



Charles Dickens
A Christmas Carol

edition
waldorf



**Charles Dickens in 1837,
at the age of 25.
Painted by Samuel Laurence**



**Charles Dickens in later life.
He was one of the few people
in Victorian England
whose face was known
almost everywhere.**

STAVE ONE: MARLEY'S GHOST

Marley was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it. And Scrooge's name was good upon the Exchange for anything he chose to put his hand to.

SECTION
1

5

Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Scrooge knew he was dead. Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he had been partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole friend, his sole mourner.

Scrooge never painted out old Marley's name, however. There it yet stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door, *Scrooge and Marley*. The firm was known as *Scrooge and Marley*. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley. He answered to both names. It was all the same to him.

10

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, was Scrooge! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! External heat and cold had little influence on him. No warmth could warm, no cold could chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn't know where to have him.

15

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what time it was, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blind men's dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts; and then would wag their tails as though they said, "No eye at all is better than an evil eye, dark master!"

20

But what did Scrooge care! It was the very thing he liked.

Once upon a time – of all the good days in the year, upon a Christmas Eve – old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting, foggy weather; and the city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already.

SECTION
2

25

The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open so that he might keep his eye upon his clerk, who, in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, was copying letters. Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldn't replenish it, for Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room; and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk put on his white comforter, and tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of strong imagination, he failed.

“A Merry Christmas, Uncle! God save you!” cried a cheerful voice. It was the voice of Scrooge's nephew, who came upon him so quickly that this was the first intimation that Scrooge had of his approach.

“Bah!” said Scrooge. “Humbug!”

“Christmas a humbug, Uncle! You don't mean that, I am sure!”

“I do. Out upon Merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer! If I had my will, every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!”

“Uncle!”

“Nephew! Keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.”

“Keep it! But you don't keep it.”

“Let me leave it alone, then. Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!”

“There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round, as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-travellers to the grave. And therefore, Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!”

The clerk in the tank involuntarily applauded.

Scrooge was conscious of being exhausted, and overcome by an irresistible drowsiness; and, further, of being in his own bedroom. He had barely time to reel to bed, before he sank into a heavy sleep.

STAVE THREE: THE SECOND OF THE THREE SPIRITS

Scrooge awoke in his own bedroom. There was no doubt about that. But it and his own sitting-room, into which he shuffled in his slippers, attracted by a great light there, had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling were so hung with living green that it looked a perfect grove. The leaves of holly, mistletoe, and ivy reflected back the light, as if so many little mirrors had been scattered there; and a mighty blaze went roaring up the chimney.

SECTION
15

Heaped upon the floor, to form a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, game, brawn, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, plum-puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chestnuts, cherry-cheeked apples, juicy oranges, luscious pears, immense twelfth-cakes, and great bowls of punch. In easy state upon this couch there sat a Giant glorious to see; who bore a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's Horn, and who raised it high to shed its light on Scrooge, as he came peeping round the door.

10

"Come in – come in! and know me better, man! I am the Ghost of Christmas Present! Look upon me! You have never seen the like of me before!"

15

20

"Never."

"Have never walked forth with the younger members of my family; meaning (for I am very young) my elder brothers born in these later years?" pursued the Phantom.

25

"I don't think I have. I am afraid I have not. Have you had many brothers, Spirit?"

"More than eighteen hundred."

"A tremendous family to provide for! Spirit, conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. Tonight, if you have anything to teach me, let me profit by it."

30

"Touch my robe!"



J. Leech

Scrooge's third Visitor.

that bundle, old Joe, and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain. I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid for them to see it."

Joe went down on his knees in order to open the bundle, and dragged out a large and heavy roll of some dark stuff.

"What do you call this? Bed-curtains?"

"Ah! Bed-curtains! Don't drop that oil upon the blankets, now."

"His blankets?"

"Whose else's do you think? He isn't likely to take cold without 'em, I dare say. Ah! You may look through that shirt till your eyes ache; but you won't find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it by dressing him up in it, if it hadn't been for me."

