A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens!

Every Man Has the Power to do Good

A Play in Two Acts

Adapted for the Stage by James Hutchison
NOTE: A smaller cast version of the play is also available where the difference in cast size is based on a difference in production concept. Otherwise, the two plays are nearly identical in structure and in text.

Also available from www.jameshutchison.ca

Under the Mistletoe Not every romantic evening goes as planned. Two couples in their late fifties, one long time friends and the other having just met, try to navigate the tricky road of love, sex and desire while spending a romantic night in the Christmas Themed Suites at the Prairie Dog Inn.
Two Act Romantic Comedy 1M, 1W Single Set, 120 minutes

Masquerade Every marriage bed has its cast of characters. Sarah loves her Saturday afternoons with her lover Jerry, but when her husband Glenn finds out about the affair and threatens to kill Jerry – Sarah has to make a choice. Which wouldn’t be so strange – except for the fact – that Glenn and Jerry are the same man.
One Act Comedy, 1M, 1W, Single Set, 80 Minutes

What the Dickens! Even Scrooge got a second chance. When Marty Fisher gets caught kissing his stage manager Samantha and the actor playing Scrooge shows up drunk Marty has to scramble to save the opening night production of a Christmas Carol and his engagement to his fiancée Tami.
Two Act Comedy, 6M, 3W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes

A Christmas Carol – Two versions available. Every man has the power to do good. When Scrooge’s nephew Fred finds some letters Scrooge had written to his sister Fan a long time ago the past is unlocked, and Scrooge learns how his fear of poverty and pursuit of wealth have cost him a chance for love and genuine happiness.
CAST OF 10+ - Two Act Drama, 6M, 4W, Multiple Sets, 100 minutes
CAST OF 25+ - Two Act Drama, 15M, 10W, Multiple Sets, 100 minutes

Heart of Stone: A Jessica Quinn Mystery Trusting the wrong person can be deadly. When Jessica Quinn uncovers the truth about her father’s killer and the truth behind a woman claiming to be the long-lost daughter of her client Mary McConnell more than one person ends up dead.
Two Act Mystery, 7M, 3W, Multiple Sets, 120 minutes

Stories from Langford: Summer Every town has its secrets. Six characters from Langford tell stories from their lives: stories about, jealousy, revenge, love and forgiveness.
Two Act Drama, 1M, 1W, Simple settings, 120 Minutes
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Please Note: Due authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play including radio, television and internet advertising.

Acknowledgements

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens and adapted for the stage by James Hutchison was first performed by the Carriage House Theatre in Cardston, Alberta from December 11 to 16th 2017. The production was directed by Juliann Sommerfeldt, produced by Alonna Leavitt, and starred Peter Hague as Ebenezer Scrooge. The small cast version was first performed at the Wokingham Theatre in Wokingham England from December 4-14, 2019. The production was directed by David Stacey and starred Jerry Radburn as Ebenezer Scrooge. The play has had productions in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

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James Hutchison writes comedies, dramas, and mysteries. You can read his interviews with other playwrights on his blog and download his plays at www.jameshutchison.ca.

A Christmas Carol – Every Man Has the Power to do Good
A Play in Two Acts by James Hutchison

