

Bartleby The Scrivener



BARTLEBY, THE SCRIVENER HERMAN MELVILLE



Bartleby the Scrivener: A Deep Dive into Melville's Masterpiece

Are you intrigued by enigmatic characters and unsettling narratives? Then you've come to the right place. This in-depth exploration of Herman Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street"

will unravel the complexities of this short story, delving into its themes, symbolism, and lasting impact on literature. We'll examine the central character, the enigmatic Bartleby, and explore the interpretations that have captivated readers for over a century. Prepare to delve into a world of passive resistance, existential questioning, and the unsettling realities of 19th-century New York.

Understanding the Context: 19th Century New York and the Rise of Capitalism

Before we dive into the intricacies of "Bartleby the Scrivener," it's crucial to understand the historical context in which it was written. Published in 1853, the story reflects the burgeoning capitalist landscape of 19th-century New York City. The relentless pursuit of wealth and the dehumanizing effects of industrialization are subtly woven into the narrative. Melville portrays a society obsessed with efficiency and productivity, a pressure cooker environment that ultimately breaks the quiet resistance of our protagonist.

The Narrator's Role and Perspective

The story is narrated by a lawyer, a seemingly benevolent and understanding figure, who, despite his attempts at empathy, ultimately fails to comprehend Bartleby's silent rebellion. His perspective shapes our understanding of the events, but it's essential to critically examine his limitations and biases. He represents the established order, struggling to reconcile his compassion with the demands of his professional life. This internal conflict mirrors the broader societal tensions of the era.

Bartleby: The Enigma at the Heart of the Story

Bartleby himself is a cipher, a character whose motivations remain elusive throughout the narrative. His famous refrain, "I would prefer not to," is a potent symbol of passive resistance, a quiet defiance that throws the lawyer, and by extension the reader, into a state of disquiet. This phrase has become iconic, encapsulating the power of gentle refusal in the face of oppressive systems.

Interpretations of Bartleby's Actions

Numerous interpretations have emerged regarding Bartleby's character and actions. Some see him as a symbol of the individual's struggle against an increasingly impersonal and dehumanizing system. Others view him as a representation of spiritual alienation, a man who has withdrawn from

the corrupting influence of societal pressures. His preference for inaction can be interpreted as a radical form of protest, a refusal to participate in a system he finds morally repugnant.

Themes Explored in "Bartleby the Scrivener"

"Bartleby the Scrivener" is rich with thematic complexity. It is not merely a story about a copyist; it is a profound exploration of several interconnected themes:

1. The Nature of Work and Alienation:

Melville poignantly portrays the soul-crushing nature of monotonous work in a capitalist system. Bartleby's quiet rebellion is a direct consequence of the dehumanizing conditions he faces. His refusal to work highlights the inherent conflict between individual needs and the demands of capitalist production.

2. Compassion vs. Self-Preservation:

The narrator's struggle to reconcile his compassion for Bartleby with the practical demands of his business reveals the complexities of human relationships in a competitive environment. His eventual abandonment of Bartleby underscores the limitations of individual empathy within a system geared toward productivity and profit.

3. The Power of Passive Resistance:

Bartleby's "I would prefer not to" becomes a powerful symbol of passive resistance. It's a quiet form of protest that is far more disruptive than overt rebellion. His actions suggest that even the most subtle forms of defiance can challenge the authority of established power structures.

4. The Limits of Empathy and Understanding:

The story highlights the limitations of empathy and understanding in human relationships. The narrator's attempts to connect with Bartleby fail, revealing the difficulties of truly grasping another person's perspective, particularly when that perspective challenges conventional norms.

The Lasting Legacy of "Bartleby the Scrivener"

Melville's short story continues to resonate with readers today due to its enduring themes and its exploration of the human condition. Its impact on literature is undeniable, influencing subsequent writers and thinkers who have grappled with similar themes of alienation, rebellion, and the complexities of human interaction. The enigmatic Bartleby has become a symbol of quiet defiance, a potent reminder of the power of individual resistance in the face of overwhelming systems.

Conclusion

"Bartleby the Scrivener" is not simply a historical narrative; it's a timeless exploration of the human spirit battling against the oppressive forces of society. Melville's masterful use of ambiguity ensures that the story continues to provoke discussion and inspire diverse interpretations, solidifying its place as a literary masterpiece. Its exploration of themes such as alienation, passive resistance, and the limits of empathy remains as relevant today as it was in 1853.

