

## **“Don’t Let the Grinches Steal Christmas”**

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As little children, prepare to receive the Christmas message...

So, I made my list and I rewrote this Seuss story, with a good Christmas twist: Listen, listen, my children, and I will share a story of a horrible burden to bear. This yarn is told of a mean-hearted Grinch, nasty Roman leaders and others, who would not give an inch.

Every “who” down in Whoville liked Christmas a lot, but the Grinch who lived down just north of Whoville, did not. That Grinch *hated* Christmas a lot - the *whole* Christmas season. He stood there on Christmas Eve hating the “whos,” staring down from his cave, with a sour “Grinchy” frown, at the warm-lighted windows below in their town.

For he knew every “who” down in Whoville beneath, was busy now hanging their mistletoe wreath. “And they are hanging their stockings,” he snarled with a sneer. “Tomorrow is Christmas - it’s practically here.”

Then he growled, with his Grinch fingers nervously drumming, “I must find some way to stop Christmas from coming. I know just what I’ll do.” The Grinch laughed in his throat and he made a quick Santa Claus hat and coat. And, he chuckled and chuckled, “What a great Grinch trick. With this coat and this hat, I will look just like St. Nick! All I need is a reindeer.” The Grinch looked around, but since reindeer are scarce, there was none to be found. Did that stop the Grinch? Noooo. The Grinch simply said, “If I can’t find a reindeer, I will make one instead.” So he called his dog, Max, and he took some red thread, and tied a big horn on top of his head.

Then he loaded some bags and some old, empty sacks on a ramshackle sleigh, and he hitched up old Max. Then the Grinch said, “Giddy up,” and the sleigh started down, toward the homes where the “whos” lay a-snooze in their town.

The Grinch did his job picking and packing. The Grinch finished his deeds and left with great speed. It was a quarter past dawn. All the “whos” still a-bed, all the “whos” still a-snooze, while he packed up his sled; packed it up with their presents, the ribbons, the wrappings, the tags and the tinsel, the trimmings and trappings. By the time he was done he was sure the “whos” would be without fun.

Now, you know, you “whos” from Westminster, you might think the Grinch only exists in the mind of Dr. Seuss. But no, no, no! If you believe this - if you do - if you listen just right, you will hear the grumpy tones of a Grinch foul-mouthed. For Grinches are here and Grinches are there. Grinches can be found far and near. They can be found at Amazon, Dillard’s and Shield’s. [Laughter.] And, no two will match, not their eyes, noses or heels.

Now, you may be thinking, “Oh, oh, poor, poor me.” There are Grinches everywhere. What will happen? How will I be? But, know this much, my fine, little friends, others so special have had Grinches with which to contend.

Even our Lord in his stall bed so dear, who hurt not a soul, still left the powerful in fear. For names like Augustus, Quirinius and Herod, how could an infant bring such a dread? For he was donned in no kingly apparel, but was cradled humbly in a lowly straw bed.

Augustus the Caesar sure tried to obstruct. Quirinius chose selfishness and failed to instruct, while Herod took child lives - a human deduct. It seems the Christ-child would be out of luck. And, an innkeeper's hard heart of flight to Egypt must start. But God never wavered - for Jesus, God favored.

With our Lord to watch over your delicate soul, you needn't worry about your hard, earthly toll; because Jesus had the most to give. Those in power could not let him live.

Who, who are you to believe that you should not have Grinches making hassles, when you have things to do? How hard being faithful to God and living a happy life, when Grinches are trying to give you nothing but strife. If that was the extent of our Grinchy who-tale, the whole human race would only derail.

If that were the extent, the Grinch of Whoville fame, with all of his anger and shame, was left only limp, feeling sad and quite lame. Yet, that Grinch he did listen. He listened for pain. He listened and listened. He listened in vain.

He stared down at Whoville. The Grinch popped his eyes then he shook. What he saw was a shocking surprise! Every "who," down in Whoville - the tall and the small - was singing without any presents at all.

He hadn't stopped Christmas from coming. It came. Somehow or other, it came just the same. Then the Grinch spotted something he hadn't before. Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store; maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.

And what happened then? Well in Whoville they say, that the Grinch's small heart grew three sizes that day. And the minute his heart didn't feel quite so tight, he whizzed with his load through the bright morning light, and he brought the toys and the food for the feast and he, he himself - the Grinch - carved the roast beast.

What I like best, if I had to choose, of this story of Grinches and "whos," is the promise that Grinches can change ugly hues; for the story does not end in sorrow and blues. Grinches can change when the human heart and the song, are somewhat a delight all the night long.

We, the people of faith, with hope in what is right, are called to sing songs of Christ-like delight. The Christmas story is not one of blues, for Grinches are not hurt or told they must loose. Grinches may become "whos," if they can choose. Christians are born, born again I dare say, when we believe in the child born on this, this Christmas Eve day. So pray now to God with joy and thanksgiving. Ask God to your heart. Only then are you living.