A CHRISTMAS CAROL (the musical) by Stephen DeCesare Copyright 2003

Before the show begins (30 minutes before), carolers go out into the foyer of the theatre (4 or more singers) and perform the following songs a-cappella: "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen", "Deck The Hall", "Coventry Carol", "The Holly & The Ivy", "Wassail Song", "Good King Wenceslas", "What Child Is This" & "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing". These are Christmas songs that originated in England so these would be more than appropriate. The carolers can be part of the stage chorus or just perform caroling as their function of this production. No songs are to be performed during the intermission.

Act I

The scene will begin opening in a graveyard. You will hear pall-bearers singing and bringing a coffin down the center aisle.

Pall-bearers
Basses: REQUIEM AETERNAM. DONA EIS DOMINE.
REQUIEM AETERNAM. DONA EIS DOMINE.
CONFUTATIS MALEDICTIS, FLAMMIS ACRIBUS ADDICTIS.
DIES IRAE, DIES ILLA SOLVET SAECLUM IN FAVILLA.
REQUIEM AETERNAM. DONA EIS DOMINE.
DOMINE. DOMINE.

Pall-bearer
Tenor Solo: LACRYMOSA, DIES ILLA, QUA RESURGET EX FAVILLA
JUDICANDUS HOMO REUS.
REQUIEM AETERNAM. DONA EIS DOMINE.

You will see a priest and Scrooge on the stage awaiting the arrival of this coffin. Scrooge is not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event. The pall-bearers place the coffin in the grave and the priest starts the rite. He gets out his holy water and starts sprinkling the coffin.

Priest:
In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti.

Pall-bearers and Priest:
Amen.

Priest:
We commend our brother Jacob Marley to the earth. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust and dust thou shall return. Jacob, may the angels lead you into Paradise and may your soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Pall-bearers and Priest:
Amen.

The coffin begins to lower. The pall-bearers and the priest leave.

Undertaker:
My condolences, Mr. Scrooge. (**Scrooge says nothing**) If you could just sign the register, sir.

Scrooge takes the papers and signs his signature.

Undertaker:
I'm surprised, Mr. Scrooge, seeing that Mr. Marley left you with all his possessions, that he did not wish for you to give him a more ostentatious funeral.

Scrooge:
Why? Why waste money for planting people in the ground when it can used for making more money in the business we started here on earth.

Undertaker:
I was only saying...

Scrooge:
I know what you were saying. Marley was a frugal man in life, so why should he be any different in death?

Undertaker:
Mr. Scrooge, I didn't mean to cause offense. I only meant that because he was your partner and friend...

Scrooge:
He served his purpose and now it's ended. I wish to be left alone. You have been paid for your services. Now go!

Undertaker exits, leaving Scrooge alone at Marley's grave, just staring. Lights go dim then out. OVERTURE. When lights come up and the overture is over, you will see Scrooge's counting house. Bob Cratchit is in a dismal little cell beyond, a sort of tank, copying letters. Scrooge has a very small fire, but the clerk's fire is so very much smaller that it looks like one coal. But he can't replenish it, for Scrooge keeps the coal-box in his own room; Cratchit is so cold that when he goes into Scrooge's office with his shovel to get more coal. Scrooge shoots him a look and Cratchit gives up before he even gets within 10 feet of the bucket. Cratchit then puts on his white comforter, and tries to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of a strong imagination, he fails. Enter Fred.

Fred:
A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!

Scrooge:
Bah! Humbug!

Fred:
Christmas a humbug, uncle! You don't mean that, I am sure.

Scrooge:
I do. Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

Fred:
Come, then, what right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough.

Scrooge: (pause)
Bah! Humbug.

Fred:
Don't be cross, uncle.

Scrooge:
What else can I be when I live in such a world of fools as this Merry Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em through a round dozen of months presented dead against you? If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with "Merry Christmas" on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!

Fred: (pleading):
Uncle!

Scrooge: (sternly)
Nephew, keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.

Fred:
Keep it! But you don't keep it.

Scrooge:
Let me leave it alone, then. Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!

Fred:
There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round -- apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin -- as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!

Cratchit applaudes. Becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety, he pokes the fire, and extinguishes the last frail spark for ever.

Scrooge: (to Cratchit)
Let me hear another sound from you, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation. (**To Fred**) You're quite a powerful speaker, sir, I wonder you don't go into Parliament.

Fred:
Don't be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us tomorrow.

Scrooge:
I will see you in Hell first.

Fred:
But why? Why?