FAQs

1. What is the significance of Bartleby's repeated phrase, "I would prefer not to"? This phrase represents a subtle yet powerful act of passive resistance, a refusal to comply with societal expectations and the demands of his job. It highlights the limitations of direct confrontation and explores the potential power of quiet defiance.
2. How does the setting of Wall Street influence the story? The bustling, capitalist environment of Wall Street provides a stark backdrop for Bartleby's quiet rebellion. The relentless pursuit of profit and efficiency contrasts sharply with Bartleby's passive resistance, highlighting the dehumanizing aspects of the system.
3. Is Bartleby a sympathetic character? Bartleby is a complex character, eliciting both sympathy and frustration. His passive resistance can be seen as a form of protest against the dehumanizing nature of his work, but his actions also cause inconvenience and disrupt the lives of others.
4. What is the overall message of "Bartleby the Scrivener"? The story offers no single, definitive answer. Its enduring power lies in its ambiguity, prompting readers to consider themes of alienation, compassion, individual liberty versus societal expectations, and the complexities of human interaction within a capitalist system.
5. How does "Bartleby the Scrivener" relate to other works by Herman Melville? While "Bartleby" is notably shorter and more focused than Melville's epic novels like "Moby Dick," it shares thematic concerns with his other works, exploring the human condition's darker aspects, often focusing on

themes of isolation and the struggle against overwhelming forces.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby The Scrivener A Story Of Wall-Street Herman Melville, 2024-05-29 Explore the enigmatic world of Wall Street with *Bartleby The Scrivener: A Story Of Wall-Street* by Herman Melville. Delve into the intricacies of corporate life and human nature as you follow the mysterious tale of Bartleby, a scrivener whose quiet defiance challenges the norms of society. But amidst the hustle and bustle of Wall Street, what truths will Bartleby's silence reveal? In this thought-provoking story, Herman Melville paints a vivid portrait of conformity, alienation, and the search for meaning in a capitalist world. Through Bartleby's enigmatic character, readers are forced to confront uncomfortable questions about identity, autonomy, and the nature of work. Are you ready to peer into the heart of darkness that lies beneath the veneer of corporate America? Will you dare to grapple with the existential dilemmas that Bartleby's story poses? Experience the timeless relevance of *Bartleby The Scrivener*. Purchase your copy today and embark on a journey of self-discovery and introspection.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, The Scrivener Herman Melville, 2021-10-13 *Bartleby, The Scrivener* Herman Melville - The narrator is an unnamed elderly lawyer who works with legal documents and has an office on Wall Street. He already employs two scriveners, Turkey and Nippers, to copy legal documents by hand, but an increase in business leads him to advertise for a third. He hires the forlorn-looking Bartleby in the hope that his calmness will soothe the other two, each of whom displays an irascible temperament during an opposite half of the day. An office boy nicknamed Ginger Nut completes the staff. At first, Bartleby produces a large volume of high-quality work, but one day, when asked to help proofread a document, Bartleby answers with what soon becomes his perpetual response to every request: I would prefer not to. To the dismay of the narrator and the irritation of the other employees, Bartleby begins to perform fewer and fewer tasks and eventually none. He instead spends long periods of time staring out one of the office's windows at a brick wall. The narrator makes several attempts to reason with Bartleby or to learn something about him, but never has any success. When the narrator stops by the office one Sunday morning, he discovers that Bartleby is living there. He is saddened by the thought of the life the young man must lead. Tension builds as business associates wonder why Bartleby is always present in the office, yet does not appear to do any work. Sensing the threat to his reputation, but emotionally unable to evict Bartleby, the narrator moves his business to a different building. The new tenant of his old office comes to ask for help in removing Bartleby, and the narrator tells the man that he is not responsible for his former employee. A week or so after this, several other tenants of the narrator's former office building come to him with their landlord because Bartleby is still making a nuisance of himself; even though he has been put out of the office, he sits on the building stairs all day and sleeps in its doorway at night. The narrator agrees to visit Bartleby and attempts to reason with him. He suggests several jobs that Bartleby might try and even invites Bartleby to live with him until they figure out a better solution. Bartleby replies that he would prefer not to make any change, and declines the offer. The narrator leaves the building and flees the neighborhood for several days, in order not to be bothered by the landlord and tenants.

bartleby the scrivener: I Would Prefer Not To Herman Melville, 2021-10-26 A new selection of Melville's darkest and most enthralling stories in a beautiful Pushkin Collection edition Includes *Bartleby, the Scrivener*, *Benito Cereno* and *The Lightning-Rod Man* A lawyer hires a new copyist, only to be met with stubborn, confounding resistance. A nameless guide discovers hidden worlds of luxury and bleak exploitation. After boarding a beleaguered Spanish slave ship, an American trader's cheerful outlook is repeatedly shadowed by paralyzing unease. In these stories of the surreal mundanity of office life and obscure tensions at sea, Melville's darkly modern sensibility plunges us into a world of irony and mystery, where nothing is as it first appears.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2015-08-19 *Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street* (1853) is a short story by the American writer Herman Melville,

first serialized anonymously in two parts in the November and December editions of Putnam's Magazine, and reprinted with minor textual alterations in 1856. Numerous essays are published on what according to scholar Robert Milder is unquestionably the masterpiece of the short fiction in the Melville canon. The narrator of *Bartleby the Scrivener* is the Lawyer, who runs a law practice on Wall Street in New York. The Lawyer begins by noting that he is an elderly man, and that his profession has brought him into more than ordinary contact with what would seem an interesting and somewhat singular set of men the law-copyists, or scriveners. While the Lawyer knows many interesting stories of such scriveners, he bypasses them all in favor of telling the story of Bartleby, whom he finds to be the most interesting of all the scriveners. Bartleby is, according to the Lawyer, one of those beings of whom nothing is ascertainable, except from the original sources, and, in his case, those were very small. One day, the Lawyer has a small document he needs examined. He calls Bartleby in to do the job, but Bartleby responds: I would prefer not to. This answer amazes the Lawyer, who has a natural expectancy of instant compliance. He is so amazed by this response, and the calm way Bartleby says it, that he cannot even bring himself to scold Bartleby. Instead, he calls in Nippers to examine the document instead.

