
GREAT ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS

**A CHRISTMAS
CAROL**

Charles Dickens

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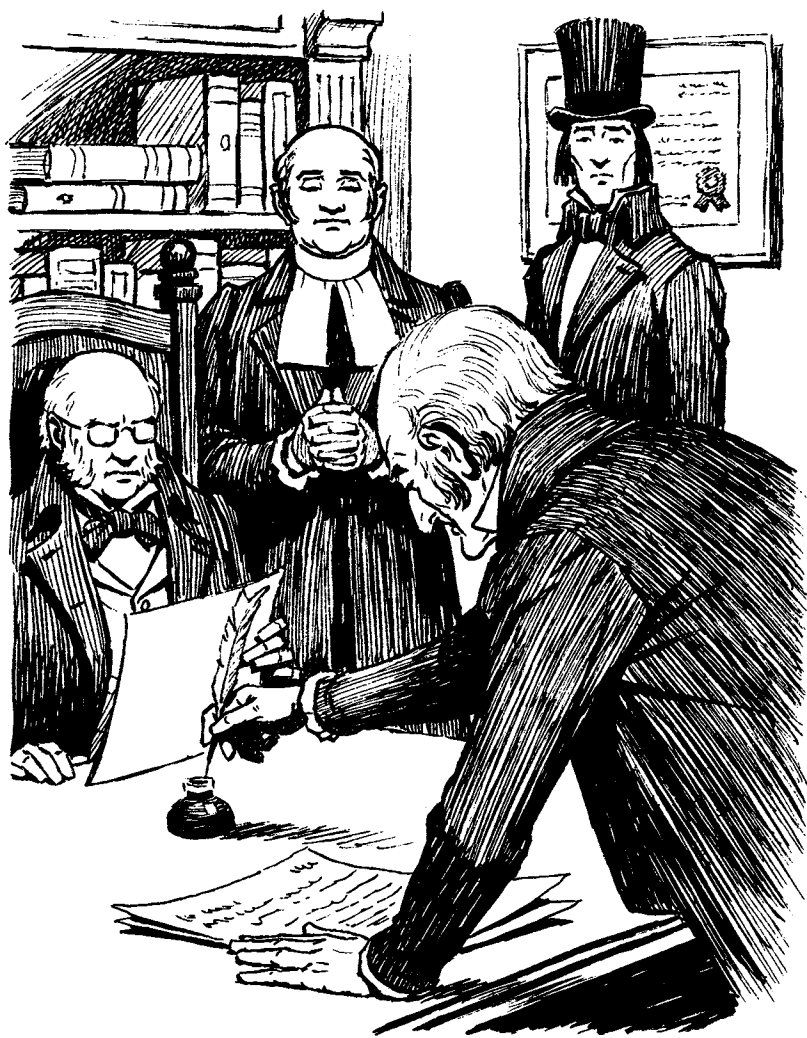
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Ebenezer Scrooge Signs the Papers.

CHAPTER 1

Ebenezer Scrooge

Jacob Marley was dead. Everyone knew that. There was no doubt about that. All the official papers were properly signed by witnesses to make them legal. The clergyman signed the papers. The city clerk signed them. And the undertaker signed them. Even Ebenezer Scrooge signed them, and everyone knew that anything Scrooge signed had to be perfectly legal!

Yes, Marley was as dead as a doornail.

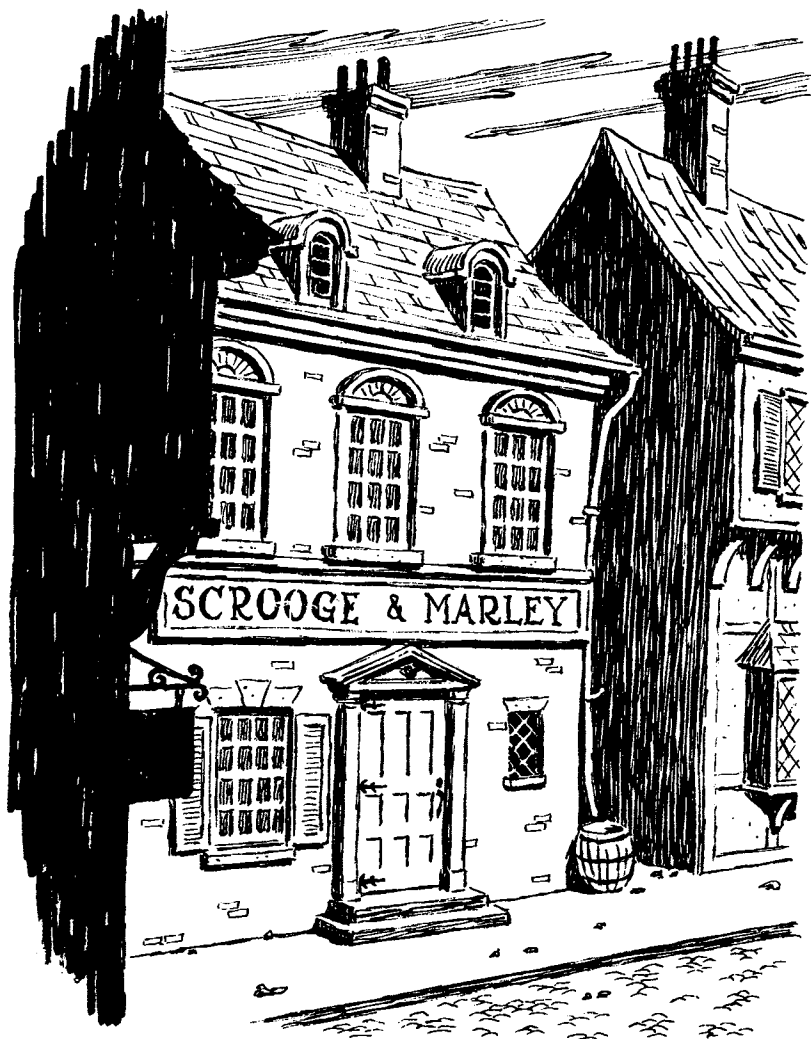
Did Scrooge know he was dead? Of course he did. How could he not know? After all,

A Christmas Carol

Scrooge and Marley had been business partners for many years. Besides, Scrooge was the executor of Marley's estate, as decreed in his will. Scrooge was Marley's only friend, his only mourner, and the only beneficiary of his estate. Still, Scrooge was an excellent business man and even on the day of Marley's death, he took advantage of the sad event by offering his customers special bargains.

Yes, Scrooge knew without a doubt that Marley was dead, but for some reason, which no one knew, he never painted old Marley's name out of the sign that stood above their warehouse door. It still read, "Scrooge and Marley."

But Scrooge was a tight-fisted old man, squeezing every penny out of a bargain, showing no mercy to those who owed him money, and wrenching every minute of work out of his employees. Yes, he was a cold, solitary old man—cold inside and cold outside. His cold heart froze every feature about



The Scrooge and Marley Warehouse