



A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens (1812 - 1870)

Read by:	Multiple readers	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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Genre:	Fantasy Fiction		

Life: it will hurt you sooner or later. You can respond one way or the other: with faith in compassion and love or with the fear that makes love so difficult. *A Christmas Carol's* Ebenezer Scrooge wasn't born a scrooge. In his childhood and youth he'd been full of goodwill. But life, with its cares and demands, had battered him about, had disappointed him enough that he gave himself over to the acquisition of money and the little power it afforded him over his fear of death. And then one Christmas Eve, his former and "beastly dead" partner, Jacob Marley, appeared to warn him of what awaited him in the afterlife if he did not change his ways. Scrooge was frightened, but not convinced. Enter Christmas Past, Present and Future. In an admixture of fear and love, Scrooge underwent the conversion made manifest on Christmas Day in generosity, kindness and amends.

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is perhaps the most popular Christmas story ever written this side of Bethlehem. Published in 1843, it revived a joyful and celebratory attitude toward Christmas and the Christmas season in England and America that had been lost with the 19th century's industrialization and urbanization. With the efforts of Victoria's kind husband, Prince Albert, who introduced the German customs of the Christmas tree and Christmas cards, and with the publication and immense popularity of Dickens's novella, the Christmas season again became for England and America what it was meant to be – a season of joy, hope, celebration, gratitude and love. (Summary by Michael Hogan)

Charles John Huffam Dickens (February 7, 1812 – June 9, 1870) was an English novelist in the mid-19th Century who was one of the most prolific, popular and politically radical in the English language. He worked as a journalist as a young man before turning to fiction. His first novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, was a great success and was followed by one blockbuster after another. He wrote at a torrid pace; most of his books first appeared as serialized chapters in weekly and monthly periodicals before being published as novels. He had a genius for uncanny caricatures of "personality types", which he tagged with catchy names and mannerisms that are still part of the cultural lexicon. to this day.

He was born into a family of moderate means that went bankrupt during his early childhood, forcing Dickens to go to work at age twelve pasting labels on jars of bootblack for six schillings a week. His exposure to the lives of those oppressed by the cruelty and injustice of the industrializing world drove him to depict aspects of society that had been shunted aside with an unprecedented level of detail and candor. His insight into human nature was well-rounded, however, and his tales are equally beloved for their qualities of generosity, faith, compassion, and triumph of good over evil.

Dickens married Catherine Thompson Hogarth in 1838, who bore him ten children. He separated from her in 1858 but did not divorce, maintaining her in a separate residence until her death. He narrowly escaped death in a railroad crash in 1865 when all the first class carriages save Dickens' plunged off a bridge under repair. After the incident his writing trailed off, and he went on tour giving readings of his bestsellers, which were immensely popular and notable for their passion and for his ability to portray the characters in unique voices.