bartleby the scrivener: *Bartleby, the Scrivener* Herman Melville, 2010-02 *Bartleby, the Scrivener* was written by Herman Melville in 1853, two years after *Moby Dick* had been published and his writing career was beginning to lose its luster. Subtitled, *A Story of Wall Street*, the book is a seemingly simple story about a lawyer who hires a gentleman named Bartleby as a scrivener in his office. In those long-ago days before copy machines, scriveners had the tedious job of hand-copying documents, sometimes over and over. Bartleby was good at the copying part of his job, but when asked to proofread aloud one day he simply replied, I prefer not to. From that moment forward, he used the phrase I prefer not to for every task requested of him, eventually preferring not to do any work whatsoever. The lawyer, who is astounded by Bartleby's attitude, tells the story in the first person. The story is rich in language and yet spare in actual action. The reader is forced to think, and think seriously about the choices we make daily. Bartleby chose to rebel and become an anti-hero. But the real protagonist of the story is the lawyer, who is drawn into Bartleby's power and grows to admire him. The conclusion is sad, but inevitable. The story of *Bartleby* is simply about a man losing his will to live. It is intended to show the reader a dark side in all of us when the meaning of our existence is allowed to be challenged. The chilling image of Bartleby in his previous job at the Dead Letter Office, and the fact that Melville left Bartleby's reason for being (or not being) a mystery, all adds to the intrigue of *Bartleby, the Scrivener*. First published anonymously Putnam's Monthly Magazine, *Bartleby, the Scrivener* reflects Melville's own pessimism at the time.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby Herman Melville, 2023 *Bartleby* by Herman Melville is a poignant exploration of alienation and the human condition, set against the backdrop of bustling Wall Street in 19th-century New York. The enigmatic Bartleby, a copyist hired by the story's narrator, initially proves a diligent worker. However, as the demands of the job weigh heavy on him, Bartleby utters his now-famous refrain: I would prefer not to. This seemingly innocuous statement transforms into a profound act of passive resistance, marking the beginning of Bartleby's descent into a realm of existential isolation. Melville's narrative delves into the complexities of individual autonomy and societal expectations, unraveling a tale that resonates with themes of free will and the consequences of rebelling against the machine of conformity. HERMAN MELVILLE [1819-1891] was an American poet and novelist. Melville was not popular during his own lifetime and largely forgotten upon his death, however, during the 20th century his work was rediscovered and his novel *Moby-Dick* [1851] is today considered one of the great American novels.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Herman Melville, 2017-03-22 How is this book unique? Font adjustments & biography included Unabridged (100% Original content) Illustrated About *Bartleby, the Scrivener* by Herman Melville *Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street* (1853) is a short story by the American writer Herman Melville, first serialized anonymously in two parts in the November and December editions of Putnam's Magazine, and reprinted with minor textual alterations in his *The Piazza Tales* in 1856. Numerous essays are

published on what according to scholar Robert Milder is unquestionably the masterpiece of the short fiction in the Melville canon.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Illustrated Edition Herman Melville, 2021-05 Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street is a short story by the American writer Herman Melville, first serialized anonymously in two parts in the November and December 1853 issues of Putnam's Magazine, and reprinted with minor textual alterations in his The Piazza Tales in 1856. The narrator is an unnamed elderly lawyer, with a business in legal documents and an office on Wall Street. He already employs two scriveners, Nippers and Turkey, to copy legal documents by hand, but an increase in business leads him to advertise for a third. He hires the forlorn-looking Bartleby in the hope that his calmness will soothe the other two, each of whom displays an irascible temperament during an opposite half of the day. An office boy nicknamed Ginger Nut completes the staff.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2016-12-11 Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street is a short story by the American writer Herman Melville, first serialized anonymously in two parts in the November and December 1853 issues of Putnam's Magazine, and reprinted with minor textual alterations in his The Piazza Tales in 1856. A Wall Street lawyer hires a new clerk who-after an initial bout of hard work-refuses to make copy and any other task required of him, with the words I would prefer not to. The lawyer cannot bring himself to remove Bartleby from his premises, and decides instead to move his office, but the new proprietor removes Bartleby to prison, where he perishes.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, The Scrivener Herman Melville, 2019-07-18 Bartleby the Scrivener is the story of a quiet, hard working legal copyist who works in an office in the Wall Street area of New York City. One day Bartleby declines the assignment his employer gives him with the inscrutable I would prefer not. The utterance of this remark sets off a confounding set of actions and behavior, making the unsettling character of Bartleby one of Melville's most enigmatic and unforgettable creations.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Illustrated Herman Melville, 2020-11-29 The narrator is an elderly, unnamed Manhattan lawyer with a comfortable business in legal documents. He already employs two scriveners, Nippers and Turkey, to copy legal documents by hand, but an increase in business leads him to advertise for a third. He hires the forlorn-looking Bartleby in the hope that his calmness will soothe the other two, each of whom displays an irascible temperament during an opposite half of the day. An office boy nicknamed Ginger Nut completes the staff. At first, Bartleby produces a large volume of high-quality work, but one day, when asked to help proofread a document, Bartleby answers with what soon becomes his perpetual response to every request: I would prefer not to. To the dismay of the narrator and the irritation of the other employees, Bartleby performs fewer and fewer tasks and eventually none, instead spending long periods of time staring out one of the office's windows at a brick wall. The narrator makes several futile attempts to reason with Bartleby and to learn something about him; when the narrator stops by the office one Sunday morning, he discovers that Bartleby has started living there. Tension builds as business associates wonder why Bartleby is always there. Sensing the threat to his reputation but emotionally unable to evict Bartleby, the narrator moves his business out. Soon the new tenants come to ask for help in removing Bartleby, who now sits on the stairs all day and sleeps in the building's doorway at night. The narrator visits Bartleby and attempts to reason with him; to his own surprise, he invites Bartleby to live with him, but Bartleby declines the offer. Later the narrator returns to find that Bartleby has been forcibly removed and imprisoned in the Tombs. Finding Bartleby glummer than usual during a visit to the prison, the narrator bribes a cook to make sure he gets enough food. When the narrator returns a few days later to check on Bartleby, he discovers that he has died of starvation, having preferred not to eat. Sometime afterwards, the narrator hears a rumor that Bartleby had worked in a dead-letter office and reflects that dead letters would have made anyone of Bartleby's temperament sink into an even darker gloom. The story closes with the narrator's resigned and pained sigh, Ah Bartleby! Ah humanity!

