubble folks ef hit’s de las’ ack,” sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. “Ef you don’t take off dat hat en tell me howdy, I’m gwine ter bus you wide open,” sezee.

Tar-Baby stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

Brer Rabbit keep on axin’ ’im, en de Tar-Baby, she keep on sayin’ nothin’ , twel present’y Brer Rabbit draw back wid his fis’ , he did, en blip he tuck ’er side er de head. Right dar’s whar he broke his merlasses jug. His fis’ stuck, en he can’t pull loose. De tar hilt ’im. But Tar-Baby, she stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

“Ef you don’t lemme loose, I’ll knock you agin,” sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, en wid dat he fotch ’er a wipe wid de udder han’ , en dat stuck. Tar-Baby, she ain’y

sayin' nuthin', en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Tu'n me loose, fo' I kick de natal stuffin' outen you," sez Brer Rabbit, sezee, but de Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin'. She des hilt on, en de Brer Rabbit lose de use er his feet in de same way. Brer Fox, he lay low. Den Brer Rabbit squall out dat ef de Tar-Baby don't tu'n 'im loose he butt 'er cranksided. En den he butted, en his head got stuck. Den Brer Fox, he sa'ntered fort', lookin' dez ez innercent ez winner yo' mammy's mockin' - birds.

"Howdy, Brer Rabbit," sez Brer Fox, sezee. "You look sorter stuck up dis mawnin'," sezee, en den he rolled on de groun', en laft en laft twel he couldn't laff no mo'. "I speck you'll take dinner wid me dis time, Brer Rabbit. I done laid in some calamus root, en I ain't gwineter take no skuse," sez Brer Fox, sezee."

Here Uncle Remus paused, and drew a two-pound yam out of the ashes.

"Did the fox eat the rabbit?" asked the little boy to whom the story had been told.

"Dat's all de fur de tale goes," replied the old man. "He mout, an den agin he moutent. Some say Judge B'ar come 'long en loosed 'im- some say he didn't. I hear Miss Sally callin'. You better run 'long."

The story is written in vernacular Black English and it teems with the pronunciation of dialect transcribed into English words. Some of these words are hardly understood to ordinary English readers. Now it is retold with the explanation in Standard English as follows^①:

The Wonderful Tar Baby Story

"Didn't the fox never catch the rabbit, Uncle Remus?" asked the little boy the next evening.

"He come mighty nigh (*very close to*) it, honey, sho's (*sure as*) you born — Brer Fox did. One day atter (*after*) Brer Rabbit fool 'im wid dat (*fooled him with that*) calamus root, Brer Fox went ter wuk (*to work*) en (and) got 'im (*himself*) some tar, en (and) mix it wid (*with*) some turkentime (*turpentine*), en (and) fix up

① The interpretation was made under the help of Linda Peek, an American scholar who taught at Yunnan University during 2011-2012.

(made) a contrapshun (contraption) w'at (that) he call a Tar-Baby, en (and) he tuck (took) dish yer (the) Tar-Baby en (and) he sot 'er (sat her) in de (the) big road, en den (and then) he lay off in de (the) bushes fer (for) to see what de news wuz gwine ter be (what was going to happen). En (And) he didn't hatter (have to) wait long, nudder (neither), kaze (because) bimeby (by and by) here come Brer Rabbit pacin' (pacing) down de (the) road — lippity-clippity, clippity-lippity — dez ez sassy ez (just as sassy as) a jay-bird. Brer Fox, he lay low. Brer Rabbit come prancin', long twel (prancing along until) he spy de (the) Tar-Baby, en den (and then) he fotch (he fetched) up on his behime (hinder) legs like he wuz' stonished (was astonished). De (The) Tar Baby, she sot dar (sat there), she did, en Brer Fox, he lay low."

" 'Mawnin'! ' (Morning) sez (says) Brer Rabbit, sezee (said he)- ' nice wedder dis mawnin' , ' sezee." (weather this morning , said he)

"Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nuthin' , (didn't say anything) en (and) Brer Fox he lay low."

" 'How duz yo' sym' tums seem ter segashuate?' (Basically the sentence means, "How are you feeling?") sez (says) Brer Rabbit, sezee (says he).

