



# The Signalman

*Charles Dickens , Scott Cohn (Illustrator)*

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## The Signalman Details

Date : Published September 1st 1998 by Wonder Publishing (first published 1866)

ISBN : 9780929605920

Author : Charles Dickens , Scott Cohn (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 56 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Classics, Horror, Fiction, Gothic, Fantasy, Paranormal

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## **From Reader Review The Signalman for online ebook**

### **Fred Shaw says**

Great ghost story. I was not aware of Dickens's ghost stories, but this one was referenced by the author of another book I am reading "The Highwayman" by Craig Johnson. I love a good ghost story, especially the old ones, and this one is scary. When I was little we lived across the street from a cemetery and could see it from my window. I never saw a ghost, but my cousin would scare the bejeebes out of me telling ghost stories as we lay in bed when he spent the night.

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### **Charlotte says**

This is a very short story that was written a year after Dickens was involved in an accident where a train derailed. He suffered badly physiologically from the events that happened and went on to write this story. It is also the last thing he wrote to completion before his death.

As it's so short (31 pages) it's hard to explain the story without giving the entire plot away but basically, the unnamed narrator has a fascination with trains and the signalman who works on the tracks so he decides to go and talk to him. There he learns that there's something very mysterious happening.

It was very creepy and unsettling and just continues to prove that Dickens is fantastic at writing the gothic.

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### **BooksTwins says**

Excelente, se me puso la piel de gallina y tuve escalofríos más de una vez!!  
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### **Ken says**

Such an effectively haunting ghost story, as a signal-man confides to the narrator that he is being haunted by an apparition warning him of an impending accident on the railway.

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### **Rosemary Atwell says**

I wonder if I'll ever read anything by Dickens that disappoints me! He really has a wonderful way of manipulating his reader's emotions and drawing them in to his tales which has, arguably, never been surpassed and this little Gothic charmer is no exception. A half-dozen pages long and subtitled 'To be Read at Dusk,' this is a classic miniature ghost story of dark prose and long shadows. Unsettling and masterful.

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## **karen says**

charles dickens wrote about one billion christmas stories; enough to populate both A Round of Stories by the Christmas Fire AND Another Round of Stories by the Christmas Fire, and doubtless more than are included there. big on christmas, that dickens was. and yet this story, originally published in a "special christmas issue" of *All the Year Round*, perversely has nothing to do with christmas at all; it is just an everyman/anyday ghost story. dickens was so punk rock he only wrote about christmas when *he* wanted to, on *his* terms. oi oi oi!

it's fine. it's about a man who decides that the local signalman is lonesome and barges into his little signalman box and then determines to visit him every day afterwards. which, were i the signalman, is an intrusion i would hate very much, but this signalman's got bigger problems than a presumptuous box-guest because ghooooooooosts!!! viiiiiisions!!! premoniiiiitions!!!

it's not scary, it's not shocking - it goes where you expect it's gonna go, but hey - it's christmas! you're half drunk on mulled wine and eggnog, watching the snow fall outside, wearing your new jammies and only half-listening to whomever is reading this aloud at your xmas eve ghost story gathering. plus, you don't want to get too scared, or you'll never get to sleep and santa won't come and bring you all the loot you earned being so good this year.

and you were very good this year. i noticed.

### **mission statement copied from my review for One Who Saw:**

this holiday season, i am going to read through 'seth's christmas ghost stories' line on biblioasis, and i encourage you to do the same. the books are so cute and tiny, you can stuff someone's stocking or dreidel with 'em! the cover art and interior illustrations are by seth, and they are seasonally spooooooky, blending the spirit of halloween with christmas cheer the way nature, and jack skellington, intended.

three more to go!

come to my blog!

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## **Sidharth Vardhan says**

I think the chances of my liking Dickens' works is in reverse proportion of their length.

Read it here:

<http://www.pagebypagebooks.com/Charle...>

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## Althea Ann says

(1866) I believe I read this one years ago... it seemed familiar.

Out for a stroll, a man decides on a whim to strike up a conversation with the railroad-worker he encounters. The signal-man seems intelligent and interesting - but something is clearly bothering him. When he starts talking about strange spectres and phantom bells, his new acquaintance begins to seriously consider trying to get him to seek help.

However, there may be more to the eerie manifestations the signal-man reported than those of a more scientific bent would have credited...

Nicely creepy, classic ghost story.

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## Brian says

I'm still adapting to Dicken's language. This story gives a deep, sinking scare in the gut. A man working on train tracks sees a ghost waving and people start dying. The narrator listens to the man's story and confession he saw the ghost a few hours before. Who will die next?

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## Eryn says

I'm a fan of Charles Dickens, but this short story just didn't do it for me. Definitely not his best writing and storytelling.

