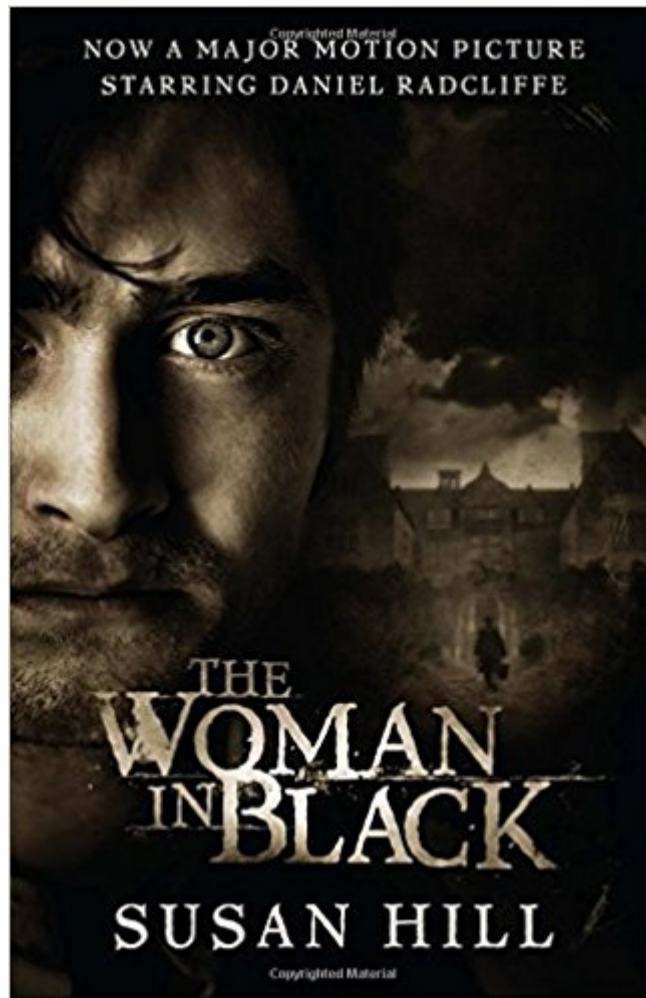




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The Woman In Black: A Ghost Story



Synopsis

The classic ghost story from the author of *The Mist in the Mirror*: a chilling tale about a menacing spectre haunting a small English town. Now a major motion picture starring Daniel Radcliffe. Arthur Kipps is an up-and-coming London solicitor who is sent to Crythin Gifford – a faraway town in the windswept salt marshes beyond Nine Lives Causeway – to attend the funeral and settle the affairs of a client, Mrs. Alice Drablow of Eel Marsh House. Mrs. Drablow's house stands at the end of the causeway, wreathed in fog and mystery, but Kipps is unaware of the tragic secrets that lie hidden behind its sheltered windows. The routine business trip he anticipated quickly takes a horrifying turn when he finds himself haunted by a series of mysterious sounds and images – a rocking chair in a deserted nursery, the eerie sound of a pony and trap, a child's scream in the fog, and, most terrifying of all, a ghostly woman dressed all in black. Psychologically terrifying and deliciously eerie, *The Woman in Black* is a remarkable thriller of the first rate.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A rattling good yarn, the sort that chills the mind as well as the spine." --The Guardian
"Excellent. . . . magnificently eerie. . . . compulsive reading." --Evening Standard
"The most brilliantly effective spine chiller you will ever encounter." --The Daily Telegraph
"[A] highly efficient chiller. . . . Nerve shredding." --The Daily Express

Susan Hill has been a professional writer for over fifty years. Her books have won the Whitbread, the John Llewellyn Prize, and the W. Somerset Maugham Award, and have been shortlisted for the Booker Prize. Her novels include *A Strange Meeting*, *I'm the King of the Castle* and *A Kind Man*, and she has also published collections of short stories and two autobiographies. Her ghost story, *The Woman in Black*, has been running in London's West End since 1988. Susan is married with two adult daughters and lives in North Norfolk.