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2020-09-08 Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street by Herman Melville The narrator, a casual business elderly lawyer, helps wealthy men deal with mortgages, deeds, and bonds, telling the story of the strangest man he has ever known Bartleby as a new addition to the narrator officer. The narrator has two staff: Nippers and Turkey. The claws suffer from dyspepsia and Turkey is drunk. But the office survived because in the morning Turkey was sane even though the claws were frustrated, and in the afternoon the claws calmed down even though Turkey was drunk. Bartleby answers questions about the ad, and the narrator hires a naive young man in hopes that his calmness will soothe the moods of other writers. One day when Bartleby was asked to proofread one of the papers he had copied, he simply replied, I don't want to, marks the first of many rejections. To the disappointment of the speaker and the frustration of the other employees, Bartleby was involved in fewer and fewer duties in the office. The narrator tries to reason with Bartleby several times and learns about him. But Bartleby always responds the same way when asked to work or to provide information about himself: I don't want to. On weekends, when a speaker stops in the office, he finds Bartle. B. lives at the office The stillness of Bartleby's life leaves the narrator at night and Sundays as desolate as a deserted city. He alternates between pity and disgust for Bartleby's bizarre behavior. Bartleby continued to deny his duties until eventually, he was inactive. But the narrator was unable to get him out. The scavenger has bizarre powers over his employer, and the narrator feels he can't do anything to hurt this homeless man. But his business peers become suspicious that Bartleby has turned up at the office as he is not at work, and the threat of a shattered reputation leads the narrator to do something. His attempts to get Bartleby away were in vain. Therefore, the speaker moved the office to a new location. But shortly thereafter, a new tenant of the narrator's old office came to him for help: Bartleby would not leave. When they drove him out of the office, Bartleby haunted the corridors. The narrator meets Bartleby in a final attempt to reason with him. But Bartleby rejected him. Fear of disturbing the anti-Bartleby group, the narrator did not have to work for a few days. When he returned, he learned that Bartleby had been taken to prison. At the prison, Bartleby appears to be fatter than usual. The friendliness of the speaker was rejected. The narrator offers a one-stop bribe to make sure Bartleby gets well fed. But when the narrator returned a few days later, Bartleby died, he didn't like to eat. Shortly after, the narrator heard rumors that Bartleby was working in the dead letter office. The narrator reflected that the dead letter would plunge everyone in Bartleby's mood into a darker darkness. The letters represent our death and the failure of our best intentions. Through Bartleby, the narrator sees the world as the miserable writer must have seen it. The closing words of the story are the narrator resigns and sighs in pain: Ah Bartlebia, man!

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2019-01-01 Considered one of the greatest American writers, Herman Melville leaves the sea behind in this short story collection to write about Wall Street offices, the Galapagos Islands, a sinister architect, apathy, capitalism, and humanity's precarious nature. In Bartleby, the Scrivener, a Manhattan lawyer struggles with a clerk who prefers not to do work or leave the office building. In Benito Cereno, a captain stumbles upon a Spanish slave ship off the coast of Chile, whose captain has been overthrown in a revolt. The short story collection also includes The Piazza, The Lightning-Rod Man, The Encantadas, and the Bell-Tower. This is an unabridged version of the 1856 edition.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2018-04-23 Bartleby the Scrivener is the story of a quiet, hard working legal copyist who works in an office in the Wall Street area of New York City. One day Bartleby declines the assignment his employer gives him with the inscrutable I would prefer not. The utterance of this remark sets off a confounding set of actions and behavior, making the unsettling character of Bartleby one of Melville's most enigmatic and unforgettable creations. We are delighted to publish this classic book as part of our extensive Classic Library collection. Many of the books in our collection have been out of print for decades, and therefore have not been accessible to the general public. The aim of our publishing program is to facilitate rapid access to this vast reservoir of literature, and our view is that this is a significant literary work, which deserves to be brought back into print after many decades. The contents of the

