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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.

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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!

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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 forever.

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.

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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?

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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.

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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 GENTLEMEN 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.

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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.

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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.

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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?!

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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 specter 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 roamed 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.

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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.

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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: I MARRIED GIRLS JUST SO I COULD GET THEIR DOWRIES IN MY HANDS.
I'D RACK UP BILLS, THEN LEAVE SO THAT THEY'D HAVE TO PAY.

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.

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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?

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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 cannot 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 then children start to run on stage playing happily as they go. Scrooge tries to get their attention, but to no avail.

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

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

Past:
The school is not quite deserted. **(They enter the school where Boy Scrooge is at)** A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.

Scrooge:
I know. (**He sobs**) 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 again kisses 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, forever 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.

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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?

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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 Dick Wilkins.

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. 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"

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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. I'll never be 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.

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Y Scrooge: I LOVE YOU AND NEED YOU.

Belle: I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE MINE.

Y. Scrooge: I WANT YOU FOREVER.

Belle: I VOW TO YOU BOTH NOW AND ALWAYS

Both: TO LOVE YOU 'TIL THE END OF TIME!

They continue dancing until song is over. When song is over, Scrooge kisses Belle. The clock strikes eleven, and the domestic ball breaks up. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig take their stations, one on either side of the door, and shaking hands with every person individually as he or she goes out, wishing him or her a Merry Christmas. Belle and Young Scrooge run around and enter into the Fezziwig's.

Dick:
Where have you two been hiding?

Belle extends her hand and shows Dick the engagement ring.

Dick:
Well, bless my soul. Congratulations you two.

Mrs. Fezziwig: (coming over)
What is all the excitement? (**Belle shows her the ring**) It's beautiful! Congratulations, my dear. (**She grabs Belle's arm and shows the ring to her husband**) Papa, look!

Mr. Fezziwig:
That's a fine ring you have Belle and a fine gentleman to go with it.

Young Man Scrooge:
Thank you, sir.

Mr. Fezziwig:
I wish you both all the happiness in the world and I hope that you two have as great a marriage as I have.

Mrs. Fezziwig: (turning to her husband)
You really mean that?

Mr. Fezziwig:
Of course I do.

Mrs. Fezziwig:
Sometimes I thought that maybe you have regretted marrying me. That you might have wanted something more...

Mr. Fezziwig:
I never wanted anything more than what I have in you. You are my life Emily, and I wouldn't trade it for all the gold in the world; Though it was a little rocky in the beginning...

Mrs. Fezziwig:
It wasn't easy.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN WE MET? HOW I WAS SHY AND YOU WERE BLUSHING?

Mr. Fezziwig: IT WAS A DAY OF HIGH RENOWN; WHEN I STOOD UP, MY PANTS FELL DOWN.

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Mrs. Fezziwig: ON OUR FIRST DATE, REMEMBER WHEN
YOU SAID GOODNIGHT AND THEN YOU KISSED ME?

Mr. Fezziwig: THAT NIGHT IS FULL OF MEMORIES; ESPECIALLY ONE: YOUR FATHER'S GUN.

Mrs. Fezziwig: WHEN WE MARRIED,

Mr. Fezziwig: IT WAS RAINING.

Mrs. Fezziwig: THE RECEPTION;

Mr. Fezziwig: FOOD WAS LOUSY.

Both: IT WAS CERTAINLY A DAY WE WON'T FORGET.

Mrs. Fezziwig: IF THERE'S ONE THING,

Mr. Fezziwig: DARE WE SAY SO;

Both: THAT WE BOTH KNOW

Mrs. Fezziwig: THAT THROUGH THE YEARS

Mr. Fezziwig: AND WE ARE STILL IN LOVE.

Mrs. Fezziwig: OUR LITTLE HOME, REMEMBER WHEN; IT WAS A PLACE FIT FOR A KING.

Mr. Fezziwig: THE FLOOR WAS CRACKED, THE WALLS WERE THIN,
AND WHEN IT RAINED THE ROOF FELL IN.

Mrs. Fezziwig: EACH HOLIDAY, REMEMBER WHEN,
WE'D HAVE OUR FAMILIES HERE FOR DINNER.

Mr. Fezziwig: THERE WERE SO MANY FROM EACH SIDE,
I'D HAVE TO SIT WITH THE KIDS AT A TABLE THIS WIDE.
(He indicates with his hands out in front a "very small" table)

Mrs. Fezziwig: ALL OUR CHILDREN.

Mr. Fezziwig: ARE ALL GROWN NOW.

Mrs. Fezziwig: HOW I LOVE THEM.

Mr. Fezziwig: WISH THEY'D MOVE OUT.

Both: WE HAVE NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO BE ALONE.

Mrs. Fezziwig: IF THERE'S ONE THING,

Mr. Fezziwig: DARE WE SAY SO;

Both: THAT WE BOTH KNOW

Mrs. Fezziwig: THAT THROUGH THE YEARS

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Mr. Fezziwig: AND WE ARE STILL IN LOVE.

Both: IF THERE'S ONE THING THAT WE KNOW. IF THERE'S ONE THING THAT WE SHOW THAT WE WOULD GLADLY DO IT ALL AGAIN.

The Fezziwig's will end the song holding hands and walking lovingly off together.

Belle:
I'll see you tomorrow Ebenezer. (**Points that they are standing underneath the mistletoe**) Merry Christmas.

Young Man Scrooge:
Merry Christmas. (**He gives her a kiss and she leaves**)

When she leaves, Dick and Young Ebenezer are left to their beds; which were under a counter in the back-shop.

Dick:
What a night this has been! First Mr. Fezziwig throws the party of the year and you finally got up the nerve to ask Belle to marry you. It's a miracle!

Young Man Scrooge:
Miracle?

Dick:
Ebenezer, I thought you would never get your nose out of your ledger long enough to asking her. You are "business, business" and nothing but "business".

Young Man Scrooge:
Not for long. Now that Belle said she would be mine, I'm going to make her the happiest woman in all of England. She'll never regret saying that she married a poor guy like me.

Dick:
I'm sure she loves you just as you are.

Young Man Scrooge:
I know that. But years from now, I want Belle to look at me the same way Mrs. Fezziwig looks at Mr. Fezziwig. I want to be just like him. I've never known anyone who is as wonderful, generous and great a man as he is. Who else would treat us like family the way he does? I know that when I own my own business, I will take a page out of Mr. Fezziwig's book and treat all my employees in the exact same way.

Dick:
He is the best and we are very fortunate to work under such a Master. And on that happy note, I wish you good night and Merry Christmas Ebenezer Scrooge.

Young Man Scrooge:
Good night, Dick, and Merry Christmas.

The scene darkens and Scrooge and Past are the only ones lighted.

Past:
A small matter to make these silly folks so full of gratitude.

Scrooge:
Small!

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Past:
Why! Is it not? He has spent but a few pounds of your mortal money: three or four perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves this praise?

Scrooge:
It isn't that, Spirit. He has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. Say that his power lies in words and looks; in things so slight and insignificant that it is impossible to add and count 'em up: what then? The happiness he gives, is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.

He feels the Spirit's glance, and stops.

Past:
What is the matter?

Scrooge:
Nothing particular.

Past:
Something, I think?

Scrooge:
No. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now! That's all.

His former self turned down the lamps as he gave utterance to the wish; and Scrooge and the Ghost again stood side by side in the open air.

Past:
My time grows short. Quick!

