

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street

****Herman Melville Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street****

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street is a fascinating and enigmatic short story that delves into the complexities of human behavior, isolation, and the bleak realities of 19th-century office life. Written by Herman Melville in 1853, this tale has captivated readers and scholars alike for its subtle yet profound commentary on the nature of work, individuality, and societal expectations. If you've ever wondered about the deeper meanings behind seemingly simple literature or the early critique of corporate culture, this story offers a compelling exploration.

The Background of Herman Melville's Bartleby the Scrivener

When Herman Melville penned **Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street**, he was already known for his major works like **Moby-Dick**. However, this particular story is uniquely set against the backdrop of Wall Street, the bustling financial district of New York City, which was rapidly evolving during the mid-19th century. This setting grounds the narrative in the real world of clerks, scriveners (copyists), and the often monotonous, repetitive nature of office work.

Melville's choice to focus on a scrivener—a person whose job was to copy legal documents—was deliberate. It symbolized the mechanical, dehumanizing aspects of clerical labor during the early days of American capitalism. The story was initially published in **Putnam's Magazine** and later included in Melville's **The Piazza Tales** collection.

Plot Overview: What Happens in Bartleby the Scrivener?

The narrator, a Wall Street lawyer who manages a small legal practice, hires Bartleby as a scrivener to help with the overwhelming paperwork. At first, Bartleby appears to be a diligent and efficient worker. However, as time goes on, he begins to refuse tasks with the enigmatic phrase, "I would prefer not to." This polite but firm refusal perplexes the narrator and escalates into a deeper mystery about Bartleby's motives and mental state.

Despite the narrator's attempts to understand and assist Bartleby, the scrivener's passive resistance ultimately leads to tragic consequences. The

story ends with Bartleby's death in prison, a victim of both societal neglect and personal despair.

Exploring Themes in Herman Melville *Bartleby the Scrivener* a Story of Wall Street

One of the reasons why **Bartleby the Scrivener** remains relevant today is its rich thematic content. The story operates on multiple levels, offering insights into human psychology, the alienation of modern work, and existential questions.

Alienation and Isolation in the Workplace

Bartleby's behavior highlights the alienation many people feel in monotonous jobs. His passive resistance can be interpreted as a silent protest against the dehumanizing conditions of office work. The repetitive nature of copying legal documents mirrors the loss of individuality and creativity often experienced in bureaucratic settings.

This theme resonates strongly with readers who have felt trapped in their careers or overwhelmed by the mechanical demands of their jobs. Melville's portrayal of Wall Street is not just a physical location but a symbol of capitalist society's tendency to reduce people to mere cogs in a machine.

The Enigma of Bartleby's Character

Bartleby himself is one of literature's most puzzling characters. His refusal to engage with the world around him challenges the expectations of employer-employee relationships and social norms. Scholars have debated whether Bartleby represents depression, a critique of capitalism, or an embodiment of passive resistance.

His famous line, "I would prefer not to," is both polite and defiant, making him a figure of quiet rebellion. This ambiguity invites readers to contemplate the nature of free will, compliance, and resistance.

The Social and Historical Context of *Bartleby the Scrivener*

Understanding the context in which Herman Melville wrote **Bartleby the Scrivener** adds depth to its interpretation. The 1850s were a time of rapid

industrialization and economic change in the United States. Wall Street was becoming a symbol of financial power but also of impersonal capitalism.

Capitalism and the Rise of Bureaucracy

Melville's story critiques the burgeoning capitalist system, where human beings are valued primarily for their productivity. The scrivener's job is repetitive and mechanical, reflecting the increasing specialization and compartmentalization of labor.

Bartleby's refusal to participate in this system exposes its cracks and limitations. His passive resistance can be seen as a subtle indictment of a society that prioritizes profit over human dignity.

Mental Health and Social Neglect

The story also touches on themes of mental health and the social responsibility toward individuals who struggle with isolation or depression. Bartleby's descent into despair and eventual death highlight the lack of support systems in a rapidly modernizing society.

In many ways, Melville was ahead of his time in portraying the psychological toll of urban life and labor conditions.

