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A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens

圣诞欢歌



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Clare West 改写

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著 Charles Dickens

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简介

埃比尼泽·斯克罗吉是一位脾气暴躁、可怜、吝啬的老头儿。当他的外甥在圣诞前夜去看望他并祝他圣诞快乐时，斯克罗吉一点儿也不高兴。“呸！骗人的东西！”他说。“圣诞节是骗人的东西！所有到处游逛说‘圣诞快乐’的人的舌头都应被割掉。是的，他会！”

噢！对了，斯克罗吉是一个刻薄、吝啬的人。他的雇员鲍勃·克拉奇蒂每周只能挣得 15 先令，而且只能在一间又冷又小的办公室上班，办公室里生的火小得连脚指头都暖和不过来。

但是那年的圣诞前夜，斯克罗吉已故多年的合伙人雅各布·马利的鬼魂拜访了他，其后又有另外三个鬼魂来访……那一夜格外漫长和恐怖，当圣诞节最终来临的时候，斯克罗吉的确已判若两人了。

查尔斯·狄更斯是英国最著名的作家之一，1812 年生于朴次茅斯，于 1870 年去世。他家境贫寒，在不幸的童年之后，他很快变得富有并一举成名。他的著名作品包括《雾都孤儿》、《双城记》和《圣诞欢歌》等。

1**Marley's ghost**

It is important to remember that Jacob Marley was dead. Did Scrooge know that? Of course he did. Scrooge and Marley had been partners in London for many years, and excellent men of business they were, too. When Marley died, Scrooge continued with the business alone. Both names still stood above the office door: Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people who were new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names. He did not care what name they called him. The only thing that mattered to him was the business, and making money.

Oh! He was a hard, clever, mean old man, Scrooge was! There was nothing warm or open about him. He lived a secretive, lonely life, and took no interest in other people at all. The cold inside him made his eyes red, and his thin lips blue, and his voice high and cross. It put white frost on his old head, his eyebrows and his chin. The frost in his heart made the air around him cold, too. In the hottest days of summer his office was as cold as ice, and it was just as cold in winter.

Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, with a happy smile, 'My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?' No poor man asked him for money, no children asked him the time, no man or woman ever, in all his life,

1. 马利的鬼魂

要记住雅各布·马利已经死了,这可是件重要的事儿。斯克罗吉知道这个吗?他当然知道。斯克罗吉和马利在伦敦曾是多年的合作伙伴,并且他们还都是精明的生意人。当马利死的时候,斯克罗吉一个人继续操持着生意。办公室门口的上方悬挂的依旧是两个人的名字:斯克罗吉和马利。有时初次来这儿打交道的人们喊斯克罗吉斯克罗吉,有时喊马利,但两个名字他都应答。他不在乎别人叫他什么名字。对他来说唯一重要的事情是他的生意和赚钱。

噢!他是一个刻薄、精明、吝啬的老头儿,斯克罗吉的确是这样的!他没有丝毫热情,也从来不敢开心扉。他过着神秘、孤独的生活,对别人丝毫不感兴趣。他内心的冷漠使他的眼睛呈红色,他的薄唇呈蓝色,他的嗓音既高又暴躁。他的冷漠使他的老脑壳、眉毛和下巴罩上了白色的冰霜。他内心的冰霜使得他周围的空气都变得寒冷。在最炎热的夏日里他的办公室也很冰冷,就像冬天一样寒冷。

走在街上没有人截住他并面带幸福的微笑向他说,“我亲爱的斯克罗吉,你好吗?你什么时候来我这里坐坐?”穷人没有向他讨过钱,孩子们没有向他问过时间。在他一生中,从没有任何人,无论男女,向他问过



partner *n.* with or in a person who shares (in the same activity). 合伙人。
continue with: go on with 继续。
matter *v.* be important. 重要;有关系。
take no interest in: show no interest in. 对…不感兴趣。



asked him the way. Animals as well as people were afraid of him. Dogs used to hide in doorways when they saw him coming. But what did Scrooge care! It was just what he wanted. He liked being on the edge of people's busy lives, while warning everyone to keep away from him.

One Christmas Eve, old Scrooge was working busily in his office. It was cold, frosty, foggy weather. Outside it was already dark, although it was only three o'clock in the afternoon, and there were candles in all the office windows. The fog covered everything, like a thick grey blanket.