Scrooge listened to this dialogue in horror.

"Spirit, I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now. Merciful Heaven, what is this!"

The scene had changed, and now he almost touched a bare uncurtained bed. A pole light, rising in the outer air, fell straight upon this bed; and on it, unwatched, unwept, uncared for, was the body of this plundered, unknown man.

"Spirit, let me see some tenderness connected with a death, or this dark chamber will be for ever present to me."

The Ghost conducted him to poor Bob Cratchit's house — the dwelling he had visited before — and found the mother and children seated round the fire.

Quiet. Very quiet. The noisy little Cratchits were as still as statues in one corner, and sat looking up at Peter, who had a book before him. The mother and her daughters were engaged in needlework. But surely they were very quiet!

"And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them."

Where had Scrooge heard those words? He had not dreamed them. The boy must have read them out, as he and the Spirit crossed the threshold. Why did he not go on?

The mother laid her work upon the table, and put her hand up to her face.

"The colour hurts my eyes," she said.

5

10

15

SECTION 23

20

25

30

35



The Last of the Spirits.

16. to describe	to say what s.o. or s.th. is like	beschreiben
17. to repeat	to say or do s.th. again	wiederholen
18. to promise	to say that you will really do s.th.	versprechen
19. to admit	to say that one has done s.th. wrong	zugeben
20. to refuse	to say 'no'	s. weigern; verweigern
21. to depend (on)	What are you going to do? That <i>depends</i> .	darauf ankommen; abhängen von
22. There is no doubt about it!	One can be quite sure about it!	Es gibt gar keinen Zweifel darüber!
23. to applaud	to clap your hands to show you like s.th.	klatschen
24. to burst into laughter/tears	to suddenly start laughing/crying	in Gelächter /Tränen ausbrechen

FOOD & EATING (I)

1. to cook	My father likes to <i>cook</i> at weekends.	kochen
2. to boil	Water <i>boils</i> at 100 °C.	(in Wasser) kochen
3. to fry	to cook s.th. in oil in a pan	(in der Pfanne) braten
4. to roast	to cook meat or vegetables in an oven	(im Ofen) braten
5. to bake	to cook bread, cakes etc. in an oven	backen
6. to prepare	to make s.th. ready	zubereiten; vorbereiten
7. jug	pot with a handle, used for water, milk etc.	Krug
8. to try	Have you ever <i>tried</i> Mexican food?	versuchen; probieren
9. to pass	Could you <i>pass</i> the butter, please?	hin-, herreichen
10. meal	food that you eat at a certain time	Mahlzeit
11. snack	small, quick meal	Imbiss; kleine Mahlzeit
12. breakfast	first meal of the day	Frühstück
13. lunch	meal that you eat in the middle of the day	Mittagessen
14. supper	We eat our <i>supper</i> in the evening.	(einfaches) Abendessen
15. dinner	What's for <i>dinner</i> tonight?	(warmes) Abendessen
16. flavour	What <i>flavours</i> of ice-cream do you like most?	Geschmack(-srichtung)
17. plate	round, flat thing for putting food on	Teller
18. bowl	deep plate for serving food	Schüssel; Schale
19. knife	sharp thing for cutting food etc.	Messer
20. fork	thing with long points, for eating food	Gabel
21. spoon	thing with a round end, for eating soup etc.	Löffel
22. cup	small bowl with a handle, for drinking from	Tasse
23. saucer	small, round plate under a cup	Untertasse
24. mug	big cup with straight sides	Becher

FOOD & EATING (II)

1. to say grace	to say a prayer before a meal	ein Tischgebet sprechen
2. meat	flesh of animals, eaten as food	Fleisch
3. beef	<i>Beef</i> is meat from a cow or a bull.	Rindfleisch
4. pork	<i>Pork</i> is meat from a pig.	Schweinefleisch
5. ham	salty meat from a pig's leg	Schinken
6. chicken	(meat from a) young hen	Huhn; Hähnchen
7. turkey	big farmyard bird	Truthahn

