

# **STELLA: A SKETCH**

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Stella: A Sketch by Nathaniel Gordon

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**NATHANIEL GORDON**

**STELLA:  
A SKETCH**





STILL THE GIRL LISTENED, THE NOTES FLOWED ON

# STELLA

A SKETCH

BY NATHANIEL GORDON

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To the Sunday School  
This Sketch is Inscribed





## STELLA

In the sunny shelter of a range of hills that lift their crests into mountains lies a wide farm.

Once its owner was a middle-aged man.

Father and grandfather had dwelt there before him, and by their hands had been set the long rows of saplings whose branches now overarched avenues of shade.

Perchance some fickle heart's idol, false to her faith, had embittered the youth of this holder of lands, for not until the noonday of life, after wanderings various beyond the seas, had he returned to make abode on the broad acres of childhood and chosen a helpmate to grace his home. The bride was an orphan of gentle birth, bringing no portion, bright with no gems, yet a dream of loveliness. But when, after the long, troublous hours of a certain night, to the sylph-like young consort her first-born had come, the vigilant old doctor who bent anxiously over her shook his head mournfully and looked away.

The curtain had been brushed aside from the win-

dow and the light of a morning star stole in. Did the sufferer think of that other star that once "stood over" the cradle of a babe? for, like the touch of an angel, a radiance illumined her languorous features, and she whispered:

"Call her Stella."

Then, with the little one's breath on her bosom, the mother slept.

Hours sped by, the star again shone down—the mother still slept. She had gone—to shine, perhaps as the star. But Stella lived. Day by day the child still thrived. No illness overtook her, no blight marred her bloom. The seasons chased each other away. A merry, rosy, romping little maiden was Stella. She frisked with the lambs and caroled with the birds; and when, at the close of a long summer day, the little girl would meander home from the fields, crowned with a chaplet of gay wild flowers, and climb upon her father's knee, the fond parent would listen delighted, as, flushed with health, his darling rehearsed her list of adventures, until at the very height of her prattle her eager eyes would suddenly droop, a shower of locks fall on his arm, and Innocence slept. Then the devout father would bow his head above the slumbering child and breathe thanks to God for this little Star.

The years glided by. The large part of these years Stella had spent on the farm, for she dearly loved the