Scrooge:
Why did you get married?

Fred:
Because I fell in love.

Scrooge: (growling)
Because you fell in love! That is the one thing in the world more ridiculous than a Merry Christmas. Good afternoon!

Fred:
Nay, uncle, but you never came to see me before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?

Scrooge:
Good afternoon.

Fred:
I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?

Scrooge:
Good afternoon.

Fred:
I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humor to the last. So a Merry Christmas, uncle!

Scrooge:
Good afternoon!

Fred:
And A Happy New Year!

Scrooge:
Good afternoon!

Fred leaves the room without an angry word. He stops at the outer door to bestow the greeting of the season on the clerk, who, cold as he is, is warmer than Scrooge;

Fred:
Merry Christmas, Mr. Cratchit, to you and your family.

Cratchit:
And to you Master Fred.

Scrooge:
There's another fellow, my clerk, with fifteen shillings a week, and a wife and family, talking about a merry Christmas. I'll retire to Bedlam.

Cratchit lets Scrooge's nephew out, and lets two other people in. They are portly gentlemen, pleasant to behold, and now stand, with their hats off, in Scrooge's office. They have books and papers in their hands, and bow to him.

Gent #1: (referring to list)
Scrooge and Marley's, I believe. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?

Scrooge:
Mr. Marley has been dead these seven years. He died seven years ago, this very night.

Gent #2: (presenting his credentials)
We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner.

At the ominous word ``liberality'', Scrooge frowns, and shakes his head, and hands the credentials back.

Gent #1: (taking up a pen)
At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the Poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessaries; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.

Scrooge:
Are there no prisons?

Gent #1 (laying down the pen)
Plenty of prisons.

Scrooge:
And the Union workhouses? Are they still in operation?

Gent #1:
They are. Still. I wish I could say they were not.

Scrooge:
The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigor, then?

Gent #2:
Both very busy, sir.

Scrooge:
Oh! I was afraid, from what you said at first, that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course. I'm very glad to hear it.

Gent #1:
Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude, a few of us are endeavoring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?

Scrooge:
Nothing!

Gent #1:
You wish to be anonymous?

Scrooge:
I wish to be left alone. Since you ask me what I wish, gentlemen, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned: they cost enough: and those who are badly off must go there.

Gent #2:
Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

Scrooge:
If they would rather die they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides -- excuse me -- I don't know that.

Gent #2:
But you might know it.

Scrooge:
It's not my business. It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly.

A MAN WORKS HARD TO REACH THE GOALS HE'S SET THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE.
SACRIFICES ARE MADE REGARDLESS OF PAIN AND STRIFE.
BUT WHEN HE REACHES HIS GOAL, THAT'S WHEN THE VULTURE'S COME AROUND.

THEY ALL STRETCH OUT THEIR HANDS FOR A PIECE OF WHAT THE MAN HAS EARNED.
WELL, IF THEY REACH OUT TO ME, THEIR HANDS ARE QUICKLY BURNED.
I HAVE NO USE FOR THEIR WHINING ESPECIALLY ON THIS SO-CALLED HOLIDAY!

CHRISTMAS IS FOR FOOLS; FOR ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN ANYTHING THEY'RE TOLD.
I BELIEVE IN NOTHING. I JUST BELIEVE IN MONEY; WHAT'S REAL TO ME IS GOLD.

YOU THINK BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS,
I SHOULD BE MORE GIVING AND SUPPORT YOUR CHARITY.
WELL, HERE'S SOME INFORMATION, YOU CAUSE AND CHRISTMAS
HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.

I WORKED FOR EVERY POUND THAT I HAVE EVER RECEIVED.
I DON'T BELIEVE IN CHARITY.
WHY SHOULD THE POOR HAVE IT EASY AND GET SOMETHING FOR FREE?
WELL, NOT FROM ME!

ASSISTANCE'S FOR THE WEAK; IT JUST MAKES PEOPLE LAZY;
THEY DON'T LEARN TO HELP THEMSELVES.
AND ALL YOU "BLEEDING HEARTS" WHO THINK YOU CAN SAVE THE WORLD -
WELL, YOU CAN'T. JUST SAVE YOURSELVES.

I AM NOT MY BROTHER'S KEEPER. WHAT IS IT TO ME IF THE POOR LIVE OR DIE.
YOU'VE WASTED MY VALUABLE TIME. SO NOW I BID YOU GENTLEMEN: GET OUT!
GOODBYE!

