

Extract from The Signalman

by Charles Dickens

A DailyStep EasyReader adapted by Brendan O'Connell

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Hello! Hello down there!

"Hello! Hello down there!"

When he first heard^[1] me shouting^[2] down to him, he was standing^[3] at the door of his signal box^[4] with a signal flag^[5] in his hand. But he did not look up to the top of the cutting^[6] where I was standing. Instead he looked down the railway line.

This seemed a little bit strange but at the time I could not think why. I was high above him

looking down into the deep cutting and I had to cover my eyes because the light from the evening sunset^[7] was very strong.

"Hello down there" I shouted^[8] again.

He stopped looking down the railway track,^[9] then he turned and looked up at me.

"How can I get down there? Is there a path^[10] or some steps? I need to speak to you."

Notes:

1. heard (*'heard' is the past simple tense of the irregular verb 'to hear' : hear, heard, heard*)
2. shouting = speaking in a very loud voice
3. he was standing (*'was standing' is the past continuous tense of the irregular verb 'to stand': stand, stood, stood*)

4. signal box = small hut or building beside a railway line (which is used for changing the signals in order to communicate with the train drivers.)
5. flag = a coloured piece of material attached to a wooden pole (here, the flag is used for signalling to the train driver, but often a flag is the national emblem of a country.)
6. cutting = railway cutting (a deep man-made valley that is cut into the ground when a railway is built.)
7. sunset = the last light of the sun before the end of the day
8. shouted = yelled / said in a very loud voice
9. the railway track = the railway line (the track consists of metal rails supported on pieces of wood or concrete, called 'sleepers'.)
10. a path = a walkway (a route that people walk along)