

A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens wrote A Christmas Carol in 1843. It is a story of Ebenezer Scrooge, a mean and heartless miser, who is visited by four spirits one Christmas Eve. The visits change Scrooge forever. In this passage, Scrooge is visited by the last of the spirits.

The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently, approached. When it came near him, Scrooge bent down upon his knee; for in the very air through which this Spirit moved it seemed to scatter gloom and mystery.

It was shrouded in a deep black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form, and left nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand. But for this it would have been difficult to detach its figure from the night, and separate it from the darkness by which it was surrounded.

He felt that it was tall and stately when it came beside him, and that its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread. He knew no more, for the Spirit neither spoke nor moved.

“I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?” said Scrooge.

The Spirit answered not, but pointed onward with its hand.

“You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us,” Scrooge pursued. “Is that so, Spirit?”

The upper portion of the garment was contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That was the only answer he received.

Although well used to ghostly company by this time, Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him, and he found that he could hardly stand when he prepared to follow it. The Spirit paused a moment, as observing his condition, and giving him time to recover.

But Scrooge was all the worse for this. It thrilled him with a vague uncertain horror, to know that behind the dusky shroud, there were ghostly eyes intently fixed upon him, while he, though he stretched his own to the utmost, could see nothing but a spectral hand and one great heap of black.



Scrooge meets the last of the spirits.

Setting the Mood

List four sentences or phrases from the passage which shows how the author uses language to set a mood of fear and darkness.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

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Examples of correct answers:

1. **“The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approached.”**

2. **“its mysterious presence filled him with a solemn dread”**

3. **“Scrooge feared the silent shape so much that his legs trembled beneath him”**

4. **“It was shrouded in a deep, black garment, which concealed its head, its face, its form”**
