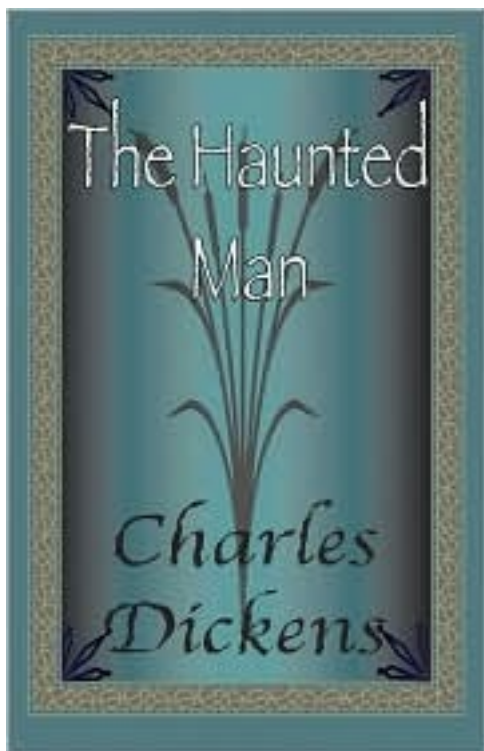

Charles Dickens

The Haunted Man (Christmas Books)



Title: The Haunted Man (Christmas Books)

Author: Charles Dickens

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Description

In this story, Dickens narrates the hair-raising experiences of a professor. As the protagonist dwells on his past sorrows and mistakes, a phantom visits him. It offers him a bizarre escape from painful recollections of yesteryear by offering to eradicate his memory. On seeing the professor turn into a man devoid of emotions, the reader realizes how empty one becomes without a past.

Insightful reviews

da-wildchildz: Yet another Dickens, where the main character, Redlaw is visited by a ghost and the experience changes his personality for the better. If only this would happen in real life!

Stephanie Blake: A Christmas Carol was the first of five Christmas books written by Charles Dickens. "The Haunted Man and the Ghost's Bargain", a lesser known work, was the last of that series.

The Haunted Man, Professor Redlaw, is haunted by his sorrowful past. The only redeeming feature of his youth was a sister who died. The memories are continually brought before him by a Phantom who offers him relief. When he allowed the Spectre to cancel his remembrances, Redlaw made a surprising discovery. Not only did his memory of sorrow and wrong leave him, so did any element of softness and caring for others. Even worse, that gift is passed on to others around him with similar consequences.

Unaffected by this desire to forget sorrow and loss is Milly Swidger who had lost her only child. A sweet simple woman, Milly tells her husband, "I am happy in the recollection of it...All through life, it seems by me, to tell me something. For poor neglected children, my little child pleads as if it were alive, and had a voice I knew, with which to speak to me. When I hear of youth in suffering or shame, I think that my child might have come to that, perhaps, and that God took it from me in His mercy...that even when my little child was born and dead but a few days, and I was weak and sorrowful, and could not help grieving a little, the thought arose, that if I tried to lead a good life, I should meet in Heaven a bright creature, who would call me, Mother!"

Observing Milly's unusual application of her sorrow and loss, Redlaw comes to himself, praying, "O Thou who through the teaching of pure love, hast graciously restored me to the memory which was the memory of Christ upon the Cross, and of all the good who perished in His cause, receive my thanks, and bless her!"

At the end of the story, Dickens suggests "that the Ghost was but the representation of his gloomy thoughts, and Milly the embodiment of his better wisdom."

I have seen Dickens' moral carried out in everyday life. Many kind hearted people attempt to sympathize with those in sorrow and pain, but it is those with similar experiences who make the largest contributions to healing. A mother who has had a stillborn child can comfort another mother like no one else can. Military families who have sent their loved ones to war can

understand each other's needs - often knowing what to do without being asked. A parent who has a wayward child can sit with another parent with a unique bonding and empathy. Those who have lost their jobs in an economic downturn are able to help each other in a special way. Homeless people can band together to become a community. And on it goes. People who have been there, done that are those who understand the most.