ISBN: 978-0-9940128-3-8
CAST of CHARACTERS

Ebenezer Scrooge  A bitter old miser
Mr. Bentley  A business associate
Bob Cratchit  Scrooge’s Clerk
Fred  Scrooge’s Nephew
Mr. Granger  A philanthropist
Mr. Harrington  A client of Scrooge’s
Boy  A poor boy
Mrs. Dilber  Scrooge’s cleaning lady
Ghost of Jacob Marley  Scrooge’s business partner
First Spirit  Ghost of Christmas past
William Turner  Boyhood friend of Scrooge’s
Charlie Campbell  Boyhood friend of Scrooge’s
Cook  The Cook at Scrooge’s school
Scrooge as a young boy  A nice quiet boy
Scrooge as a young man  Scrooge was a different man
Fan  Scrooge’s sister
Mr. Fezziwig  Scrooge’s old boss
Mrs. Fezziwig  Fezziwig’s wife
Fezziwig Daughter  One, or more Fezziwig Daughters
Fezziwig Daughters’ Beaux  One, or more Fezziwig Daughters’ beaux
Jacob Marley  Scrooge’s business partner
Belle  Scrooge’s Fiancée
Dick Wilkens  Belle’s husband
Hugh  Belle & Dick’s 1st child
George  Belle & Dick’s 2nd child
Grace  Belle & Dick’s 3rd child
Tabatha  Belle & Dick’s oldest child
Second Spirit  Ghost of Christmas present
Mrs. Cratchit  Bob Cratchit’s wife
Peter Cratchit  Oldest Cratchit son
Abigail Cratchit  Youngest Cratchit daughter
Martha Cratchit  Oldest Cratchit daughter
Tiny Tim Cratchit  Youngest Cratchit son
Emma  Fred’s wife
Topper  Friend of Fred and Emma’s
Rose  Emma’s sister
Ignorance  A scrawny boy
You can break down the casting according to the talents and availability of actors for your production. For example, Old Fezziwig, and the Ghost of Christmas Present could all be played by the same actor. The genders and ethnicity of many of the characters, spirits, and children is flexible as is the total number of Fezziwig daughters or other background characters. So, for example you could have Mrs. Granger instead of Mr. Granger or Mrs. Harrington instead of Mr. Harrington.

NOTE ON PRODUCING THE LARGE CAST VS SMALL CAST VERSION

This is a large cast version of A Christmas Carol. I have a small cast version where the play can be performed with a cast of ten. One actor plays Ebenezer Scrooge and the rest of the cast play multiple roles. The suggested style of production is the main difference between the two plays however the small cast version of the play has also been performed as a traditional play with a larger cast on a proscenium stage. Otherwise, the two plays are nearly identical in structure and in text.

In the small cast version the style of performance hides nothing from the audience. We see the transitions of actors going from one character to the next and the scene changes are suggested with a prop or piece of furniture. Of course, having said that there are an infinite number of ways to present the play using a large cast or a small cast and the specifics of your production are totally up to you.
**A CHRISTMAS CAROL – ACT I**

| Scene i: | A London Street |
| Scene ii: | Scrooge & Marley’s |
| Scene iii: | Scrooge’s Street and Front Door |
| Scene iv: | Scrooge’s Bed Chamber |
| Scene v: | Scrooge’s School & Classroom |
| Scene vi: | Fezziwig’s Warehouse |
| Scene vii: | Scrooge & Marley’s |
| Scene viii: | Belle’s home |

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL – ACT II**

| Scene i: | A London Street |
| Scene ii: | Bob Cratchit’s Home |
| Scene iii: | Fred’s Home |
| Scene iv: | London Business District |
| Scene v: | Old Joe’s |
| Scene vi: | Thomas and Caroline’s Home |
| Scene vii: | Bob Cratchit’s Home |
| Scene viii: | Church Yard |
| Scene ix: | Scrooge’s Bed Chamber |
| Scene x: | A London Street |

**TIME**

Christmas Eve Long Ago in Victorian England

**STORY of the PLAY**

In this fresh, fun, and lively adaptation of A Christmas Carol you’ll meet Mr. Bentley, learn about the letters Scrooge wrote to his sister Fan, and find out who Mr. Newbury is. You’ll still find all the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future along with Tiny Tim, Bob Cratchit, the Ghost of Jacob Marley, Old Fezziwig, Scrooge’s nephew Fred, and the love of Scrooge’s life, Belle. There are some new scary bits, a few good laughs, a tender moment or two, and some surprises! It’s a fresh take on an old tale sure to thrill young and old alike.
For Ann Louise
A CHRISTMAS CAROL
ACT I

SCENE i: A LONDON STREET

Setting: A busy London Street the day before Christmas.

