

Helping you choose books for children



opening extract from
**A Christmas Carol:
The Graphic Novel
(Original Text)**

written by

Charles Dickens

published by

Classical Comics

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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. OLD MARLEY WAS AS DEAD AS A DOOR-NAIL.

MIND! I DON'T MEAN TO SAY THAT I KNOW, OF MY OWN KNOWLEDGE, WHAT THERE IS PARTICULARLY DEAD ABOUT A DOOR-NAIL. BUT THE WISDOM OF OUR ANCESTORS IS IN THE SMILE; AND MY UNHALLOWED HANDS SHALL NOT DISTURB IT, OR THE COUNTRY'S DONE FOR.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT MARLEY WAS DEAD. THIS MUST BE DISTINCTLY UNDERSTOOD, OR NOTHING WONDERFUL CAN COME OF THE STORY I AM GOING TO RELATE.

SCROOSE AND HE WERE PARTNERS FOR I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY YEARS.

SCROOSE WAS HIS SOLE EXECUTOR, HIS SOLE ADMINISTRATOR, HIS SOLE ABBASIN, HIS SOLE RESIDUARY LEGATEE, HIS SOLE FRIEND, AND SOLE MOURNER. AND EVEN SCROOSE WAS NOT SO DREADFULLY CUT UP BY THE BAD EVENT, BUT THAT HE SOLEMNISED IT WITH AN UNDOUBTED BARGAIN.



SCROOSE NEVER PAINTED OUT OLD MARLEY'S NAME.

THERE IT STOOD, YEARS AFTERWARDS, ABOVE THE WAREHOUSE DOOR:



OH! BUT HE WAS A TIGHT-FISTED HAND AT THE GRINDSTONE, SCROOSE!

A SQUEEZING, WRENCHING, GRASPING, SCRAPING, CLUTCHING, CONTOUS, OLD SINNER!



THE COLD WITHIN HIM FROZE HIS OLD FEATURES, NIPPED HIS POINTED NOSE, SHRIVELLED HIS CHEEK, STIFFENED HIS GAUT; MADE HIS EYES RED, HIS THIN LIPS BLUE; AND SPOKE OUT SHREWDLY IN HIS GRATING VOICE.



EXTERNAL HEAT AND
COLD HAD LITTLE
INFLUENCE ON SCROOSE.

NO WARMTH COULD
WARM, NOR WINTRY
WEATHER CHILL HIM.

NOBODY EVER STOPPED
HIM IN THE STREET TO
SAY, WITH GLAD SOME
LOOKS, "MY DEAR
SCROOSE, HOW ARE
YOU? WHEN WILL YOU
COME TO SEE ME?"
NO BEGGARS INQUIRED
HIM TO BESTOW A TRIFLE,
NO CHILDREN ASKED HIM
WHAT IT WAS O'CLOCK,
NO MAN OR WOMAN EVER
ONCE IN ALL HIS LIFE
INGUIRED THE WAY TO
BUCH AND BUCH A
PLACE, OF SCROOSE.



EVEN THE BLINDMEN'S
DOGS APPEARED TO
KNOW HIM; AND WHEN THEY
SAW HIM COMING ON,
WOULD TUG THEIR OWNERS
INTO DOOR-WAYS AND LIP
COURTS; AND THEN
WOULD WAG THEIR TAILS
AS THOUGH THEY SAID,
"NO EYE AT ALL IS
BETTER THAN AN EVIL
EYE, DARK MASTER!"



BUT WHAT DID SCROOSE
CARE! IT WAS THE VERY
THING HE LIKED.

TO EDGE HIS WAY ALONG
THE CROWDED PATHS
OF LIFE, WARNING ALL
HUMAN SYMPATHY TO
KEEP ITS DISTANCE.



ONCE UPON A TIME
- OF ALL THE GOOD
DAYS IN THE YEAR, ON
CHRISTMAS EVE -
OLD SCROOGE SAT
BUSY IN HIS
COUNTING-HOUSE.

IT WAS A COLD, BLEAK,
BITING WEATHER: AND HE
COULD HEAR THE PEOPLE
IN THE COURT OUTSIDE
BEATING THEIR HANDS
UPON THEIR BUSTS.

THE CITY CLOCKS HAD
STRUCK THREE, BUT IT WAS
QUITE DARK ALREADY.



THE DOOR OF SCROOSE'S COUNTING-HOUSE WAS OPEN THAT HE MIGHT KEEP AN EYE ON HIS CLERK, WHO IN A DISMAL LITTLE CELL BEYOND, WAS COPYING LETTERS.

SCROOSE 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 SCROOSE KEPT THE COAL-BOX IN HIS OWN ROOM.

WHEREFORE THE CLERK TRIED TO WARM HIMSELF AT THE CANDLE;

IN WHICH EFFORT, NOT BEING A MAN OF STRONG IMAGINATION, HE FAILED.