All the people in the street watch as the gentlemen are being thrown out into the streets. As soon as the gentlemen exit the building, the next song begins.

Gent. #1: IF THERE WAS EVER A MAN YOU THOUGHT DID NOT HAVE A SOUL,

Gent. #2: OR A MISER WHO'S LIFE WAS HIS ENTIRE BANKROLL.

Woman #1: OR SOMEONE WHO'S DEMEANOR WAS JUST OUTRIGHT COLD.

All: THE TOP OF THE ALL WOULD BE A MAN CALLED SCROOGE.

A young boy stops at Scrooge's door and starts singing a Christmas carol:

Boy: GOD REST YE MERRY GENTELEMEN, LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY.
REMEMBER CHRIST OUR SAVIOR WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

Scrooge seizes a ruler flies to the door with rage that when Scrooge opens the door, the singer flees in terror.

Woman #2: HE TRIES SO HARD TO BE MEAN; IT WOULD KILL HIM TO BE NICE.

Woman #3: HE HAS A HEART MADE OF STONE AND BLOOD AS COLD AS ICE.

Gent. #3: TO FIND A WAY TO CHARGE US MORE, HE DON'T ACT TWICE.

All: ALL THIS FROM A MAN WE'VE COME TO KNOW AS SCROOGE.
KINDNESS AND MERCY ARE NOT HIS NATURE;
HE HAS THE DISPOSITION OF A BEAR.
THE MAN IS GREEDY. THE MAN IS STINGY.

A man starts to enter Scrooge's office until the chorus sings to him this line.

AND IF YOU OWE HIM MONEY: BEWARE! YOU WON'T HAVE A PRAYER.

The man quickly turns around and leaves.

Gent. #1: WHEN IT COMES TO BEING RUDE, HE IS UNPARALLED.

Gent. #2: HE'S AS SHALLOW AS THEY COME; HE'S AS HOLLOW AS A SHELL.

Woman #1: AND IN OUR OPINION

All: HE CAN GO TO HELL!
THE ONLY ONE WHO CARES FOR MISTER SCROOGE, IS SCROOGE.
WE'D BE BETTER OFF IF WE DID NOT KNOW SCROOGE.
THE WORLD WOULD BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT MISTER SCROOGE!

Clock bell strikes the hour, the chorus goes their own way and Scrooge dismounts from his stool.

Scrooge:
Cratchit, it's closing up time.

Cratchit instantly snuffs out his candle and puts on his hat.

Scrooge:
You'll want all day tomorrow, I suppose?

Cratchit:
If it is quite convenient, Sir.

Scrooge:
It is not convenient, and it is not fair. If I was to stop half-a-crown for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound? (**The clerk smiles faintly**.) And yet you don't think me ill-used, when I pay a day's wages for no work.

Cratchit:
It's only once a year, Sir.

Scrooge:
A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December! (**buttoning his great-coat to the chin**) But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning!

Cratchit:
I promise, Sir.

Scrooge walks out with a growl. The office is closed in a twinkling, and Cratchit puts on his coat

Cratchit: THERE'S A SPECIAL SOMETHING IN THE AIR.
YOU CAN FEEL IT'S MAGIC EVERYWHERE.
FOR THIS IS THAT SPECIAL TIME OF YEAR.
HOLD ON NOW! IT'S STARTING TO FEEL LIKE CHRISTMAS

CHILDREN WAITING SO IMPATIENTLY;
THEY WANT MORNING TO COME SUDDENLY.
TO SEE WHAT GIFTS ARE LEFT BENEATH THEIR TREE.
HOLD ON NOW! IT'S STARTING TO FEEL LIKE CHRISTMAS.

STREETS ALL LINED IN DECORATIONS, PEOPLE FULL OF JOY AND CHEER.
WHY CAN'T THIS FEELING OF CHRISTMAS LAST EVERYDAY OF THE YEAR.
OF THE YEAR!

Bob starts to join in the games that the local children are playing.

Cratchit: CAROLS SOUNDING IN THE DISTANCE.
HEAR THE ORGAN START TO SWELL.
IN THE CHURCH, THE CHOIR'S SINGING THEIR HYMNS TO OUR NOEL.

Cratchit & Chorus: OUR NOEL!

Cratchit: THIS, THE HOLIEST OF NIGHTS IS WHEN
WE ARE CALLED AS PART OF HUMAN KEN
TO PRAY FOR PEACE AND GOODWILL TOWARDS MEN.