At Rise: Couples stroll along looking at the shops. Kids play in the street. CAROLLERS sing DECK THE HALLS. Friends and strangers greet each other happily. FRED and several of the other cast members walk through the crowd greeting people and enjoying the season.

CAROLLERS
DECK THE HALLS WITH BOUGHS OF HOLLY,
FA LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA.
TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY
FA LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA.

DON WE NOW OUR GAY APPAREL,
FA LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA.
TROLL THE ANCIENT YULE TIDE CAROL,
FA LA LA LA LA, LA LA LA LA.

FRED breaks away from the crowd and addresses the audience.

FRED
My word, I love Christmas – there’s a spirit in the air.

MR. GRANGER
It is a time of joy and celebration.

BELLE
It is a time when people are more kind and more considerate.

MRS. DILBER
Well, most people, that is.

The group laughs.
FRED
Quite right. For, there are those who see Christmas as a waste of time and energy and my Uncle Scrooge was not only a member of that tribe but in all likelihood their loudest cheerleader and most ardent supporter.

MRS. DILBER
He hated Christmas.

MR. HARRINGTON
He hated anything that did not make him richer and so he hated Christmas most of all.

_FRED stands outside SCROOGE’s Counting House and an old sign very much in need of repair with the names Scrooge & Marley hangs out front._

FRED
And on this particular Christmas when I dropped in to see him he was in a particularly foul mood.

MRS. DILBER
It might have been because seven years ago this very night his business partner, and only friend in the world, Jacob Marley had died.

MR. NEWBURY
Marley was long dead and buried. This you must remember or nothing wonderful can come of the tale you are about to see.

FRED
And so, on a crisp and chilly – Christmas Eve my Uncle Scrooge,

MRS. DILBER
that tight fistled, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous, old sinner was –

FRED
can you believe it – conducting business in his counting house!

_End Scene_
SCENE ii: SCROOGE & MARLEY’s

SCROOGE and MR. BENTLY are concluding some business while MR. GRANGER and BOB CRATCHIT wait.

SCROOGE

One hundred pounds a-piece. My word, a fair profit, I dare say, wouldn’t you Mr. Bentley.

MR. BENTLEY

A nice tidy sum to add to a record year, Mr. Scrooge.

MR. SCROOGE

Yes. Yes indeed. And to add to our success I have some other business investments I would like to propose. There’s a lot of money to be made in India – and of course there is the fur trade in the new world. That interests me. There is a hunger for fur, Mr. Bentley, and the new world offers an abundance of such resources, and the man willing to invest, wisely mind you, will be well rewarded, I would think.

MR. BENTLEY

Without a doubt sir.

MR. SCROOGE

Shall we discuss these opportunities at length?

MR. BENTLEY

Nothing would please me more, Mr. Scrooge, unfortunately, I have some urgent business across town, but I am available tomorrow.

SCROOGE

On Christmas Day?

MR. BENTLEY

Most certainly on Christmas Day. It is a day like any other as far as I’m concerned, why should it be absent of work.

SCROOGE

My feelings precisely Mr. Bentley. Ha ha! I sense we are kindred spirits when it comes to business. Until tomorrow then. Good day. Cheerio!
MR. BENTLY

Good day, Mr. Scrooge.

MR. BENTLY exits.

BOB

Mr. Scrooge, there’s a Mr. Granger here to see you sir.

SCROOGE

Well show him in we mustn’t keep clients waiting.

BOB

This way sir.

MR. GRANGER

Good afternoon Mr. Scrooge, and Merry Christmas.

SCROOGE

How do you do Mr. Granger. I understand you have some business to propose.

MR. GRANGER

The business of charity sir.

SCROOGE

Charity?

MR. GRANGER

Yes, Mr. Scrooge. Charity is everyone’s business, and so at this festive time of the year a few of us are raising a fund to help the poor and destitute.

SCROOGE

Are there no prisons?

MR. GRANGER

Plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE

And the Union workhouses, are still in operation, I take it?
MR. GRANGER
They are. Although, I wish I could say they were not.

