

A Christmas Carol Summary

Characters *(in order of appearance)*

- **Scrooge:** a selfish and ignorant member of society who refuses to give to charity and be generous.
- **Bob Cratchit:** He is a lower class member of society who works for Scrooge. He is very polite, moral and grateful
- **Fred:** Scrooge's nephew (son of Scrooge's deceased sister Fanny) who is jovial and optimistic
- **Marley:** Scrooge's ex business partner who appears in the form of the first ghost, draped in chains trying to warn Scrooge if he continues, he will end up like him
- **Ghost of Christmas Past:** Looks like a child and old man simultaneously. He shows Scrooge his past in an attempt to remind him of his past joys and replicate this in his current life
- **Mr. Fezziwig:** The man Scrooge was an apprentice for and admired
- **Fanny:** Scrooge's deceased sister (mother to Fred)
- **Belle:** Scrooge's ex wife who divorces him for his obsession and adoration of money
- **Ghost of Christmas Present:** Looks like a mix of Father Christmas and God. He is sitting on a heaped pile of food and he symbolises abundance. He shows Scrooge the Cratchits and ignorance and want
- **Mrs Cratchit and the Cratchit family:** Alike to Bob in his nature: grateful and benevolent
- **Tiny Tim:** Bob Cratchit's son who falls ill and passes away in the Ghost of Christmas present's lessons to Scrooge
- **Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come:** He is wearing a black cloak and looks like the grim reaper. He shows Scrooge his bleak future and neglected grave

Stave 1

- Scrooge is a **parsimonious (stingy)** man who refuses to celebrate Christmas, or anything positive in life
- We see his interactions with Fred (his nephew) to which he shows his miserly traits. Fred is **the antithesis (opposite)** to Scrooge as he is positive and **jovial**
- Scrooge dismisses two gentlemen collecting money for charity because he believes the poor should be put in **prison or the workhouses instead (place where the poor work in exchange for food and a place to stay – exploitative conditions)**
- Scrooge returns home where he is visited by the first ghost – Marley (his ex-business partner)
- **Marley is draped in chains, symbolising that eternal punishment**, and tries to warn Scrooge that if he continues on this greedy and selfish trajectory he will end up the same as Marley
- Scrooge is terrified and petrified, he puts seeing Marley down to a “*disorder of the stomach*” (e.g. food poisoning). Marley tells him 3 other ghosts will come and visit him

Stave 2

- The Ghost of Christmas Past visits Scrooge and he looks like an **old man and young man simultaneously**. He is a bright light and wears a cap, and a white tunic (almost a white looking dress)
- The Ghost instantly brings him back to his hometown, to which we see an **emotional reaction** from Scrooge – this is the first time Scrooge is **humanised** in the novella (made to appear a like to a normal human)
- He shows Scrooge at boarding school, and being united with his **younger sister Fanny** to which it is revealed that she has formerly passed away.
- Scrooge is also taken back to a positive time where he was an **apprentice for a man called Mr. Fezziwig**. We see a jubilant young Scrooge who admires Mr. Fezziwig and see them all at a **vivacious and flamboyant party** hosted by Fezziwig.
- A more dark flashback from the past is shown by the Ghost – **the end of Belle (Scrooge's ex wife) and his marriage**. She speaks about how **Scrooge idolises money over love** and was not the man she was once engaged to. This is a painful memory for Scrooge and he gets an “extinguisher cap” and puts it on the Ghost to try eradicate him.

Stave 3

- The 3rd Ghost to visit Scrooge appears- **the Ghost of Christmas Present**
- The Ghost appears to look like **a mix of Father Christmas and God**. He is surrounded by Ivy and is sat on top of a pile of food. **He represents abundance and is there to contrast Malthusian views** (poverty is inevitable as there is not enough food supplies to go round)
- He is shown the joyous celebrations of Christmas as his nephew Fred's house. We see them making jokes at Scrooge's expense, **yet Fred showing compassion for Scrooge** and saying how he is not judgmental towards his actions in life
- The Ghost next takes Scrooge to the scene of the Cratchits'. Despite their poverty, Bob and his family express a **deep level of gratitude for the little they have**. Bob even crowns Scrooge the "*funder*" of their meagre feast (despite being severely underpaid). We see the **fragility of Tiny Tim** and the Ghost alluding to his death.
- At the end of the stave, the Ghost shows Scrooge two **animalistic looking children** and names them 'ignorance' and 'want'. These are **symbols of the neglected lower classes** because of the upper **classes ignorance and exploitation**. Scrooge is disturbed.

Stave 4

- The last ghost, the most terrifying of them all, the **Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come**.
- The Ghost is **draped in a dark black cloak** and replicates the **grim reaper** (a person who typically brings people to their death). He is unlike the other ghosts, he doesn't speak, instead uses his hand and finger to point.
- He shows Scrooge at first some rich upper-class men talking about a funeral and speaking about this **dead individual in economical terms**. It is revealed they are speaking of Scrooge.
- **Scrooge's servant** is shown to have taken his belongings, even the curtain of his death bed, to sell them to a man called Old Joe. This whole stave shows the carelessness of people towards Scrooge in his death – **a harrowing realisation for Scrooge**.
- We are taken back to the Cratchits' home and they are all **devastated by the death of Tiny Tim**.
- The last scene Scrooge is shown is his **neglected grave**. He pleads the Ghost for a **chance of redemption and salvation**, and whether these events can be reversed if he alters his behaviour.

Stave 5

- Scrooge wakes up on Christmas Day and is **overjoyed** that he has been given a second chance at life. His movement is as “*light as a feather*” and he seems to have been born into a new man – **regressing back into a jovial and magnanimous (generous) individual**
- He sends a **prize turkey** to the Cratchits as a token of his gratitude for them, he then goes to spend the day with Fred’s family.
- The next day at work, he pretends to be his same miserable self to Bob, scrutinising for his lateness. Instead, he gives **Bob a raise for his hard work** and becomes a second father to Tiny Tim (who doesn’t die).
- Scrooge continues to be a **charitable and magnanimous individual, embodying communal spirit.**