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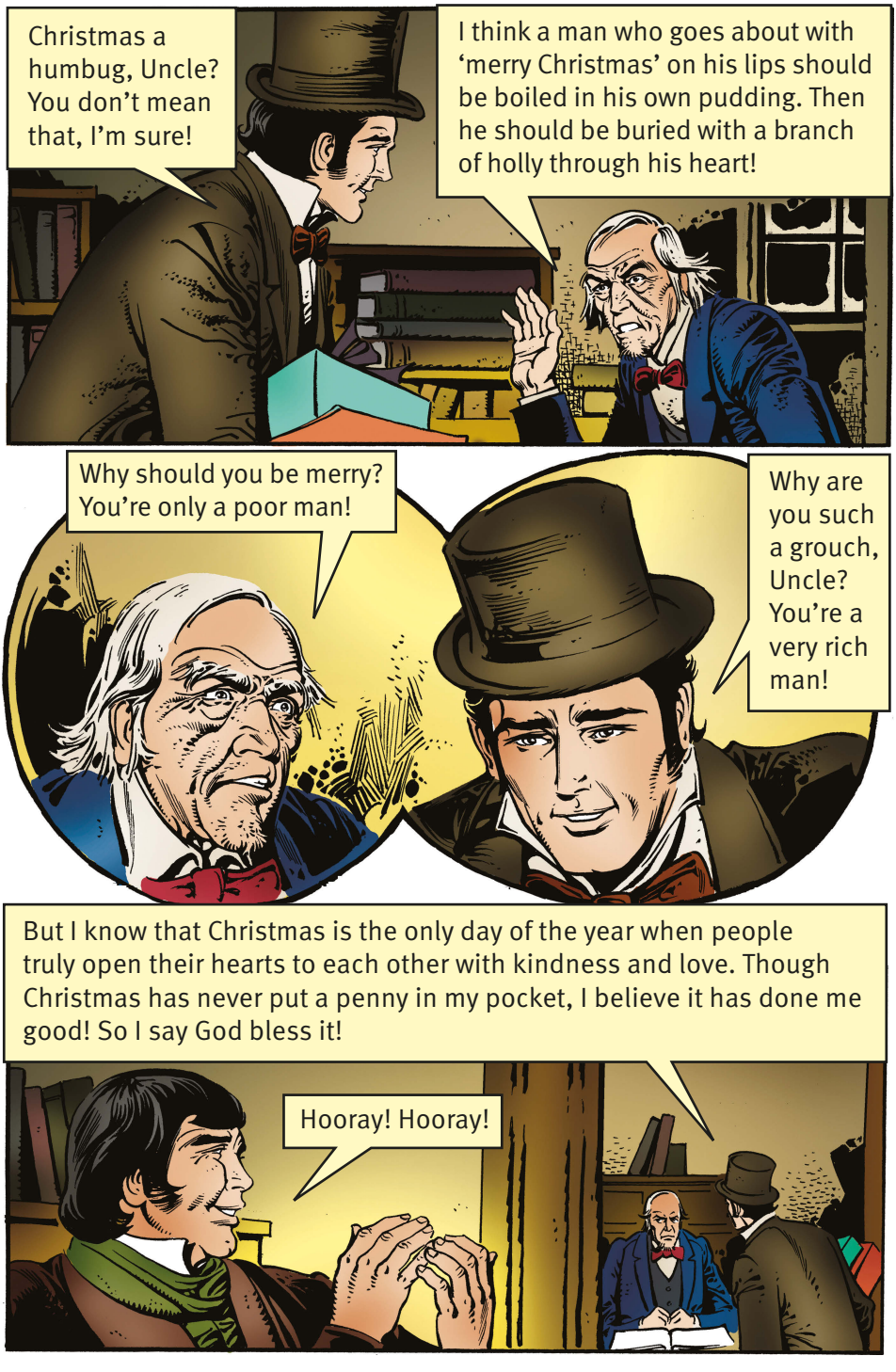
A Christmas Carol
CHARLES DICKENS

Ebenezer Scrooge and Jacob Marley had been business partners for years. However, when our story opens on this cold Christmas Eve in eighteenth-century London, Jacob Marley had been dead for the last seven. Since money had always been the most important thing in the world to them, the sign outside the office still read Scrooge and Marley. It would have cost Scrooge money to have Marley's name painted out!

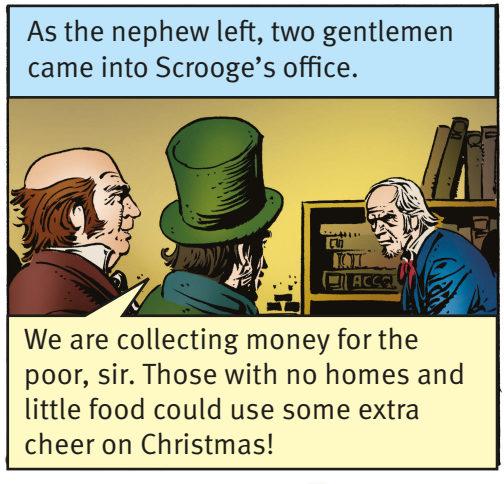
In the story, the ghost of Scrooge's dead partner, Jacob Marley visits him. Marley's ghost promises Scrooge that, for his own good, he will have three other ghostly visitors. They help Scrooge to see what he has become: a man without love or friends. But most important of all, Scrooge is left with the chance to change his future.