SCROOGE
Oh! Thank God, I am very glad and relieved to hear it. I was afraid, from what you had said, that something had happened to stop them in their useful work. Good day sir.

MR. GRANGER
But Mr. Scrooge, those institutions hardly furnish any Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitude. And so, a few of us are collecting money to buy the poor some meat and drink and means of warmth. We choose this time of year, because it is a time, above all others, when want is most keenly felt, and abundance rejoiced! What may I put you down for?

SCROOGE
You may put me down for nothing. I don’t make merry myself at Christmas and I certainly can’t afford to make idle people merry. I help support the establishments I have mentioned. They cost far more than enough and those who are in need must go there.

GRANGER
But many can’t go there, and many would rather die.

SCROOGE
Well then let them die and thereby decrease the surplus population.

GRANGER
Mr. Scrooge!

SCROOGE
Mr. Granger! It is not my business what happens to these people. Why should I care about them? I dare say, they care little for me. It is enough for a man to understand his own business and not to interfere in other people’s. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon, sir, good day!

GRANGER
But Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE
Good day.
BOB shows MR. GRANGER to the door and returns to his desk.

FRED enters and cheerfully greets his UNCLE SCROOGE.

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 most certainly do. Merry Christmas! What right have you to be so merry? You’re poor enough.

FRED
Come now, what right have you to be so miserable? You’re rich enough.

SCROOGE
What else can I be when I live in a world of fools such as this. Merry Christmas! If I had my way every idiot who goes about with Merry Christmas on his lips would be boiled in his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart!

FRED
Uncle!

SCROOGE
Nephew! Keep Christmas in your own way and let me keep in in mine.

FRED
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
But Uncle I have always thought of Christmas time as a kind, forgiving, charitable time. It is the one time of the year, when men and women open their hearts and think of all
people as fellow passengers to the grave, and not as another race of creatures bound on different journeys. And therefore, 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!

    *BOB applauds.*

    BOB
    Well said, I must say.

    SCROOGE
    Oh, you agree with my nephew, do you Mr. Cratchit?

    BOB
    I do, sir. I think Christmas is a joyous time.

    SCROOGE
    Well, you let me hear another word from you Mr. Bob Cratchit and you’ll spend your Christmas looking for another job. Is that understood?

    BOB
    Yes, Mr. Scrooge.

    SCROOGE
    You’re quite a powerful speaker, sir. I am most impressed. It’s a wonder you don’t go into politics. Run for office. Become a Member of Parliament.

    FRED (Teasing)
    What a good idea. I just might do that, can I count on your vote, Uncle?

    SCROOGE
    Bah!

    FRED
    Oh, Uncle, don’t be angry. Come, dine with us tomorrow.

    SCROOGE
    No, thank you.

    FRED
    But why not?
SCROOGE
A man’s first priority is to secure his financial future. You should have never gotten married. Why did you?

FRED
Why does anyone get married? I fell in love.

SCROOGE
You fell in love! What nonsense.

FRED
Have you never been in love Uncle?

SCROOGE
No, I have not.

FRED
No?

SCROOGE
No. Have you come here for the sole purpose of keeping me from my work?

FRED
Not at all. I have come here because I have something that belongs to you.

SCROOGE
Do you?

_FRED removes a bundle of letters from his pocket._

SCROOGE
And what are those?

FRED
Letters.

SCROOGE
Letters?
FRED
Yes, Uncle. Letters. I was going through an old trunk of my mother’s and I came across some letters you wrote to her when you were a much younger man, and those letters are from a very different Uncle Scrooge than the person who sits before me now.

SCROOGE
You read them?

FRED (Teasing)
I might have read one or two…maybe three. Can you blame me?

SCROOGE
How dare you! Those were private letters between your mother and me. You had no right to read them. Now hand them over.

FRED
I’m sorry if I’ve upset you Uncle, that was not my intention. I thought you’d be pleased to get them back. Here, let me make it up to you. Come have dinner with us tomorrow.