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## Quirkyreader says

I think this was one of the creepers written for the holiday season.

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## Empress Reece (Hooked on Books) says

"A Ghost Story for Christmas"- **2.5 stars...**

Introduction Excerpt:

*"The telling or reading of ghost stories during long, dark and cold Christmas nights is a yuletide ritual which dates to at least the eighteenth century, and was once as much a part of Christmas tradition as decorating fir trees, feasting on goose and the singing of carols. During the Victorian era many magazines printed ghost stories specifically for the Christmas season. These "winter tales" did not necessarily explore Christmas themes in any manner. Rather, they were offered as an eerie pleasure to be enjoyed on Christmas eve with the family, adding a supernatural shiver to the seasonal chill. This tradition remained strong in the*

*British Isles (and her colonies) throughout much of the twentieth century, though in recent years it has been on the wane. Certainly few in North America-in Canada or the United States-seem to know about it any longer. This series of small books seeks to rectify this, to revive a charming custom for the long dark nights we all know so well here at Christmas time."*

*The Signalman* is a short ghost story written by Charles Dickens...When a guest at a nearby hotel is out taking a stroll, he comes upon a signalman working at a train tunnel. They start talking and the signalman tells him that he has encountered a ghost several times warning him of dangers on the tracks and each time something has happened. He's worried because he just saw the ghost again while the man was visiting him and he's at a loss at what to do and hopes the man can help him.

The story is written in the old style language so it took me a couple of paragraphs to get use to it but once I did the style didn't bother me too much. As for the plot, it started out great and the story was very atmospheric but then the ending just fell completely flat. Even after reading the last paragraph several times, I'm not sure that I even actually understood it. It really had the potential though to be a nice little ghost story but unfortunately the ending wasn't very satisfying. It's not something I would recommend to anyone on the hunt for a good ghost story.

\*I received this ARC from Consortium Book Sales & Distribution and Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!

\*\*I read this for my 2016 Halloween Book Bingo: ~**Ghost Stories & Haunted Houses**~ square

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## **Davonna Juroe says**

Great ghost story written by Charles Dickens in 1866 revolving around a railway signalman. The signalman repeatedly sees a ghost who warns him of impending railroad accidents, including one that the signalman will play a part in. Chilling tale with an ironic twist ending. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Nobody does it like Dickens.

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## **Brina says**

The Reading for Pleasure book club has an annual Read Dickens at the Holidays challenge. As I am in crunch time to meet reading goals for the year and still wanted to participate, I selected *The Signalman*, which is at most 15 pages in text. The version I chose, which was part of the anthology *Classic Ghost Stories* by Dickens and Others, was only 13 pages long; hence, my reason for choosing a kindle edition of this story because it most closely fits the pages read number of the story I read. So, I still got to participate in the challenge, and reading this story so short, I got a pining to read even more Dickens next year, after reading *A Christmas Carol* earlier this month.

At first glance, this story is not a holiday story. It is by all means a spooky, paranormal, ghost story which I try to stay away from or I will get nightmares. Reading the descriptions of most editions, we find out that in

Dickens time it was a tradition to read a ghost story on Christmas Eve. Perhaps, this was his impetus for creating his three ghosts in A Christmas Carol in the first place. Here, we have an experienced railroad signalman who is plagued by visitations by supernatural beings. They flash red lights, give warnings of impending doom as well as visions of dead bodies, and scare the wits out of him. It gets to the point where he needs a companion to keep him company on his night shift so as not to risk getting too spooked to complete his nightly work shift.

This story, even in the longest editions, can be read in mere minutes. It is definitely spooky and does not offer a holiday feel at all. Yet, it does speak to the depth of Dickens' story telling ability as most of his stories focus on the ills of London society, so this was out of the norm, at least in comparison to the classics that most readers are familiar with. Do read The Signalman, especially if you enjoy scary stories. And do check out The Reading for Pleasure Book Club. Aside from offering this Dickens challenge, of which I may add another story to my repertoire, it is the most friendly, diverse, and non stressful place on Goodreads. It is well worth a look. Wishing everyone a happy holiday, whichever one you may observe, season.

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### **Zuky the BookBum says**

I've never read a Dicken's novel before, I always felt like I would come out of them dumbfounded... his writing seems too intellectual and educational for my little brain. But, this is just a ghost story, so it was easy enough to get on with!

Yes, I enjoyed this, but it wasn't my favourite short story. A classic old school ghost story, but it could have been so much creepier than it was, so that let me down. There is a slight pang of shock at the tail end of this short, but it's nothing to write home about.

What's most interesting, to me, about this book, is the fact that it's been pulled out of a personal tragedy of Dicken's.

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