Why Bartleby the Scrivener Still Matters Today

Despite being written over 150 years ago, **Bartleby the Scrivener** continues to resonate with modern audiences, especially in discussions about work culture, mental health, and individual agency.

Lessons for the Modern Workplace

In today's world, where remote work, burnout, and job dissatisfaction are common, Bartleby's story offers valuable insights. It reminds employers and employees alike to recognize the human element behind every task and to consider the emotional and psychological impacts of work environments.

Many readers find that Bartleby's quiet rebellion speaks to the importance of setting boundaries and asserting personal autonomy, even in rigid systems.

Enduring Literary Influence

Bartleby's influence extends beyond literature into philosophy, psychology, and cultural studies. The story has been adapted into films, plays, and even inspired discussions on passive resistance and civil disobedience.

For anyone interested in American literature or the critique of modern life, Herman Melville's **Bartleby the Scrivener** remains a foundational text that challenges readers to look beneath the surface of everyday routines.

Tips for Reading and Analyzing Bartleby the Scrivener

If you're planning to read or teach **Bartleby the Scrivener**, here are some tips to enhance your understanding and appreciation:

- **Pay attention to the narrator's perspective:** The story is told from the lawyer's point of view, which colors the portrayal of Bartleby and raises questions about reliability and bias.
- **Consider the symbolic significance:** Look beyond the literal events to explore what Bartleby represents in terms of societal critique and existential questions.
- **Reflect on the historical context:** Understanding the 19th-century Wall Street environment enriches the narrative's meaning.
- **Explore secondary literature:** Numerous essays and analyses delve into the story's themes, providing diverse interpretations.

Engaging with these elements can transform a straightforward reading into a deeper exploration of human nature and societal structures.

Herman Melville Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street remains a timeless piece that challenges readers to think critically about work, humanity, and resistance in the face of conformity. Its enduring relevance speaks to Melville's extraordinary ability to capture the complexities of the human condition with subtlety and depth. Whether you are a literature enthusiast or someone curious about the origins of workplace critiques, Bartleby's tale is a compelling journey into the heart of 19th-century America and beyond.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Herman Melville, the author of 'Bartleby, the Scrivener'?

Herman Melville was an American novelist, short story writer, and poet, best known for his novel 'Moby-Dick.' He wrote 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' as a short story exploring themes of isolation and passive resistance.

What is the central theme of 'Bartleby, the Scrivener'?

The central theme of 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' is passive resistance and the alienation of individuals in a capitalist society, as illustrated by Bartleby's repeated phrase 'I would prefer not to.'

How does 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' reflect the environment of Wall Street?

The story is set in a law office on Wall Street, symbolizing the impersonal and mechanical nature of business and capitalism, where workers like Bartleby become dehumanized and disconnected.

What is the significance of Bartleby's phrase 'I would prefer not to'?

Bartleby's phrase 'I would prefer not to' signifies his passive refusal to conform to societal expectations and work demands, highlighting themes of nonconformity and passive resistance.

How does the narrator in 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' perceive Bartleby?

The narrator is initially perplexed and frustrated by Bartleby's behavior but gradually becomes sympathetic, reflecting on the limits of compassion and responsibility in a capitalist society.

What literary style is used in 'Bartleby, the Scrivener'?

'Bartleby, the Scrivener' employs a first-person narrative style with elements of realism and existentialism, using detailed descriptions to explore psychological and social themes.

Why is 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' considered a critique of capitalism?

The story critiques capitalism by portraying the dehumanizing effects of repetitive, meaningless work and the isolation it causes, as seen through Bartleby's disengagement and ultimate fate.

What role does isolation play in 'Bartleby, the Scrivener'?

Isolation is a key theme, with Bartleby embodying social and emotional isolation, highlighting the alienation individuals face in modern urban and corporate environments.

Has 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' influenced modern literature or culture?

Yes, 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' has influenced numerous writers and thinkers and is often referenced in discussions about bureaucracy, alienation, and passive resistance in literature and popular culture.

What is the ending of 'Bartleby, the Scrivener' and its significance?