Cratchit & Chorus: HOLD ON NOW! IT'S STARTING TO FEEL LIKE CHRISTMAS.
CHRISTMAS. **(Everyone starts to leave, going about their business)**
CHRISTMAS. **(The singing is faded, but still heard)**

Blackout.

Lights up on Scrooge in his house, in his night-cap; sitting before the fire taking his gruel. Suddenly, a bell that hangs in this room begins to swing. It swings so softly in the outset that it scarcely makes a sound; but soon it rings out loudly, and so does every bell in the house. It will last a few seconds, then suddenly cease.

Then a clanking noise, deep down below; as if some person were dragging a heavy chain over the casks in the wine-merchant's cellar. The cellar-door flies open with a booming sound, and then he hears the noise much louder, on the floors below; then coming up the stairs; then coming straight towards his door.

Scrooge:
It's humbug still! I won't believe it.

His color changes though, when, without a pause, it comes on through the heavy door, and passes into the room before his eyes. Upon its coming in, the dying flame leaps up, as though it cries,

Scrooge:
I know him! Marley's Ghost! (**He falls again**)

Marley in his pigtail, usual waistcoat, tights, and boots; the tassels on the latter bristling, like his pigtail, and his coat-skirts, and the hair upon his head. The chain he draws is clasped about his middle. It is long, and wound about him like a tail; and it is made of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel.

Scrooge: (caustic and cold)
How now! What do you want with me?

Marley:
Much!

Scrooge:
Who are you?

Marley:
Ask me who I was.

Scrooge: (raising his voice)
Who were you then. You're particular, for a shade.

Marley:
In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

Scrooge: (looking doubtful)
Can you -- can you sit down?

Marley:
I can.

Scrooge:
Do it, then.

The ghost sits down on the opposite side of the fireplace, as if he were quite used to it.

Marley:
You don't believe in me.

Scrooge:
I don't.

Marley:
What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your senses?

Scrooge:
I don't know.

Marley:
Why do you doubt your senses?

Scrooge:
Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are! You see this toothpick?

Marley:
I do.

Scrooge:
You are not looking at it.

Marley:
But I see it, notwithstanding.

Scrooge:
Well! I have but to swallow this, and be for the rest of my days persecuted by a legion of goblins, all of my own creation. Humbug, I tell you; humbug!

At this the spirit raises a frightful cry, and shakes its chain with such a dismal and appalling noise, that Scrooge holds on tight to his chair, to save himself from falling in a swoon.

Scrooge:
Mercy! Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?

Marley:
Man of the worldly mind, do you believe in me or not?!

Scrooge:
I do. I must. But why do spirits walk the earth, and why do they come to me?

Marley:
It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow-men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world -- oh, woe is me! -- and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!

Again the spectre raises a cry, and shakes its chain, and wrings its shadowy hands.

Scrooge: (trembling)
You are fettered. Tell me why?

Marley:
I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to you? (**Scrooge trembles more and more.)** Or would you know the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it, since. It is a ponderous chain!

Scrooge glances about him on the floor, in the expectation of finding himself surrounded by some fifty or sixty fathoms of iron cable: but he sees nothing.

Scrooge: (imploringly)
Jacob, Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob.

Marley:
I have none to give. It comes from other regions, Ebenezer Scrooge, and is conveyed by other ministers, to other kinds of men. Nor can I tell you what I would. A very little more, is all permitted to me. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. My spirit never walked beyond our counting-house -- mark me! -- in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!

Scrooge puts his hands in his breeches pockets. Pondering on what the Ghost had said, he does so now, but without lifting up his eyes, or getting off his knees.

Scrooge: (in a business-like manner)
You must have been very slow about it, Jacob.

Marley:
Slow!

Scrooge:
Seven years dead, and traveling all the time?

Marley:
The whole time. No rest, no peace. Incessant torture of remorse.

Scrooge:
You travel fast?

Marley:
On the wings of the wind.

Scrooge:
You might have got over a great quantity of ground in seven years.

The Ghost, on hearing this, sets up another cry, and clanks its chain hideously.

Marley:
Oh! captive, bound, and double-ironed, not to know, that ages of incessant labor by immortal creatures, for this earth must pass into eternity before the good of which it is susceptible is all developed. Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunities misused! Yet such was I! Oh! such was I!

Scrooge:
But you were always a good man of business, Jacob.

Marley: (wringing his hands)
Business! Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business! (**It holds up its chain at arm's length, as if that were the cause of all its unavailing grief, and flings it heavily upon the ground again**) At this time of the rolling year I suffer most. Why did I walk through crowds of fellow-beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode? Were there no poor homes to which its light would have conducted me! (**Scrooge begins to quake exceedingly**) Hear me My time is nearly gone.

