

A christmas carol-
which of the three
spirits is the most
influential in
scrooges...

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A Christmas Carol: Scrooge's Epiphany In his preface to the novel A Christmas Carol, Charles Dickens writes: " I 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" (Dickens, 2004). This sums up the theme of his story. Dickens writing often portrays his own childhood and this novel in particular reflects on many aspects of his painful past, mainly his father's imprisonment due to unpaid debt and his mother making him work in a boot-blackening factory. The novel sheds light on the essence and spirit of the Christmas Eve with which the Victorians celebrated it.

The story, however, revolves around a cold and insensitive man named Ebenezer Scrooge who remains engrossed in his business and does not believe in wasting time even on the celebration of Christmas. In fact, he hated the very sound of anything associated with it, even the carols sung on the street. Because of this heartless approach towards the poor, people winced at his name and called him worse than an animal. As the story unfolds, he is visited by three spirits of the past, present and future. His dead friend Marley warns him of their arrival. At first Scrooge ignores the delusions. But he is later convinced that they really have visited him to help him transform. Each spirit has an inimitable influence on Scrooge's personality but the Ghost of Christmas Future has the most powerful impact on his life.

At first Scrooge does not believe in what he witnesses. When the ghost of Christmas past takes him back in time and shows him his own childhood,

tears start rolling down his hard and stiff cheeks. He resists what he calls a torment to his soul and denies the ghost as he returns to the comfort of his own wintry chamber. He is surrounded by bleakness and he does not welcome any sort of intrusion. But the spirit from the past makes him recall the times when he was treated with love and affection. He got his father's entire inheritance and did not share it with his sister.

The second spirit is from the present. Cloaked in a lavish gown, the ghost takes him through the happy moments and the joyous lives of other people in the town. Scrooge is made to see that after such a hectic routine, everybody deserves a break and Christmas is the right time to do exactly that. It takes him to the house of his employee, Cratchit who is sitting with his family around the table, along with his ill son, Tiny Tim. Tim was ill-treated by Scrooge and as a result fell sick. Here the ghost of Christmas Future intervenes and shows him that soon the child will be dead. This is the turning point in his life. Scrooge cannot take it any longer. The painful future is too much to bear.

The third spirit knocks the life out of Scrooge. He realizes that he has wasted his past twenty years doing nothing special. Death gives Scrooge the chills of life and he swears to help undo all the harm he has done to the people around him. The last spirit, the Ghost of the Future shows him that after his death, no one will care about him. Scrooge manages to keep his word on the day of Christmas when it dawns upon him that he is still alive and has another chance to prove his worth. Charles Dickens not only brought a smile on the general reader but also reduced the gulf between the rich and the poor of the society.

Works Cited

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