vast majority of titles in the Classic Library have been scanned from the original works. To ensure a high quality product, each title has been meticulously hand curated by our staff. Our philosophy has been guided by a desire to provide the reader with a book that is as close as possible to ownership of the original work. We hope that you will enjoy this wonderful classic work, and that for you it becomes an enriching experience

bartleby the scrivener: *Bartleby, the Scrivener* Herman Melville, 2021-01-02 Bartleby the Scrivener tells the story of an optimistic lawyer faced with an inscrutable employee named Bartleby. Not long after starting his job, Bartleby moves into the office, stops doing most of his work, and answers the lawyer's every request with, I would prefer not to. Bartleby later dies of malnutrition in jail. A successful Wall Street lawyer employs a motley group of workers, each with their own strange attributes. He prides himself on being able to manage this group.

bartleby the scrivener: *HERMAN MELVILLE Bartleby, The Scrivener Annotated* Herman Melville, 2021-04-04 This story, in its most basic, stripped-down form, is a simple one: a successful lawyer, in need of assistance, hires a new scrivener (a kind of human Xerox machine) to join his small firm. Enter Bartleby, a quiet, initially efficient, anti-social little man. Bartleby proceeds to work well as a copyist, but refuses to help out with any other office tasks - or rather, he simply prefers not to. The lawyer and his other employees are shocked, but Bartleby just won't do what they ask. Bartleby is always in the office, either working or staring out the window at a facing wall, and it turns out that he actually lives in the office. Eventually, this refusal grows more bizarre, when Bartleby announces that he will no longer work as a copyist - but prefers simply to stay in the office and not do any work. Finally, he is firmly asked to leave...but he just doesn't. Rather than take any more drastic measures to get Bartleby out of his office, the lawyer actually picks up and moves his practice elsewhere. Another practice moves into the building, only to discover that Bartleby is still a fixture there. The new occupants complain to the Narrator, but he tells them the truth - Bartleby isn't his responsibility. At the end of their rope, the new occupants have the police arrest Bartleby. The story concludes with Bartleby in prison. He prefers not to do anything there, either, and even prefers not to eat. The Narrator goes to visit Bartleby, but unsurprisingly, he can't get through to the strange scrivener. Eventually, Bartleby wastes away and starves to death, leaving only the Narrator to mourn him. As a rather odd end note, the narrator informs us that Bartleby previously worked as a clerk in an obscure branch of the Post Office known as the Dead Letter Office, sorting through undeliverable mail. We have to wonder what kind of effect these dead letters must have had on his psyche. But still, Bartleby is a mystery left unsolved.

bartleby the scrivener: To Serve Them All My Days R. F. Delderfield, 2011-10-27 Miner's son David Powlett-Jones returns from the carnage of the Western Front in 1918, shell-shocked and bitterly hardened by the violence of war. He begins life again as a master at a remote Devon school, controlling the destiny of boys barely his junior. As the years pass David becomes a teacher of rare talent, begins to find peace, and is able to adjust to the changes which are overwhelming society. But soon he will have to face up to the prospect of another terrible war...

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2015-05-23 I am a rather elderly man. The nature of my avocations for the last thirty years has brought me into more than ordinary contact with what would seem an interesting and somewhat singular set of men, of whom as yet nothing that I know of has ever been written: -I mean the law-copyists or scriveners. I have known very many of them, professionally and privately, and if I pleased, could relate divers histories, at which good-natured gentlemen might smile, and sentimental souls might weep. But I waive the biographies of all other scriveners for a few passages in the life of Bartleby, who was a scrivener of the strangest I ever saw or heard of. While of other law-copyists I might write the complete life, of Bartleby nothing of that sort can be done. I believe that no materials exist for a full and satisfactory biography of this man. It is an irreparable loss to literature. Bartleby was one of those beings of whom nothing is ascertainable, except from the original sources, and in his case those are very small. What my own astonished eyes saw of Bartleby, that is all I know of him, except, indeed, one vague report which will appear in the sequel

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener by Herman Melville Classic Illustrated Edition Herman Melville, 2021-05-25 Bartleby is a kind of clerk, a copyist, who obstinately refuses to go on doing the sort of writing demanded of him. During the spring of 1851, Melville felt similarly about his work on Moby Dick. Thus, Bartleby can be seen to represent Melville's frustration with his own situation as a writer, and the story itself is about a writer who forsakes conventional modes because of an irresistible preoccupation with the most baffling philosophical questions. Bartleby can also be seen to represent Melville's relation to his commercial, democratic society. Bartleby is a kind of clerk, a copyist, who obstinately refuses to go on doing the sort of writing demanded of him. During the spring of 1851, Melville felt similarly about his work on Moby Dick. Thus, Bartleby can be seen to represent Melville's frustration with his own situation as a writer, and the story itself is about a writer who forsakes conventional modes because of an irresistible preoccupation with the most baffling philosophical questions. Bartleby can also be seen to represent Melville's relation to his commercial, democratic society.

