

Fifty-Cent Piece

A New York Ghost Story retold by S. E. Schlosser

Narrators 1-6, Husband, Owner

Narrator 1: There is a story told in Troy and Albany about a couple returning home from a trip to New England.

Narrator 2: They were driving home in a carriage, and were somewhere near Spieglestown when the light failed and they knew they would have to seek shelter for the night.

Narrator 3: The husband spied a light through the trees and turned their horse into a small lane leading up a hill. A pleasant little house stood at the crest, and an old man and his wife met the couple at the door.

Narrator 4: They were in nightclothes and were obviously about to turn in, but they welcomed the travelers and offered them a room.

Narrator 5: The old woman bustled about making tea and offering freshly-baked cakes. Then the travelers were shown to their room.

Narrator 6: The husband wanted to pay the old couple for their lodgings, but the old lady shook her head and the old man refused any payment for such a small service to their fellow New Yorkers.

Narrator 1: The travelers awoke early and tiptoed out of the house, leaving a shiny fifty-cent coin in the center of the kitchen table where the old couple could not miss it.

Narrator 2: The husband hitched up the horse and they went a few miles before they broke their fast at a little restaurant in Spieglestown.

Narrator 3: The husband mention the nice old couple to the owner of the restaurant and the man turned pale.

Owner: Where did you say that house was?

Narrator 4: The husband described the location in detail.

Owner: You must be mistaken. That house was destroyed three years ago by a fire that killed the Brown family.

Husband: I don't believe it,

Narrator 5: the husband said flatly.

Husband: Mr. and Mrs. Brown were alive and well last night.

Narrator 6: After debating for a few more minutes, the couple and the restaurant owner drove the carriage back out of town towards the old Brown place.

Narrator 1: They turned into the lane, which was overgrown with weeds, and climbed the hill to the crest.

Narrator 2: There they found a burned out shell of a house that had obviously not sheltered anyone for a long time.

Husband: I must have missed the track.

Narrator 3: And then his wife gave a terrified scream and fainted into his arms.

Narrator 4: As he caught her, the husband looked into the ruin and saw a burnt table with a shiny fifty-cent piece lying in the center.

Scripted by Chase Young