Bartleby dies in prison from starvation after refusing to comply with the legal system, symbolizing the ultimate consequence of his passive resistance and the failure of society to address individual suffering.

Additional Resources

****Herman Melville Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street – An Analytical Review****

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street stands as one of Herman Melville's most enigmatic and enduring works. Despite its brevity, this narrative manages to encapsulate the complexities of 19th-century urban life, human alienation, and the mechanization of labor in the burgeoning financial district of New York City. First published in 1853, "Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street" offers a profound exploration of passive resistance and existential despair within the rigid confines of capitalist enterprise.

The Context and Significance of "Bartleby the

Scrivener"

To understand Herman Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener," it is essential to appreciate its context both within Melville's literary career and the socio-economic landscape of the time. Melville, renowned for his seafaring novel *Moby-Dick*, diverged here into urban fiction, focusing on the monotonous, bureaucratic world of Wall Street rather than the vast, unpredictable sea. This shift illustrates a transition reflective of America's own evolution—from exploration and adventure towards industrialization and capitalism.

The story's setting, Wall Street, is not merely a backdrop but acts as a symbol of the emerging corporate world's impersonal and dehumanizing nature. Bartleby, the scrivener—essentially a copyist—embodies the disposability and invisibility of laborers trapped in repetitive office roles. Through this lens, Melville critiques the alienation wrought by the economic system.

The Character of Bartleby: Passive Resistance and Alienation

Bartleby himself is an ambiguous figure. The scrivener initially performs his duties with remarkable diligence but soon adopts a peculiar form of protest: responding to requests with the phrase, "I would prefer not to." This passive resistance confounds his employer and colleagues, raising questions about individual agency and conformity within institutional systems.

Bartleby's behavior can be interpreted on multiple levels:

- **Psychological alienation:** His withdrawal from social interaction and refusal to work suggest a deep-seated existential despair.
- **Critique of labor conditions:** Bartleby's reluctance reflects a silent rebellion against the dehumanizing monotony of clerical work.
- **Symbol of nonconformity:** His passivity challenges traditional notions of protest, contrasting with overt rebellion or violence.

Melville's portrayal pushes readers to reflect on the limits of empathy and authority in the workplace, especially in the impersonal world of finance.

Literary Style and Narrative Technique

Herman Melville employs a first-person narrative, with the story told through the eyes of Bartleby's employer, an anonymous lawyer. This perspective provides an intimate yet limited understanding of Bartleby's motivations, adding layers of ambiguity. The narrator's fluctuating sympathy and frustration mirror society's broader ambivalence toward nonconformity.

Stylistically, Melville infuses the text with legal and bureaucratic jargon, reinforcing the cold, mechanical environment of Wall Street offices. The repetitive nature of legal copying tasks is echoed in the narrative's rhythm, immersing readers in the tedious world that ultimately crushes Bartleby's spirit.

Themes Explored in "Bartleby the Scrivener"

Alienation in the Modern Workplace

Bartleby's isolation exemplifies the alienation experienced by individuals in capitalist economies. Melville anticipates later sociological theories, such as Marx's concept of alienated labor, by highlighting how repetitive, meaningless work can erode personal identity.

The Limits of Compassion and Authority

The narrator's dilemma—how to deal with Bartleby's noncompliance—raises ethical questions about employer responsibility and human kindness in a profit-driven society. Despite efforts to help, the lawyer remains powerless, illustrating the limitations of institutional compassion.

The Enigma of Human Will and Free Choice

Bartleby's persistent refusal invites reflection on autonomy and the human will. Is his resistance a form of self-preservation or a surrender to nihilism? Melville deliberately leaves these questions unresolved, enhancing the story's haunting quality.

Impact and Legacy of "Bartleby the Scrivener"

Since its publication, "Bartleby the Scrivener" has captivated scholars, critics, and readers alike. It occupies a unique place in American literature as both a psychological case study and a socio-economic critique. The story has inspired numerous adaptations, including stage plays, films, and literary reinterpretations, underlining its timeless relevance.

