

# SnapRead!

Stella rode the Red Line in the morning. She sat beside mothers with strollers. She sat next to tall kids with big sneakers. Many people rode the train. They went to work. They went to school. The train took them away from their homes. The windows on the train were old and dirty. The town outside looked old, too.

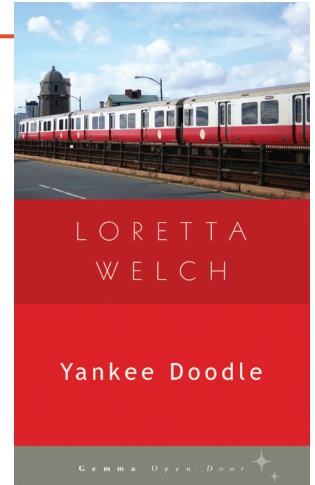
Boston was Stella's new home. She was born in the Midwest. The towns in the Midwest looked the same. Boston looked different.

Stella remembered summer at home. She slept in a hammock. The bed was tied between two trees. She heard trains miles away. Cindy was her friend. Stella and Cindy wanted to ride the train to Chicago. Maybe they would go farther.

Stella's father went away. She was fifteen. She moved to her aunt's house. Her aunt lived near Boston. The ocean surprised her. She saw big fields of corn back home. Sometimes they had no end. Still, the sea was so wide and so deep.

Stella looked at boats in the harbor. How far could they go? Small boats could go to Cape Cod. Bigger ships with puffy sails could go to Canada. The biggest ships could go far. They could go out onto the deep blue sea for weeks.

People have many ways to travel. They have many places to go.



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*Yankee Doodle*  
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SR.YD1.5

# SnapRead!

Stella moved to a new building. Her neighbor was Mrs. Washington. Stella called her Mrs. W. Mrs. W. liked to talk to Stella. She was afraid of the girl at first. Stella was from out of town. Stella had no luggage. But Stella helped Mrs. W. Then they were friends.

Mrs. W. and Stella talked a lot. Stella told her about her dreams. She wanted to go to school at night. She wanted to earn a degree. She wanted a new job. Mrs. W. told her about her grandson. She loved her grandson. But her grandson was a fool, she said.

Mrs. W. was the first person Stella talked to in Boston. Stella thought that people in big cities were cold. She was afraid to talk. Mrs. W. said she should give folks a chance. Then Stella opened up.

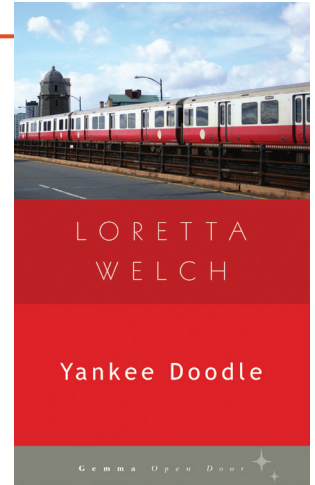
Mrs. W. was happy that Stella wanted a good job. She was glad she went to school after work. But, she worried about her. She thought Stella had a hard life.

“Stop working so much, Stella. Don’t be riding that train so late!”

Stella said she was fine. Mrs. W. was proud of Stella.

Stella said that she had hope.

Mrs. W. smiled.



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# SnapRead!

Mrs. F. lived on the fifth floor. Mrs. F. buzzed Stella in the front door. Stella cleaned Mrs. F.'s apartment on Wednesdays. She carried buckets and mops up the stairs. Mrs. F. had her own vacuum.

Stella liked the small apartment. She like the lace curtains and the shiny furniture. Everything was tiny. Everything was in its place. Mrs. F. had salt and pepper shakers shaped like many things. Some were little lamps. Some were tiny dogs. Some were mushrooms. Some were very small flowerpots.

Stella did not like to ask for her pay. She pushed the couch back. She fluffed up the pillows. Then she stood by the door.

“Are you sure you swept under the bed?”

“Yes, ma'am.”

“Did you clean the garbage pail?”

“It is clean, Mrs. F.”

