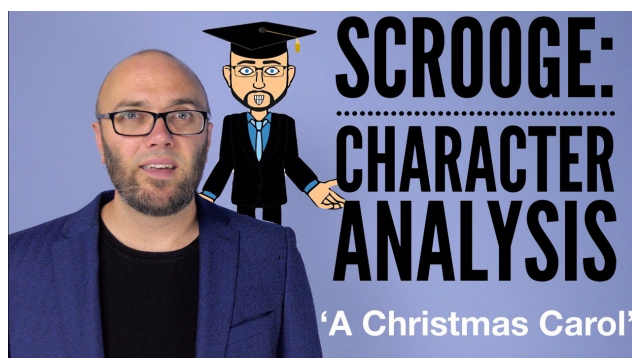


Ebenezer Scrooge: Character Analysis

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/F2kuQSBazUo>
Alternatively, on YouTube, search for: Ebenezer Scrooge: Character Analysis (animated & updated)



Questions:

- 1) What does the repetition in the following quotation emphasise about the character of Scrooge? 'Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend, and sole mourner'.
- 2) Give two interpretations of the quotation 'Hard and sharp as flint'.
- 3) How is Scrooge like an oyster?
- 4) Why does Dickens present Scrooge as a humorous character?
- 5) When does the reader begin to feel sorry for Scrooge?
- 6) What does the verb 'profit' in the following quotation suggest about Scrooge: "I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. To-night, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it."
- 7) How do Dickens' use of similes in the final section of the novella highlight Scrooge's transformation?

EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

What does Scrooge learn by the end of the novella?

Which other character is Scrooge most similar to at the end of novella? Support your answer with reference to the text.

EXAM QUESTION: (based on the extract on the next page):

Read the following extract from Chapter 1 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer this question:

'Dickens' initial presentation of Scrooge presents him as a dislikable character'.

Starting with this extract, explore how far you agree with this opinion.

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 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to. 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. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that 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 were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole residuary legatee, his sole friend, and sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event, but that he was an excellent man of business on the very day of the funeral, and solemnised it with an undoubted bargain.

The mention of Marley's funeral brings me back to the point I started from. 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. If we were not perfectly convinced that Hamlet's Father died before the play began, there would be nothing more remarkable in his taking a stroll at night, in an easterly wind, upon his own ramparts, than there would be in any other middle-aged gentleman rashly turning out after dark in a breezy spot—say Saint Paul's Churchyard for instance—literally to astonish his son's weak mind.

Scrooge never painted out Old Marley's name. There it 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, but he answered to both names. It was all the same to him.

Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint, from which no steel had ever struck out generous fire; secret, and self-contained, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his old features, nipped his pointed nose, shrivelled his cheek, stiffened his gait; made his eyes red, his thin lips blue; and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. A frosty rime was on his head, and on his eyebrows, and his wiry chin. He carried his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days; and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas.

External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather 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. The heaviest rain, and snow, and hail, and sleet, could boast of the advantage over him in only one respect. They often "came down" handsomely, and Scrooge never did.

Fred: Character Analysis

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/FOeASyrxL1c>
Alternatively, on YouTube, search for: Fred: Character Analysis - 'A Christmas Carol' (Animated)



Questions:

- 1) How is Fred's dialogue different to that of Scrooge?
- 2) What is asyndetic listing?
- 3) What does this list indicate about Fred: 'kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time'.
- 4) How does Fred mirror Scrooge?
- 5) What does this quotation tell the reader about Fred: "I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not, for I pity him".

EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

Is Fred a believable character?

Which other character in the novella most closely resembles Fred? Support your answer with reference to the text.

EXAM QUESTION: (based on the extract on the next page):

Read the following extract from Chapter 1 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer this question:

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents Fred as a role model in *A Christmas Carol*.

The door of Scrooge's counting-house was open 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 a 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 he had of his approach.

"Bah!" said Scrooge, "Humbug!"

He had so heated himself with rapid walking in the fog and frost, this nephew of Scrooge's, that he was all in a glow; his face was ruddy and handsome; his eyes sparkled, and his breath smoked again.

"Christmas a humbug, uncle!" said Scrooge's nephew. "You don't mean that, I am sure?"

"I do," said Scrooge. "Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough."

"Come, then," returned the nephew gaily. "What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough."

Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said, "Bah!" again; and followed it up with "Humbug."

"Don't be cross, uncle!" said the nephew.

"What else can I be," returned the uncle, "when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas! 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, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will," said Scrooge indignantly, "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!" pleaded the nephew.

"Nephew!" returned the uncle sternly, "keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine."

"Keep it!" repeated Scrooge's nephew. "But you don't keep it."

"Let me leave it alone, then," said Scrooge. "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," returned the nephew. "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—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-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. 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!"