Scrooge:
I will. But don't be hard upon me! Don't be flowery, Jacob! Pray!

Marley:
How it is that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day. That is no light part of my penance. I am here tonight to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer.

Scrooge:
You were always a good friend to me. Thank'ee.

Marley:
You will be haunted by Three Spirits.

Scrooge: (in a faltering voice)
Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob?

Marley:
It is.

Scrooge:
I -- I think I'd rather not.

Marley:
Without their visits, you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first tomorrow, when the bell tolls One.

Scrooge:
Couldn't I take 'em all at once, and have it over, Jacob?

Marley:
Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third upon the next night when the last stroke of Twelve has ceased to vibrate. Look to see me no more; and look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us.

When it had said these words, the apparition walks backward from him; and at every step it takes, the window raises itself a little, so that when the spectre reaches it, it is wide open.

Marley:
Come here.

When they are within two paces of each other, Marley's Ghost holds up its hand, warning him to come no nearer. Scrooge stops. Scrooge follows to the window: desperate in his curiosity. He looks out and while the song is being sung, phantoms come in (or fly in) through the window.

Marley: WHAT YOU SEE ALL AROUND ARE PHANTOMS
WHO ARE BOUND FOR ALL TIME; TO WANDER ENDLESSLY.
EVERYONE WEARS A CHAIN; CHAINS OF MISSED OPPORTUNITY.
WE'RE DOOMED AND NEVER CAN BE FREE.

WE NEVER HELPED ANYONE WHO WAS NEEDY IN OUR MIDST;
WE JUST TURNED OUR BACKS AND LOOKED AWAY.
AND NOW EACH DAY WE ALL YEARN
FOR THE CHANCE TO MAKE AMENDS: BUT IT'S TOO LATE.
AND OUR FATE YOU'LL SHARE MY FRIEND

IF YOU DON'T OPEN YOUR HEART AND LET CHRISTMAS
COME ALIVE IN YOU, A CHAIN, YOU TOO WILL BEAR.
IF YOU DON'T OPEN YOUR HEART TO YOUR FELLOW MAN,
A CHAIN OF GUILT YOU'LL SOON FOREVER WEAR.
YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW LITTLE EFFORT IT WILL TAKE
TO ERASE YOUR CRUEL, UNKIND MISTAKES.
AMEND YOUR LIFE! FOR TONIGHT IS FOR YOU A FINAL WARNING,
OR YOU'LL SPEND ETERNITY IN CHAINS.

Spirits have been moving throughout the theater and stage.

Marley:
These spirits try to interfere for good in human affairs, but they've lost the power. That is the curse we bear.

Man Ghost #1: IN THE STORE THAT I RAN, ALL THE SCALES WERE FIXED
SO I COULD CHARGE EACH PATRON A LITTLE BIT MORE.

Woman Ghost: WHEN I WENT TO A CHURCH, AND WAS SURE NO ONE
WAS LOOKING, I STOLE MONEY THAT WAS MEANT FOR THE POOR.

Man Ghost #2: I BEAT MY WIFE AND MY KIDS WHEN I HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK
WHICH WAS ALMOST EVERY OTHER DAY.

Man Ghost #3: IF SOMEONE STAYED AT MY INN,
I NICKELED AND DIMED FOR EVERY WHIM
OR MY NAME WASN'T MONSIEUR THENARDIER.

Marley: IF YOU DON'T OPEN YOUR HEART AND LET CHRISTMAS
COME ALIVE IN YOU, A CHAIN, YOU TOO WILL BEAR.
IF YOU DON'T OPEN YOUR HEART TO YOUR FELLOW MAN,
A CHAIN OF GUILT YOU'LL SOON FOREVER WEAR.
YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW LITTLE EFFORT IT WILL TAKE
TO ERASE YOUR CRUEL, UNKIND MISTAKES.
AMEND YOUR LIFE! FOR TONIGHT IS FOR YOU A FINAL WARNING,
OR YOU'LL SPEND ETERNITY IN CHAINS.

More Spirits have entered the house and start to encircle Scrooge.