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bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street (Hardcover) Herman Melville, 2018-08-27 Herman Melville's absurdist classic is printed anew in this presentable hardcover edition. First published in 1853, Bartleby, the Scrivener has been lauded as a superb - even perfect - example of short form fiction. In the years since its original publication, the text has received analysis in numerous essays and is commonly studied in school classrooms and university lectures. Various interpretations as a dark office comedy or as an autobiography by the increasingly iconoclastic Melville, the story concerns the titular Bartleby, a 'scrivener' or clerk hired by the narrator who is a prosperous lawyer based in Manhattan. Despite starting very well, the quiet Bartleby begins to refuse to do tasks, and gradually his workload tapers to zero. Each refusal is paired with Bartleby's catchphrase: I would prefer not to.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Annotated Herman Melville, 2020-05-06 Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street is a short story by the American writer Herman Melville, first serialized anonymously in two parts in the November and December 1853 issues of Putnam's Magazine, and reprinted with minor textual alterations in his The Piazza Tales in 1856. In the story, a Wall Street lawyer hires a new clerk who, after an initial bout of hard work, refuses to make copies or do any other task required of him, with the words I would prefer not to.

bartleby the scrivener: BARTLEBY, the SCRIVENER by Herman Melville Herman Melville, 2017-07-18 How to recognize which books should read. The classic means forever then the classic books mean eternity. Good friends, good books and a cup of tea, this is my idea life. And You?

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2020-09-28 The narrator is an elderly, unnamed Manhattan lawyer with a comfortable business in legal documents. He already employs two scriveners, Nippers and Turkey, to copy legal documents by hand, but an increase in business leads him to advertise for a third. He hires the forlorn-looking Bartleby in the hope that his calmness will soothe the irascible temperaments of the other two. An office boy nicknamed Ginger Nut completes the staff. At first, Bartleby produces a large volume of high-quality work, but one day,

when asked to help proofread a document, Bartleby answers with what soon becomes his perpetual response to every request: I would prefer not to. To the dismay of the narrator and the irritation of the other employees, Bartleby performs fewer and fewer tasks and eventually none, instead spending long periods of time staring out one of the office's windows at a brick wall. The narrator makes several futile attempts to reason with Bartleby and to learn something about him; when the narrator stops by the office one Sunday morning, he discovers that Bartleby has started living there.

bartleby the scrivener: *BARTLEBY, the SCRIVENER. (Annotated): a STORY of WALL-STREET* Herman Melville, 2021-05-05 This story, in its most basic, stripped-down form, is a simple one: a successful lawyer, in need of assistance, hires a new scrivener (a kind of human Xerox machine) to join his small firm. Enter Bartleby, a quiet, initially efficient, anti-social little man. Bartleby proceeds to work well as a copyist, but refuses to help out with any other office tasks - or rather, he simply prefers not to. The lawyer and his other employees are shocked, but Bartleby just won't do what they ask. Bartleby is always in the office, either working or staring out the window at a facing wall, and it turns out that he actually lives in the office. Eventually, this refusal grows more bizarre, when Bartleby announces that he will no longer work as a copyist - but prefers simply to stay in the office and not do any work. Finally, he is firmly asked to leave...but he just doesn't. Rather than take any more drastic measures to get Bartleby out of his office, the lawyer actually picks up and moves his practice elsewhere. Another practice moves into the building, only to discover that Bartleby is still a fixture there. The new occupants complain to the Narrator, but he tells them the truth - Bartleby isn't his responsibility. At the end of their rope, the new occupants have the police arrest Bartleby. The story concludes with Bartleby in prison. He prefers not to do anything there, either, and even prefers not to eat. The Narrator goes to visit Bartleby, but unsurprisingly, he can't get through to the strange scrivener. Eventually, Bartleby wastes away and starves to death, leaving only the Narrator to mourn him. As a rather odd end note, the narrator informs us that Bartleby previously worked as a clerk in an obscure branch of the Post Office known as the Dead Letter Office, sorting through undeliverable mail. We have to wonder what kind of effect these dead letters must have had on his psyche. But still, Bartleby is a mystery left unsolved.

bartleby the scrivener: *Bartleby, the Scrivener by Herman Melville (Annotated)* Herman Melville, 2021-06-26 Bartleby is a kind of clerk, a copyist, who obstinately refuses to go on doing the sort of writing demanded of him. During the spring of 1851, Melville felt similarly about his work on *Moby Dick*. Thus, Bartleby can be seen to represent Melville's frustration with his own situation as a writer, and the story itself is about a writer who forsakes conventional modes because of an irresistible preoccupation with the most baffling philosophical questions. Bartleby can also be seen to represent Melville's relation to his commercial, democratic society.