"Brer Fox, he wink his eye slow, en lay low, en de (and the) Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin' ." (didn't say anything)

" 'How you come on, den (how are you , then)? Is you deaf? ' " sez (says) Brer Rabbit, sezee (says he). " 'Kaze (Because) if you is, I kin (can) holler (shout) louder,' " sezee (says he).

Tar-Baby stay still, en (and) Brer Fox, he lay low.

"You er (are) stuck up, dat's w'at (that's what) you is," says Brer Rabbit, sezee (says he), "en I'm gwine ter (and I'm going to) kyore (kill) you, dat's w'at I'm a gwine ter do, (that's what I'm going to do)" sezee (says he).

Brer Fox, he sorter (sort of) chuckle in his stummick, he did, but Tar-Baby ain't sayin' nothin' (isn't saying anything).

"I'm gwine ter larn you how ter talk ter 'spectubble folks ef hit's de las' ack," (I'm going to teach you how to talk to respectable folks if it's my last act) sez (says) Brer Rabbit, sezee (says he). "Ef (If) you don't take off dat (that) hat en (and) tell me howdy (hello), I'm gwine ter bus you wide open (I'm going to hit you)," sezee (says he).

Tar-Baby stay still, en (*and*) Brer Fox, he lay low.

Brer Rabbit keep on axin' 'im (*asking him*), en de (*and the*) Tar-Baby, she keep on sayin' nothin', twel present'y (*until presently*) Brer Rabbit draw back wid (*with*) his fis' (*fist*), he did, en(*and*) blip he tuck'er side er de head (*he hit her on the side of her head*). Right dar's whar (*there's where*) he broke his merlasses (*molasses*) jug. His fis' (*fist*) stuck, en(*and*) he can't pull loose. De tar hilt'im (*The tar held him*). But Tar-Baby, she stay still, en Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Ef (*If*) you don't lemme (*let me*) loose, I'll knock you agin(*again*)," sez (*says*) Brer Rabbit, sezee(*says he*), en wid dat he fotch'er a wipe wid de udder han', en dat stuck(*and with that he hit her with the other hand, and that stuck*). Tar-Baby, she ain'y sayin' nuthin' (*isn't saying anything*), en (*and*) Brer Fox, he lay low.

"Tu'n me loose, fo' I kick de natal stuffin' outen you," (*Turn me loose, before I kick the stuffing out of you*) sez (*says*) Brer Rabbit, sezee(*says he*), but de (*the*) Tar-Baby, she ain't sayin' nuthin' (*isn't saying anything*). She des hilt on(*She just held on*), en de (*and the*) Brer Rabbit lose de use er (*lost the use of*) his feet in de(*the*) same way. Brer Fox, he lay low. Den(*Then*) Brer Rabbit squall (*yelled*) out dat ef de (*that if the*) Tar-Baby don't tu'n 'im (*didn't turn him*) loose he butt'er cranksided(*he would head-butt her from the side*). En den(*and then*) he butted, en (*and*) his head got stuck. Den (*Then*) Brer Fox, he sa'ntered fort', lookin' dez ez innercent ez wunner yo' mammy's mockin' -birds(*sauntered out, looking just as innocent as one of your mother's mocking birds*).

"Howdy(*Hello*), Brer Rabbit," sez (*says*) Brer Fox, sezee (*says he*). "You look sorter (*sort of*) stuck up dis mawnin' (*this morning*)," sezee(*says he*), en den (*and then*) he rolled on de groun' (*the ground*), en laft en laft twel he couldn't laff no mo' (*and laughed and laughed until he couldn't laugh any more*). "I speek you'll take dinner wid me dis time(*I think you'll have dinner with me this time*), Brer Rabbit. I done laid in (*I have*) some calamus root, en I ain't gwineter take no skuse (*and I'm not going to take any excuses*)," sez (*says*) Brer Fox, sezee(*says he*)."

Here Uncle Remus paused, and drew a two-pound yam out of the ashes.

"Did the fox eat the rabbit?" asked the little boy to whom the story had been told.