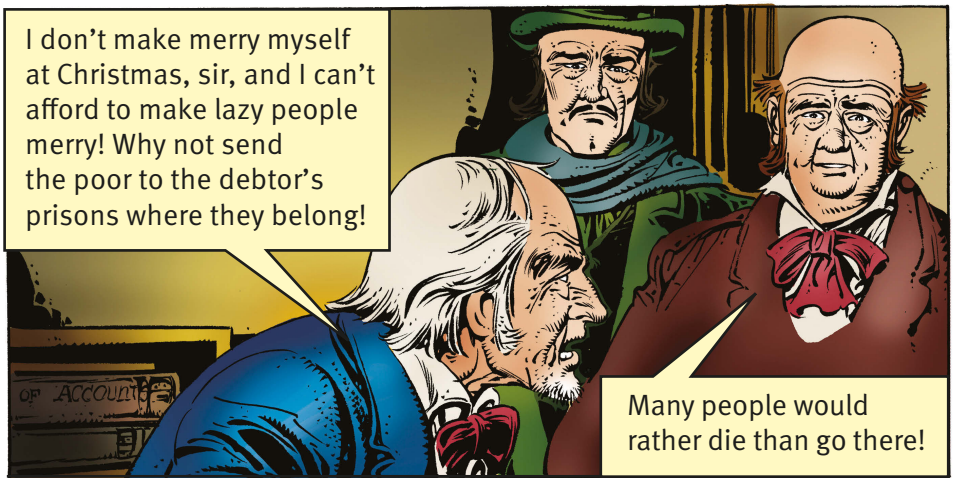
Although the hour was late, Scrooge and his clerk, Bob Cratchit, were still at work in the chilly, dark office. Outside, people rushed by on last-minute Christmas errands. None of them were too cold or too hurried to wish the others a merry Christmas! It seemed warmer outside than it was in Scrooge's office.
You didn't put more coal on the fire, did you Cratchit?
No, sir.
Good! And keep your eye off that clock, too!
Will this day never end? There's so much I have to do tonight!
A little later, as Scrooge sat at his desk, counting coins, a young man appeared in the doorway. It was his nephew, Fred.
A merry Christmas, Uncle!
Bah! Humbug!

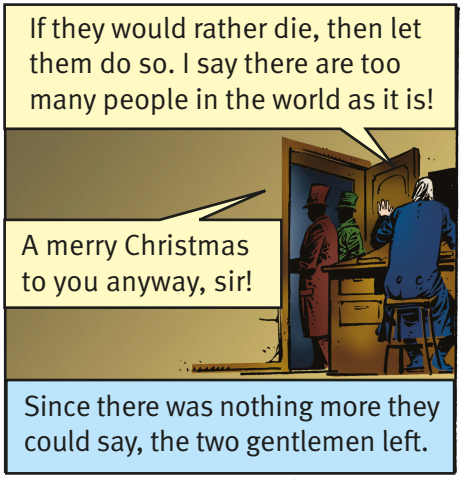

Christmas a humbug, Uncle? You don't mean that, I'm sure!
I think a man who goes about with 'merry Christmas' on his lips should be boiled in his own pudding. Then he should be buried with a branch of holly through his heart!
Why should you be merry? You're only a poor man!
Why are you such a grouch, Uncle? You're a very rich man!
But I know that Christmas is the only day of the year when people truly open their hearts to each other with kindness and love. Though Christmas has never put a penny in my pocket, I believe it has done me good! So I say God bless it!
Hooray! Hooray!

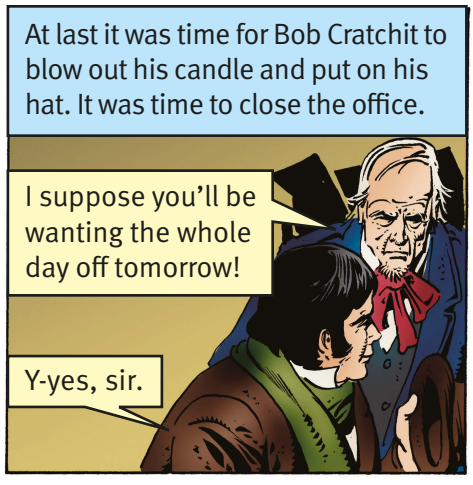
Another sound from you, Cratchit, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your job!
Don't be angry, Uncle. Come and have Christmas dinner with us tomorrow.

