

# 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.”

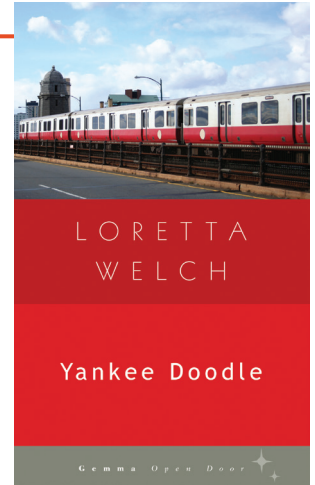
“Let me find my money, then.”

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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