Comparing Bartleby to Contemporary Representations of Work

In today's context, "Bartleby the Scrivener" resonates strongly amid ongoing discussions about workplace dissatisfaction, the gig economy, and mental health. Much like Bartleby's passive resistance, modern employees often express discontent through subtle withdrawal or disengagement rather than overt protest.

The story's depiction of a scrivener—an archaic role centered on document copying—parallels the modern fear of obsolescence in an age of automation. As technology reshapes labor markets, Bartleby's plight serves as a cautionary tale about the human cost of economic progress.

Key Features of Melville's Wall Street Storytelling

- **Concise yet layered narrative:** The story's brevity belies its rich thematic complexities.
- **Symbolic use of setting:** Wall Street is both a physical locale and a metaphor for capitalist alienation.
- **Unreliable narrator:** The lawyer's subjective viewpoint colors readers' interpretation.
- **Philosophical depth:** Questions of existence, agency, and societal roles permeate the text.

Pros and Cons of "Bartleby the Scrivener" as a Literary Work

- **Pros:** Offers profound insights into human psychology and social systems; rich symbolism; pioneering exploration of passive resistance.
- **Cons:** Ambiguous ending may frustrate some readers; narrative style can be dense due to legal jargon; limited action compared to Melville's other works.

Why "Bartleby the Scrivener" Remains Relevant Today

The tale of Herman Melville's Bartleby transcends its 19th-century origins, providing a mirror for contemporary anxieties about conformity, labor alienation, and the search for meaning in an increasingly mechanized world. Its exploration of passive resistance prefigures modern concepts of workplace disengagement and mental health struggles.

Moreover, the story's setting in Wall Street underscores the enduring critique of financial capitalism's impersonal nature, which continues to dominate global economies and influence individual lives.

In sum, *Herman Melville Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street* endures as a seminal work that invites readers to contemplate the

intersections of humanity, labor, and resistance. Its haunting narrative and complex themes offer valuable perspectives for both literary scholars and those interested in the socio-economic dynamics of work and identity.

Herman Melville Bartleby The Scrivener A Story Of Wall Street

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: *Bartleby The Scrivener*
Herman. Melville, 2006-10 Every person around has a dream world which is influenced by the outer world. But when internal passions try to descend over practical tasks then characters like Bartleby are made. The story is rich in language and yet spare in actual action as the protagonist answers to any task as I prefer not to. The end is very unusual making it more in...

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby, der Schreiber: Eine Geschichte aus der Wall Street Herman Melville, 2023-11-30 In *Bartleby, der Schreiber*: Eine Geschichte aus der Wall Street präsentiert Herman Melville eine eindringliche Erzählung über Isolation und die Mechanismen der modernen Arbeitswelt. Der Protagonist, Bartleby, ein scheinbar passiver Repräsentant des Unbehagens in der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft, verweigert schrittweise seine Mitarbeit und hinterlässt dabei einen tiefen, philosophischen Eindruck auf seinen Arbeitgeber. Melvilles meisterhafte Prosa, durchdrungen von ironischem Witz und düsterer Melancholie, reflektiert die Entfremdung des Individuums und die Spannungen zwischen Pflicht und persönlicher Integrität, fest verwoben in den Kontext der sich verändernden amerikanischen Industriegesellschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts. Herman Melville, ein bedeutender amerikanischer Schriftsteller des 19. Jahrhunderts, ist bekannt für seine komplexen Charakterstudien und die Auseinandersetzung mit existenziellen Themen. Geboren 1819, erlebte er die Umwälzungen seiner Zeit und reflektierte oft soziale Missstände sowie die Bedingungen des menschlichen Daseins in seinen Werken. Die Entstehung von *Bartleby* spiegelt seine tiefgreifende Beschäftigung mit Fragen der Identität, Freiheit und der Absurdität des Lebens wider, die sicherlich von seinen eigenen Erfahrungen und Beobachtungen geprägt wurden. Dieses Buch ist eine unverzichtbare Lektüre für alle, die sich mit den Themen der Individualität, der gesellschaftlichen Verantwortung und der Herausforderungen des modernen Lebens auseinandersetzen möchten. Melvilles scharfsinnige Analyse der menschlichen Psyche und der gesellschaftlichen Normen lädt den Leser dazu ein, über seine eigenen Werte und die Art des Arbeitens nachzudenken. *Bartleby, der Schreiber* ist nicht nur ein literarisches Meisterwerk, sondern auch eine zeitlose Mahnung an die Bedeutung der persönlichen Wahl und der menschlichen Würde.