Mr & Mrs Cratchit: Character Analysis

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video:

<https://youtu.be/pjxyPIA79aY>

Alternatively, on YouTube, search for: Mr & Mrs Cratchit: Character Analysis (animated and updated)



Questions:

- 1) How do Mr and Mrs Cratchit differ in their attitude towards Scrooge?
- 2) How does Dickens invite the reader to feel sorry for Bob?
- 3) What does the following quotation tell us about Bob's character when he 'ran home to Camden Town as hard as he could pelt, to play at blindman's-buff'?
- 4) How does Mrs Cratchit's effort to mark Christmas day with 'ribbons' contrasts with Scrooge's attitude?

EXTENSION QUESTION:

In 1843:

- A woman was first the legal possession of her father and then that of her husband (this is the origin of the tradition of a bride being given away by her father at a church wedding).
- When a woman married, everything she owned belonged to her husband.
- If she earned any money, she was not allowed to keep it—she had to pass it to her husband.

How does the presentation of Mrs Cratchit conform to contemporary attitudes of the time towards married women?

EXAM QUESTION: (based on the extract on the next page):

Read the following extract from Chapter 3 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer this question:

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens uses the Cratchit family to present the life of the poor.

"Mr. Scrooge!" said Bob; "I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!"

"The Founder of the Feast indeed!" cried Mrs. Cratchit, reddening. "I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it."

"My dear," said Bob, "the children! Christmas Day."

"It should be Christmas Day, I am sure," said she, "on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert! Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow!"

"My dear," was Bob's mild answer, "Christmas Day."

"I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's," said Mrs. Cratchit, "not for his. Long life to him! A merry Christmas and a happy new year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!"

The children drank the toast after her. It was the first of their proceedings which had no heartiness. Tiny Tim drank it last of all, but he didn't care twopence for it. Scrooge was the Ogre of the family. The mention of his name cast a dark shadow on the party, which was not dispelled for full five minutes.

After it had passed away, they were ten times merrier than before, from the mere relief of Scrooge the Baleful being done with. Bob Cratchit told them how he had a situation in his eye for Master Peter, which would bring in, if obtained, full five-and-sixpence weekly. The two young Cratchits laughed tremendously at the idea of Peter's being a man of business; and Peter himself looked thoughtfully at the fire from between his collars, as if he were deliberating what particular investments he should favour when he came into the receipt of that bewildering income. Martha, who was a poor apprentice at a milliner's, then told them what kind of work she had to do, and how many hours she worked at a stretch, and how she meant to lie abed to-morrow morning for a good long rest; to-morrow being a holiday she passed at home. Also how she had seen a countess and a lord some days before, and how the lord "was much about as tall as Peter;" at which Peter pulled up his collars so high that you couldn't have seen his head if you had been there. All this time the chestnuts and the jug went round and round; and by-and-bye they had a song, about a lost child travelling in the snow, from Tiny Tim, who had a plaintive little voice, and sang it very well indeed.

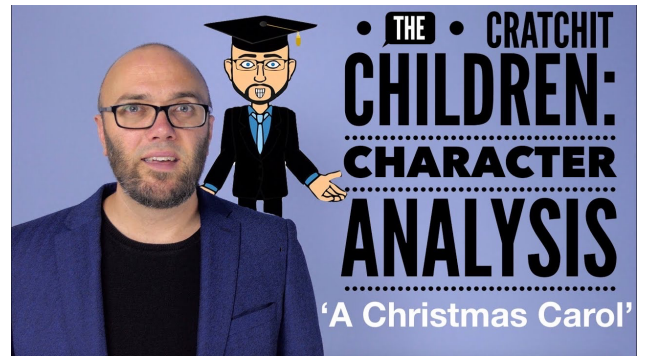
There was nothing of high mark in this. They were not a handsome family; they were not well dressed; their shoes were far from being water-proof; their clothes were scanty; and Peter might have known, and very likely did, the inside of a pawnbroker's. But, they were happy, grateful, pleased with one another, and contented with the time; and when they faded, and looked happier yet in the bright sprinklings of the Spirit's torch at parting, Scrooge had his eye upon them, and especially on Tiny Tim, until the last.

The Cratchit Children: Character Analysis

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video:

<https://youtu.be/NXUROxCLtfA>

Alternatively, on YouTube, search for: The Cratchit Children: Character Analysis - 'A Christmas Carol' (Animated)



Questions:

- 1) What does Tiny Tim represent?
- 2) What does this quotation reveal about the character of Tiny Tim: "He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see".
- 3) What is symbolised by Peter Cratchit's new shirt with its 'monstrous' collar?
- 4) What is a milliner?
- 5) What is ironic about the fact that Martha 'had seen a countess and a lord some days before'?

EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

What does this description of Bella and Mrs Cratchit tell us about the role of women in Victorian England:

'Then up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons'

EXAM QUESTION: (based on the extract on the next page):

Read the following extract from Chapter 3 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer this question:

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens presents the Cratchit children as worthy of sympathy.

Then up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honour of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable Parks. And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own; and basking in luxurious thoughts of sage and onion, these young Cratchits danced about the table, and exalted Master Peter Cratchit to the skies, while he (not proud, although his collars nearly choked him) blew the fire, until the slow potatoes bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan-lid to be let out and peeled.

"What has ever got your precious father then?" said Mrs. Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim! And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half-an-hour?"

"Here's Martha, mother!" said a girl, appearing as she spoke.

"Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits. "Hurrah! There's *such* a goose, Martha!"

"Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs. Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her with officious zeal.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night," replied the girl, "and had to clear away this morning, mother!"

"Well! Never mind so long as you are come," said Mrs. Cratchit. "Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye!"

"No, no! There's father coming," cried the two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. "Hide, Martha, hide!"

So Martha hid herself, and in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him; and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

"Why, where's our Martha?" cried Bob Cratchit, looking round.

"Not coming," said Mrs. Cratchit.

"Not coming!" said Bob, with a sudden declension in his high spirits; for he had been Tim's blood horse all the way from church, and had come home rampant. "Not coming upon Christmas Day!"

Martha didn't like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she came out prematurely from behind the closet door, and ran into his arms, while the two young Cratchits hustled Tiny Tim, and bore him off into the wash-house, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

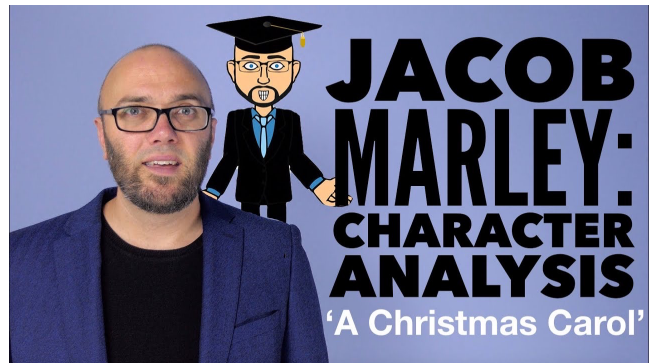
"And how did little Tim behave?" asked Mrs. Cratchit, when she had rallied Bob on his credulity, and Bob had hugged his daughter to his heart's content.

"As good as gold," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see."

Jacob Marley: Character Analysis

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/A9TNVOWQxdY>

Alternatively, on YouTube, search for: Jacob Marley: Character Analysis - 'A Christmas Carol' (updated & animated)



Questions:

- 1) How does the opening description of Jacob Marley introduce a supernatural theme and create anticipation?
- 2) What is the significance of the fact that Marley's Ghost wears a chain made of 'cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses'?
- 3) Which quotation hints at religious reasons for Marley's torment?
- 4) Dickens describes Scrooge as Marley's 'sole friend', highlighting how lonely they were in pursuit of money. He was also, sadly, the 'sole mourner' at Marley's funeral. What is suggested by the repetition of the adjective 'sole'?

EXTENSION QUESTION:

How does Dickens use Marley as his mouthpiece to emphasise the importance of social responsibility and the need to look after family, friends and employees?

EXAM QUESTION: (based on the extract on the next page):

Read the following extract from Chapter 1 of *A Christmas Carol* and then answer this question:

Starting with this extract, explore how Dickens uses the ghosts to teach the value of social responsibility.

The same face: the very same. Marley in his pigtail, usual waistcoat, tights and boots; the tassels on the latter bristling, like his pigtail, and his coat-skirts, and the hair upon his head. The chain he drew was clasped about his middle. It was long, and wound about him like a tail; and it was made (for Scrooge observed it closely) of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel. His body was transparent; so that Scrooge, observing him, and looking through his waistcoat, could see the two buttons on his coat behind.

Scrooge had often heard it said that Marley had no bowels, but he had never believed it until now.

No, nor did he believe it even now. Though he looked the phantom through and through, and saw it standing before him; though he felt the chilling influence of its death-cold eyes; and marked the very texture of the folded kerchief bound about its head and chin, which wrapper he had not observed before; he was still incredulous, and fought against his senses.

"How now!" said Scrooge, caustic and cold as ever. "What do you want with me?"

"Much!"—Marley's voice, no doubt about it.

"Who are you?"

"Ask me who I *was*."

"Who *were* you then?" said Scrooge, raising his voice. "You're particular, for a shade." He was going to say "*to* a shade," but substituted this, as more appropriate.

"In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley."

"Can you—can you sit down?" asked Scrooge, looking doubtfully at him.

"I can."

"Do it, then."

