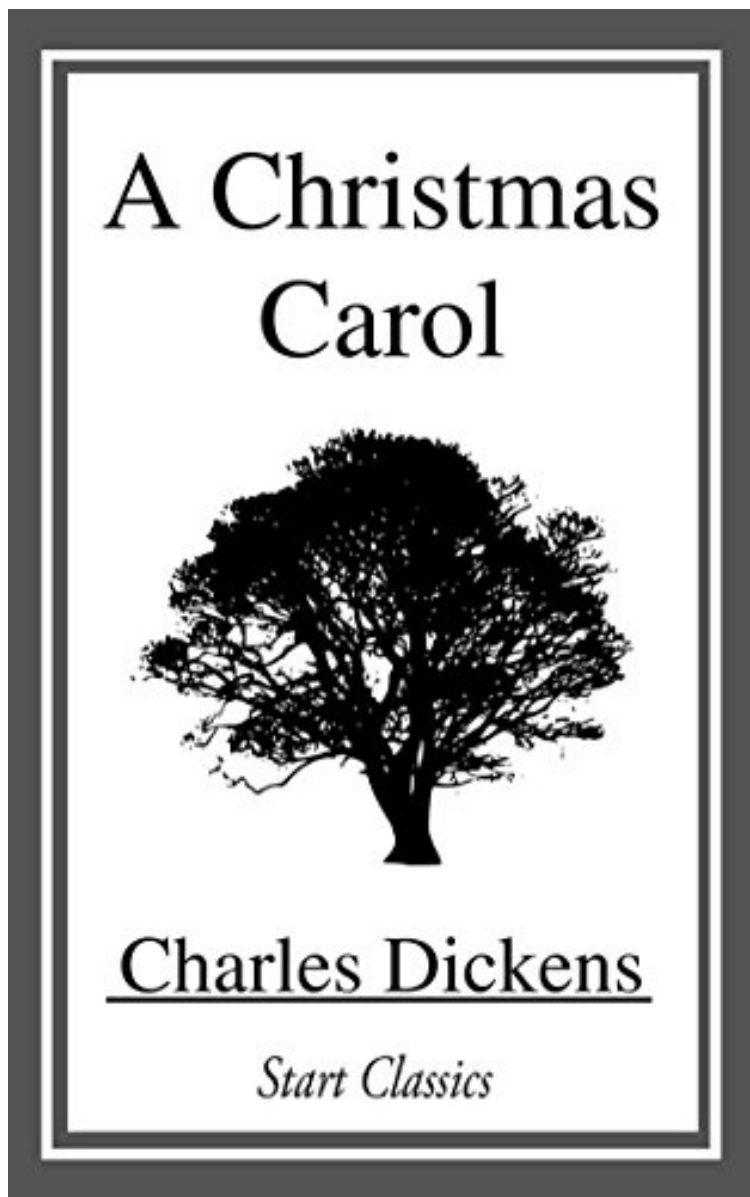


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A Christmas Carol (Dover Thrift Editions) (English Edition)



Par Charles Dickens
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Description : Description du produitThis full-length classic is Charles Dickens' famous tale of the tight-fisted Ebenezer Scrooge, who is forced just in time to relearn the meaning of the "Christmas Spirit." A family favorite.

Prsentation de l'diteurI have endeavoured in this Ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it..frATTENTION : La reliure de ce livre est "Rough

Cut" c'est pourquoi les bords sont mal coupés. Ce n'est pas quelque sorte de défaut de fabrication, c'est plutôt une sorte de reliure utilisée pour donner un aspect ancien aux livres. Extrait A new addition to the award-winning, enduring Puffin Classics line, Puffin Chalk is the next wave of classics in childrens literature. With colorful chalk designs that echo the whimsy of childhood, these collectible editions add beauty to the bookshelves of children and classics lovers alike.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR MARY KATE MCDEVITT is a letterer and illustrator living and working in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from the Tyler School of Art with a degree in graphic design and illustration and has worked as a designer, freelance illustrator, and artist. Her work has been featured in Design*Sponge, Apartment Therapy, Etsy, and Bust magazine, among many others. Preface I have endeavoured in this Ghostly book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their house pleasantly, and no one wish to lay it. Their faithful Friend and Servant, C. D. December 1843

