



The Beckoning Fair One

Oliver Onions

Download now

Read Online ➞

The Beckoning Fair One

Oliver Onions

The Beckoning Fair One Oliver Onions

"Miles ahead of the average ghost-story" — *Sunday Times*. A novelist retreats to an abandoned house in the heart of London, where he becomes enthralled by an 18th-century spirit — and where his contact with the outside world gradually diminishes. Acclaimed by such masters as Lovecraft as one of the best ghost stories in the English language.

The Beckoning Fair One Details

Date : Published August 30th 2004 by Dover Publications (first published 1911)

ISBN : 9780486436470

Author : Oliver Onions

Format : Paperback 96 pages

Genre : Horror, Fiction, Classics, Gothic, Paranormal, Ghosts, Short Stories, Ghost Stories, Gothic Horror

 [Download The Beckoning Fair One ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Beckoning Fair One ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Beckoning Fair One Oliver Onions

From Reader Review The Beckoning Fair One for online ebook

Holly Cagney says

I decided to read this novella because of a painting I own. It was given to me by my father, and it previously belonged to my great-grandmother. She'd been given this strange painting of a woman by an artist friend, and on the back it has the title *The Beckoning Fair One*. I wanted to find out more about the painting so I Googled it and found this story. It's quite an intriguing read, full of suspense that kept me up half the night wanting to see how it ended.

Johnny Waco says

This 1911 ghost story is an impressive example of suggestion and atmosphere, as a struggling novelist, Paul Oleron, rents a floor of a dilapidated house and is slowly seduced by something ghostly. Onions unfolds the story languidly, beginning with incidents that could just as easily be Oleron's imagination as a supernatural presence: an ancient melody he can't stop humming, a visitor scratched by a nail he swore he removed. Uncovering the hidden, nailed-down window boxes gives us our first clue about the spectral inhabitant--Oleron finds a large, strangely-shaped piece of soft cloth, and after puzzling over it for awhile, discovers it is a harp cover. This hint that the presence is feminine continues to be reinforced, when Oleron hears hair being brushed, feels a strong desire to bring flowers to his house every day, and learns that the melody he can't get out of his head is called "*The Beckoning Fair One*." His seduction continues when his only female friend suffers several accidents in his house, and Oleron comes to believe that his ghost is jealous of her. Like many ghost stories, it is possible to read large sections of *The Beckoning Fair One* as perception rather than reality--Oleron may be cracking under the strain of his deadlines and years of financial pressures--but the horrific ending makes this line of thinking more difficult to argue.

Annalisa says

Una ghost-story ritenuta tra le più suggestive, "*La bella Incantatrice*" di Oliver Onion, pochissimo conosciuto in Italia, tradotto solo nell'ambito di alcune raccolte dedicate alla Ghost Story e di genere.

La lettura di questo romanzo breve (o racconto lungo) è davvero seducente, alla maniera Edith Wharton le presenze non sono quasi mai manifeste, sono "suggerite", accennate, ma non per questo meno terrorizzanti.

JoAnn says

Odd, yet compelling.

M says

This is not a story where ghosts pop out of the dark shadows and people scream. It is a story of obsession,

possession and the sheer terror of losing everything to an unknown force. Short and brilliant. Why it is not better known, amazes me. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

Althea Ann says

What really makes this story is how what's terrifying about the ghost is how its influence affects the mind and moods of the characters... Over and above shadows and bumps in the night, it's the depression and despair that accompany its presence.

A writer rents out a suite in a decrepit and long-empty home. Sinking his savings into renovations, he's eager to show the apartment off to his lady-friend, whom he anticipates will be delighted by what he's done with the old place. However, her reaction is quite the opposite. Even though everything is freshly painted and lovely, she hates it. Moreover, she seems terribly prone to accidents whenever she comes to visit. Meanwhile, the tenant can't seem to get a lick of work accomplished there, and the more he tries to buckle down and get his latest novel written, the more he seems convinced that it's no good, and that he's a failure.

And that's just the beginning of the horror...

(Just as a note, I think what really brought this up to 5 stars for me is the character of Elsie [the friend of the narrator]. She's just so bold and real - 'substantial' in more ways than one. She's one that's going to stick with me.)

(a re-read)

Julie Davis says

I can't believe I never reviewed this novella. I read it on Forgotten Classics in three parts as it is rather long.

We will be discussing it on SFFaudio where Jesse very kindly put all the pieces together into one complete audiobook for those who want to listen before hearing our discussion.

Many people complain of this being a slow, meandering tale but I found this explained by the author's own forward which explains his approach to the ghost story. These are just a few snippets but I hope they convey his overall meaning:

Ghosts, it is advanced, either do not exist at all, or else, like the stars at noonday, they are there all the time and it is we who cannot see them. The stories in the following pages were written on the second of these assumptions. ...

... I myself have never been able to understand why the unvarying question should be, "Have you ever seen a ghost?" when, if a ghost cannot exist apart from visibility, his being rests solely on the testimony of one sense, and that in some respects the most fallible one of all. May not his proximity be felt and his nature apprehended in other ways? I have it on excellent authority that such a visitor can in fact be heard breathing in the room, most powerfully smelt, and known for a spirit in travail longing for consolation, all at one and the same time, and yet not be seen by the eye. ...

