



The Summer People

Shirley Jackson

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'The Summer People' is a rather creepy and mysterious short story by author Shirley Jackson. A New York City couple encounter sinister resistance when they decide to stay at their summer cottage past Labor Day.

The Summer People Details

Date : Published 1970 by Dramatic Publishing (first published January 1st 1950)

ISBN : 0871293625

Author : Shirley Jackson

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Jay C says

The third story I've read by Shirley Jackson, and all three have been superb. This one has really gotten me thinking about how well we really know the "worlds" with which we believe ourselves familiar, and how infused our own vision of them might be depending on the specifics of season or time of day...

A couple from new york spend their summers at a country house on a lake. One year, despite the incredulity of their seasonal neighbors, they decide to stay an extra month ("past Labor Day") and find that their 'summer eden' can be a very, very different place.

Skylar Phelps says

3.5 Stars

Yeah, I'm mildly suspicious of my neighbors now...

and I live on a lane surrounded by family in the country. I guess I better stock up on kerosene, just in case.

Laura says

The ending definitely sneaks up on you. This is a very short story, with really no suspicions or feelings of dread until nearly the end.

Mostly about an older couple who decide to stay a month longer after their summer vacation and everyone in town is surprised because NO ONE stays after.

It does finish with the kinda ending that could be interpreted as mildly annoying (small issues like groceries can't be delivered, out of gas, car busted, phone problems) or could be interpreted as much more sinister (car tampered with, phone lines cut, letter from son is not what it seems)... Given Jackson wrote it, and her frequent theme of people being untrustworthy/generally sinister, the latter is the more likely.

The great thing about Jackson is her skill in portraying subtle suspense. In this story the reader is mostly waiting for something to happen and then it kiiiiinda does and then it's over. I can definitely see that being disappointing for most readers but I still like the skillfull way Jackson incorporates subtle dread.

Flavia says

Breve racconto d'atmosfera...angosciante.

cindy says

what happened to them after that? whaaatttt?!!?

aaargggghhh..... mrs jackson, you are messing with my head again!! (-_-)

Yovano N. says

Kota yang nyaman dikunjungi, ditambah penduduk yang ramah, pasti mampu membuat betah. Tapi setika kamu memutuskan untuk tinggal lebih lama, mereka mulai menunjukkan keanehan. Mereka suka kunjunganmu, tapi tak ingin kau tinggal di sana. Hahahaha. Creepy.

Camila Rodríguez Q says

great

Olga Kowalska (WielkiBuk) says

One of those stories that makes reader freaked out with fear when there is nothing that obvious to fear really. Or maybe there is... Creeping and closing, waiting for the perfect moment to attack.

Erika says

Yeah, yeah I know what happened, but I really want to **KNOW** what happened.

Also, makes **bolded** and *italicized* note in calendar when Labor Day is.

Zoe says

I read it after Labor Day

Asha says

Jackson is master of the short and creepy. Everything is not what it seems at the lake and staying after Labor

Day comes with consequences. What those consequences are depends on how vivid and morbid your imagination is.

Maria Fernanda Gama says

Definitely one of her best short stories. I think I'll wonder about the ending for a really long time.

P.S. I just realized that today is labor day in the US and now I'm extra scared :|

Lianna says

I like to think the story ends with the townspeople throwing the old couple a surprise party and then their children show up too. Apple pie for everyone!

Or maybe the townspeople really want to wear white after Labor Day and not get made fun of by high-falutin' city folk.

Rebecca McNutt says

This was just downright sinister, plain and simple. You know something insidious is creeping just beneath the pages, and yet it doesn't really hit you until it's too late. What the hell happened to that poor New Yorker couple?

Samantha says

Lesson Learned: Once Labor Day rolls around, don't stay in your summer cottage. You'll regret it.