This is not addressed to Scrooge, or to any one whom he could see. Past waves his hand again. Now, Scrooge sees himself. He is older now; a man in the prime of life. His face has begun to wear the signs of avarice. He is not alone, but sits by the side of Belle who is in a mourning-dress: in whose eyes there are tears.

Belle: (softly)
It matters little. To you, very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.

Young Man Scrooge:
What Idol has displaced you?

Belle:
A golden one.

Young Man Scrooge:
This is the even-handed dealing of the world! There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!

Belle: (gently)
You fear the world too much. All your other hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?

Young Man Scrooge:
What then? Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you. (**She shakes her head**) Am I?

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Belle:
Our contract is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so, until, in good season, we could improve our worldly fortune by our patient industry. You are changed. When it was made, you were another man.

Young Man Scrooge: (impatiently)
I was a boy.

Belle:
Your own feeling tells you that you were not what you are. I am. That which promised happiness when we were one in heart, is fraught with misery now that we are two. How often and how keenly I have thought of this, I will not say. It is enough that I have thought of it, and can release you.

Young Man Scrooge:
Have I ever sought release?

Belle:
In words. No. Never.

Young Man Scrooge:
In what, then?

Belle:
In a changed nature; in an altered spirit; in another atmosphere of life; another Hope as its great end. In everything that made my love of any worth or value in your sight. If this had never been between us, tell me, would you seek me out and try to win me now? Ah, no!

Young Man Scrooge:
You think not.

Belle:
I would gladly think otherwise if I could. But if you were free today, tomorrow, yesterday, can even I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl -- you who, in your very confidence with her, weigh everything by Gain: or, choosing her, if for a moment you were false enough to your one guiding principle to do so, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do; and I release you. With a full heart, for the love of him you once were. (**He is about to speak; but with her head turned from him, she resumes**) You may -- the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will -- have pain in this. A very, very brief time, and you will dismiss the recollection of it, gladly, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke.

OUR LOVE WAS FROM ANOTHER TIME; A BOND, WE TWO, DID SHARE.
THE DREAMS WE HAD, THE PLANS WE MADE,
A TIME WHEN I KNEW YOU CARED AND HOW YOU LOVED ME ONCE;
YOU HEART BELONGED TO ME. BUT NOW IT'S OVER; IT WAS NEVER MEANT TO BE.

I'VE TRIED SO HARD TO MAKE IT WORK, BUT I COULD NOT DO IT ALONE.
I'VE TRIED TO REACH YOU, BUT YOU TURNED AWAY;
YOUR LOVE TURNED AS COLD AS STONE.
SO I RELEASE YOU NOW FROM YOUR PROMISE TO ME.
THE LOVE IS GONE AND NOW I SET YOU FREE.

I'VE HOPED THAT WE COULD PART AS FRIENDS, BUT I'M NO USE IN YOUR LIFE.
WE SHOULD JUST LET IT END.

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I'LL WISH YOU WELL; I'LL THINK OF YOU FONDLY FROM TIME TO TIME.
I'LL THINK OF HOW IT COULD HAVE BEEN
AND HOW YOU ALMOST WERE MINE.
BUT I MUST LET YOU GO; MY HEART JUST WANTS TO CRY.
I LOVE YOU SO, BUT I MUST SAY GOODBYE.
OUR LOVE IS OVER AND WE MUST SAY GOODBYE.

May you be happy in the life you have chosen!

She leaves him, and they part. The scene darkens and only Scrooge and Past are lighted.

Scrooge:
Spirit, show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?

Past:
I told you these were shadows of the things that have been. That they are what they are, do not blame me!

Scrooge:
Remove me! I cannot bear it!

He turns upon the Ghost, and seeing that it looks upon him with a face of pity, wrestles with it.

Scrooge:
Leave me! Take me back. Haunt me no longer!

In the struggle, if that can be called a struggle in which the Ghost with no visible resistance on its own part was undisturbed by any effort of its adversary, Scrooge observes that its light is burning high and bright; and dimly connecting that with its influence over him, he seizes the extinguisher-cap, and by a sudden action presses it down upon its head. The Spirit drops beneath it, so that the extinguisher covered its whole form; but though Scrooge pressed it down with all his force, he could not hide the light, which streamed from under it, in an unbroken flood upon the ground. When the Spirit and the light go out, Scrooge will stay on his knees and collapse.

Blackout.

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Act II

Awaking in the middle of a prodigiously tough snore, and sitting up in bed to get his thoughts together. When the Bell strikes Two, and no shape appears, he is taken with a violent fit of trembling. Then a blaze of ruddy light, which streams upon it when the clock proclaimed the hour; and which, being only light, was in the adjoining room. This idea taking full possession of his mind, he gets up softly and shuffles in his slippers to the door. The moment Scrooge's hand is on the lock, a strange voice calls him by his name.

Present:
Ebenezer Scrooge. Come in and know me better, man! **(second fanfare blows)** Ebenezer Scrooge. I'm waiting.

Scrooge obeys. His own room had undergone a surprising transformation. The walls and ceiling are so hung with living green, that it looks a perfect grove; from every part of which, bright gleaming berries glistened. The crisp leaves of holly, mistletoe, and ivy reflect back the light, as if so many little mirrors had been scattered there; and such a mighty blaze goes roaring up the chimney. Heaped up on the floor, to form a kind of throne, are turkeys, geese, game, poultry, brawn, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince-pies, plum-puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chestnuts, cherry-cheeked apples, juicy oranges, luscious pears, immense twelfth-cakes, and seething bowls of punch, that make the chamber dim with their delicious steam. In easy state upon this couch, there sits a jolly Giant, glorious to see: who bears a glowing torch, in shape not unlike Plenty's horn, and holds it up, high up, to shed its light on Scrooge, as he comes peeping round the door. Scrooge enters timidly, and hangs his head before this Spirit. He is not the dogged Scrooge he had been; and though the Spirit's eyes are clear and kind, he does not like to meet them.

Present:
I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. Look upon me!

Scrooge reverently does so. It is clothed in one simple green robe, or mantle, bordered with white fur. This garment hangs so loosely on the figure, that its capacious breast is bare, as if disdaining to be warded or concealed by any artifice. Its feet, observable beneath the ample folds of the garment, are also bare; and on its head it wears no other covering than a holly wreath, set here and there with shining icicles. Its dark brown curls are long and free: free as its genial face, its sparkling eye, its open hand, its cheery voice, its unconstrained demeanor, and its joyful air. Girded round its middle is an antique scabbard; but no sword is in it, and the ancient sheath is eaten up with rust.

Present:
You have never seen the like of me before!

Scrooge:
Never.

Present:
Have never walked forth with the younger members of my family; meaning (for I am very young) my elder brothers born in these later years?

Scrooge:
I don't think I have. I am afraid I have not. Have you had many brothers, Spirit?

Present:
More than eighteen hundred.

Scrooge:
A tremendous family to provide for! (**The Ghost of Christmas Present rises**) (**submissively**) Spirit, conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learnt a lesson which is working now. Tonight, if you have aught to teach me, let me profit by it.

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Present:
Touch my robe!

Scrooge does as he is told. Everything vanishes and they stand in the city streets on Christmas morning.

LOOK ALL AROUND YOU; PEOPLE FILLED WITH GLEE
BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN.
CHILDREN UNWRAPPING PRESENTS JOYFULLY: IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN.
LOVERS ARE KISSING 'NEATH THE MISTLETOE. IT'S ALL IN FUN, YOU SEE.
THERE'S SO MUCH LOVE AND LAUGHTER, THAT IS WHAT YOU'RE AFTER.
COME ON, AND SET YOUR SPIRIT FREE.

