

Stave 5: The End of It

Yes! and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

‘I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future.’ Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. ‘The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley. Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this. I say it on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees.’

He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call. He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the Spirit, and his face was wet with tears.

‘They are not torn down.’ cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, ‘they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here — I am here — the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will.’

His hands were busy with his garments all this time; turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.

‘I don’t know what to do.’ cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoon of himself with his stockings. ‘I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody. A happy New Year to all the world. Hallo here. Whoop. Hallo.’

He had frisked into the sitting-room, and was now standing there: perfectly winded.

‘There’s the saucepan that the gruel was in.’ cried Scrooge, starting off again, and going round the fireplace. ‘There’s the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered. There’s the corner where the Ghost of Christmas Present, sat. There’s the window where I saw the wandering Spirits. It’s all right, it’s all true, it all happened. Ha ha ha.’

Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs.

‘I don’t know what day of the month it is.’ said Scrooge. ‘I don’t know how long I’ve been among the Spirits. I don’t know anything. I’m quite a baby. Never mind. I don’t care. I’d rather be a baby. Hallo. Whoop. Hallo here.’