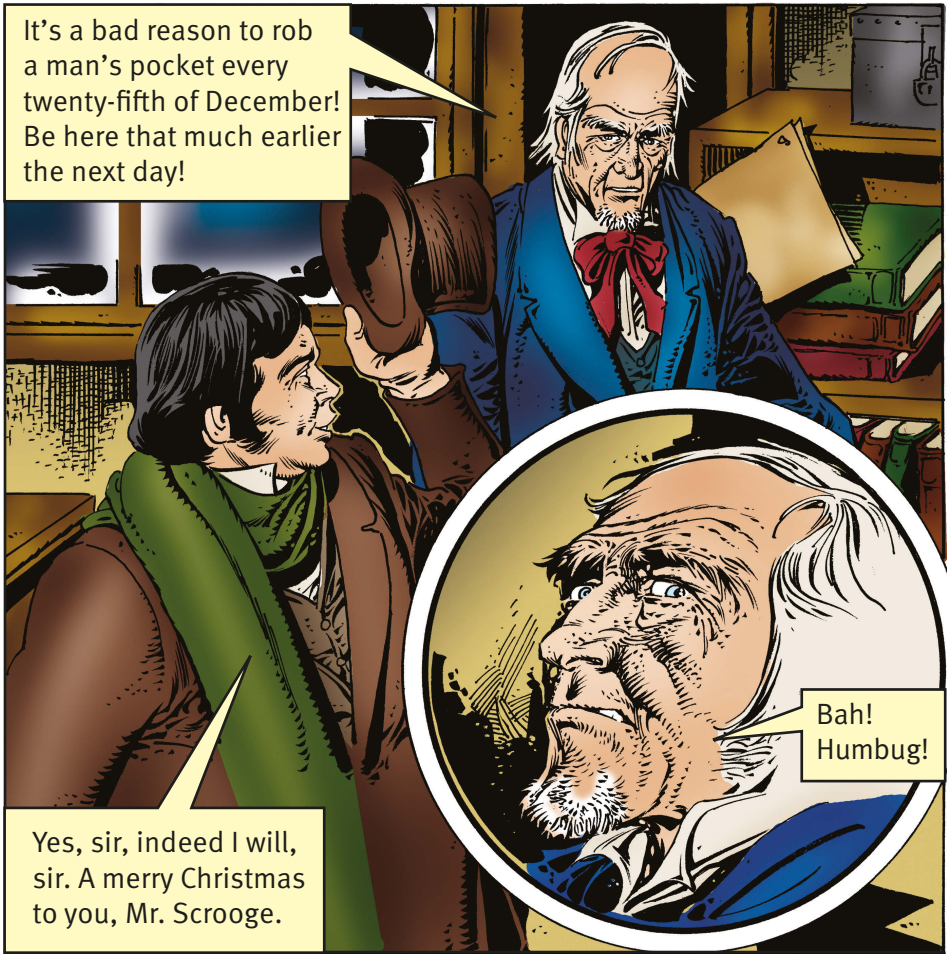
I will not! Christmas is a lot of humbug! Goodbye!
Goodbye, Uncle, and a happy holiday to you anyway!


As the nephew left, two gentlemen came into Scrooge's office.
We are collecting money for the poor, sir. Those with no homes and little food could use some extra cheer on Christmas!


I don't make merry myself at Christmas, sir, and I can't afford to make lazy people merry! Why not send the poor to the debtor's prisons where they belong!
Many people would rather die than go there!


If they would rather die, then let them do so. I say there are too many people in the world as it is!
A merry Christmas to you anyway, sir!
Since there was nothing more they could say, the two gentlemen left.


At last it was time for Bob Cratchit to blow out his candle and put on his hat. It was time to close the office.
I suppose you'll be wanting the whole day off tomorrow!
Y-yes, sir.


It's a bad reason to rob a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December! Be here that much earlier the next day!
Yes, sir, indeed I will, sir. A merry Christmas to you, Mr. Scrooge.
Bah! Humbug!

After a lonely supper at a nearby shop, Scrooge started home. He lived alone in the same rooms that had once been the home of his partner, Jacob Marley.

He made his way through the dark streets until he reached the front door of an old building. As he reached to unlock it, the door knocker before him seemed to glow. Then it changed, and Marley's face appeared in its place!

As Scrooge stood watching, the face faded. Soon only the heavy iron knocker remained.

I couldn't have seen Marley's face. My mind must be playing tricks on me tonight!

Once inside, he lighted a candle, locked the door, and started up the stairs.

It was nothing!

A Christmas Carol

A wonderful, intriguing, joyful, mystery about Christmas...one of the most heartwarming stories ever written!

A Christmas Carol is without question one of Charles Dickens' greatest works. This extremely popular story introduces some of the most timeless, internationally known characters such as Scrooge, the unforgettable miser; Bob Cratchit, the underpaid clerk; and Tiny Tim, Crachit's frail, loving son.

This story is synonymous with the festive and giving spirit of Christmas and is one of the most widely read classics of all time.

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