Scrooge kept his office door open, in order to check that his clerk, Bob Cratchit, was working. Bob spent his days in a dark little room, a kind of cupboard, next to his employer's office. Scrooge had a very small fire, but Bob's fire was much smaller. It was very cold in the cupboard, and Bob had to wear his long white scarf to try to keep warm.

'Merry Christmas, uncle! God bless you!' cried a happy voice. Scrooge's nephew had arrived.

'Bah!' said Scrooge crossly. 'Humbug!'

'Christmas is humbug! Surely you don't mean that, uncle?' said his nephew.

'I do,' said Scrooge. 'Why do you call it "merry" Christmas? You're too poor to be merry.'

'Well,' replied the nephew, smiling, 'why are you so cross? You're too rich to be unhappy.'

'Of course I'm cross,' answered the uncle, 'when I live in a

路。人和动物都怕他。狗见到他来了就藏到门廊下。但斯科罗吉在乎什么呢！这正是他梦寐以求的。他喜欢处在人们繁忙生活的边缘，他警告所有的人都离他远点儿。

在一个圣诞前夜，老斯科罗吉正在办公室忙碌着。天气寒冷，还有霜冻，雾蒙蒙的。虽然才下午3点，但外面天已经黑了，办公室窗子里都亮起了蜡烛。雾就像一条厚厚的毯子笼罩了一切。

斯科罗吉办公室的门总是敞开着，目的是监督他的雇员，鲍勃·克拉奇蒂有没有怠工。鲍勃整天呆在老板隔壁的一间小黑屋里，它实际是一个壁橱。斯科罗吉房间的火很小，鲍勃的火更小。壁橱里冷极了，鲍勃不得不戴着他那条白色的长围巾取暖。

“舅舅，圣诞快乐！上帝保佑你！”一个声音高兴地说。斯科罗吉的外甥已经到了。

“呸！”斯科罗吉恼怒地说。“骗人的东西！”

“圣诞节是骗人的东西！舅舅，当然你不是这个意思？”他外甥说。

“我就是这个意思，”斯科罗吉说。“你为什么管它叫‘快乐’的圣诞节？你太穷了，根本快乐不起来。”

“哎，”外甥笑着回答说，“你为什么这么生气？你很有钱不该不高兴啊。”

“我当然生气，”舅舅回答说，“当我生活在一个满是像你这种蠢人的世界里！你说

frosty *adj.* stringingly cold; cold with frost. 霜冻的，结霜的，严寒的。**foggy** *adj.* not clear because of fog. 有雾的。**humbug** *n.* nonsense. 胡说。**cross** *adj.* angry; bad-tempered. 发怒的，生气的。

world full of stupid people like you! You say “Merry Christmas”! But what is Christmas? Just a time when you spend too much, when you find yourself a year older and not an hour richer, when you have to pay your bills. Everyone who goes around saying “Merry Christmas” should have his tongue cut out. Yes, he should!’

‘Uncle! Please don’t say that!’ said the nephew. ‘I’ve always thought of Christmas as a time to be helpful and kind to other People. It’s the only time of the year when men and women open their hearts freely to each other. And so, uncle, although I’ve never made any money from it, I think Christmas has been and will be a good time for me! And I say, God bless Christmas!’

Bob, in the cupboard, agreed loudly, without thinking. He immediately realized his mistake, and went quickly back to his work, but Scrooge had heard him.

‘If I hear another sound from *you*,’ said Scrooge, ‘you’ll lose you job!’

‘Don’t be angry with him, uncle,’ said the nephew. ‘Come and have dinner with us tomorrow.’

‘Dinner with you? I’ll see you dead first!’

‘But why won’t you come? Why?’

‘Because Christmas is humbug! Good afternoon!’

‘I want nothing from you. I ask nothing of you. Why can’t we be friends?’

‘Good afternoon!’ said Scrooge.