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: 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, scribes 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.

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: *Bartleby, the Scrivener* (Annotated) Herman Melville, 2015-10-28 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.[

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby, The Scrivener. A Story of Wall-Street (Annotated) Herman Melville, 2020-07-11 Differentiated book- It has a historical context with research of the time-This book contains a historical context, which helps us understand this literary work. We must pay special attention to those events that especially influenced the world of culture and art and also to those events that were especially reflected in literature, in the life of its writer or that affected it. There are many examples in which historical events have shaped the content and forms of literature, as well as this has often been the best testimony to the importance of certain events throughout history. This context is formed by everything that, in some way, influences the event when it happens. A fact is always tied to its time: that is, to its time.Bartleby, the scribe (Bartleby the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street) is a story by Herman Melville (the author of Moby Dick), disconcerting while the personality of one of the protagonists has raised countless theories about it. The story begins with the first person voice of a man who owns a copy office for legal documents in downtown Wall Street. A man comes to him applying for a job: Bartleby. He is an effective worker (he copies documents without errors, he is the first to arrive and the last to leave) but, before another class of requests, the only thing he can answer is: he would rather not do so (I would prefer not to).

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: *Bartleby, The Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street* Herman. Melville, 2024-12-03

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby, The Scrivener Herman Melville, 2020-05-02 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.

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herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: *Bartleby the Scrivener A Story of Wall Street* Herman Melville, 2021-03-06 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.

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby Herman Melville, 2020-10-08 Academics hail it as the beginning of modernism, but to readers around the world-even those daunted by Moby-Dick-Bartleby the Scrivener is simply one of the most absorbing and moving

novellas ever. Set in the mid-19th century on New York City's Wall Street, it was also, perhaps, Herman Melville's most prescient story: what if a young man caught up in the rat race of commerce finally just said, I would prefer not to? The tale is one of the final works of fiction published by Melville before, slipping into despair over the continuing critical dismissal of his work after Moby-Dick, he abandoned publishing fiction. The work is presented here exactly as it was originally published in Putnam's magazine-to, sadly, critical disdain.

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: 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 scriveners 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, pitifully respectable, incurably forlorn!

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby, the Scrivener Illustrated Herman Melville, 2020-05-15 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. 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.

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby, the Scrivener Herman Melville, 2025-03-28 Herman Melville's Bartleby, The Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street is a timeless exploration of alienation and the human condition. Set against the backdrop of bustling Wall Street, this short story follows a copyist whose quiet refusal to conform disrupts the predictable world around him. Melville masterfully crafts a melancholy atmosphere, drawing readers into Bartleby's growing isolation. The story delves into themes of individuality, the drudgery of routine, and the search for meaning in a rapidly changing world. A cornerstone of classic American literature, Bartleby, The Scrivener resonates with its subtle humor and poignant portrayal of a man choosing his own path, however unconventional. This meticulously prepared print edition preserves the story's original integrity, ensuring its enduring power continues to captivate readers. This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

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herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: 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. Variouslly interpreted 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.

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: 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!

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby, the Scrivener: a Story of Wall-Street Herman Melville, 2017-09-15 Buy this Classic Bestseller in its original format in this new series of bestselling classic paperback reprints! Welcome to a special edition of a renowned classic. This classic, difficult-to-find text has been reprinted using a print-on-demand service to provide you with an updated version of the text, at the best value possible! Several edits have been made for readability, including font, text size, spacing, and alignment changes. However, while our goal was to enhance the ease at which this book can be read, we did not alter or change the historic text. Experience this classic in all of its glory and historical significance!

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby, The Scrivener
Gabriel Zarraga, Herman Melville, 2019-10-16 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.

herman melville bartleby the scrivener a story of wall street: Bartleby the Scrivener (Large Print) Herman Melville, 2015-03-19 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

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