Marley
and All Spirits: OUT OF ALL THE CHAINS THAT WE MUST BEAR,
THE 'CHAIN OF REGRET' TORMENTS US MOST.
WE MUST WEAR IT CLOSE AS IF IT WERE OUR SKIN.
(**they point at Scrooge)** AND IT'S A WEIGHT THAT YOU WILL KNOW

IF YOU DON'T OPEN YOUR HEART AND LET CHRISTMAS
COME ALIVE IN YOU, A CHAIN, YOU TOO WILL BEAR.
IF YOU DON'T OPEN YOUR HEART TO YOUR FELLOW MAN,
A CHAIN OF GUILT YOU'LL SOON FOREVER WEAR.
YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW LITTLE EFFORT IT WILL TAKE
TO ERASE YOUR CRUEL, UNKIND MISTAKES.
AMEND YOUR LIFE! FOR TONIGHT IS FOR YOU A FINAL WARNING,
OR YOU'LL SPEND ETERNITY IN CHAINS.

When song is over, blackout. Lights quickly up and Scrooge is alone with an open window. Scrooge closes the window and examines the door by which the Ghost had entered.

Scrooge:
Hum....

Scrooge goes straight to bed, without undressing, and falls asleep upon the instant. When Scrooge awakes, the heavy bell tolls one; then stops. He touches the spring of his repeater, to correct this most preposterous clock.

Scrooge:
One! It was past two when I went to bed. Why, it isn't possible that I can have slept through a whole day and far into another night.

Light flashes up in the room upon the instant, and the curtains of his bed are drawn aside. A strange figure -- like a child: yet not so like a child. Its hair, which hangs about its neck and down its back, is white as if with age; and yet the face has not a wrinkle in it. Around its waist is bound a lustrous belt, the sheen of which was beautiful. It holds a branch of fresh green holly in its hand; and, its dress trimmed with summer flowers. But the crown of its head springs a bright clear jet of light, by which all this is visible; and a great extinguisher for a cap, which it now holds under its arm.

Scrooge:
Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?

Past: (soft and gentle)
I am!

Scrooge: (demanding)
Who, and what are you?

Past:
I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

Scrooge:
Long past?

Past:
No. Your past.

Scrooge:
Spirit, would you kindly cover yourself with my cap.

Past:
What! Would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give? Is it not enough that you are one of those whose passions made this cap, and force me through whole trains of years to wear it low upon my brow!

Scrooge:
I am sorry, Spirit. I did not mean to offend or willfully bonnet you at any period in my life. What business brings you here?

Past:
Your welfare!

Scrooge:
I am much obliged, but I can not help thinking that a night of unbroken rest would be more conducive to that end.

Past:
Your reclamation, then. Take heed! (**It puts out its strong hand as it speaks, and clasps him gently by the arm**) Rise! and walk with me!

Scrooge:
I am mortal and liable to fall.

Past:
Bear but a touch of my hand there, (**laying it upon his heart**) and you shall be upheld in more than this!

As the words are spoken, they pass through the wall, and stand upon an open country road, with fields on either hand.

Scrooge: (clasping his hands together)
Good Heaven! I was bred in this place. I was a boy here!

Past:
Your lip is trembling. And what is that upon your cheek?

Scrooge:
It's a pimple. Spirit, lead me where you will.

Past:
You recollect the way?

Scrooge: (with fervor)
Remember it! I could walk it blindfold.

Past:
Strange to have forgotten it for so many years! Let us go on.

They walk along the road and soon you hear a fife in the distance, and then children start to run on stage and sing their song, playing happily as they go:

Children: WILLIE, TAKE YOUR LITTLE DRUM, ROBIN TAKE YOUR FLUTE AND COME,
WHEN WE HEAR THE TUNE YOU PLAY, TU-RE-LU-RE-LU, PAT-A-PAT-A-PAN;
WHEN WE HEAR THE TUNE YOU PLAY, HOW CAN ANYONE BE GLUM?

WHEN THE MEN OF OLDEN DAYS GAVE THE KING OF KINGS THEIR PRAISE,
THEY HAD PIPES ON WHICH TO PLAY, TU-RE-LU-RE-LU, PAT-A-PAT-A-PAN;
THEY HAD DRUMS ON WHICH TO PLAY, FULL OF JOY ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

Scrooge has been trying to get the children's attention, but to no avail.

Children: GOD AND MAN THIS DAY BECOME, JOINED AS ONE WITH FLUTE AND DRUM,
LET THE HAPPY TUNE PLAY ON, TU-RE-LU-RE-LU, PAT-A-PAT-A-PAN;
FLUTE AND DRUM TOGETHER PLAY AS WE SING ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

Past:
These are but shadows of the things that have been. They have no consciousness of us.