‘圣诞快乐’！但圣诞节是什么？不过是一个让你大把大把花钱的日子，这时你会发现你老了一岁可财富却没有增加半点，而且你还得去付所有的账单。所有到处游逛说‘圣诞快乐’的人的舌头都应被割掉。是的，他会的！”

“舅舅，请不要这么说！”外甥说。“我一直把圣诞看作是一个帮助别人、善待别人的日子。一年中只有这么一天男男女女可以彼此自由地敞开心扉。所以舅舅，尽管我从未发过圣诞的财，我认为对我来说圣诞节一直就是而且也将是美好的时刻！愿上帝保佑你！”

坐在壁橱里的鲍勃未加思索大声表示赞同。但他立刻意识到自己所犯的错误，便又立即埋头工作，但斯科罗吉已经听见了他的话。

“如果我再听到你发出一点声音的话，”斯科罗吉说，“你就会丢掉这份工作！”

“舅舅，别生他的气，”外甥说。“明天来和我们一起吃晚饭吧。”

“和你们吃晚饭？门儿也没有！”

“那你为什么不来呢？为什么？”

“因为圣诞节是个骗人的把戏！再见！”

“我什么也不要你送给我，我什么都不问你要。我们为什么不能成为朋友呢？”

“再见！”斯科罗吉说。

cupboard n. set of shelves enclosed by doors, where clothes, cups, plates, food etc. may be stored. 壁橱。

‘I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you like this. I have never wanted to argue with you. But I came to see you and invite you because it’s Christmas, and so I’ll say, a merry Christmas, uncle!’

‘Good afternoon,’ said Scrooge.

‘And a happy new year!’

‘Good afternoon!’ said Scrooge.

His nephew left the room, without an angry word, stopping only to wish Bob Cratchit a merry Christmas.

Then two other gentlemen came in. They were large, round, comfortable-looking men, with books and papers in their hands.

‘This is Scrooge and Marley’s, I think,’ said one of them, looking at the papers that he was carrying. ‘Am I speaking to Mr Scrooge or Mr Marley?’

‘Mr Marley is dead,’ Scrooge replied. ‘He died seven years ago today, on Christmas Eve.’

‘I’m sure that you are just as kind to the poor as your partner,’ said the gentleman, smiling.

What *was* true was that Scrooge was just as mean as Marley, and Marley had been just as mean as Scrooge.

‘At this happy time of year, Mr Scrooge,’ the gentleman went on, taking up his pen, ‘we should help poor people who have no food or clothes or homes.’

‘Are there no prisons?’ asked Scrooge coldly.

‘Plenty of prisons,’ said the gentleman.

“看到你这样,我真感到难过,我从来就没想过要与你争吵,但我来是为了看看你并邀请你,因为是圣诞节,所以我要说一声,舅舅,圣诞快乐!”

“再见。”斯克罗吉说。

“新年快乐!”

“再见!”斯克罗吉说。

他外甥离开了房间,没有一句愠怒之言。他停下来只是为了祝鲍勃·克拉奇蒂圣诞快乐。

然后进来了另外两位绅士,他们身材魁梧,胖胖的,仪表堂堂,手里拿着书和文件。

“我想,这是斯克罗吉和马利的办公室吧,”其中一位看着手中的文件问到。“你是斯克罗吉先生还是马利先生?”

“马利先生死了,”斯克罗吉回答说。“他是七年前的今天死的,死在圣诞夜。”

“我肯定你对穷人同你的合伙人的态度一样好,”绅士微笑着说。

事实是斯克罗吉同马利一样的吝啬,马利在世时也曾和斯克罗吉一样吝啬。

“在一年中这个幸福的日子,斯克罗吉先生,”绅士拿起笔继续说,“我们应该帮助那些没有衣食和无家可归的穷人。”

“没有看守所吗?”斯克罗吉冷冷地问。

“有很多看守所,”绅士说。

gentleman n. a man who behaves well towards others. 绅士。mean adj. ungenerous; unwilling to share or help. 刻薄的,吝啬的。

‘And the workhouses, where poor people can live and work? Are they still open?’

‘Yes, they are, I’m sorry to say.’

‘I’m happy to hear it,’ said Scrooge. ‘I thought, from what you said at first, that perhaps these useful places were closed, for some reason.’

‘But some of us feel,’ replied the gentleman, ‘that these places don’t offer enough to poor people. We’re hoping to give some meat and drink, and wood for a fire, to people who need all these things. This is a time when we should all be able to enjoy ourselves. How much will you give, sir?’

‘Nothing!’ Scrooge replied. ‘I don’t have a merry Christmas myself, and I won’t pay for other people to be merry. We all have to pay for prisons and workhouses—they cost enough. The poor will have to go there.’

‘Many can’t go there, and many prefer to die.’