For these reasons I claim that the tales that follow all range themselves somewhere between the ultra-violet and the infra-red of the ghostly spectrum. ...

I found this story did a wonderful job of introducing that uncertainty of whether there are ghosts or whether we are at the mercy of an unreliable narrator, much like *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James.

mark monday says

A chilling novella about a writer's move into a flat and his quick descent into lunacy. I can see why this classic is still being recommended today: it set the table for many such stories to come, and yet doesn't feel dated or overly familiar. Onions is a splendid writer: he gets right into his protagonist's head and so we descend right alongside him, following his increasingly deranged thought process and disastrous life decisions. The storytelling is never stilted and - despite its eventual cruelty - the storyteller has a lot of empathy for his two main characters.

The sound of the ghost brushing her hair was pretty freaky. The image of our unhinged protagonist standing for hours in just the right spot in the hallway - the spot that allows him to see into all five of his rooms at once - was even freakier. And the long sequence where the writer decides he's going to carefully ignore the ghost *because that's the best way to get a lady's attention* was the freakiest thing of all. There's plenty more unnerving bits of horror, but the main thing I took away from this was how sorry I felt for the sad, pretentious Oleron. The ghost in this story doesn't just influence his mood, it takes away his affection for the one woman who appreciates him and, just as terribly, it destroys his personal ambitions. He begins to see his flat as his special hidey hole, a place of heady scents and romantic contemplation; the reader begins to see the starkness of his rooms and halls as a mirror reflecting an empty life and an even emptier future.

I was impressed by Onions' portrait of the brave love interest, who is atypical for her time period. Stout and sensible (although eccentric in her couture, and yay for that too); devoted to the hero but never in a clinging or pathetic way; a career girl during a time when such things were considered pretty radical... she's a striking creation. Although she suffers **WATCH OUT HERE COMES A SPOILER** an early version of the dreaded Woman in Refrigerator trope, she's an admirably well-developed character up until then.

Sirensongs says

It seems as if there is somewhat of a gap in my experience of ghost stories if it has taken me this long to finally read this classic by Oliver Onions. Better late than never, however, and I must say it is one of the finest spectral tales that I have ever read! It contained all the elements that I find most enticing in a ghost stories: a tortured artist, obsession, madness, unrequited love and passion, the subtlest hints of lust, ambiguity... I truly found this to be a masterpiece of this particular literary form. What a treat! I look forward to further exploring the oeuvre of Mr. Onions!

Laura Garner says

My favorite ghost story of all time. Subtle yet terrifying, in a Victorian way. And the idea of a man (or woman) preferring some romanticized, probably non-existent ideal over a real, solid, flawed woman (or man) ... I'd call that a timeless theme.

Michael Adams says

Well written short horror / ghost story. Follows the final days of a frustrated novelist and his unrequited love to a rather grim and ambiguous ending. The troubles begin upon moving into new lodgings, a dilapidated old house, one with a curious, haunted, or even accursed history. As with many such tales, events begin playing out in a cyclical manner, history repeating itself, and we are led inexorably to a murky and dark conclusion. A few tricks with an unreliable narrator are played, leaving us with some doubt as to the exact nature of the ending, but we are able to glean enough to be chilled by the outcome.

Randy Money says

One of the great early 20th century ghost stories, on a par with anything written by M. R. James, and arguably creepier than The Turn of the Screw. A man rents a room and begins to hear things, not least the combing of someone's hair ...

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

Hmm. I didn't enjoy this story that much. I can see why it's influential and respected as a ghost story. But, it's not my cup of tea. I think that the malevolent ghost aspect is interesting and appreciated, but I didn't care much for the execution, or the ending. I can see how this motif has been used in latter works. Definitely respect Oliver Onions for that. I also respect him for having such a dark aspect to this story.

Let's be real here. I like upbeat endings. I can enjoy some books that end negatively, but I didn't like this ending. I felt bad for Elsie. She genuinely cared about Paul. I wanted her to kick some ghost you know what. And Paul, well he just seemed to give up the ghost (no pun intended) and let the spirit suck him dry, practically. Nope, I didn't like that.

My other problem was how long and meandering it was. That doesn't tend to be my favorite kind of writing. I didn't think that Mr. Onions did much to build up the tension. It was awful vague, more suggestive and 'is it really happening or is Paul Oleron off his rocker?' But we know that's not the case.

Again, I can see why this is well-respected, and it was a pretty good story. Just not my thing. I feel so bad for poor Paul and Elsie. What a downer--and no good scare with it. Bah!!!

Suzy Nash says

This is perhaps the scariest haunted house story I have ever read.

Latasha says

I listened to a Librivox recording for this story. the reader did very well. the story started out so slow. i didn't think it picked up until desperate friend started getting hurt then it slowed back down. overall it was ok. it could have been A LOT shorter, though.