bartleby the scrivener: *The Silence of Bartleby* Dan McCall, 1989 In *The Silence of Bartleby*, Dan McCall proposes a new reading of Herman Melville's classic short tale *Bartleby, The Scrivener*. McCall discusses in detail how *Bartleby* has been read in the last half-century by practitioners of widely used critical methodologies—including source-study, psychoanalytic interpretation, and Marxist analysis. He argues that in these elaborate readings of the tale, the text itself may be lost, for critics frequently seem to be more interested in their own concerns than in Melville's. Efforts to enrich *Bartleby* may actually impoverish it, preventing us from experiencing the sense of wonder and pain that the story provides. McCall combines close readings of Melville's tale with a lively analysis of over four decades of commentary, and he includes the complete text of the story itself as an appendix, encouraging us to read the story on its own terms.

bartleby the scrivener: *Bartleby, the Scrivener [electronic Resource]* Herman Melville, 2005

bartleby the scrivener: *Bartleby the Scrivener* Herman Melville, 2016-08-07 The narrator of the story is an unnamed lawyer with offices on Wall Street in New York City. He describes himself as doing a snug business among rich men's bonds and mortgages and title-deeds. He has three employees: First, Turkey; second, Nippers; third, Ginger Nut, each of whom is described. Turkey and Nippers are copyists or scribes while Ginger Nut does delivery work or other assorted jobs around the office, and the lawyer decides his business needs a third scrivener. Bartleby responds to

his advertisement and arrives at the office, pallidly neat, pitiably respectable, incurably forlorn!

bartleby the scrivener: Great Short Works of Herman Melville Herman Melville, 1966

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby & Co Enrique Vila-Matas, 2007 Tells the story of a hunchback who is a failed writer that has no luck with women. He is a self-described Bartleby, named after the Herman Melville character; someone who, when asked to reveal information about themselves, will respond that they would prefer not to.

bartleby the scrivener: Together We Will Go J. Michael Straczynski, 2021-07-06 The Breakfast Club meets The Silver Linings Playbook in this powerful, provocative, and heartfelt novel about twelve endearing strangers who come together to make the most of their final days, from New York Times bestselling and award-winning author J. Michael Straczynski. Mark Antonelli, a failed young writer looking down the barrel at thirty, is planning a cross-country road trip. He buys a beat-up old tour bus. He hires a young army vet to drive it. He puts out an ad for others to join him along the way. But this will be a road trip like no other: His passengers are all fellow disheartened souls who have decided that this will be their final journey—upon arrival in San Francisco, they will find a cliff with an amazing view of the ocean at sunset, hit the gas, and drive out of this world. The unlikely companions include a young woman with a chronic pain sensory disorder and another who was relentlessly bullied at school for her size; a bipolar, party-loving neo-hippie; a gentle coder with a literal hole in his heart and blue skin; and a poet dreaming of a better world beyond this one. We get to know them through access to their texts, emails, voicemails, and the daily journal entries they write as the price of admission for this trip. By turns tragic, funny, quirky, charming, and deeply moving, *Together We Will Go* explores the decisions that brings these characters together, and the relationships that grow between them, with some discovering love and affection for the first time. But as they cross state lines and complications to the initial plan arise, it becomes clear that this is a novel as much about the will to live as the choice to end it. The final, unforgettable moments as they hurtle toward the decisions awaiting them will be remembered for a lifetime.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby Herman Melville, 1995-01-01 PRÉSENTATION :BARTLEBY est l'une des œuvres les plus remarquables de Melville en même temps que l'un des textes majeurs de la littérature quand celle-ci est justement considérée comme la première métamorphose de l'activité intellectuelle. Si Bartleby a été imaginé il y a plus d'un siècle, sa singularité est aujourd'hui d'exister partout où l'homme devient le sacrifié de la société. Le bureau de Bartleby à Wall Street est déjà, bien avant Kafka, entouré de murs aveugles. Bartleby fait partie des *Piazza Tales* que Melville commença de publier en 1850 dans le magazine *Putman's*, sept histoires parmi lesquelles, à côté de Bartleby, Benito Cereno, Les îles enchantées... Les éditions en langue anglaise portent soit le titre *Bartleby the scrivener* soit simplement *Bartleby*. Seule véritable traduction de Michèle Causse. CITATION :[...] - Ce sont vos copies que nous allons collationner. Il s'agit d'une économie de travail pour vous car une seule lecture répondra de vos quatre minutes. C'est l'usage. Chaque copiste est tenu de collationner sa copie. L'ignoreriez-vous ? Avez-vous quelque chose à dire ? Répondez ! - Je préférerais n'en rien faire, répliqua-t-il d'une voix flûtée. Tandis que je lui parlais, il m'avait donné l'impression de tourner soigneusement dans son esprit chacune de mes déclarations, d'en comprendre parfaitement le sens, de ne pouvoir en contredire l'irrésistible conclusion mais d'être contraint, par quelque souveraine considération, à répondre comme il le faisait. - Vous êtes donc décidé à ne pas satisfaire ma requête ? Une requête conforme à l'usage et au bon sens ? Il me donna brièvement à entendre que, sur ce point, mon jugement était juste. Oui, sa décision était irrévocable. Il arrive qu'un homme violemment brusqué, déraisonnablement contrarié voie ses convictions les mieux établies se mettre à vaciller. Il en vient alors, et tel était mon cas, à conjecturer que la justice et la raison, aussi surprenant que cela puisse paraître, sont toutes deux de l'autre côté. Par voie de conséquence, s'il se trouve quelques personnes désintéressées dans les parages, il se tourne vers elles pour étayer ses propres esprits défaillants. - Dindonneau, dis-je, que pensez-vous de cela ? N'ai-je pas raison ? - Avec votre permission, monsieur, dit Dindonneau, de sa voix la plus suave, je pense que vous dites vrai. - Pincettes, dis-je, qu'en pensez-vous ? - Je pense que je le jetterais à la porte de l'étude.[...] - Gingembre, dis-je, désireux de ne pas négliger le plus petit