1 Marleys 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. Scrooge signed it: and Scrooges name was good upon Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a doornail. Mind! I dont mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a doornail. 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 Countrys done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically,

that Marley was as dead as a doornail. Scrooge knew he was dead? Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he were partners for I dont 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 solemnized it with an undoubted bargain. The mention of Marleys 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 Hamlets 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 Pauls Churchyard for instance literally to astonish his sons weak mind. Scrooge never painted out Old Marleys 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 didnt thaw it one degree at Christmas. External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, nor 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 didnt 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. Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with gladsome looks, My dear Scrooge, how are you? when will you come to see me? No beggars implored him to bestow a trifle, no children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place, of Scrooge. Even the blindmens dogs appeared to know him; and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up 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 Scrooge 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, was what the knowing ones call nuts to

Scrooge. 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 cold, bleak, biting weather: foggy withal: and he could hear the people in the court outside, go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement-stones to warm them. The city clocks had only just gone three, but it was quite dark already: it had not been light all day: and candles were flaring in the windows of the neighbouring offices, like ruddy

smears upon the palpable brown air. The fog came pouring in at every chink and keyhole, and was so dense without, that although the court was of the narrowest, the houses opposite were mere phantoms. To see the dingy cloud come drooping down, obscuring everything, one might have thought that Nature lived hard by, and was brewing on a large scale. The door of Scrooges 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 clerks fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. But he couldnt 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 Scrooges 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 Scrooges, 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 Scrooges nephew. You dont 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? Youre poor enough. Come, then, returned the nephew gaily. What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? Youre rich enough. Scrooge having no better answer ready on the spur of the moment, said, Bah! again; and followed it up with Humbug. Dont 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! Whats Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and 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 Scrooges nephew. But you dont 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! The clerk in the tank involuntarily applauded: becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he poked the fire, and extinguished the last frail spark for ever. Let me hear another sound from you, said Scrooge, and youll keep your Christmas by losing your situation. Youre quite a powerful speaker, sir, he added, turning to his nephew. I wonder you dont go into Parliament. Dont be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us tomorrow. Scrooge said that he would see him yes, indeed he did. He went the whole length of the expression, and said that he would see him in that extremity first. But why? cried Scrooges nephew.

Why? Why did you get married? said Scrooge. Because I fell in love. Because you fell in love! growled Scrooge, as if that were the only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a merry Christmas. Good afternoon! Nay, uncle, but you never came to see me before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now? Good afternoon, said Scrooge. I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends? Good afternoon, said Scrooge. I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and Ill keep my Christmas humour to the last. So A Merry Christmas, uncle! Good afternoon, said Scrooge. And A Happy New Year! Good afternoon! said Scrooge. His nephew left the room without an angry word, notwithstanding. He stopped at the outer door to bestow the greetings of the season on the clerk, who, cold as he was, was warmer than Scrooge; for he returned them cordially. Theres another fellow, muttered Scrooge; who overheard him: my clerk, with fifteen shillings a-week, and a wife and family, talking about a merry Christmas. Ill retire to Bedlam. This lunatic, in letting Scrooges nephew out, had let two other people in. They were portly gentlemen, pleasant to behold, and now stood, with their hats off, in Scrooges office. They had books and papers in their hands, and bowed to him. Scrooge and Marleys, I believe, said one of the

gentlemen, referring to his list. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr Scrooge, or Mr Marley? Mr Marley has been dead these seven years, Scrooge replied. He died seven years ago, this very night. We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner, said the gentleman, presenting his credentials. It certainly was; for they had been two kindred spirits. At the ominous word liberality, Scrooge frowned, and shook his head, and handed the credentials back. At this festive season of the year, Mr Scrooge, said the gentleman, taking up a pen, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir. Are there no prisons? asked Scrooge. Plenty of prisons, said the gentleman, laying down the pen again. And the Union workhouses? demanded Scrooge. Are they still in operation? They are. Still, returned the gentleman, I wish I could say they were not. The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then? said Scrooge. Both very busy, Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course, said Scrooge. I'm very glad to hear it. Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude, returned the gentleman, a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for? Nothing! Scrooge replied. You wish to be anonymous? I wish to be left alone, said Scrooge. Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there. Many can't go there; and many would rather die. If they would rather die, said Scrooge, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides excuse me I don't know that. But you might know it, observed the gentleman. It's not my business, Scrooge returned. It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, gentlemen! Seeing clearly that it would be useless to pursue their point, the gentlemen withdrew. Scrooge resumed his labours with an improved opinion of himself, and in a more facetious temper than was usual with him.