

Chapter 7

Christmas with the Fezziwigs

Scrooge and the Ghost of Christmas Past walked through the busy streets of the city. The ghost stopped outside the door of a big building.

'Do you remember this place?' it asked.

'Yes, of course I remember,' replied Scrooge. 'I worked here after I left school.'

They went into the building and saw an old gentleman sitting in an office. He was sitting on a very high chair and he was writing numbers in a big account book. 'It's old Fezziwig!' shouted Scrooge. 'Dear old Fezziwig!'

As Scrooge spoke, the old gentleman put down his pen. He looked at a clock. It was seven o'clock. Fezziwig smiled, then he laughed. He clapped his hands together. He was a very happy old man.

'Ebenezer! Dick!' shouted Fezziwig.

Two young men ran into the office. And Scrooge saw himself as a young man.

'Look,' said Scrooge to the ghost. 'There's Dick Wilkins with me. He liked me. He was a good friend.'

No more work tonight, boys,' said Fezziwig. 'It's Christmas Eve.'

Fezziwig clapped his hands again and jumped down from his high chair.

'Move the desks, boys,' he said. 'Move the chairs. Put lots of coal on the fire. Make the room bright and merry!'

Soon a man arrived. He was carrying a violin. Mrs Fezziwig arrived. She was smiling and happy like her husband. Then Mr and Mrs Fezziwig's three daughters arrived. They were smiling and happy too. Then six young men who were in love with the daughters came in. And the Fezziwigs' servants and a young man who lived across the road arrived. The musician started to play his violin and the party began.

The young people danced. They played games and they ate lots of food.

Old Mr and Mrs Fezziwig danced and laughed!

At eleven o'clock the party finished. Mr and Mrs Fezziwig stood by the door. They shook hands with everyone as they left. 'Merry Christmas!' they all said. 'Merry Christmas!'

At last, everyone had gone except Ebenezer and Dick. They lived with Mr and Mrs Fezziwig. The two old people shook hands with them. Then Ebenezer and Dick went to bed. They both slept in beds in the office.

While he watched the party, old Scrooge had forgotten about the ghost. Suddenly he saw that the ghost was looking at him again. The light coming out of its head was very bright.

'It is very easy to make people happy, isn't it?' the ghost said. 'Listen.'

Scrooge listened to Dick and Ebenezer talking.

'Mr and Mrs Fezziwig are dear, kind people. They are so good to us,' said the young men.

'Fezziwig did not spend much money,1 the ghost went on.



The young people danced. They played games and ate lots of food. Old Mr and Mrs Fezziwig danced and laughed!

'So why did people like him so much?

'The money was not important,' replied Scrooge. 'We worked for him and he was able make us happy or unhappy. He was able make our work hard or easy. The happiness he gave us was important, not the money he spent.

The Ghost of Christmas Past looked carefully at Scrooge and Scrooge suddenly stopped talking.

'What are you thinking about?' asked the ghost.

'Oh, nothing much,' replied Scrooge. 'I was ... I was wishing I could speak a few words to Bob Cratchit.

The ghost did not speak for a few moments. Then it said, 'I do not have much time left'