SO OPEN UP YOUR HEART; LET CHRISTMAS COME ON IN
AND FEEL IT TAKE YOU ON A JOYFUL RIDE.
LET IT SWEEP AWAY THE COBWEBS FROM YOUR SOUL
SO YOU CAN START TO FEEL THE LOVE YOU HAVE INSIDE.
OPEN UP YOU HEART; LET CHRISTMAS COME ON IN
AND FEEL LIKE A CHILD ONCE AGAIN.
HEED THE WORDS I SAY AND ALL THIS CAN BE YOURS
AND ALL BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN!

CHRISTMAS IS CALLED THE SEASON OF THE HEART
BECAUSE YOU SHOW SOMEONE YOU CARE.
EITHER WITH GIFTS OR SOME KIND WORD OR DEED TO SHOW THEM YOU ARE THERE.
THAT'S WHAT THIS HOLIDAY IS ALL ABOUT; THE WAYS OF LOVE MADE CLEAR.
AND IT'S THE DUTY OF EACH PERSON ON THE EARTH
TO HEAR IT AND MAKE IT LAST ALL YEAR.

SO OPEN UP YOUR HEART; LET CHRISTMAS COME ON IN
AND FEEL IT TAKE YOU ON A JOYFUL RIDE.
LET IT SWEEP AWAY THE COBWEBS FROM YOUR SOUL
SO YOU CAN START TO FEEL THE LOVE YOU HAVE INSIDE.
OPEN UP YOU HEART; LET CHRISTMAS COME ON IN
AND FEEL LIKE A CHILD ONCE AGAIN.
HEED THE WORDS I SAY AND ALL THIS CAN BE YOURS
AND ALL BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN!

People: CELEBRATE! CELEBRATE! AAAH AND ALL BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN.

Dance break

Kids: CELEBRATE! CELEBRATE! AAAH AND ALL BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN.
ALL BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN.

Present & Chorus: SO OPEN UP YOUR HEART; LET CHRISTMAS COME ON IN
AND FEEL IT TAKE YOU ON A JOYFUL RIDE.
LET IT SWEEP AWAY THE COBWEBS FROM YOUR SOUL
SO YOU CAN START TO FEEL THE LOVE YOU HAVE INSIDE.
OPEN UP YOU HEART; LET CHRISTMAS COME ON IN
AND FEEL LIKE A CHILD ONCE AGAIN.
HEED THE WORDS I SAY AND ALL THIS CAN BE YOURS
AND ALL BECAUSE IT'S CHRISTMAS ONCE AGAIN!

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But soon the steeples called good people all, to church and chapel, and away they start to leave, flocking through the streets in their best clothes, and with their gayest faces. At the same time, people, carry their dinners to the baker shops. The sight of these poor revelers appeared to interest the Spirit very much, for he stands with Scrooge beside him in a baker's doorway, and taking off the covers as their bearers passed, sprinkled incense on their dinners from his torch.

Scrooge:
Is there a peculiar flavor in what you sprinkle from your torch?

Present:
There is. My own.

Scrooge:
Would it apply to any kind of dinner on this day?

Present:
To any kindly given. To a poor one most.

Scrooge:
Why to a poor one most?

Present:
Because it needs it most.

Scrooge: (after a moment's thought)
Spirit, I wonder you, of all the beings in the many worlds about us, should desire to cramp these people's opportunities of innocent enjoyment.

Present:
I!

Scrooge:
You would deprive them of their means of dining every seventh day, often the only day on which they can be said to dine at all. Wouldn't you?

Present:
I!

Scrooge:
You seek to close these places on the Seventh Day? And it comes to the same thing.

Present:
I seek!

Scrooge:
Forgive me if I am wrong. It has been done in your name, or at least in that of your family.

Present:
There are some upon this earth of yours who lay claim to know us, and who do their deeds of passion, pride, ill-will, hatred, envy, bigotry, and selfishness in our name, who are as strange to us and all our kith and kin, as if they had never lived. Remember that, and charge their doings on themselves, not us.

Scrooge:
I promise I will.

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He takes Scrooge with him, holding to his robe; and arrive at Bob Cratchit's. When lights come up on Cratchit's, he sprinkles his torch upon the place. Then up rises Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she lays the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunges a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honor of the day) into his mouth.

Peter:
Well, here I am!

Mrs. Cratchit:
Peter, you look just like your father in his shirt.

Belinda:
Yes, very handsome.

Peter:
I'd love to show this off in the Parks.

And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, come tearing in.

Boy Cratchit:
Mother, the goose smells wonderful!

Girl Cratchit:
We knew it had to be ours. We could smell it outside the Baker's shop.

These young Cratchits dance about the table.

Mrs. Cratchit:
What has ever got your precious father then. And your brother, Tiny Tim! And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half-an-hour!

Martha: (appearing as she speaks)
Here's Martha, mother!

Girl Cratchit:
Here's Martha, mother!

Boy Cratchit:
Hurrah! There's such a goose, Martha!

Mrs. Cratchit: (kissing her a dozen times and taking off her shawl)
Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!

Martha:
We'd a deal of work to finish up last night and had to clear away this morning, mother!

Mrs. Cratchit:
Well! Never mind so long as you are come. Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye!

Girl Cratchit:
No, no! There's father coming!

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Boy Cratchit:
Hide, Martha, hide!

So Martha hides herself, and in comes little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him; and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bears a little crutch, and his limbs supported by an iron frame!

Bob Cratchit: (looking around)
Why, where's our Martha?

Mrs. Cratchit:
Not coming.

Bob Cratchit:
Not coming! Not coming upon Christmas Day!

Martha doesn't like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she comes out prematurely from behind the closet door, and runs into his arms,

Martha:
Here I am, father.

Bob hugs his daughter to his heart's content. The two young Cratchits hustle Tiny Tim, and bear him off into the wash-house, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

Mrs. Cratchit:
And how did little Tim behave?

Bob Cratchit:
As good as gold and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.

Mrs. Cratchit:
Not many remember that. You can count on it.

Bob Cratchit:
I think he is getting better by the day.

Tiny Tim enters before another word is spoken, escorted by his brother and sister to his stool before the fire; and while Bob, turning up his cuffs, compounds some hot mixture in a jug with gin and lemons, and stirs it round and round and puts it on the hob to simmer; Master Peter, and the two ubiquitous young Cratchits go to fetch the goose, with which they soon return in high procession. Bob takes Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves, and mounting guard upon their posts, cram spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped. At last the dishes are set on, and grace is said.

Bob Cratchit:
O Heavenly Father, we ask for Your blessing on these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty. We ask for Your blessing and healing on our Tiny Tim and also a blessing on those who are not so fortunate as ourselves; who do not have a family or food on this, Your Christmas Day.

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All:
Amen.

A breathless pause, as Mrs. Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving-knife, prepares to plunge it in the breast; but when she does, one murmur of delight arises all round the board, and even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beats on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cries:

Tiny Tim:
Hurrah!

Bob Cratchit:
I don't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavor, size and cheapness, are the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it is a sufficient dinner for the whole family; (**proposes**) A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!

All Family except Tiny Tim:
God bless us!

Tiny Tim:
God bless us every one!

He sits very close to his father's side upon his little stool. Bob holds his withered little hand in his, as if he loved the child, and wished to keep him by his side, and dreads that he might be taken from him.

Tiny Tim: I HAVE SO MUCH TO BE GRATEFUL FOR; IT FILLS ME WITH LAUGHTER AND SONG,
LIKE MY FAMILY WHOSE LOVE IS PURE AND STRONG; MAY GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.

