

A Don Mills Christmas Carol

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On Christmas Eve, three ghosts will visit Cadillac Fairview (CF). The scene will unfold as follows:

The Ghost of Don Mills Past takes CF to the Don Mills Centre of previous years, showing CF the crowds of happy shoppers in the mall—people young and old, people with walkers, in scooters and wheelchairs, blind people with guide-dogs, young parents with children visiting Santa Claus, the kids from the nearby schools—families, neighbours, and friends, merrily shopping and socializing in comfort and safety.

The Ghost of Don Mills Present takes CF to the Don Mills Centre demolition site, showing CF how sad, depressed, and lonely the people are, having lost their beloved shopping mall and gathering place.

“Don’t worry, Spirit!” CF tells the ghost. “We are building a beautiful open-air lifestyle centre. Those people will have a new place to shop that’s even better than their old mall!”

In response, the ghost lifts his hand and a light streams forth, causing CF to become attached to a walker. A snowstorm arises, covering the ground with snow and ice. The ghost says to CF: “Now walk with this through snow and ice on a cold and stormy day and do your shopping in your open-air centre!”

The ghost lifts his hand again. This time, CF becomes attached to a baby stroller, with two little children at its side. The ghost says: “How about now? Go and do your shopping along the busy streets where cars drive, and in the heat and cold. Are you feeling safe and comfortable?”

“We know what’s good for the people; we did our market study,” replies CF.

The ghost asks: “So you know, do you? Did you listen to the people when they begged you not to take the roof from over their heads, and when a blind person asked you to “have vision”? Did you respond to their requests? No, you only looked out for yourself and your profits!”

The Ghost of Don Mills Future is shrouded in black garments concealing his head and face. He leads CF to a deep hole, pointing down into the ground.

“Look inside!” he commands.

Deep at the bottom, CF sees a big, black stone with the letters “CF” on it.

“But Spirit, what are you showing me?” whimpers CF.

“You closed your heart to the people of Don Mills,” answers the ghost. “You closed your eyes and ears to their requests. Those who have no heart might as well turn to stone. And for a stone, there is only one way to go: down, down, and down!”

“Good Spirit,” cries CF. “Assure me that I may yet change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!”

The ghost replies: “Listen to the people and open your heart to them! Be one with the people of Don Mills! Remember, it is they who have made you what you are today. When you are one with the people, you become like a spirit, and for a spirit, there is only one way to go: up, up, and up! It is all in your hands, CF. The future is yours to change!”