

The ghost of Christmas yet to come is very much like the **Grim Reaper, the personification of death, dark mysterious and silent.** Shrouded in a black cloak, concealing its head, face and form. This darkness is in stark contrast to the light shed by the first two ghosts. The ghost uses the only visible part of his body, its finger to show Scrooge where to look. "I fear you more than any spectre I have seen." Scrooge says and he feels horror and is fearful of the unseen ghostly eyes that must be viewing him. The feeling of gloom and misery surround the ghost of Christmas yet to come, his legs tremble and Scrooge falls to a knee.

The ghost of Christmas present showed Scrooge the joyful, happy side of Christmas but in the last scene introduced Ignorance and Want, a darker theme. The ghost of Christmas yet to come continues **this darker more foreboding aspect and reinforces the idea of death.** Dickens perhaps tries to make us aware of the short life expectancy in the 1840's which was only just over 40 years, even less for the poor, mostly brought about by poor living conditions and poor health in the big cities like London. "But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear your company, and I will do it with a thankful heart." Scrooge says in acceptance of the ghosts role.

In the vision of his death Scrooge died alone in bed and had his possessions stolen by people like his charwoman and they seek to profit from his death in a way no-one profited by his life. He is shown her and others selling his possessions at a lowly 'rag and bone' type of shop in a very poor rundown part of the city. "Every person has a right to take care of themselves. He always did," a woman says to justify the way they have stolen his goods. They feel that if he had been kinder in life he would have had someone there to care for him in death. "**It's a judgement on him,**" says one of the women.

### GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME



Scrooge is shown a meeting place for businessmen and finds a group talking without feeling about the death of one of their own. He doesn't know who they are talking about although the person was obviously not well loved. He sees the place where he usually sits and, noting the time is surprised not to see himself. Scrooge only finds out for sure who has died, although he must have suspected it when the ghost points to a gravestone. When he looks at the uncared for and overgrown **grave he sees "EBENEZER SCROOGE"**

When the ghost of Christmas yet to come takes Scrooge to the future Cratchit household the contrast with the previous happy, joyous visit is stark. Tiny Tim has died, There is an empty stool by the fireplace and an unused crutch nearby, and the whole family mourn his death and are quiet and still. Scrooge is **heartbroken that this poor, crippled, yet kind and thoughtful boy has died** and his thoughts echo the feeling of the family. "I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim." Bob Cratchit says, to which they all respond, "No, never, Father!" Scrooge is true to his word, he does reform, starting the very next day on Christmas morning. He buys a giant turkey for the Cratchit family and ever after acts as **a second father to Tiny Tim, who does not die.**

The ghost of Christmas yet to come allows Scrooge to see a possible future if Scrooge continues acting in his mean, self-centred and miserly ways. Scrooge is terrified by the ghost and by its visions of the possible future and he begins to realise that actions have consequences. **This gives Scrooge a final push towards complete redemption as he realises people have a social responsibility.** The silence of the ghost appears to make Scrooge more responsive and talkative, and prepared to take the lead in his own redemption. "Hear me. I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for this intercourse"....."I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year." Says Scrooge begging for a chance to change his way and he is transported back to his bed.