



## **Anatomy of a Short Story: Nabokov's Puzzles, Codes, "Signs and Symbols"**

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# Anatomy of a Short Story: Nabokov's Puzzles, Codes, "Signs and Symbols"

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Since its first publication in 1948, one of Vladimir Nabokov's shortest short stories, "Signs and Symbols," has generated perhaps more interpretations and critical appraisal than any other that he wrote. It has been called "one of the greatest short stories ever written" and "a triumph of economy and force, minute realism and shimmering mystery" (Brian Boyd, *Vladimir Nabokov: The American Years*).

*Anatomy of a Short Story* contains:

- ? the full text of "Signs and Symbols," line numbered and referenced throughout
- ? correspondence about the story, most of it never before published, between Nabokov and the editor of *The New Yorker*, where the story was first published
- ? 33 essays of literary criticism, bringing together classic essays and new interpretations
- ? a round-table discussion in which a screenwriter, a theater scholar, a mathematician, a psychiatrist, and a literary scholar bring their perspectives to bear on "Signs and Symbols"

*Anatomy of a Short Story* illuminates the ways in which we interpret fiction, and the short story in particular.

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