

KEY WORDS

Menacing, ambivalent, ominous, bleak, alike to grim reaper, solemn, irreversible gloom

The ghost of Christmas yet to come

MENACING ENIGMATIC (MYSTERIOUS) DEPICTION

SCROOGE'S APOLOGETIC REACTION FILLED WITH DREAD

- Scrooge is presented **as cowardice and petrified of the ghost**, he is filled with **"solemn dread"**. This supernatural dread is key in Scrooge's **emancipation** (freedom) as it allows Scrooge to fear the **inevitable future he will face if he continues to be shrouded in his own internal darkness**.
- His **utter terror** is so powerful it does not just evoke an emotional reaction from Scrooge, but a physical one: **"Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him"**. The alliteration on **"silent shape"** draws emphasis on the mysteriousness of the ghost, its **faceless figure** makes Scrooge lose all composure.
- Unlike to his previous masking of his fear of the ghosts, Scrooge appears honest about his dread as he says, **"I fear you more than any spectre I have seen."**
- Scrooge's honesty, due to his dropping of his **miserable unphased façade**, highlights how he is **unlearning how to repress his emotions**, instead is being emotionally vulnerable and open.

- The triple ominous adverb **"slowly, gravely, silently approached"** shows this **menacing ambience filled with dread**. This is exacerbated through the **archetypal presentation of a menacing ghost**- it is a faceless figure that is there to haunt Scrooge.
- The ghost is **"shrouded in a deep black garment"** which is reminiscent of the description of the **grim reaper**, a **symbol of death as he was believed to collect people's souls**. The likeness in description is suggestive that Scrooge's **chances of redemption have vanished**, and he is now going to be mercilessly taken to his hellish death.
- The **enigmatic** ghost does not verbally communicate, but physically uses his body as he had an **"outstretched hand"** and **"steady hand was pointed to the head."**
- The use of its **"hand"** repeatedly could be an **allusion to the hand of time**; the ghost is warning Scrooge that he is losing time and is edging closer to his **ironically "solitary" death**- Scrooge longed for a **"solitary"** existence and now the ghost **is solemnly showing** him the repercussions of this selfish want.
- At the finger symbolises the hand of time and appears **"unmoved"** and **"inexorable"** (unstoppable) it illuminates the **finality and unstoppable nature of time**- it is a precious concept that cannot be reversed, once it is gone, it is gone eternally.
- At the end of the stave, **"The kind hand trembled"**. As it is no longer **"unmoved"** this is suggestive that **Scrooge's plead for redemption has altered the unstoppable nature of time**. He is now given an opportunity to rectify his wrongdoings and cherish Christmas day again.
- Scrooge sees the **irreversibility and permanence** of wasting time living a life full of misery as his grave is **"overrun by grass and weeds"**. Scrooge's **sardonic life** has lead to him being neglected in his after life.



DICKENS' WARNING

- Dickens tactically sets Stave 5 within the London streets full of squalor and agony: **"smell, and dirt, and life, upon the straggling streets; and the whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, and misery"**.
- The **Victorian era was known as the 'progressive era'**, a time of technological advancements, therefore Dickens uses his novel as a work of **social documentation** to highlight the true nature of London- people are treated in dehumanising ways while the streets are filled **with abandonment and neglect**.
- He chooses this setting for Stave 5 to show how this **squalor is synonymous with the ignorant attitudes of the upper class**, the attitude that Scrooge is being punished for, and without justice being served to those perpetuating this dehumanising abuse, society will continue to decline.
- Dickens highlights that the **neglect of others in turn will cause your own neglect in your death**: **"It was a worthy place...overrun by grass and weeds"**. Scrooge's decaying and uncared for grave serves as a warning to the reader that neglect is cyclical and will cycle back round to punish you.
- The ghost physically resembles the future itself- an unknown mystery. It can be seen as **personifying** the concept of **memento mori**, the inevitability of eventual death.
- Dickens explores that only death is certain, so the life that an individual lead should be based around **maximising the life they lead and maximising others**- compassion, empathy and **agape (Christian idea of love for humans) should be central to society**.
- The ghost is a **microcosm for the bleak future of Victorian society if they undergo no change**.

COMPARISON

You could compare how Dickens' message strengthens throughout. His message is subtle at first, creating Scrooge to be an archetypal Victorian villain that the readers would not want to like. However, by the end of the novel, his political diatribe is fully developed and it is clear that his comical fiction is an attack on social inequality and the dehumanising treatment of the destitute.



TOPIC SENTENCES

The ghost of Christmas yet to come is symbolic of death as it holds a strong resemblance to the grim reaper. It's menacing enigmatic depiction elicits tremendous dread within Scrooge as he realises that his gloomy death is imminent and irreversible.

Dickens uses his novella as a work of social documentation to highlight how justice will be served to those who are belligerent and ignorant in society. He uses Scrooge's neglected and abandoned grave to represent how a neglect of others will cause your lonesome death.