Scrooge asked the question, because he didn't know whether a ghost so transparent might find himself in a condition to take a chair; and felt that in the event of its being impossible, it might involve the necessity of an embarrassing explanation. But the ghost sat down on the opposite side of the fireplace, as if he were quite used to it.

"You don't believe in me," observed the Ghost.

"I don't," said Scrooge.

"What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your senses?"

"I don't know," said Scrooge.

"Why do you doubt your senses?"

"Because," said Scrooge, "a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!"

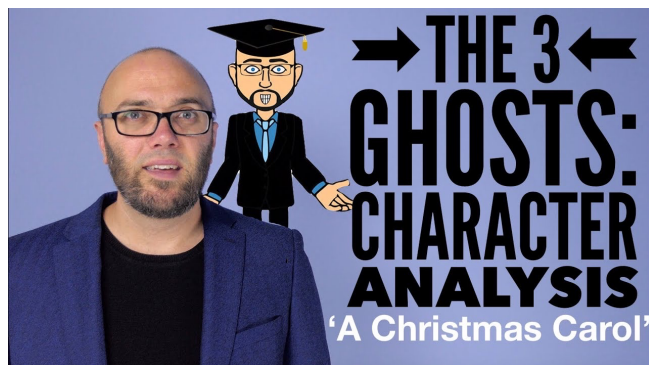
Scrooge was not much in the habit of cracking jokes, nor did he feel, in his heart, by any means waggish then. The truth is, that he tried to be smart, as a means of distracting his own attention, and keeping down his terror; for the spectre's voice disturbed the very marrow in his bones.

To sit, staring at those fixed glazed eyes, in silence for a moment, would play, Scrooge felt, the very deuce with him. There was something very awful, too, in the spectre's being provided with an infernal atmosphere of its own.

The Three Ghosts: Character Analysis

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/YW6Qo3TB39o>

Alternatively, on YouTube, search for: The 3 Ghosts: Character Analysis - 'A Christmas Carol' (animated)



Questions:

- 1) What is the symbolic significance of the fact that the Ghost of Christmas Past is associated with light?
- 2) How does the reader know that the Ghost of Christmas Present is non-threatening?
- 3) What kind of imagery is used to describe the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come? Give two examples.
- 4) How does the tone change at this moment:
““Are there no prisons?” said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. “Are there no workhouses?”

EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

Which Ghost teaches Scrooge the most important lesson? Back up your answer with reference to the text.

Summarise the message presented by each ghost.

EXAM QUESTION (based on the extract on the next page):

In this extract the Ghost of Christmas Past is being introduced to the reader. Starting with this extract, how does Dickens present the supernatural?

It was a strange figure – like a child: yet not so like a child as like an old man, viewed through some supernatural medium, which gave him the appearance of having receded from the view, and being diminished to a child's proportions. Its hair, which hung about its neck and down its back, was white as if with age; and yet the face had not a wrinkle in it, and the tenderest bloom was on the skin. The arms were very long and muscular; the hands the same, as if its hold were of uncommon strength. Its legs and feet, most delicately formed, were, like those upper members, bare. It wore a tunic of the purest white, and round its waist was bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It held a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, in singular contradiction of that wintry emblem, had its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the strangest thing about it was, that from the crown of its head there sprung a bright clear jet of light, by which all this was visible; and which was doubtless the occasion of its using, in its duller moments, a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now held under its arm.

Even this, though, when Scrooge looked at it with increasing steadiness, was not its strangest quality. For as its belt sparkled and glittered now in one part and now in another, and what was light one instant, at another time was dark, so the figure itself fluctuated in its distinctness: being now a thing with one arm, now with one leg, now with twenty legs, now a pair of legs without a head, now a head without a body: of which dissolving parts, no outline would be visible in the dense gloom wherein they melted away. And in the very wonder of this, it would be itself again; distinct and clear as ever.

“Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?” asked Scrooge. “I am.” The voice was soft and gentle. Singularly low, as if instead of being so close beside him, it were at a distance. “Who, and what are you?” Scrooge demanded. “I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.” “Long Past?” inquired Scrooge: observant of its dwarfish stature. “No. Your past.” Perhaps, Scrooge could not have told anybody why, if anybody could have asked him; but he had a special desire to see the Spirit in his cap; and begged him to be covered.

“What!” exclaimed the Ghost, “Would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give? Is it not enough that you are one of those whose passions made this cap, and force me through whole trains of years to wear it low upon my brow!”

Scrooge reverently disclaimed all intention to offend or any knowledge of having willfully bonneted the Spirit at any period of his life. He then made bold to inquire what business brought him there.

“Your welfare,” said the Ghost.

Scrooge expressed himself much obliged, but could not help thinking that a night of unbroken rest would have been more conducive to that end. The Spirit must have heard him thinking, for it said immediately:

“Your reclamation, then. Take heed.