


The Home of Santa Claus

ERY, very long ago, in a far off country there lived in a small stone house by the side of a road leading to, and about six miles from a large city, an old man and his grand-child, a little girl named Stella. Stella always lived in that house. She was born there—her mother being the old man's daughter, whose husband had been killed in a great battle. Stella's mother grieved sorely over the loss of her husband, and though she lived for some years after his death, she never regained perfect health or happiness, and died when Stella was but ten years old, leaving the orphan to the care of her good and holy grandfather.

When Stella was christened her grandfather wished her to be named Stella Matutina, after the Morning Star—which he considered the most beautiful object in the whole world.

After the first pangs of their sorrow, for the dear mother and daughter had gradually worn away, Stella and her grandfather lived quite happy in their humble home.

They were rather comfortable, too. They owned a few acres of fertile land, which yielded sufficient fodder for their small stock (consisting of a cow, a pony, and a few hens), as well as several bushels of grain, chiefly oats