All Cratchit Family: HERE'S TO OUR FAM'LY NOW GATHERED HERE AND ALL THOSE WHO ARE IN NEED.
MAY THIS CHRISTMAS BRING PEACE AND HARMONY;
MAY GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.

THERE'S SOMETHING 'BOUT CHRISTMAS TOGETHER
THAT BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN ALL MEN.
IF WE COULD HOLD ON TO THIS FEELING,
NO ONE WOULD EVER KNOW SADNESS AGAIN.

LET'S NOW WITH GREAT JUBILATION, SING OUT FOR ALL THAT IT'S WORTH
THAT THIS MESSAGE OF LOVE SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE EARTH
AND MAY GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.

Peter starts to dance with one of his sisters who then in turn inspires other people in the family to join in the fun.

Cratchit Family:
LET'S NOW WITH GREAT JUBILATION, SING OUT FOR ALL THAT IT'S WORTH
THAT THIS MESSAGE OF LOVE SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE EARTH
AND MAY GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE. MAY GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.

Scrooge: (with an interest he never felt before)
Spirit, tell me if Tiny Tim will live.

Present:
I see a vacant seat in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die.

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Scrooge:
No, no. Oh, no, kind Spirit! say he will be spared.

Present:
If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, none other of my race will find him here. What then? If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.

Scrooge hangs his head to hear his own words quoted by the Spirit, and is overcome with penitence and grief.

Present:
Man, if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant until you have discovered What the surplus is, and Where it is. Will you decide what men shall live, what men shall die? It may be, that in the sight of Heaven, you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. Oh God! to hear the Insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust!

Scrooge bends before the Ghost's rebuke, and trembling casts his eyes upon the ground. But he raises them speedily, on hearing his own name.

Bob Cratchit:
Mr. Scrooge! I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast!

Mrs. Cratchit:
The Founder of the Feast indeed! I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it.

Bob Cratchit:
My dear, the children; Christmas Day.

Mrs. Cratchit:
It should be Christmas Day, I am sure on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert! Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow!

Bob Cratchit: (mild answer)
My dear, Christmas Day.

Mrs. Cratchit:
I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's, not for his. Long life to him. A merry Christmas and a happy new year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!

The children drink the toast after her. After it passes away, they are ten times merrier than before. They start to enjoy their meager Christmas Feast. Lights fade off on Cratchits. Present walks with Scrooge to another destination.

Present: THOUGH YOU PAY HIM THE LEAST YOU CAN,
HE'S RICHER THAN A CRABBY, OLD BUSINESS MAN.
HE STOPS TO THINK OF YOU AND OF HIS FELLOW MAN.
IT'S BECAUSE OF HIM THAT HIS FAMILY WILL ALWAYS KNOW CHRISTMAS.

When lights come up, Scrooge will see that it is his own nephew's and to find himself in a bright, dry, gleaming room, with the Spirit standing smiling by his side, and looking at that same nephew with approving affability!

Fred:
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! He said that Christmas was a humbug, as I live! He believed it too!

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Fred's Wife:
More shame for him, Fred!

Fred:
He's a comical old fellow that's the truth: and not so pleasant as he might be. However, his offenses carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him.

Fred's Wife:
I'm sure he is very rich, Fred. At least you always tell me so.

Fred:
What of that, my dear! His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He don't make himself comfortable with it. He hasn't the satisfaction of thinking -- ha, ha, ha! -- that he is ever going to benefit Us with it.

Fred's Wife:
I have no patience with him.

Her sisters nod their head in unison in agreement

Fred:
Oh, I have! I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us and not making merry with us is, as I think, that he loses some pleasant moments, which could do him no harm. I am sure he loses pleasanter companions than he can find in his own thoughts, either in his moldy old office, or his dusty chambers. I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not, for I pity him. He may rail at Christmas till he dies, but he can't help thinking better of it -- I defy him -- if he finds me going there, in good temper, year after year, and saying Uncle Scrooge, how are you? If it only puts him in the vein to leave his poor clerk fifty pounds, that's something; and I think I shook him yesterday. (**He encourages them in their merriment, and passes the bottle joyously)** How about some music?!

Sister #2:
What a splendid idea.

Sister #1:
Fred, would you care to start us off?

Fred: THERE WAS A GIRL THAT I FELL IN LOVE WITH AND HER NAME WAS MARY.
SHE WAS CUTE AND REFINED AND I NEVER WOULD FIND
A GIRL WHO WAS QUITE CONTRARY.
NOW THERE WAS A DAY WHEN I WENT TO PAY HER A VISIT AND TRIED TO COURT HER,
BUT SHE WASN'T THERE; I WAS IN DESPAIR. 'WHERE COULD SHE BE'? I WONDERED.

WHERE CAN SHE BE? WHERE CAN SHE BE?
HAVE YOU SEEN THE GIRL WITH THE UPTURNED CURL WHO HAS STOLEN MY HEART?
WHERE CAN SHE BE? WHERE CAN SHE BE?
NOT KNOWING WHERE TO FIND MY LOVE IS TEARING ME APART.

I SEARCHED EVERYWHERE AND I DIDN'T CARE HOW LONG THAT IT WOULD TAKE.
IF I DIDN'T TRY, I KNEW I WOULD CRY AND MY HEART WOULD SURELY BREAK.
EVERYWHERE I TURNED, I THOUGHT I SAW HER IN EVERY FACE I'D SEE.
I LOOKED HIGH AND LOW, IN THE SUN AND THE SNOW,
UNDER ROCKS AND IN EVERY TREE

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WHERE CAN SHE BE? WHERE CAN SHE BE?
HAVE YOU SEEN THE GIRL WITH THE UPTURNED CURL WHO HAS STOLEN MY HEART?
WHERE CAN SHE BE? WHERE CAN SHE BE?
NOT KNOWING WHERE TO FIND MY LOVE IS TEARING ME APART.

AND THEN ONE DAY I FOUND HER: I WAS DUMBSTRUCK BY HER FACE.
I KNEW IT WAS SHE; WHO ELSE COULD IT BE? SHE HAD BEAUTY. SHE HAD GRACE.
I WENT UP TO HER AND PROCLAIMED MY LOVE AND THEN TO MY DISMAY,
SHE SHOWED ME A RING AND HERE'S THE THING, SHE GOT MARRIED JUST THAT DAY.

WHERE CAN SHE BE? WHERE CAN SHE BE?
WILL THERE BE A GIRL WHO WILL FALL IN LOVE WITH A LOSER SUCH AS ME?
WHERE CAN SHE BE? WHERE CAN SHE BE?
IF I CAN'T FIND A GIRL WITH AN UPTURNED CURL, I'LL JOIN A MONASTERY.

During the song, they play a game at blind-man's buff. Topper is it and it is obvious that he is cheating because he goes after Sister #1. The Ghost of Christmas Present knows it. The way he goes after Sister #1 is an outrage on the credulity of human nature. Knocking down the fire-irons, tumbling over the chairs, etc.; Wherever she goes, there he goes. The others try to distract him, but to no avail. At last, he catches her and he gets her into a corner where there is no escape; then his conduct is the most execrable. For his pretending not to know her; his pretending that it is necessary to touch her head-dress, and further to assure himself of her identity by pressing a certain ring upon her finger, and a certain chain about her neck. He unveils himself, and she drags him behind the curtains. Scrooge is getting into the mood and the Christmas Present looks upon him with favor.

Scrooge:
Spirit, may I please stay until the guests depart?