8. goose (<i>pl. geese</i>)	water bird or farm bird larger than a duck	Gans
9. sausage	meat mixture cut up finely, in a thin tube	Wurst
10. ready	Come on! Breakfast's <i>ready</i> !	fertig; bereit
11. done	cooked exactly right	gar
12. plum-pudding	traditional Christmas Pudding	Weihnachtsdessert
13. vegetable	Carrots and potatoes are <i>vegetables</i> .	Gemüse(-sorte)
14. potato	round, white vegetable that grows under	Kartoffel
15. to peel	to cut the skin off	the ground schälen
16. fruit	Bananas and apples are <i>fruit</i> .	Obst; Früchte
17. cake	We had tea and <i>cakes</i> at 5 o'clock.	Kuchen
18. slice	thin piece of bread, meat, cake etc.	Scheibe; Schmitte
19. biscuit	kind of thin, dry cake	Keks; Plätzchen
20. menu	list of things to eat in a restaurant	Speisekarte
21. starter	first part of a meal, e.g. soup	Vorspeise
22. main course	most important part of a meal	Hauptgang, -gericht
23. dessert	sweet food at the end of a meal	Nachspeise
24. delicious	Mmm! That ice-cream was <i>delicious</i> !	lecker

'WHEN'-WORDS

1. to miss	to be too late for s.th.	verpassen
2. used to	I <i>used to</i> dance a lot when I was younger.	pflegte zu
3. until, till	Wait here <i>until</i> I come back.	bis
4. past	time before now; <i>opp.</i> future	Vergangenheit
5. present	time now	Gegenwart; gegenwärtig
6. age	how old you are	Alter
7. just as	at the same moment as	im selben Moment als
8. Christmas Eve	day or evening before Christmas Day	Heiligabend
9. Christmas Day	25th December	1. Weihnachtstag
10. century	a hundred years	Jahrhundert
11. occasion	time when s.th. happens	Gelegenheit; Anlass
12. occasionally	sometimes	gelegentlich
13. in a moment	very soon; I'll be with you <i>in a moment</i> .	gleich
14. at the moment	now; Sorry – <i>at the moment</i> he's not here.	jetzt; zur Zeit
15. while	<i>While</i> we were eating, the telephone rang.	während (<i>vor Satz</i>)
16. during	The telephone rang <i>during</i> breakfast.	während (<i>vor Hauptw.</i>)
17. already	We ran fast, but the train had already left.	schon; bereits
18. recently	a short time ago	neulich; kürzlich
19. immediately	at once; Come here <i>immediately</i> !	sofort; gleich
20. meanwhile	Jane was working, and <i>meanwhile</i> her sister	währenddessen
21. nowadays	<i>Nowadays</i> everyone has a telephone.	was watching television. heutzutage
22. only just	He had <i>only just</i> come in when he saw me.	gerade erst
23. whenever	1. Come again <i>whenever</i> you like. 2. Those boys fight <i>whenever</i> they meet.	1. wann (auch) immer 2. jedesmal wenn
24. almost	Don't go away – dinner is <i>almost</i> ready.	fast; beinahe

- B1. Which sentence in the first paragraph tells us that Scrooge was extremely rich?
- B2. Which part of the text tells us how lonely and friendless Marley was?
- B3. Collect the words and expressions in this section that describe Scrooge.
- B4. Find the parts of the text that tell us how Scrooge felt about other people.
- C1. *What kind of man was Scrooge?* Write from four to seven sentences, using your own words, if possible.