SCROOGE
No thank you. Now give me those letters.

FRED
Not until you agree to come dine with us.

SCROOGE
Bah, you were always an obstinate child.

FRED
Stubborn like my Uncle Scrooge my dad used to say. Well, if you won’t have dinner with us, Uncle, how about you Bob? How about you and your fine family join us for Christmas?

BOB
Oh! Ha, ha that’s very kind of you sir, and most unexpected, but I’m afraid I’m scheduled to work.

FRED
Good Lord, on Christmas! That is a humbug. What mean spirited old moneygrubber would make you work on Christmas day I wonder?
SCROOGE
If I was to stop him half-a-crown for it, you’d think him ill-used. And yet you don’t think me ill-used when I pay a day’s wages for no work.

BOB
But Mr. Scrooge, it’s only once a year.

SCROOGE & FRED
That’s a poor excuse for picking a man’s pocket every twenty-fifth of December!

SCROOGE
I am surrounded by fools! Very well, if you must have it, have it!

BOB
Oh, thank you sir. Thank you very much.

FRED
Excellent! Well then, I take it that means you’re free to come dine with us Uncle?

SCROOGE
No, no, no. Mr. Cratchit may have his day to do with as he intends. I will use my day for more profitable enterprises.

FRED
I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I’ll keep my Christmas cheer to the last. So, a Merry Christmas, uncle!

*FRED puts the letters on SCROOGE’s desk.*

SCROOGE
Good afternoon!

FRED
And a Happy New Year!

SCROOGE
Good afternoon!

*FRED turns to leave.*
FRED
And a Merry Christmas to you and your family, Bob. My invitation to Christmas dinner stands. You are welcome to join us.

BOB
Oh, that’s most kind of you sir but we like to celebrate at home and have the whole family together on Christmas day.

FRED
There’s nothing more important than family, is there Bob.

BOB
No sir, nothing.

FRED
Merry Christmas.

BOB
Merry Christmas, sir.

FRED
Merry Christmas, Uncle!

SCROOGE growls and then goes back to working at his desk. The day grows darker and colder. The letters sit where FRED put them.

SFX: A DISTANT CHURCH CLOCK BEGINS TO CHIME SEVEN

BOB begins to pack up his desk as the hour of closing is reached.

SCROOGE
Well, Mr. Cratchit, you have tomorrow to do with as you like, but I expect you here at your desk all the earlier the following morning. Is that clear?

BOB
Quite clear sir. Thank you, Mr. Scrooge.
SCROOGE
Mark my word Mr. Cratchit, this is a harsh and cruel world where your only shield against the cold hand of poverty is acquisition, profit, and gain. What’s Christmas time to you but a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer?

BOB
Yes, sir. Good night, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE
Good day.

BOB exits the counting house and once outside whistles a happy tune and laughs as he rushes off to be with his family.

SCROOGE is about to return to work but instead picks up the letters. They are bound by a ribbon. As SCROOGE unties the bundle, he hears a whisper and other soft ghostly sounds from beyond.

MARLEY’s GHOST (Off)

Ghostly whisper

Scrooge.

SCROOGE
What’s that? Hello? Is someone there?

SFX SOFT GHOSTLY NOISES

MARLEY’s GHOST (Off)

Ghostly whisper.

Scrooge.

SCROOGE
Whoever’s there I’m warning you – I am armed. Yes, yes, I am armed. So, you had better show yourself. Come on – out from the shadows whoever you are.

SFX KNOCK AT THE DOOR

The ghostly sounds fade away.

SFX KNOCK AT THE DOOR
SCROOGE upon hearing the knock crosses to the door and opens it.

MR. HARRINGTON
Ah, Mr. Scrooge, I am so sorry to disturb you on Christmas Eve, but I know how long are the hours you work, and took the chance that I might find you here still – at your office – at this late hour.

SCROOGE
What sort of a trick are you up to?

MR. HARRINGTON
Trick, Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE
Yes, what game are you playing at?