suffrage en mafaveur, que pensez-vous de tout ceci ? - Je pense, monsieur, qu'il est un peu cinglé, répliqua Gingembre avec un large sourire. - Vous entendez ce qu'ils disent, m'écriai-je en direction du paravent, sortez de là et faites votre devoir. Il ne daigna pas répondre. Je réfléchis un moment, en proie à une cruelle perplexité. Mais une fois encore le travail me harcelait. Je résolus donc remettre l'examen de ce dilemme à plus tard. Avec quelque difficulté, nous nous mîmes en devoir de collationner sans Bartleby. Toutes les deux ou trois pages, Dindonneau émettait respectueusement l'opinion que cette façon de faire était rien moins qu'ordinaire et Pincettes, se tortillant sur sa chaise avec une nervosité de dyspeptique, marmottait entre ses dents de cinglantes malédictions à l'adresse de la tête de mule assise derrière le paravent. Quant à lui (Pincettes), c'était la première et la dernière fois qu'il faisait le travail d'un autre sans recevoir salaire. Les Suppléments, p.20-21

bartleby the scrivener: The Fiddler Herman Melville, 2009-04-28 A short story from the Classic Shorts collection: The Happy Failure by Herman Melville

bartleby the scrivener: 101 Great American Poems The American Poetry & Literacy Project, 2012-04-04 Rich treasury of verse from the 19th and 20th centuries includes works by Edgar Allan Poe, Robert Frost, Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, Emily Dickinson, T. S. Eliot, other notables.

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby and Benito Cereno Herman Melville, 2012-02-29 DIV Two classics in one volume: Bartleby, a disturbing moral allegory set in 19th-century New York, and Benito Cereno, a gripping sea adventure that probes the nature of man's depravity. /div

bartleby the scrivener: Bartleby, The Scrivener Herman Melville, 2020-02-16 It's a source of bafflement to me that Bartleby the Scrivener is not the most famous and celebrated book by Herman Melville. It's a flawless and ambiguous work of art. -Sophie Hannah; The Independent Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street (1853) is a short story by the American writer Herman Melville. In the story, a Wall Street lawyer hires a new clerk who, after an initial bout of hard work, refuses to make copies or do any other task required of him, with the words I would prefer not to. Numerous critical essays have been published about the story, which scholar Robert Milder describes as unquestionably the masterpiece of the short fiction in the Melville canon. Also included in this book is Benito Cereno (1855), another short story by Herman Melville, a fictionalized account about the revolt on a Spanish slave ship captained by Don Benito Cereno. Two Classic Melville Stories that Belong on Every Bookshelf!

bartleby the scrivener: Grammardog Guide to Bartleby the Scrivener Mary Jane McKinney, 2003-08 Grammardog Teacher's Guide contains 16 quizzes for this story set in the early days of Wall Street. All sentences are from the short story. Figurative language describes Bartleby as a bit of wreckage in the mid-Atlantic and a millstone to his boss. Allusions mention tycoon John Jacob Astor and geographical locations such as Broadway, Jersey City and Hoboken.

bartleby the scrivener: Disease and Decease in "Bartleby, the Scrivener". A Story of Wall-Street Natalie Pehl, 2015-03-18 Seminar paper from the year 2014 in the subject American Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,0, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz (Amerikanistik), course: Advanced Academic Writing I, language: English, abstract: As postmodern critics have stated, the rise of capitalism entailed negative consequences on the individual being. Society turned into a crisis of self-identification and still many people are dealing with the repercussions. As a result, low self-esteem and loss of identity lead to an increasing number of mental disorders. Critics like Deleuze and Guattari even argued for a link between capitalism and schizophrenia, claiming that schizophrenia arises from the decoding processes characteristic of capitalism (Holland 66). Bartleby, the Scrivener by Herman Melville, presents this serious conflict between the individual and society. In the following I will argue that society is in a deranged state. Moreover, society stigmatizes Bartleby as being mentally ill which causes his social limitation and leads in consequence to his act of passive resistance. Therefore, this paper will deal with two major issues: The conflict between the individual being and the social structure will be illustrated in detail. I will use Marxist terminology to help illustrate the main points of the capitalist exploitation of the individual worker.

bartleby the scrivener: Billy Budd Herman Melville, 1963

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Trilling, Lionel. "Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street," in his preface to *The Experience of Literature*, pp. 74-8, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979.

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