Children: GOD AND MAN THIS DAY BECOME, JOINED AS ONE WITH FLUTE AND DRUM,
LET THE HAPPY TUNE PLAY ON, TU-RE-LU-RE-LU, PAT-A-PAT-A-PAN;
FLUTE AND DRUM TOGETHER PLAY AS WE SING ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

The children exit playing and Scrooge and Past are left alone.

Past:
The school is not quite deserted. A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.

Scrooge:
I know. (**He sobs**)

They enter the school where Scrooge as boy is at. Scrooge sits down upon a form, and weeps to see his poor forgotten self as he used to be.

Boy Scrooge:
WHEN I WAS A LAD, I HAD COURSE TO BE SAD, A VERY GOOD FRIEND I DID LOSE.
IT STARTS WITH A MAN WHEN HIS JOURNEY BEGAN:
HIS NAME IT WAS ROBINSON CRUSOE.

OH, ROBINSON CRUSOE! OH, POOR ROBINSON CRUSOE!
HE WENT OFF TO SEA AND BETWEEN YOU AND ME,
OLD NEPTUNE WRECKED ROBINSON CRUSOE.

BUT HE SAVED FROM ABOARD AN OLD GUN AND A SWORD
AND ANOTHER ODD MATTER OR TWO,
SO THAT BY DINT OF HIS THRIFT HE JUST MANAGED TO SHIFT,
AND KEEP ALIVE ROBINSON CRUSOE!
OH, ROBINSON CRUSOE! OH, POOR ROBINSON CRUSOE!
WHETHER TEMPEST OR TURK, OR WILD MAN OR WORK, NO MATTER TO ROBINSON CRUSOE.

Scrooge:
Poor boy (**he cries again**) I wish (**putting his hand in his pocket, and looking about him, after drying his eyes with his cuff**) but it's too late now.

Past:
What is the matter?

Scrooge:
Nothing. Nothing. There was a boy singing a Christmas Carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all.

The Ghost smiles thoughtfully, and waves its hand: saying as it does so:

Past:
Let us see another Christmas!

The room becomes a little darker and more dirty. The younger Scrooge is now a boy of about 12 and he is walking up and down despairingly. Scrooge looks at the Ghost, and with a mournful shaking of his head, glances anxiously towards the door. It opens; and a little girl, much younger than the boy, comes darting in, and putting her arms about his neck, kisses him and addresses him.

Fan:
Dear, dear brother. I have come to bring you home, dear brother! (**clapping her tiny hands, and bending down to laugh**) To bring you home, home, home!

Boy Scrooge:
Home, little Fan?

Fan:
Yes! Home, for good and all. Home, for ever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be, that home's like Heaven! He spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said Yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're to be a man, and are never to come back here; but first, we're to be together all the Christmas long, and have the merriest time in all the world.

Young Scrooge:
You are quite a woman, little Fan!

She claps her hands and laughs, and tries to touch his head; but being too little, laughs again, and stands on tiptoe to embrace him.

Fan: CHRISTMAS IS MORE THAN WHEN THE SLEIGH BELLS RING.
CHRISTMAS IS MORE THAN THE SONGS WE SING.
CHRISTMAS IS PEACE AND HARMONY; COMING TOGETHER AS FAMILY.

Boy Scrooge: CHRISTMAS IS LAUGHTER AND LOTS OF CHEER;
KNOWING THAT SOON WILL BE A BRAND NEW YEAR.
CHRISTMAS IS SNOW, ALL PURE AND CLEAN;
STREETS DECORATED IN RED AND GREEN.

Fan: CHRISTMAS IS YOU.

Boy Scrooge: CHRISTMAS IS ME.

Both: CHRISTMAS IS EVERYONE.

Fan: THIS IS THE TIME

Boy Scrooge: TO CELEBRATE

Both: THE BIRTH OF GOD'S ONLY SON. CHRISTMAS IS BEING WITH THE ONES YOU LOVE;
CREATING MEM'RIES FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.
FOR IF ONE DAY, WE TWO SHOULD PART,
THIS CHRISTMAS WILL ALWAYS BE IN MY HEART.

They start to play tag.

Both: CHRISTMAS IS BEING WITH THE ONES YOU LOVE;
CREATING MEM'RIES FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.
FOR IF ONE DAY, WE TWO SHOULD PART,
THIS CHRISTMAS WILL ALWAYS BE IN MY HEART.
YOU'LL ALWAYS BE WITHIN MY HEART.

Then she begins to drag him, in her childish eagerness, towards the door; and he accompanies her. The scene is blacked out and only Scrooge and Past are lighted.