Present:
That cannot be done.

Scrooge:
Here is a new game. One half hour, Spirit, only one!

Present:
One more game.

Fred:
All right everyone, let's play 'Yes and No'.

Sister #3:
Oooh, I like this game.

Fred:
I'll think of something and you have to guess what it is. (**Pause**) All right, I have something. Fire away with your questions.

Topper:
Is it an animal?

Fred:
Yes.

Fred's Wife:
A live animal?

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Fred:
Yes.

Sister #3:
A disagreeable animal?

Fred:
Most definitely.

Sister #2:
A savage animal?

Fred:
No.

Sister #1:
An animal that growls and grunts sometimes?

Fred:
Oh, yes.

Topper:
Talk sometimes?

Fred:
Yes.

Fred's Wife:
Does it live in London?

Fred:
Yes.

Sister #1:
Does it walk about the streets?

Fred:
Yes.

Sister #2:
Is it made a show of?

Fred:
Never.

Sister #3:
Is it led by anybody?

Fred:
Definitely not.

Topper:
Does it live in a menagerie?

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Fred:
No.

Sister #2:
Was it never killed in a market?

Fred:
No.

Topper:
A horse? An ass?

Fred's Wife:
A cow? A bull?

Sister #3:
A tiger? A dog?

Scrooge getting caught up in the moment even interjects:

Scrooge and Topper:
A cat? A bear?

Fred bursts into a fresh roar of laughter; and is so inexpressibly tickled, that he is obliged to get up off the sofa and stamp. At last, Sister #1, falls into a similar state, cries out:

Sister #1:
I have found it out! I know what it is, Fred! I know what it is!

Fred:
What is it?

Sister #1:
It's your Uncle Scrooge!

Fred:
We have a winner!

Everyone starts laughing.

Topper:
That isn't fair, Fred. When I asked if it was a bear, your reply should have been yes.

Fred:
He has given us plenty of merriment, I am sure and it would be ungrateful not to drink his health. Here is a glass of mulled wine ready to our hand at the moment; and I say, ``Uncle Scrooge!"

All:
Well! Uncle Scrooge.

Fred:
A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to the old man, whatever he is! He wouldn't take it from me, but may he have it, nevertheless. Uncle Scrooge!

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The whole scene passes off in the breath of the last word spoken by his nephew; and he and the Spirit are again upon their travels. They are on top of a platform and music will start and what is lighted are people in sick beds, people in jail, misery in every refuge. These people come out and sing and the Spirit points them out to Scrooge while Scrooge watches.

Scrooge:
Spirit, what is this? Who are all these people?

Present:
Those whose lives have not been as fortunate as yours; they know me – even in their most trying of times.

Woman Solo: IN THE LONELY MIDNIGHT ON THE WINTRY HILL,
SHEPHERDS HEARD THE SINGING: "PEACE, GOOD-WILL."
LISTEN, O YE WEARY, TO THE ANGEL'S SONG.
UNTO YOU THE TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY BELONG.

Scrooge: I NEVER REALIZED JUST HOW FORTUNATE I WAS.
THE STATE THEY'RE IN: I WONDER IF I WAS THE CAUSE.
LOOK AT THEIR FACES: THEY DON'T SEEM SAD AT ALL.
THEY'RE GRATEFUL FOR GOD'S BLESSINGS,
NO MATTER HOW GREAT OR SMALL.
I NEVER WANTED TO HEAR PEOPLE'S TROUBLES OR PAIN.
I'D LOVE TO TAKE IT BACK AND START ALL OVER AGAIN.

Chorus: SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT! ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT.
ROUND YON VIRGIN MOTHER AND CHILD.
HOLY INFANT, SO TENDER AND MILD, SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE.
SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE.

Woman Solo: THOUGH THE CHILD OF MARY, SENT FROM HEAV'N ON HIGH,
IN HIS MANGER CRADLE MAY NO LONGER LIE.
LOVE IS KING FOREVER, THOUGH THE PROUD WORLD SCORN;
IF YE TRULY SEEK HIM, CHRIST, YOUR KING IS BORN.

After song is over, they descend to the main playing area. The Ghost has grown older. When, looking at the Spirit as they stand together in an open place, he notices that its hair is gray.

Scrooge:
Are spirits' lives so short?

Present:.
My life upon this globe, is very brief. It ends tonight.

Scrooge:
Tonight!

Present:
Tonight at midnight. Hark! The time is drawing near.

The chimes are ringing the three quarters past eleven at that moment.

Scrooge:
Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask, (**looking intently at the Spirit's robe**) but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw!

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Present:
It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it. Look here.

From the foldings of its robe, it brings two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They kneel down at its feet, and cling upon the outside of its garment.

Present:
Oh, Man! look here. Look, look, down here!

There is a boy and girl. Yellow, meager, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touches them with its freshest tints, a stale and shriveled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Scrooge startes back, appalled.

Scrooge:
Spirit! are they yours?

Present: (looking down upon them)
They are Man's, and they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it! (**stretching out its hand towards the city**) Slander those who tell it ye! Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse! And bide the end!

Scrooge:
Have they no refuge or resource?

Present:
Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

Immediate blackout with only Scrooge lighted. Present, Ignorance and Want disappear. The bell strikes twelve. Scrooge looks about him for the Ghost, but doesn't see it. As the last stroke ceases to vibrate, he beholds a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded, coming, like a mist along the ground, towards him. The Phantom slowly, gravely, silently approaches. When it comes, Scrooge bends down upon his knee. It is shrouded in a deep black garment, which conceals its head, its face, its form, and leaves nothing of it visible save one outstretched hand.

Scrooge:
I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come? (**The Spirit answers not, but points onward with its hand**) You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us. Is that so, Spirit?

The upper portion of the garment is contracted for an instant in its folds, as if the Spirit had inclined its head. That is the only answer he receives. Scrooge fears the silent shape so much that his legs tremble beneath him, and he finds that he can hardly stand when he prepares to follow it. The Spirit pauses a moment, as observing his condition, and gives him time to recover. But Scrooge is all the worse for this.

Scrooge:
Ghost of the Future! I fear you more than any spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company, and do it with a thankful heart. Will you not speak to me? **(It gives him no reply. The hand is pointed straight before them)** Lead on! Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!

The Phantom moves away as it had come towards him. Scrooge follows in the shadow of its dress. The Spirit stops beside one little knot of business men. Observing that the hand is pointed to them, Scrooge advances to listen to their talk.

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Fat Man:
No. I don't know much about it, either way. I only know he's dead.

Man #1:
When did he die?

Fat Man:
Last night, I believe.

Man #2: (taking a vast quantity of snuff out a very large snuff box)
Why, what was the matter with him? I thought he'd never die.

Fat Man: (with a yawn)
God knows.

Man #1:
What has he done with his money?

Fat Man: (yawning again)
I haven't heard. Left it to his Company, perhaps. He hasn't left it to me. That's all I know. **(This pleasantry is received with a general laugh)** It's likely to be a very cheap funeral. For upon my life I don't know of anybody to go to it. Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?

Man #2:
I don't mind going if a lunch is provided. But I must be fed, if I make one.

Another laugh from the group.

Fat Man:
Well, I am the most disinterested among you, after all, for I never wear black gloves, and I never eat lunch. But I'll offer to go, if anybody else will. When I come to think of it, I'm not at all sure that I wasn't his most particular friend; for we used to stop and speak whenever we met. Bye, bye!