MR. HARRINGTON
Um, I’m playing no game, I assure you sir. Is something wrong?

SCROOGE
Wrong? (Pause) No. No, nothing is wrong.

SCROOGE tosses the letters into the trash.

SCROOGE
Well then Mr. Harrington I assume you are here to make a payment.

MR. HARRINGTON
Ah, yes well, I’ve run into a bit of a problem – you see – and I need to make some sort of arrangement for an extension Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE
The terms of the loan were quite clear when you signed them.

MR. HARRINGTON
Yes, of course, sir, but it’s not easy finding work at the moment you see and if I could just have a little more time…I’m good for it…I’m a hard worker…
SCROOGE
None of this is my concern Mr. Harrington. If you are unable to pay off your loan you must pay the penalty and do so in a timely fashion or forfeit the collateral you have offered or find yourself in debtor’s prison. There is no court in the land that will not rule in my favour.

MR. HARRINGTON
Maybe so sir, but that doesn’t make it right.

SCROOGE
I have a right to be paid the money owed me.

MR. HARRINGTON
But Mr. Scrooge I’m sure you’ve seen tough times yourself and have needed a helping hand from time to time.

SCROOGE
God helps those who help themselves. Good night Mr. Harrington. A full payment is due by the end of the year.

MR. HARRINGTON
Were you always so cold and unfeeling a man, Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE
You may find me cold and unfeeling sir, but I would venture to say I am a man of my word; a man whose word carries weight; a man whose word allows him the ability to strike a deal and back it up with his signature. My signature is worth something. Yours it would appear – if you continue to treat your financial obligations and business dealings in this manner – will soon be worthless. Now if you’ll excuse me, I’m off to the Nags Head Pub for a well-earned and well-deserved supper. Good day, sir!

HARRINGTON exits

SCROOGE puts on his coat and hat; looks about the office and leaves.

End Scene
SCENE iii: SCROOGE’S STREET AND THE FRONT DOOR

It is late and cold. Fog circles the street. A YOUNG BOY stands near the door to Scrooge’s apartments singing. SCROOGE enters from the other end of the street and approaches the boy.

BOY
The closer SCROOGE gets the more the BOY falters until over the last few lines the song fades away to nothing.

GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN
LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY
REMEMBER, CHRIST, OUR SAVIOR
WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY.
TO SAVE US ALL FROM SATAN’S POWER
WHEN WE WERE ALL GONE ASTRAY
O TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY
COMFORT AND JOY
O TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY

SCROOGE
What are you doing on my doorstep, boy?

BOY
Singing, sir.

SCROOGE
Singing.

BOY
Yes, sir. You wouldn’t happen to have any change, would you sir, for a poor boy just trying to make a few bob?

SCROOGE
Singing, is not something I wish to pay for. Now get out of here before I call a constable. Go on. Hurry up. Go sing somewhere else – not here. Not at my door. You want money, then you should earn it. Go work in the coal mines and find yourself some other porch to haunt.
SCROOGE watches the boy run off and then digs in his pocket for a key. There is a sudden chill in the air as SCROOGE puts the key in the lock and the horrifying distorted face of SCROOGE’s long dead partner JACOB MARLEY appears in the centre of the door.

MARLEY’s GHOST (Chilling and ghostly)
Scrooge! (Raspy Breath) Scrooge!

SCROOGE (Startled)
Ohhaahhh!

SCROOGE backs away startled. The door returns to normal and slowly swings open. Fog from inside the dwelling mingles with the fog on the street.

SCROOGE
Hello? Is there someone there? Hello?

MRS. DILBER enters from inside and steps out onto the street. SCROOGE is relieved but troubled.

MRS. DILBER
Oh, Mr. Scrooge. I was just leaving. You are running rather late tonight – even for you sir. And I do have me own family to think of – and what with tomorrow be’n Christmas and all there’s a lot of work needs doing. Now I know Christmas means little to you sir, but we mothers and wives, find ourselves occupied with much preparation for the day.

