

The signalman

"What is the matter?" I asked the men.

"Signalman killed this morning, sir".

"Not the man belonging to that box?"

"Yes, sir."

"Not the man I know?"

"You will recognize him, sir, if you knew him", said the man who spoke for the others, solemnly uncovering his own head, and raising an end of the tarpaulin, "for his face is quite composed."

"Oh, how did this happen, how did this happen?" I asked, turning from one to another as the hut closed in again.

"He was cut down by an engine, sir. No man in England knew his work better. But somehow he was not clear of the outer rail. It was just at broad day. He had struck the light, and had the lamp in his hand. As the engine came out of the tunnel his back was towards her, and she cut him down. That man drove her, and was showing how it happened. Show the gentleman, Tom."

The man, who wore a rough dark dress, stepped back to his former place at the mouth of the tunnel.

"Coming round the curve in the tunnel, sir," he said, "I saw him at the end, like as if I saw him down a perspective glass. There was no time to check speed, and I knew him to be very careful. As he didn't seem to take heed of the whistle, I shut it off when we were running down upon him, and called to him as loud as I could call."

The signalman.
Charles Dickens.

QUESTIONS

1. Was the signalman a careful man?
2. Why couldn't he see the engine?
3. What was the machine driver wearing?
4. Tell the story in five or six lines.
5. Write the following sentences in the indirect speech with the introducing verb in the past.
 - a. How did this happen?
 - b. He was cut down by an engine, sir.
 - c. I saw him at the end, like as if I saw him down a perspective glass.
6. Vocabulary.

Box:	Hut:
Engine:	Step back:
Whistle:	