



# **A Christmas Carol: The holiday classic, gently abridged for today's readers**

*Charles Dickens*

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A few years ago, just before Christmas, I started to read "A Christmas Carol" to our young daughter. "I'm bored," she cried, after five minutes, so I stopped. I wasn't mad at her. She was right --- "A Christmas Carol," which I loved all those years ago, wasn't fun for today's kids to listen to. The problem is time. Charles Dickens wrote the story in 1843, and viewed from the distance of almost two centuries, his language is dense and over-wrought. Do you need long descriptions of Victorian London? I don't think so --- you've seen it a zillion times on film and TV. Because I really wanted my daughter to know "A Christmas Carol," I edited the text. It was 28,000 words. It's now 13,000. Nothing important is gone. I added only a few words of my own, just to make some connections. And Paige Peterson, a noted artist, has enriched the story with original --- and very striking --- illustrations. This version of "A Christmas Carol" is pure story. And what a story! I'm going to read it to our daughter at Christmas, and this time I bet she'll like it. It's my hope that many other kids and their parents will too.

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