‘If they prefer to die, why don’t they die, then? There are too many people in the world, so it’s a good thing if some of them die. All this is none of my business! It’s enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to think about other people’s. I’m a very busy man. Good afternoon, gentlemen!’

The gentlemen shook their heads a little sadly, and left the office. Scrooge went back to his work, feeling pleased with himself.

Now the fog was at its thickest outside, and the cold was

“还有可供穷人生活和工作的济贫院呢？它们还开着吗？”

“是的，它们开着，很抱歉。”

“我很高兴听到这个，”斯克罗吉说。“听你最开始说的，我还以为这些能够提供帮助的地方由于某种原因都关掉了呢。”

“但是我们有些人感到，”绅士回答说，“这些地方无法为穷人提供足够的东西。我们希望为那些需要帮助的人提供一些肉类，饮料和柴火。这个时候我们都应该能够过得开心。你能给多少，先生？”

“什么都不给！”斯克罗吉回答说。“我自己圣诞节都不快乐，所以我也不会花钱去让其他人快乐。我们都要付钱给看守所和济贫院——这笔开销够大的了。没钱的人应该去那儿。”

“很多人不能去，还有很多人宁愿去死。”

“如果他们宁愿死的话，他们为什么不去死呢？世界上的人太多了，所以如果有些人死了的话这倒是件好事。这些都与我无关！一个人能清楚他自己该做什么就够了，用不着去考虑别人的事。我很忙，再见，先生们！”

两位绅士难过地摇摇头，离开了办公室。斯克罗吉又重新开始工作，心中很得意。

现在外面的雾大得不能再大了。天气寒

workhouse *n.* BrE. (in former times) a place for the poor to live when they had no employment, esp. when old. 收容院。 **prefer** *to.* to choose (one thing or action) rather than another; like better. (两者相比)更喜欢做…。

biting. Lights shone brightly from the shop windows. People were hurrying here and there—rich and poor alike—to buy what they needed for tomorrow's Christmas dinner.

At last it was time to close the office. Scrooge got up slowly from his desk. Bob was waiting for this moment, and he immediately put on his hat.

'You'll want a holiday all day tomorrow, I suppose?' said Scrooge.

'If you don't mind, sir.'

'I *do* mind. It's not fair. I have to pay you for a day's work when you don't *do* any work.'

'It's only once a year, sir,' said Bob politely.

'That's no reason for robbing me every twenty-fifth of December!' said Scrooge, putting on his coat. 'But I suppose you must have it. Be here early next morning.'

'Yes, sir, I will, I promise,' Bob said happily. Scrooge walked out, without another word. When Bob had closed the office, he ran home to his family in Camden Town as quickly as possible.

Scrooge always used to eat his dinner alone, in the same miserable little eating-house. Tonight was no different from other nights. He read the newspapers, looked at his bank books, and went home to bed. He lived in rooms which had once belonged to his dead partner. They were in an old, dark building in a lonely side street, where no one except Scrooge lived.

In the blackness of the night, through the fog and the frost,

冷刺骨。商店的窗户闪烁出耀眼的光。人们匆忙地穿梭着——有钱人和穷人都一样——去采购他们明天圣诞晚餐所需要的东西。

最后终于到了关门的时间了。斯克罗吉慢慢地从桌子后站起身。鲍勃等的就是这一刻，所以他立即戴上了帽子。

“我猜测你想明天一天都放假，是吗？”斯克罗吉问。

“先生，如果你不介意的话。”

“我确实介意，这不公平。你不做任何工作，我还得付你工钱。”

“先生，一年就这么一次，”鲍勃礼貌地说。

“这也并不能成为每年的12月25日你抢夺我钱财的理由！”斯克罗吉边说边穿上了大衣。“但我想这个节你必须得过。第二天早晨早点到。”

“是的，先生，我会的，我保证。”鲍勃高兴地说。斯克罗吉再没说一名话走了出去。鲍勃关上办公室的门后，以最快的速度跑回他位于卡姆登镇的家。

斯克罗吉总是独自一人在同样寒酸的小饮食店里吃晚饭，今晚也同往常一样。他读着报纸，看着银行的存单，然后回家去睡觉。他住在他的合伙人曾住过的房子里，它在一幢临街的孤零零的又旧又黑的楼里，只有斯克罗吉一人住在这里。

suppose *v.* to take as likely; consider as true. 假定、假设，认为。
miserable *adj.* very poor in quality. 寒酸的。