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LEVEL 3

PENGUIN ACTIVE READING

Six Ghost Stories

S. H. Burton





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What's the book about?

- Look at the picture on the front cover of this book.
 - Where does this story take place?
 - What is happening?
- Make sentences that are true for you. Then explain your answers to another student.
 - I *believe / don't believe* in ghosts.
 - I *have / have never* seen a ghost.
 - I *have / have never* heard a ghost.
 - I *know someone / don't know anyone* who has seen a ghost.
 - If I ever see a ghost, I will *laugh / scream*.
- Look at these pictures of ghosts. Which is most like your idea of a ghost? Tick (✓) one.



1.2 What happens first?

- The first story is called 'Room 7'. Read the words in *italics* and look at the picture on page 1. Tick (✓) the best answers.
 - Where is Room 7, do you think?

<input type="checkbox"/> In a hotel.	<input type="checkbox"/> In a school.	<input type="checkbox"/> In a hospital.
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 - Is the man in the car

<input type="checkbox"/> going to have an accident?	<input type="checkbox"/> going to see a ghost?	<input type="checkbox"/> a ghost?
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- What will be in Room 7, do you think? Write your ideas.

Room 7

*I closed my eyes tightly. I didn't feel afraid. Not then. Fear came later.
No, I wasn't afraid; but I wanted to think ...*

Perhaps you don't believe in **ghosts**. I'm not sure that I believe in them. I'm not sure that I saw a ghost that night. But if I didn't see a ghost, what did I see?

I was returning from a business trip to the north. I lived near London then. It was winter. The roads were covered with ice, and I had to drive slowly and carefully. I was still a long way from home when it got dark. Then my car lights began to fail. It was too dangerous to stay on the main road. I turned off into a quiet country road.

After a few kilometres I saw a road sign – *Millham*. Five minutes later I was driving along a narrow street. There were a few shops with bright lights, and I could see a garage at the end of the street. I stopped there and explained my problem. The man looked at my car lights.



ghost /gəʊst/ (n) a dead person who has returned to Earth. Some people believe that you can see *ghosts*.

'I'll repair them in the morning,' he said.

'Is there a hotel in Millham?' I asked.

'There's The Goat at the top of the street,' he said. 'We don't have many visitors in Millham in the winter. Tell Mr Richards I sent you. He'll look after you.'

I thanked him and took my suitcase out of the car. Then I walked back up the street to The Goat. It was an old building. The hotel office was just inside the front door. A big man came through another door at the back of the office and smiled at me in a friendly way.

'Mr Richards?' I asked.

'Yes,' he answered. 'Can I help you?'

I explained that my car was at the garage. 'I need a meal and a room for the night,' I said.

'The meal isn't a problem,' he said. 'Dinner will be ready in an hour. But this is a small hotel. We've only got six bedrooms, and they're all full.'

The door opened again, and a little woman walked quickly into the room.

'This is my wife,' Richards explained. He turned to her and said, 'I was telling our visitor that we're full tonight, Liz. His car's at the garage, and he wants dinner and a bed for the night.'

'There's Room 7, Tom,' she said.

'But we don't ...' he began.

'We can't send him away on a night like this,' his wife said. 'I'll make the bed in Room 7.'

'I'm giving you trouble, I'm afraid,' I said.

'It's no trouble, Mr ...?'

'Saunders,' I said. 'I'm John Saunders.'

'It's no trouble, Mr Saunders. We don't use Room 7 much. There's nothing wrong with it.' She gave her husband a look when she said that. He didn't reply.

Room 7 was on the top floor, above the other bedrooms. It felt quite cold, but there was an electric fire.

'It will soon get warm,' I thought. 'And it's beautifully quiet up here. I'll sleep well tonight.'

It wasn't a big room. There was a bed, a cupboard, and a **washbasin** behind the door. Between the washbasin and the cupboard was a big, straight-backed chair.

I washed, and then went down to dinner. I enjoyed my meal and then I went to the bar. I talked to Richards and some of his friends until I began to feel sleepy.

washbasin /'wɒʃ,beɪsɪn/ (n) a large bowl in a bathroom. You use it for washing your face and hands.

‘I think I’ll go up to bed now,’ I said.

‘Goodnight, then, Mr Saunders,’ Richards said. ‘I hope you’ll be comfortable. Sleep well!’

I don’t know how long I slept. Something woke me. It wasn’t a noise. The bedroom was quiet, but something strange was happening. The light on my bedside table wasn’t on, but part of the room was slowly becoming light. My bed was in the dark. I couldn’t see the cupboard or the washbasin, but I could see the big chair. I could see its seat, its arms, its legs and its tall, straight back. It was shining at me out of the dark.

I closed my eyes tightly. I didn’t feel afraid. Not then. Fear came later. No, I wasn’t afraid; but I wanted to think and to shut out that strange light.



Six Ghost Stories

S. H. Burton

British English

Original

What is the secret of Room 7? Why do the Frobishers feel so uncomfortable with their young visitor? Why is Roger Wingate afraid to drive his new car? And is the old woman at Number 91 really waiting for a birthday card that never comes? The answers to these questions are in the stories in this book. Will you sleep well after you finish them?

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