Speakers and listeners stroll away and mixed with other groups. Scrooge looks towards the Spirit for an explanation. The Phantom glides on into a street. Its finger points to a wife and her husband (who was the one who went to Scrooge's door during the "Scrooge" number.) The wife is waiting and her husband comes up to her. Scrooge listens again, thinking that the explanation might lie here.

Caroline:
Is it good or bad?

Alexander:
Bad.

Caroline:
We are quite ruined?

Alexander:
No. There is hope yet, Caroline.

Caroline:
If he relents there is! Nothing is past hope, if such a miracle has happened.

Alexander:
He is past relenting. He is dead.

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Caroline (clasping her hands):
Oh, saints be praised! **(pause)** Oh, Alexander, I am so sorry I just said that. I feel terrible that that was the first emotion of my heart.

Alexander:
When I tried to see him and obtain a week's delay; and what I thought was a mere excuse to avoid me; turns out to have been quite true. He was not only very ill, but dying, then.

Caroline:
To whom will our debt be transferred?

Alexander:
I don't know. But before that time we shall be ready with the money; and even though we were not, it would be a bad fortune indeed to find so merciless a creditor in his successor. We may sleep tonight with light hearts, Caroline!

Not another word. That was their conversation, and their parting. They leave the scene, and go into an obscure part of the town of bad repute. He is taken to Old Joe's shop. Upon the floor within, are piled up heaps of rusty keys, nails, chains, hinges, files, scales, weights, and refuse iron of all kinds. Sitting in among the wares he dealt in, by a charcoal stove, made of old bricks, is Old Joe, a gray-haired rascal, nearly seventy years of age; smoking his pipe in all the luxury of calm retirement. Scrooge and the Phantom come into the presence of this man, just as a woman with a heavy bundle slinks into the shop. But she had scarcely enters, when another woman, similarly laden, comes in too; and she is closely followed by a man in faded black, who is no less startled by the sight of them, than they had been upon the recognition of each other. After a short period of blank astonishment, in which the old man with the pipe had joined them, they all three burst into a laugh.

Woman:
Let the charwoman alone to be the first! Let the laundress alone to be the second; and let the undertaker's man alone to be the third. Look here, old Joe, here's a chance! If we haven't all three met here without meaning it!

Joe: (removing his pipe from his mouth)
You couldn't have met in a better place. Come into the parlor. You were made free of it long ago, you know; and the other two an't strangers. Stop till I shut the door of the shop. Ah! How it skreeks! There an't such a rusty bit of metal in the place as its own hinges, I believe; and I'm sure there's no such old bones here, as mine. Ha, ha! We're all suitable to our calling, we're well matched. Come into the parlor. Come into the parlor.

Old Joe rakes the fire together with an old stair-rod, and having trimmed his smoky lamp (for it was night), with the stem of his pipe, puts it in his mouth again. While he does this, the woman who had already spoken throws her bundle on the floor, and sits down in a flaunting manner on a stool; crossing her elbows on her knees, and looking with bold defiance at the other two.

Woman:
What odds then! What odds, Mrs. Dilber? Every person has a right to take care of themselves. He always did!

Mrs. Dilber:
That's true, indeed! No man more so.

Woman:
Why then, don't stand staring as if you was afraid, woman; who's the wiser? We're not going to pick holes in each other's coats, I suppose?

Mrs. Dilber:
No, indeed!

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Man #5:
We should hope not.

Woman:
Very well, then! That's enough. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose.

Mrs. Dilber: (laughing)
No, indeed!

Woman:
If he wanted to keep 'em after he was dead, a wicked old screw, why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with Death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself.

Mrs. Dilber:
It's the truest word that ever was spoke. It's a judgment on him.

Woman:
I wish it was a little heavier judgment and it should have been, you may depend upon it, if I could have laid my hands on anything else. Open that bundle, old Joe, and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain. I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid for them to see it. We know pretty well that we were helping ourselves, before we met here, I believe. It's no sin. Open the bundle, Joe.

But the gallantry of her friends would not allow of this; and the man in faded black, mounting the breach first, produces his plunder.

Joe: (taking things out of his bundle)
Two seals. A pencil-case. A pair of sleeve-buttons and a brooch of no great value. (**Joe totals the amount on the wall behind him**) I'll give you three quid for the lot.

Man #5:
Three quid?!

Joe:
That's your account and I wouldn't give another sixpence, if I was to be boiled for not doing it. Who's next?

Mrs. Dilber is next.

Joe: (opening her bundle)
Let's see what we have here. Sheets. Towels, a little wearing apparel. Two old-fashioned teaspoons. A pair of sugar tongs and a few boots. (**Joe totals her amount on the wall**) I'll give you five pounds.

Mrs. Dilber:
You must be daft, man. Five measly pounds for all that lot?!

Joe:
I always give too much to ladies. It's a weakness of mine, and that's the way I ruin myself. That's your account. If you asked me for another penny, and made it an open question, I'd repent of being so liberal and knock off half-a-crown.

Woman:
And now undo my bundle, Joe.

Joe goes down on his knees for the greater convenience of opening it, and having unfastened a great many knots, drags out a large and heavy roll of some dark stuff.

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Joe:
What do you call this. Bed-curtains!

Woman: (laughing and leaning forward on her crossed arms)
Ah! Bed-curtains!

Joe:
You don't mean to say you took them down, rings and all, with him lying there?

Woman:
Yes I do. Why not?

Joe:
You were born to make your fortune and you'll certainly do it.

Woman:
I certainly shan't hold my hand, when I can get anything in it by reaching it out, for the sake of such a man as He was, I promise you, Joe. Don't drop that oil upon the blankets, now.

Joe:
His blankets?

Woman:
Whose else's do you think? He isn't likely to take cold without 'em, I dare say.

Joe: (stopping in his work and looking up)
I hope he didn't die of anything catching? Eh?

Woman:
Don't you be afraid of that. I an't so fond of his company that I'd loiter about him for such things, if he did. Ah! you may look through that shirt till your eyes ache; but you won't find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for me.

Joe:
What do you call wasting of it?

Woman: (with a laugh)
Putting it on him to be buried in, to be sure. Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again. If calico an't good enough for such a purpose, it isn't good enough for anything. It's quite as becoming to the body. He can't look uglier than he did in that one.

Scrooge: (with disgust)
I'm surprised they didn't market the corpse itself!

Joe produces a flannel bag with money in it and several coins fall upon the ground.

Woman: (laughing)
This is the end of it, you see! He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead!

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Old Joe:

IF SOMETIME IN THE NIGHT YOU FEEL A PAIN
CREEPING ON YOUR HEART, YOUR ARM GOES LAME
AND SUDDENLY YOU FIND YOURSELF AMONG THE MANY DECEASED.
I'LL BE THERE WITH MY SACK TO GRAB YOUR LOOT;
I'LL TAKE EVERYTHING YOU OWN; DOWN TO THE LAST BOOT;
ESPECIALLY THE ONES YOU MAY BE WEARING ON YOUR FEET.

THERE'S NOTHING I HOLD SACRED IN THIS WORLD.
I'M THE MASTER BROKER IN THIS NETHERWORLD.

I'LL BE DANCING ON YOUR GRAVE SOMEDAY; PROFITING FROM BODILY DECAY.
WHEN PEOPLE'S LIVES CRAP OUT, THAT'S WHEN I HIT IT BIG!
SO WHEN YOU DIE, I'LL BE RICH AND DANCING ON YOUR GRAVE.