Christians have a Lord who empathizes with our sorrows and pains. His suffering was a choice - so that we knew that He could understand, empathize and give guidance and comfort when comfort is needed. That is what the apostle Paul meant when he wrote 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 (NIV):

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows."

Andrea McDowell: I read this as part of a Dickens Christmas Anthology rather than separately, but it's hard to review that way, so I'm going to cheat and claim to have read this version:

The Haunted Man is in many respects Dickens' most modern Christmas story. The main character is a respected and well-off scientist, kind enough, but obsessed with wrongs in his past that have made him permanently bitter. Why was I cursed with a life that began that way? he asks. Why can't I forget and move on? Why can't I find joy in my life now?

With the cultural focus on happiness and healing almost as a moral imperative today, these questions are common I think.

A ghost visits him--all Dickens' Christmas books are ghost stories--and offers him a bargain: I will remove all of your unhappy memories. They will never trouble you again. But if you accept, your condition will become contagious; everyone you interact with will have all of their negative memories removed as well. He accepts.

The rest of the story--which takes place Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, of course--follows his interactions with people and the effects of the memory loss on their lives and character. There is more suffering of more kinds in this book; no, no Tiny Tim, but we visit people much lower on the economic totem pole than Cratchit's family.

The main character is not as evil as Scrooge at the beginning nor as good as Scrooge at the end; the transformation is more credible because it is less profound. Dickens wrote the novel when he was more cynical himself about personal and societal transformations, so the characters are more complex and the narrative arc is more realistic than A Christmas Carol.

It suffers from some of Dickens usual weaknesses, of course, including completely unrealistically virtuous and perfect female characters (not all of them, but one in particular is more saintly than God). Still, as much as I love A Christmas Carol (and I do) I think it is time for the world to rediscover The Haunted Man.

Hobby: it is a ghostly stories, from commence - center - ending, i am guessing what the authors intended by means of the ghost. Even this comprise as a short-stories, Dickens may give such depth at the story. Never-never liking short-stories, yet with Dickens, you by no means comprehend the place you gonna end, inspite of 'twisted-story' continues to be attention-grabbing and can't easily forgotten. more approximately this stories, money on my evaluation at the following : [http://my-classic-books.blogspot.com/...](http://my-classic-books.blogspot.com/)

Greg: I simply learn this tale for the 3rd time. Of Dickens' 5 brief tales for Christmas, i believe this one's message is the main profound and the main openly Christian. Its supernatural occasions should not as dazzling as "A Christmas Carol," however it makes an improved statement: that remembrance is the resource of gratitude, even painful remembrances, the aim of which isn't to remorse or resent the past, yet to forgive it. To overlook with out forgiving brings bitterness and misery, yet with forgiveness comes pleasure and hope. Like Phillip within the tale I pray, "Lord, maintain my reminiscence green." i'll take pleasure in examining this tale again.

Kailey: This brief Christmas tale is equivalent to A Christmas Carol, in ghost looks and propels the most personality into drastic adjustments with lots of ethical classes alongside the way. Dickens is very long-winded during this one, and at his most interesting with the lengthy descriptions of everything. (Confession: I skimmed half the descriptions.) I enjoyed the fundamental premise of the story- the sorrow and problems in our lives train us priceless lessons. I laughed so tough on the Tetterby family, specially bad Johnny getting beaten at any time when he sits down with the child in his lap! Haha! yet 5 mins later, i used to be crying on the outdated guy praying by means of his son's sickbed, begging God to forgive him. So touching! Dickens did an awesome task of constructing it transparent via their discussion precisely whilst humans misplaced or regained their memories. it could actually were complicated or ambiguous, however it was once in actual fact and wonderfully written! I enjoyed that every personality has their very own humorous mannerisms of speech: The outdated guy continually reminding every body that he's eighty-seven, and William announcing an analogous issues over and over. So adorable! Dickens consistently has such impressive characters.

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