

Chapter 8

The Girl Who Loved Scrooge

Mr and Mrs Fezziwig disappeared. So did Dick and the young Ebenezer. Then Scrooge saw himself again, but now he was a few years older. He looked serious and worried; Scrooge was looking at himself in his past life again. :

There was a beautiful young girl sitting next to Ebenezer. She was wearing a black dress and she was crying.

'It was Christmas once again, but it was not a happy Christmas.'

A few years ago we got engaged, Ebenezer,' said the girl. 'We decided to get married when we had enough money. But you have changed. Now you care more about money than you care about me. You do not have to marry me. We can break our engagement.'

'Belle, I have never asked to break our engagement,' replied Ebenezer.:

'No,' she said. 'But it's true, isn't it? You love money more than you love me.'

'Yes,' he replied quietly. The girl stood up and walked away from him. She left him for ever.

'Oh, Ghost of Christmas Past!' cried Scrooge. 'Take me home. I don't want to see any more.'

'There is one more place you must see,' said the ghost, and it held Scrooge with a strong hand. 'Look over there!'

Scrooge saw a warm, comfortable room. The room was full of noisy, happy children. A beautiful young girl was sitting by the fire. : ' ;

And first, Scrooge thought it was Belle. But then he saw Belle sitting opposite the girl. Belle was many years older now, but she was still beautiful. The girl was Belle's daughter : . : .

The door opened and a man came in, He was carrying toys and Christmas presents. The children ran to meet their father who laughed and played with them. At last, the man sat down with his wife and eldest daughter.

Scrooge watched sadly. Why wasn't this woman his wife? Why wasn't this girl his daughter?

'Belle, said the man to his wife. 'I saw someone you used to know today. Who do you think it was?'

The woman laughed. 'Was it Mr Scrooge?'

'Yes, it was. I walked past his office. He was sitting there on his own. His partner, Jacob Marley, died today. So now Scrooge is alone. He has no friends and no family.'

'Ghost of Christmas Past,' said Scrooge, 'please, please



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take me away from this place. I don't want to see any more.'

'These things all happened in your past life,' said the ghost to the old man. 'You made them happen.'

'Please,' said Scrooge, 'please let me go home.'

When he looked at the ghost's face, Scrooge saw lots of different faces. He saw the faces of all the people from his past life. The bright light shone out of the top of the ghost's head.

Quickly, Scrooge took hold of the pointed cap that was under the ghost's arm. He put the cap on the ghost's head. He pushed the cap down as hard as he could. But the light did not go out. It shone down onto the ground. Scrooge was very tired. Suddenly he was back in his own room. He lay down on his bed and immediately fell asleep.