Section 2 – page 3, line 30 to Page 5, line 22

- ↳ **Headline for this section:** *Scrooge’s nephew visits the office. ‘Good afternoon!’*
- A1. Describe the time of day, time of year and the weather when the story begins.
- A2. Why is it so cold in the clerk’s little room?
- A3. How does Scrooge first notice that his nephew has come to see him?
- A4. How does the clerk react to the nephew’s words about “*Christmas ... God bless it!*”?
- A5. What is Scrooge’s answer to the clerk here?
- A6. What does Scrooge say when his nephew invites him to dinner?
- B1. *In Scrooge’s office.* Write (or prepare) two or three sentences on this subject.
- B2. What is the nephew’s view of Christmas?
- B3. How does Scrooge see Christmas?
- C1. *Scrooge and his nephew.* Write about five to eight simple sentences of your own.

Section 3 – page 5, line 23 to Page 6, line 14

- ↳ **Headline for this section:** *The two portly gentlemen arrive. ‘Are there no prisons?’*
- A1. How does the text describe the gentlemen in Scrooge’s office?
- A2. What does the first gentleman ask Scrooge?
- A3. What two new things do we learn about Marley’s death?
- A4. What problems do “*the poor and destitute*” have at Christmas time?
- A5. What is Scrooge’s Christmas wish?
- A6. What does he think that poor people should do?
- B1. What are the two gentlemen doing, and why?
- B2. What does Scrooge feel about their plan, and why?
- B3. “*... many would rather die*” (page 6, line 12). The two gentlemen and Scrooge think very differently from one another on this point. Can you explain?
- C1. *Scrooge and the two gentlemen.* Write from four to seven simple sentences of your own.

Section 4 – page 6, line 15 to line 35

- ↳ **Write a suitable headline for this section.**
- A1. How did the clerk see that it was time to close the office?
- A2. What did the clerk do before speaking to Scrooge?
- A3. How much money did the clerk earn for a day’s work?
- A4. When did work start again after the holiday?
- A5. How was the clerk dressed for his journey home?
- A6. What did he do on the way home?
- B1. What happens when Scrooge gets down from his stool?
- B2. What do Scrooge and his clerk talk about?

- B3. Can you describe how the clerk goes home?
- C1. *Closing the office.* Write from four to six simple sentences of your own.
- D1. Write between six and ten sentences on *Christmas Eve in Scrooges office*, retelling sections two, three and four.

Section 5 – Page 7, line 1 to line 24

- ✎ Write a suitable headline for this section.
- A1. What does Scrooge do in the tavern?
- A2. What are the other rooms in the building where Scrooge lives?
- A3. Where does Scrooge see Marley’s face?
- A4. When does this happen?
- A5. How does Marley’s face look at Scrooge?
- A6. How does Scrooge react to this?
- B1. Describe the place where Scrooge lived.
- B2. Why was it surprising that Scrooge saw Marley’s face in the door-knocker?
- B3. What might have frightened some people when the door banged shut?
- C1. *Scrooge arrives home.* Write from four to six simple sentences of your own.

Section 6 – page 7, line 25 to page 8, line 4

- ✎ Write a suitable headline for this section.
- A1. How did Scrooge feel about the darkness?
- A2. What did he do before closing his front door?
- A3. How many rooms did Scrooge have?
- A4. What did he do differently from usual when he finally closed his door?
- A5. What did he do after locking his door?
- A6. Scrooge had already eaten dinner. Why did he have gruel ready to eat?
- B1. Why does Scrooge walk through his rooms when he goes in?
- B2. Why does he leave the door open while he looks around?
- B3. Why do you think he looks in the lumber-room twice?
- C1. Write from three to five sentences with the title *Scrooge enters his rooms.*

Section 7 – page 8, line 5 to line 27

- ✎ Write a suitable headline for this section.
- A1. What is the first sign that something strange is happening?
- A2. Where does the next sound seem to begin?
- A3. How does the noise change, and become different?
- A4. Why does the double-locked door not help Scrooge now?
- B1. Describe the strange things that happened before the ghost appeared.
- B2. What did Marley’s ghost look like?
- B3. How did Scrooge feel about the ghost?
- C1. *A strange visitor.* Write from four to six simple sentences of your own.

Section 8 – page 8, line 28 to page 11, line 29

- ✎ Write a suitable headline for this section.