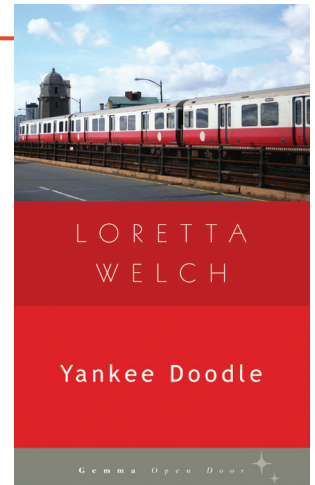
“Let me find my money, then.”

Stella rode the Red Line to Mrs. F. from spring to fall. She saw the colors change in the trees. In November, all the leaves were gone. The river was a dusty grey color. Mrs. F. looked a little grey, too. She had many pills. Her breathing was hard. In January, Mrs. F. was frail. She shuffled into her bedroom. She looked for money for Stella.

“It is okay, Mrs. F. You paid two weeks last time.”

Mrs. F. was quiet. Then she said, “Oh yes, child, I did.”

She watched Stella unlatch the door.



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# SnapRead!

People go underground to ride the subway. Some people work underground. They sell papers at the newsstand. They sell donuts at the donut shop. Some people play music for money. This was new to Stella.

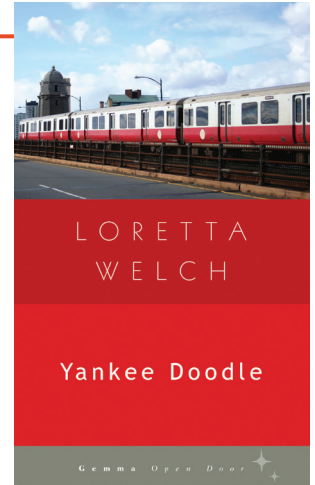
People waiting for the train gave entertainers money. Some musicians had posters. Some sold CDs. Stella loved the old violin man on the Blue Line. She dropped coins in Blonde Bob's case. That is what she called the tall Texan. He played the accordion and made people laugh.

The most famous stop on the Red Line is Harvard Square. Once, Stella got out on her way home. She wandered around the brick buildings. She looked in bookstores. She wanted a cup of coffee. It was too expensive. She watched people play chess.

People performed on the street. They stood in front of shops. Stella thought they were very brave. She saw people juggle, dance, sing, and do magic. She wished she had money to give them. Some were very good. Maybe they would be famous! One night, a couple performed in the Park Street station. They were very young. The boy had red hair. He wore jeans and a jacket from a suit. His eyes twinkled. He played the guitar. When he sang, the sound was like the radio. It was round and sweet. He was not from America.

A dark-haired girl was next to him. She had curly waves down to her shoulders. She wore many bangles on her arm. She sang quietly. Her eyes were soft. Maybe she was in love. Maybe she was scared of the big city. The boy and the girl sang for money. They sang for each other. Stella saw them smile.

She thought about the boy and the girl for a long time.



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GEMMA OPEN DOOR FOR LITERACY

# SnapRead!

My name Stella Dakota. I am named for a movie star.  
I am named for the stars in the sky.

At home, I was just Stella. Here, people ask who I am.  
Are you Mexican? Are you Italian? What are you?  
Dad said we were a mixed breed.

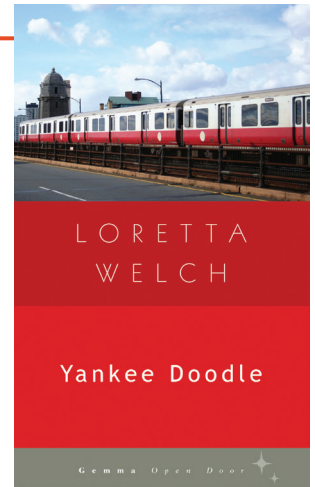
Everybody is from someplace else in Boston. I  
like that. They are like me!

I go to school at night. We introduced ourselves.  
Nobody wanted to start. The teacher made a  
game. She called your number. You said one word  
about you. I said "Kansas." Everybody called me  
Dorothy then.

Dorothy left Kansas in a movie. She looked for a  
wizard. The Wizard of Oz was big when I was small.  
Many things are strange in my new home. Some  
are good. Some are not so good. Look at the food.

Flatbread is delicious. You can buy one slice of  
pizza. Not the whole pie! Asian sandwiches have  
good sauce. But, I didn't know about the hot peppers.  
I learned the hard way.

Everybody comes from somewhere. We all  
wonder, "Do I fit in?"



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