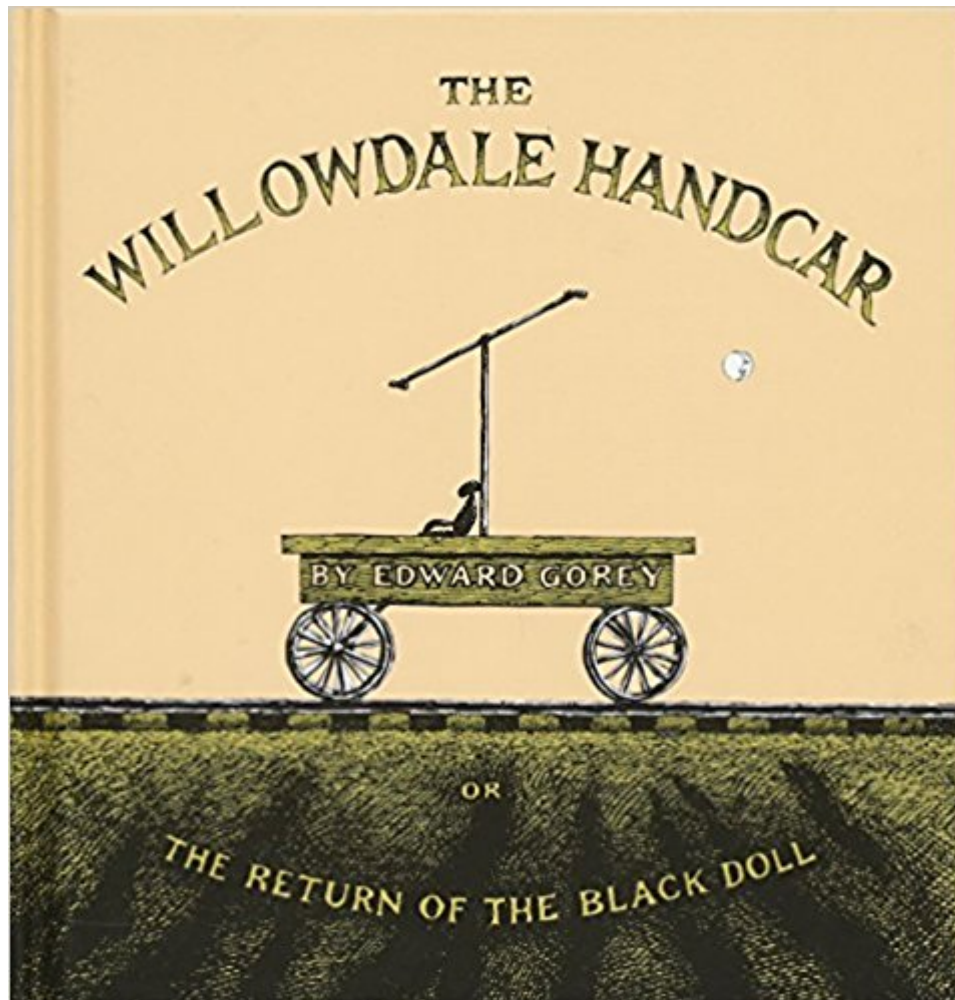




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# The Willowdale Handcar: Or The Return Of The Black Doll



## Synopsis

In this enigmatic, surreal, wonderfully entertaining tale, three mysterious figures set out from Willowdale, traveling by handcar. On the way to nowhere in particular they pass a number of odd characters and observe a series of baffling phenomena, from a house burning down in a field to a palatial mansion perched precariously on a bluff. At once deeply vexing and utterly hilarious, darkly mysterious and amusingly absurd, *The Willowdale Handcar* is vintage Edward Gorey.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt; 1 edition (October 6, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0151010358

ISBN-13: 978-0151010356

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.4 x 6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #281,701 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Art of Comics and Manga](#) #107 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Drawing > Pen & Ink](#) #291 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Drawing > Cartooning](#)

## Customer Reviews

PRAISE FOR EDWARD GOREY "Dark masterpieces of surreal morality . . . beautifully depicted." -Vanity Fair "A master of a genre of graphic storytelling [and] a brilliant draftsman." -The New York Times Book Review

Edward Gorey (1925-2000) wrote and illustrated such popular books as *The Doubtful Guest*, *The Gashlycrumb Tinies*, and *The Headless Bust*. He was also a very successful set and costume designer, earning a Tony Award for his Broadway production of Edward Gorey's *Dracula*. Animated sequences of his work have introduced the PBS series *Mystery!* since 1980.

"*The Willowdale Handcar*" follows three friends as they hop on a handcar from Willowdale and go on what seems like a year long road trip. They encounter so many odd things, sceneries and moments on their travels. Not everything revolves around the handcar as the friends visit other various locations. The artwork is traditional Gorey and the story is just as surreal. By the end of it all,

you'll have a better connection with the characters and would have seen them age throughout the pages. Their outfits change, their hair and beards change and one could only assume that they've been on the road for many years. You might also enjoy a fairytale about a little girl and a haunted house in the tradition of Gorey:~ ~ The Stumps of Flattop Hill

One of my favorite books by Mr. Gorey.

I did a project on him in high school I love his work. This book caught my eye because of the black doll on the handcar. I bought the black doll and I thought the story was about him. It's not but still, most of Gorey's works are great!

A wonderful nugget to enjoy for any Gorey fan. His oft times weird and unexpected world abounds. Enjoy, enjoy, enjoy

The Willowdale Handcar is hilarious. The main characters inexplicably ride a handcar past all kinds of shocking and tragic scenes, about which they barely even comment. An underlying mystery develops but remains only vaguely resolved. Edward Gorey's characters are colorful and entertainingly odd.

this was a children's book and, as such, was ok

This is the one little Gorey book that I own, because I relish the challenge of figuring it out! A strange little puzzle of a tale, "The Willowdale Handcar" enigmatically unfolds a tale of death & tragedy..... none of which the readers (or the main characters) are able to figure out, as they navigate its outer bounds in a stolen handcar. Ostensibly a macabre sort of travelogue, "handcar" presents us three young folk from the kind of early 20th-century scene that Edward Gorey does so well, who simply "borrow" a handcar and set out on a trip. Their joyride extends surreally for months, and seemingly takes them across the country, while mysterious and seemingly sinister things happen to the world around them, with fatal results for other characters and no explanation readily given to the reader. And through it all, a strange, crudely-fashioned black doll (a reference to an earlier Gorey book) keeps popping up in the background, as if foreshadowing something unknown.....Gorey's short book is a like a cartoon version of Tom Stoppard's "Rosencrantz And Guildenstern Are Dead": a tale of enormous impact, made eerily nonsensical by being told from the

perspective of its most peripheral supporting characters, through whom the reader is not privy to the essential facts of the plot. The result is a gleefully impenetrable riddle for the kind of reader who likes to look between the lines of their favorite stories. It is also a chilling reminder of the many forgotten, supporting characters in those same stories, whose fate we never bother to learn; perhaps the underlying lesson of the book, is that EVERYONE matters.

Still a turn-of-the-century setting, but this time most definitely set in USA, this follows three young people who take a handcar for a spin, and their adventures, including a visit to "Edna's cousins, the Zeph Claggs. He showed them a few of the prizes from his collection of over 7,000 glass telephone-pole insulators." There's a strange (deliberate) lack of flow to the events. A "frantic face" at a window of a passing train...it's a few pages till the individual is mentioned again, this time tied to the track. How? Why? (could it be anything to do with her wonderfully-named fiance, Dick Hammerclaw?) Very weird, wonderful illustrations.

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