

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

Stave Five

The Third and final ghost leaves

THE Spirit disappeared down into a bedpost.

Scrooge looked around him. He was alone again. Everything was back to normal.

From the street he could hear church bells.

Scrooge ran to the window and opened it. He put his head out. It was clear and bright. No fog! No night! A golden day.

‘What day is today my fine fellow?’ cried Scrooge, calling down to a boy in his best clothes.

‘Today? Why, CHRISTMAS DAY.’

‘So I haven’t missed it! Tell me, have they sold that prize turkey in the shop on the corner?’

‘What, the one as big as me?’

‘Yes, my boy!’

‘It’s hanging there now.’

‘Is it? Go and buy it.’

‘Don’t joke with me sir!’ said the boy.

‘No, no, I am not joking. Tell them to bring it here. Come back in less than five minutes, and I’ll give you a silver coin!’

The boy raced off and returned with the turkey. The bird was twice the size of Tiny Tim! Scrooge arranged for it to be delivered anonymously to the home of Mr Bob Cratchit.

Scrooge dressed in his best clothes and went out into the streets. There were crowds of people.

Walking with his hands behind him, Scrooge smiled at everyone. He looked so happy that three or four fellows said, ‘Good morning, sir! A merry Christmas to you!’

They were the most joyful words he had ever heard.

In the afternoon, Scrooge walked to his nephew’s house. He passed the door a dozen times, too scared to go up and knock.

Then he did it.

‘Is your master at home, my dear?’ said Scrooge to the girl.

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Where is he, my love?’

‘He’s in the dining-room, sir.’

‘He knows me,’ said Scrooge. ‘I’ll go in here, my dear.’ Then he called out ‘Fred!’

‘Who’s that?’ cried Fred.

‘It’s I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?’

Let him in? Fred nearly shook his arm off.



Scrooge came early to the office next morning. He wanted to be there first. He wanted to catch Bob Cratchit coming late!

And he did it.

The clock struck nine. No Bob. A quarter past. No Bob.

Bob was eighteen-and-a-half minutes late.

Scrooge sat with his door wide open. He watched Bob come into the office.

Bob's hat was off before he opened the door. A second later he was sitting on his stool, pen in hand.

‘What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?’

‘I am very sorry, sir. I am behind my time.’

‘Yes, I think you are!’

Scrooge leapt from his stool. He pushed Bob so hard he fell back into the office again ‘I’m going to raise your salary!’

Bob trembled. What was Scrooge saying? ‘I don’t understand, sir.’

‘A Merry Christmas, Bob!’ said Scrooge, clapping him on the back. ‘Now go and buy some more coal for the fire. We need to discuss how to help your family.’

Scrooge did it all, and more. To Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, he was a second father. I-

Some people laughed to see the change in Scrooge.

But his own heart laughed, and that was quite enough for him.

Scrooge had no further visits from the Spirits. From that day on he always celebrated Christmas with all his heart. People always said of him, ‘Old Scrooge knows how to keep Christmas well.’

And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!

The End

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