



A Christmas Carol

Description

Based on Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Illustrations by Arthur Rackham.



Once upon a time, in the great city of London, there was an old banker named Ebenezer Scrooge. He was very rich, but he was also very stingy, selfish and grumpy.

Scrooge was mean and contemptuous to everyone and never helped anyone. His only employee, Bob Cratchit, had to work in the cold all day because Scrooge wouldn't pay for heat.

It was Christmas Eve and once again he had turned down his nephew Fred's invitation to spend Christmas Eve with his family because he hated the holidays. « Holidays are for lazy people! » He said. He even blamed Bob Cratchit for asking him for an advance on his salary to buy the turkey on Christmas Eve, saying he was already overdoing it by not coming to work on Christmas Day.



All he knew how to do was work: Counting, calculating, and amassing his immense fortune all day long, keeping everything to himself, not sharing his money or his time with anyone, least of all since his partner Jacob Marley had died seven years ago.



After closing the store, he returned to his old, dilapidated and dirty apartment. He thought he first saw the head of his dead former partner Jacob Marley where the knob of the front door used to be, and he quickly entered, trying to forget about it.



He was about to eat his meager dinner by the weak and single fire that served as his heater, before going to bed as he did every night, when the ghost appeared to him – this time for real – that almost scared him to death. It was the ghost of his former partner Jacob Marley, who began to speak to him with a voice from beyond the grave:

– Ebenezer! Look at what you’ve become, a rancid old fart who only thinks in pounds! You were funnier and nicer when we opened our first business fifty years ago. If you continue like this, you will be condemned to drag your books, files, safes and keys for the rest of your life and probably beyond death! Change your life! Become a better man! Be kind and generous to others, laugh and have fun with them! »

Old Scrooge was so frightened to see his old partner again that he stood speechless with his mouth open.

– Listen to me, » said the ghost. Tonight you will be visited by three spirits, the three spirits of Christmas, that of Christmas past, that of Christmas present, and that of Christmas future. This will be your last chance to save yourself. So pay attention to them and act accordingly!

And with these words he disappeared.



He went to bed shivering, and soon after, the ghost of Christmas past appeared to him. He took Ebenezer Scrooge on a journey to his golden youth. The old man recognized himself celebrating Christmas cheerfully with his parents and friends: He looked so happy. Then he saw other, more recent and much sadder Christmases and the terrible misdeeds he had committed then.



Then came the Ghost of Christmas Present who showed him a poor room beautifully decorated with holly, ivy and mistletoe. There was a table there with sausages, potatoes, some pears, apples, oranges and cakes. This was the home of his employee Bob Cratchit and his family. Bob, his wife and two children sat at the table. It was a meager holiday meal, but they all rejoiced and said it was the most wonderful Christmas dinner they had ever seen.

Although poor, they were happy and loved each other dearly. They saw him and invited him to sit down and have dinner with them. But Scrooge was too ashamed because, in addition, he had seen little Tim, their son, who was quite ill because the parents did not have enough money to pay the doctor.

« Look! » Said the ghost « the little boy will die soon if they don't find the money to pay the doctor. »

– Take me away; please, I can't take it anymore! Begged the old miser.



The third ghost was that of the future Christmas.

He took Ebenezer Scrooge to a cemetery where he showed him an abandoned grave. His name was inscribed on the stone.

– Oh Mr. Ghost! said the frightened old man. « I will change my life, I promise you! I will be kind and generous from now on! »



Then the ghost disappeared.

When Scrooge woke up the next day, he remembered the three ghosts and what they had shown him. It was Christmas morning and he thought, « What a wonderful morning! »

He jumped out of bed and smiled for the first time in a very long time. He dressed quickly, went out into the street, and as he walked, he tossed coins to every beggar he saw wishing them a Merry Christmas!

He bought all kinds of delicious food and desserts and many gifts and headed for the poor house of his employee Bob Cratchit. He gave them everything he had bought on the road and gave them the money for the doctor to cure their son. He had never felt so happy in his life!



So he made his way back to his nephew Fred's house to celebrate Christmas with him and his family.

The ghosts of Christmas and his old partner had done the impossible: change the life of Ebenezer Scrooge, who was now generous and happy until the last of his days.



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