I bought this after seeing the movie starring Daniel Radcliffe. I wanted to see what the director and scriptwriters had started with. I was astonished. This book could have been written in the mid-20th century, or much earlier. The style is very gothic and dark, and -- in some ways -- a throwback to the 19th century. I liked it. In fact, I liked it better than the movie, though the film was extremely stylish and Daniel Radcliffe did a remarkable job with a role involving little dialogue. The book is a different story. It contains similar elements, and shares a lot of plot elements with the movie, but... it's a different story with a different outcome. If you're a fan of gothic novels by Mary Stewart, Victoria Holt, Phyllis A. Whitney, and so on, you'll probably like this book, too. It doesn't have the romance of those authors, but the darkness and suspense are definitely in the same genre. This story is told in the first person, with considerable style. Some sentences run on forever. Others are clipped short. The emotions are conveyed as much by the words as the writing style itself. This book isn't for everyone. If you hate, say, Dickens or novels by the Brontes, this may not be your cup of tea. Otherwise, if you like dark tales and sweeping gothic suspense, this is a good choice.

Though apparently this was first published in 1983, it's written in the style of a late-nineteenth-century novel. This isn't necessarily a good thing. At times I felt I was wading through an over-complicated story. The story is atmospheric; it's easy to feel that you are shut in to this old house along with the characters. I liked the little dog, and was impressed that he wasn't killed off just because that's a popular thing to do in spooky stories. At times I found the lead character rather obtuse. Not a bad book, and smoother reading than novels that really ARE nineteenth-century publications, but if you lack patience with that sort of writing, you may want to just settle for watching the movie.

After seeing the movie, I bought the book to see how it compared. In this rare instance, I have to say that the movie was an improvement on the book. The premise is of course the same. An

apprentice attorney is sent to Crythin Gifford, a black and dreary town, to settle the affairs of a deceased client named Alice Drablow. Mrs. Drablow was the resident of a large, dark, bleak house named Eel Marsh House. The only way to get to it is via a drive that ends up covered under several feet of water, effectively stranding anyone at the home from the rest of the world. Arthur Kipps, the young attorney, thinks that this will be an easy business trip. He knows little of the stories or mysteries surrounding Eel Marsh House, and is ill prepared for the increasingly eerie events he experiences while working on the vast piles of paperwork Mrs. Drablow left behind. He befriends a local man, Samuel Daily, a seemingly jovial local who becomes entangled in the goings-on at Eel Marsh House as well. Books like this are a hard review to write. How can I give enough details to hook potential readers without giving away the best parts of the book? Though I did like the movie better than the book, the book was still a taut read. When left up to the imagination, the Woman in Black is creepier when left up to the imagination than what was shown in the movie. I was able to give myself a few whopper nightmares thanks to the extra creepies I added to the Woman in Black. Most of the heebie-jeebies you get from reading will come from your own mind, which I love in a book. And if you enjoy this book, another like this is House on Haunted Hill.

Susan Hill writes about an unwed mother in the late 19th Century, forced to give up her child to adoption. The father refuses to marry her and bolts. She gets her childless married sister to adopt the baby as her own. She moves to the nearest village to be able to visit him. Her sister agrees on condition she never reveals her true relationship to the boy. The 6-year old child drowns in the marshes as she watches from his nursery window. She is horrified, angry and crushed. She rages at an unfair society and cruel fate. She suffers a wasting disease for another 12 years before dying heartbroken. Her soul returns to avenge her wrongs, by taking the children of other mothers. Susan was writing in the mid-1980s when the Thatcher government was promoting a quasi-Victorian Puritan ethic. By reversing the pain, she holds a mirror up to a censorious society, to reflect on its unthinking cruelty to unwed women.

Simply Amazing. I really liked this story for it's always casting like that gloom of terror over you. It is so well written that you feel like you live in that old mansion and you feel the despair of the main character. The ending is really good, when you think everything is over. So much better than the movie. I just could not put it down.

Well, I myself did not read this book. I ordered it and had it sent to my best friend that is an inmate at

Mabel Bassett Correctional Center in McLoud Oklahoma. She called me after she read it and said she loved it. "Very spooky" she told me. My friend said she loved the ending. She said she always has dreams at night but hasn't had a nightmare dream for many years until she read this book, and this is coming from a person that is living a hellish life in a woman's prison.

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