

**NANNIE, A SONG
OF THE HEART**

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Nannie, a song of the heart by Louis M. Eilshemius

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LOUIS M. EILSHEMIUS

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NANNIE

A SONG OF THE HEART

By
LOUIS M. ~~EL~~^ISHEM~~US~~^I

Author of "Poetical Works," "Mammon," etc.



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RICHARD G. BADGER

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FOREWORD

The following Rhapsody was written in the year 1888, at Delaware Water Gap, Pa. The author then was only twenty-four years old. He informs his readers that he thinks it will enhance the interest of the song if they know the origin of a work. The author's enjoyment of many a work of his "confrères" was marred by the lack of any hint of the genesis of their longer poems. He takes the liberty to suggest to them to follow his initiative — for his benefit, and that of others.

PROLOGUE

Morning-Birds

This morning early, in the gleaming dawn,
From dreams I woke: Aurora's minstrels —
listen!

All sing a glorious song — while sun-glints
glisten —

The mavis gurgles; the robin on the lawn
Flutes madcap-madrigals, so clear and sweet.
But hush! last eve a lovely maiden was mine.
O are those songs prelude for love divine?
Will she with love-lilts make my bliss complete?

Like darkest marjoram her locks are; brown
As hazel-nuts her sparkling eyes; soft hands
And sinuous shape, like Naiads in those lands
Of goddess, and of shepherd. Oh! her gown
Doth flutter in the wind. Bright youth is hers.
She scolds not, when this love-gone near de-
murs!

I

Bird-Oracle True

The symphonies of that lone dawn were true.
For now she lays her dreamy eyes on me;
Listens to all I say; and gives a few
Long sighs, born of her Dido-bosom free.
O birdlings! gushing forth your minstrelsy
That morn, two morns ago! — so short —
imbue
Me with her laughter-soul and brown, bright
eye,
For she has kept my flower of rosy hue!

'Tis true; 'tis true! her sparkling eyes are mine;
From them purl thought-floods of a wild-fire
fair!
She smiles and pouts when I am smiling there.
And now she seems to be a sacred shrine
Which, wound around with lilies, roses, glows,
For me, when she her sweeter spirit shows!

II

She is walking with sister —
Down the lane of the broad high oaks;
I have never yet kissed her —
For I saw her today, at first —
Romping with Jack through the grasses tall and
sleek,
Laughing in maidhood, enraptured with her
joy —
Now and then halting anear with me to speak;
Running o'er fields like a fair Apollo-boy!

With her sister she's walking —
Has a banjo adangling down; —
We are seated — and talking
Of the days that have gone to rest.
Picking the strings, we are seeing pictures drear.
Brown are her eyes, they have many a thought
within.
Young is she — sweet her dear shape — and
not a tear
Rolls down her cheek — she is innocent of sin.

III

Her dear name is Nannie.
Nannie strums so sweetly clear,
That the oak-tree birdies
Sing voluptuously dear.

In the arbor, while sunrays glinted jasper
From her locks hanging down her maiden-
shoulder;

A firm string came aloose — but my lovely
Nannie,

She is provident — hath Minerva's thinking —
For she keeps many strings to last her three days,
So began to repair the banjo — grown a treasure
In mine eyes. Then she asked me for a sharp
knife —

Oh! the beech by the hillside grew more golden
Than the hilt of high Kandy's sword, when
flashing

Its broad side in the flames of burning diamonds.
Oh, the grasses and bushes smelt of incense;
And the bower pervaded all the envious breezes
With the fragrance that rose from Nannie's
banjo.

With a dexterous hand I cut the bad string;
While so doing, her finger-tip was kissing
My brown hand; — was a-kissing, as a rain-drop
Softly lies on the leaf, then glides in grasses —
As the wind hath the marjoram kissed in pass-
ing —

As the rivers kiss tufts of tallest reed-plants!
So demurely pendent, near my sweetened finger,
That a pulse of exhilaration's being
Grew to life — dead'ning all woe, and sorrow —
lifting

Me to bowers so rosy, where angels of joyance
Their gold bow-strings were quivering for Israfil.
It was done — and she picked at the strings
that breathed

A sad tune; sung by men on plains; by rivers,
Whose reverberant falls loudly emulated
The grim thunder that rolls when grim Leo
angers; —

Of the wepts of sad savages where Columbia
Passes by shade-pines in far haunts of Oregon.
It was done — and she passed away — a vision—
A sweet moment's glad life — a fairest moment