THERE'S SOMETIMES IN THE YEAR WHEN THE PICKINGS ARE SLOW
THAT'S WHEN I HAVE TO LEAVE MY WORLD AND GO
AND GIVE OL' FATE A HAND AND BE THE REAPER FROM HELL.
A LITTLE POISON HERE, SOME MURDER THERE;
AS LONG AS DEATH IS SOMEWHERE FAR OR NEAR.
I'LL DO ALL THAT I CAN TO HELP MY PROFIT MARGIN SWELL.

THERE'S NO PLACE ON THIS EARTH YOU CAN HIDE FROM ME;
THERE'S ONE PLACE THAT I KNOW SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE.

I'LL BE DANCING ON YOUR GRAVE SOMEDAY; PROFITING FROM BODILY DECAY.
WHEN PEOPLE'S LIVES CRAP OUT, THAT'S WHEN I HIT IT BIG!
SO WHEN YOU DIE, I'LL BE RICH AND DANCING ON YOUR GRAVE.

Dance sequence. (Gravediggers, undertaker, and various miscreants)

Old Joe: SOME PEOPLE SAY IT'S CRUEL AND THEY'RE ABHORED.
WELL, HEY! IT'S A LIVING AND YOU KNOW WHAT: **(they all give the "two-finger" salute)**
UP YOURS!

I'LL BE DANCING ON YOUR GRAVE SOMEDAY; PROFITING FROM BODILY DECAY.
WHEN PEOPLE'S LIVES CRAP OUT, THAT'S WHEN I HIT IT BIG!
SO WHEN YOU DIE, I'LL BE RICH AND DANCING ON YOUR GRAVE.

Fade out on everyone except Scrooge and Christmas Future.

Scrooge: (shuddering)
Spirit! I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now. Spirit, let me see some tenderness connected with a death or that dark chamber which we left just now, will be forever present to me.

The Ghost conducts him to Bob Cratchit's house; where he finds the mother and the children seated round the fire. Very quiet. The noisy little Cratchits are as still as statues in one corner, and sat looking up at Peter, who has a book before him. The mother and her daughters are engaged in sewing.

Peter:
And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them.

Mrs. Cratchit lays her work upon the table, and puts her hand up to her face.

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Mrs. Cratchit (making up an excuse- trying not show the children she is crying):
The color hurts my eyes. They're better now again. It makes them weak by candlelight; and I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father when he comes home, for the world. It must be near his time.

Peter: (shutting up his book)
Past it rather. But I think he has walked a little slower than he used, these few last evenings, mother.

They are very quiet again.

Mrs. Cratchit (in a steady, cheerful voice):
I have known him walk with -- I have known him walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder, very fast indeed.

Peter:
And so have I. Often.

Belinda:
And so have I!

Rest of Cratchit children:
And so have I!

Mrs. Cratchit:
But he was very light to carry and his father loved him so, that it was no trouble, no trouble. And there is your father at the door!

She hurries out to meet him; and Boy Cratchit in his comforter -- he had need of it, poor fellow -- comes in. His tea was ready for him on the hob, and they all try who should help him to it most. Then the two young Cratchits get upon his knees and lay, each child a little cheek, against his face.

Mrs. Cratchit:
Did you see the area where will Tiny Tim will... (**she can't finish the sentence**)

Bob Cratchit:
Yes, my dear. I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you'll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on a Sunday. **(crying)** My little, little child! My little child!

He breaks down all at once. He can't help it. He leaves the room, and goes upstairs into the room above, which was lighted cheerfully, and hung with Christmas. There is a chair set close beside the child, and there were signs of someone having been there, lately. Poor Bob sits down in it.

Bob Cratchit: SLEEP, MY SON AND PEACE ATTEND THEE, ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT;
GUARDIAN ANGELS GOD WILL LEND THEE, ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT.
SOFT THE DROWSY HOURS ARE CREEPING, HILL AND VALE IN SLUMBER SLEEPING;
LOVE ALONE HIS WATCH IS KEEPING, ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT.

HARK! A SOLEMN BELL IS RINGING, CLEAR THROUGH THE NIGHT.
YOU, MY CHILD ARE HEAV'NWARD WINGING, HOME THROUGH THE NIGHT.
EARTHLY DUST FROM OFF YOU SHAKEN, SOUL IMMORTAL, YOU SHALL WAKEN
WITH YOUR LAST DIM JOURNEY TAKEN, HOME THROUGH THE NIGHT.

ALL YOUR PAIN IS FINALLY OVER, SLEEP THROUGH THE NIGHT.
BE AT PEACE WITH GOD FOREVER, SLEEP THROUGH THE NIGHT.
THANK YOU FOR THE CHANCE TO KNOW YOU;
YOU'LL BE IN MY HEART FOR ALWAYS. ONE DAY SOON WE'LL MEET IN HEAVEN,
HOME THROUGH THE NIGHT. ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT.

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When song is finished, Bob will kiss the forehead of the dead boy who is covered in a sheet. Blackout. Fade up on Scrooge

Scrooge:
Spectre, something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it, but I know not how. **(pause for Scrooge to look at his current surroundings)** This is where my place of occupation is, and has been for a length of time. I see the house. Let me behold what I shall be, in days to come. **(The Spirit stops; the hand is pointed elsewhere)** The house is yonder. Why do you point away?

The inexorable finger undergoes no change. Lights up on a churchyard graveyard. The Spirit stands among the graves, and points down to One. Scrooge advances towards it trembling.

Scrooge:
Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point, answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that Will be, or are they shadows of things that May be, only? (**Still the Ghost points downward to the grave by which it stands.)** Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead, but if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me! **(The Spirit is immovable as ever. Scrooge creeps towards it, trembling as he goes; and follows the finger, reads upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name)** Ebenezer Scrooge. (**Cries upon his knees**. **The finger points from the grave to him, and back again**) No, Spirit! Oh no, no! (**The finger still is there**) (**Scrooge clutching at the spirit's robe**) Why show me this, if I am past all hope? (**For the first time the hand appears to shake**) Good Spirit, (**falls upon knees again**) Your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life!

The kind hand trembles. In his agony, he catches the spectral hand. It seeks to free itself, but he is strong in his entreaty, and detains it. The Spirit, stronger yet, repulses him. Holding up his hands in a last prayer to have his fate reversed

Scrooge: SPIRIT, HEAR ME, I'M NOT THE MAN I WAS!
SPARE ME FROM THIS CRUEL FATE.

Scrooge: A PROMISE I'LL MAKE TO YOU: CHRISTMAS WILL BE IN MY HEART.
I'LL LIVE IN THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.
SPIRIT! HEAR ME! I'M NOT THE MAN I WAS. SAVE ME FROM THIS CRUEL FATE.

Scrooge: FOR ALL THE LESSONS I'VE LEARNED, I'LL NOT SHUT THEM OUT.
O TELL ME HOW I MAY SPONGE THE WRITING ON THIS STONE.
SPIRIT! HEAR ME! I'M NOT THE MAN I WAS. SAVE ME FROM THIS CRUEL FATE.

Scrooge: HELP ME!

After song immediate blackout. Lights up and Scrooge is holding on to what seems to be his own bedpost.

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Scrooge: (scrambling out of bed)
I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future! The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob; on my knees! (**Folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms**) They are not torn down. They are not torn down, rings and all. They are here: I am here: the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will! (**His hands are busy with his garments all this time: turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance**) (**laughing and crying in the same breath**) I don't know what to do! I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo! (**He frisks into the sitting-room, and is now standing there: perfectly winded**) There's the saucepan that the gruel was in! (**starting off again, and going round the fire-place**) There's the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered! There's the corner where the Ghost of Christmas Present, sat! There's the window where I saw the wandering Spirits! It's all right, it's all true, it all happened. Ha ha ha! (**Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs**) I don't know what day of the month it is! I don't know how long I've been among the Spirits. I don't know anything. I'm quite a baby. Never mind. I don't care. I'd rather be a baby.

