

It was soft and thick, for Stella always used the best of yarn for her work. The crown of the cap was dark blue in colour, while red and white stripes adorned the rim, and a bunch of tassels hung jauntily from the top, which bobbed and danced merrily, as if playing hide and seek among the old man's snow white hair, to Stella's delight and amusement, as she watched through the kitchen window when he cut wood or shovelled the snow around the house and barn.

One cold, crisp morning towards the end of December, Stella Matutina awakened in an unusually happy frame of mind. She had an expectant feeling, as if something entirely out of the ordinary was pending. At first she attributed it to the thought of their approaching trip to the city, which hitherto had been the chief event of her young life, but she quickly put that thought aside, as she murmured to herself, I believe Cousin Zyra and children are coming today or tomorrow. Her door being open the brilliantly lighted kitchen and the warmth of her own room told her that her grandfather had risen some time before, and had gone to the barn.

Slipping out of bed, she dressed hurriedly said her prayers, and began preparing breakfast.

Her grandpa, too, seemed more cheerful than ever as he entered the house. He was fairly bursting with joy as he greeted her with his usual: "How is the star of my heart this beautiful morning?"

"Wonderful!" came the prompt answer, "I never was as happy in my life."