Past:
Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered. But she had a large heart!

Scrooge:
So she had. You're right, I will not gainsay it, Spirit. God forbid!

Past:
She died a woman and had, as I think, children.

Scrooge:
One child.

Past:
True. Your nephew!

Scrooge:
Yes.

Past waves its hand again. They are now at Fezziwig's old shop.

Past:
Do you know this place?

Scrooge:
Know it! I was apprenticed here!

At sight of an old gentleman in a Welch wig, sitting behind such a high desk. Scrooge cries in great excitement:

Scrooge:
Why, it's old Fezziwig! Bless his heart; it's Fezziwig alive again!

Old Fezziwig lays down his pen, and looks up at the clock, which points to the hour of seven. He rubs his hands; adjusts his capacious waistcoat; laughs all over himself, and calls out in a comfortable, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice:

Fezziwig:
Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!

Scrooge's former self, now grown a young man, comes briskly in, accompanied by his fellow apprentice.

Scrooge:
Dick Wilkins, to be sure! Bless me, yes. There he is. He was very much attached to me.

Fezziwig:
Yo ho, my boys! No more work tonight. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up before a man can say, Jack Robinson!

They charge rush around the shop shutting all of the shutters and clearing the area for the expected guests.

Fezziwig:
Hilli-ho! (**skipping down from the high desk, with wonderful agility**) Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here! Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer!

In comes Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In comes the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In come the six young followers whose hearts they broke. Enter all the young men and women employed in the business, the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker, the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman, everyone in the village has been invited.

Bandleader (Conductor from orchestra pit):
Mr. Fezziwig, would you and your lovely wife, lead us in the first dance.

Mr. Fezziwig: (acting shy)
Oh, I don't know. It's been so long since.....

Mrs. Fezziwig grabs him and pulls him close.

Mrs. Fezziwig:
Your mine, Mr. Fezziwig. Do I make myself quite clear? (**She kisses him smack dab on the mouth. Everyone is quite surprised at this.)**

Mr. Fezziwig: (pause, getting out of his daze)
Ah one and a two...

The Fezziwig's alone dance the "Pre-Intrada" Dance. After the dance, Mr. Fezziwig says,

Mr. Fezziwig (to the conductor and motioning everyone else to dance)
Mr. Conductor, if you please....

SONG "INTRADA"

During the song, you see young Scrooge motioning to a young girl to dance with him which she does so unhesitantly. After the song is over, young Scrooge takes the young girl outside where they can speak in private.

Belle:
Ebenezer, why did you bring me out here? It's freezing.

Young Man Scrooge:
Belle, I wanted to be alone with you for a minute. I have something to ask of you.

Belle:
What is it?

Young Man Scrooge: (turns away from her)
Well, I've never been good with words, so.... (**He pulls a box out of his pocket and opens it, turns around, and shows her a band of gold**) Belle, (**he gets down on one knee**) will you marry me?

Belle:
Oh, Ebenezer. (**she takes the ring**) Yes, I will marry you.

Young Man Scrooge gets up and the two lovers embrace.

Young Man Scrooge:
Belle, I will make you happy, I promise.

Belle:
You already do.

Young Man Scrooge:
Belle, as soon as I gain enough capital, I'm going to open my own business. I'm going to make us rich, and you'll have all the things that you deserve and more. No more taking second best.

Belle:
Oh, Ebenezer....

Young Man Scrooge:
Belle, I'm going to make my first contract with you, right here and now. (**Gets down on one knee and takes her by the hand**) I will always be there when you need me, I will always take care of you and I will never, ever let my business take precedence over us. You will always come first in my life.

Belle: TONIGHT YOU'VE PROMISED TO BE MINE; YOU GIVE YOUR HEART AND SOUL TO ME.
NOW EVERY DAY WILL BE A LOVE SONG THAT WE'LL SING THROUGH ALL ETERNITY.

I'LL BE FOREVER YOURS AND YOU FOREVER MINE;
WE'LL GLADLY SHARE OUR LIVES TOGETHER.
NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE OUR HOME WILL ALWAYS BE
IN THE ARMS OF EACH OTHER.

YOU'VE MADE MY LIFE SO COMPLETE. I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE MINE.
I VOW TO YOU BOTH NOW AND ALWAYS TO LOVE YOU 'TIL THE END OF TIME.

They dance.

Belle: YOU'VE MADE MY LIFE SO COMPLETE.

Y Scrooge: I LOVE YOU AND NEED YOU.