Scrooge (runs to the window and opens it):
THERE'S A SPECIAL SOMETHING IN THE AIR. I CAN FEEL IT'S MAGIC EVERYWHERE.
I DID NOT MISS THIS SPECIAL TIME OF YEAR! HOLD ON NOW!
IT'S STARTING TO FEEL LIKE CHRISTMAS.

(Calling downward to a boy in Sunday clothes) Hallo! Whoop! Hallo here! What's today?

Boy:
Eh?

Scrooge:
What's today, my fine fellow?

Boy:
Today? Why, Christmas Day.

Scrooge:
It's Christmas Day! I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow!

Boy:
Hallo!

Scrooge:
Do you know the Poulterer's, in the next street but one, at the corner?

Boy:
I should hope I did.

Scrooge:
An intelligent boy! A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize Turkey that was hanging up there? Not the little prize Turkey; the big one?

Boy:
What, the one as big as me?

Scrooge:
What a delightful boy! It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck!

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Boy:
It's hanging there now.

Scrooge:
Is it? Go and buy it.

Boy:
Walk-er!

Scrooge:
No, no, I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them the direction where to take it. Come back with the man, and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes, and I'll give you half-a-crown! (**Boy runs off like a shot**) I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's! He sha'n't know who sends it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. Joe Miller never made such a joke as sending it to Bob's will be!

Scrooge:
I FEEL A SPECIAL SOMETHING DEEP INSIDE; IT MAKES ME WARM. IT MAKES FEEL ALIVE.
I'M BLESSED TO BE PART OF THIS CHRISTMASTIDE.
HOLD ON NOW! IT'S STARTING TO FEEL LIKE CHRISTMAS.

Scrooge finally goes down stairs to open the street door, ready for the coming of the poulterer's man. Scrooge is still dressed in his nightgown and slippers. He has only thrown a coat over himself and put on his hat. Boy enters with the Poulterer carrying a huge Turkey.

Scrooge: (hands boy money he promised)
Wonderful, you're here! Now, my good sir. You must deliver that fine bird to this address which is in Camden Town. Oh, wait-a-minute. Why, it's impossible to carry that to Camden Town. You must have a cab.

He chuckles when he pays for the Turkey, and chuckles when he recompenses the boy.

THIS HOLIDAY WILL ALWAYS BE WITH ME; I'LL SPREAD JOY AND PEACE TO MEN.
MY HEART HAS BEEN RENEWED, MY SPIRIT'S BEEN SET FREE;
I FEEL I'VE BEEN BORN AGAIN! BORN AGAIN!

Gent #1 enters and sees Scrooge and almost succeeds in turning around the other way.

Scrooge:
Scrooge and Marley's, I believe. My dear sir, (**taking the old gentleman by both his hands**) How do you do? I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. A merry Christmas to you, sir!

Gent #1:
Mr. Scrooge?

Scrooge:
Yes. That is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness --- (**here Scrooge whispers in his ear**)

Gent #1:
Lord bless me! My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?

Scrooge:
If you please, not a farthing less. A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you. Will you do me that favor?

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Gent #1: (shaking hands with him)
My dear sir, I don't know what to say to such munifi...

Scrooge:
Don't say anything, please. Come and see me. Will you come and see me?

Gent #1:
I will!

Scrooge:
Thank 'ee, I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times. Bless you!

I'LL NEVER SHIRK THE CHANCE TO HELP MY NEIGHBOR; IT WILL BE MY LIFE-LONG CALL.
CHARITY WILL BE MY LIFE'S AMBITION; TO BE THERE FOR ONE AND ALL. ONE AND ALL!

THIS I PLEDGE TO EVERY PERSON HERE, THAT I WILL ALWAYS HOLD CHRISTMAS DEAR
AND KEEP IT EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR.
HOLD ON NOW! IT'S STARTING TO FEEL LIKE CHRISTMAS! CHRISTMAS! CHRISTMAS!

The scene changes while he is singing the last three "Christmas'" to the scene at his nephew's door. Scrooge starts pacing, trying to get up the courage to go up and knock. But he makes a dash, and does it:

Scrooge:
Is your master at home, my dear?

Maid:
Yes, sir.

Scrooge:
Where is he, my love?

Maid:
He's in the dining-room, sir, along with mistress. I'll show you upstairs, if you please.

Scrooge:
Thank 'ee. He knows me. I'll go in here, my dear.

He turns the door knob gently and sidles his face in, round the door. Enter Fred and his wife.

Scrooge:
Fred!

Fred:
Why bless my soul! Who's that?

Scrooge:
It's I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?

Fred: (almost shaking his arms off)
Let you in?! You are always welcome, uncle.

Scrooge (goes over to Fred's wife):
Madam, I am truly sorry for any grief that I have caused you. Will you let me in?

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Fred's Wife: (pauses in shock)
Merry Christmas, Uncle Scrooge.

Fred: (raising his glass in a toast)
To Christmas!

All in the room:
To Christmas!

Blackout. The next scene is early the next morning. Scrooge is already there. The clock strikes a quarter past. No Bob. Soon, Bob enters. His hat is off, before he opens the door; his comforter too. He is on his stool in a jiffy; driving away with his pen, as if he were trying to overtake nine o'clock.

Scrooge: (growling in his accustomed voice)
Hallo! What do you mean by coming here eighteen minutes late?!

Bob Cratchit:
I am very sorry, sir. I am behind my time.

Scrooge:
You are? Yes. I think you are. Step this way, if you please.

Bob Cratchit: (pleading Bob, appearing from the Tank)
It's only once a year, sir. It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir.

Scrooge:
Now, I'll tell you what, my friend, I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore, (**he continues, leaping from his stool, and giving Bob such a dig in the waistcoat that he staggers back into the Tank again**) and therefore I am about to raise your salary!

Bob trembles, and gets a little nearer to the ruler. He had a momentary idea of knocking Scrooge down with it; holding him, and calling to the people in the court for help and a strait-waistcoat.

Scrooge: (in earnest as he claps him on the back)
A merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another I, Bob Cratchit.

Bob rushes to get more coal and Scrooge stands there, beaming.

As scene is fading out and stage darkens, Scrooge stands center stage and Fred enters and stands stage right. They are both now in spots and Fred says his monologue:

Fred:
Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh, and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter in the outset; and knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it quite as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins, as have the malady in less attractive forms. His own heart laughed: and that was quite enough for him. He had no further intercourse with Spirits, but lived upon the Total Abstinence Principle, ever afterwards; and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed:

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During this monologue, the entire company (except Marley, Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Future) meaning all those who were affected and will be affected by Scrooge, will fade in from the back and come forward. Tiny Tim (without his crutch) will be on Scrooge's left, but not near him (He is still with the ensemble). As they come forward the lights slowly come up, but never come as bright as Scrooge's spot. They are in almost a very dim light. They come forward so that they all surround him in a tableau position (with a look of love and forgiveness on their faces), but are not right up to him. They are at least a couple of steps back. When the monologue ends, Tiny Tim will come right up to Scrooge's left side and say:

Tiny Tim:
God Bless Us, Every One! **(Tiny Tim hugs Scrooge)**

Lights fade up to full when people start singing.

Ensemble: GOD BLESS US, EVERY ONE!

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