SCROOGE
Yes, yes, yes. We all busy ourselves with what we think is important, Mrs. Dilber.

MRS. DILBER
Now, I’ve left your gruel by the fire, Mr. Scrooge and put a cover on it to keep it warm, and I’ve put the bed warmer in the bed. It’s a cold night. Cold to the bones. The only people who don’t feel this cold are the dead I reckon. Ha, ha, ha.

SCROOGE
Yes…uh…Mrs. Dilber?

MRS. DILBER
Yes, Mr. Scrooge?
SCROOGE
Have you noticed anything peculiar?

MRS. DILBER
Peculiar? In what way, sir?

SCROOGE
No strange noises, perhaps?

MRS. DILBER
No stranger than usual. This old place creaks and groans like an old man.

SCROOGE
Everything is quite normal, then?

MRS. DILBER
Everything is as it should be, Mr. Scrooge. Why, is there something wrong?

SCROOGE
Well…it’s just I thought for a moment…that…I saw in the door…but no. That’s impossible. Clearly, I have been surrounded by such fools this entire day that their nonsense and silly talk of Christmas has me hearing and seeing things. Good night Mrs. Dilber.

MRS. DILBER
Good night Mr. Scrooge. Will you be taking breakfast at your usual time tomorrow?

SCROOGE
I see no reason why I should adjust my schedule.

MRS. DILBER
Ah, very well Mr. Scrooge, I will see you first thing in the morning.

SCROOGE enters his house.

MRS. DILBER starts to exit. She looks about her. A GHOSTLY shadow moves across the exterior of the house. MRS. DILBER shivers – and then hurries off.

End Scene
SCENE iv: SCROOGE’s BED CHAMBER

There is a small fire in the fireplace and beside the fire is a high back chair. The four-poster bed dominates the room. SCROOGE sits in the chair wearing his slippers, nightshirt, and cap. He holds the bowl of gruel in his hands.

SCROOGE


SCROOGE goes to take a spoonful of gruel and blows on it. He is about to eat the gruel when he hears MARLEY’s GHOST.

MARLEY’s GHOST (Off)

Scrooge.

SCROOGE drops his spoon into the bowl.

SFX HEAVY FOODSTEPS AND THE SOUND OF CHAINS BEING DRAGGED OUTSIDE THE BEDROOM DOOR WITH LAMENTED AND MOANING CRIES.

SCROOGE

What’s this? No. This is a humbug I say! A humbug!

SCROOGE shaking with fear rushes to the door and double bolts all the locks.

SFX: SOUND OF CHAINS BEING DRAGGED ACROSS THE FLOOR

SCROOGE

Ha, there! Not even Hannibal and his Elephants could break down this door! You hear me? Hey! I advise you to leave this place at once – whoever you are.

MARLEY’s GHOST (Off)

Scrooge.
SCROOGE
Leave now before I shout for the law and have you arrested! You hear me? You’ll spend your Christmas in a jail cell if I have anything to say about it!

As SCROOGE stands at the door it blasts open and the Ghost of JACOB MARLEY ghostly white and bound by a long chain made of cash boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers, deeds, and heavy purses wrought in steel, appears and walks towards SCROOGE.

MARLEY’s GHOST
OhhhAhhhOhhhAhhh!

SCROOGE
Oh, dear God! Merciful heaven what is this?

MARLEY’s GHOST
Whooaaaahhhh.

SCROOGE
Answer me dreadful phantom, who and what are you?

MARLEY’s GHOST
In life, I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

SCROOGE
Jacob? No. No, it cannot be. You are dead and long buried. Looong buried.

MARLEY’s GHOST
Do you not believe in me?

SCROOGE
No, I do not.

MARLEY’s GHOST
You doubt your own eyes and ears?

SCROOGE
I do. Yes, I do. In this matter they are not to be trusted. Why you may be nothing more than an undigested bit of beef…yes…a glob of mustard, a chunk of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. I say you are nothing more than a troubled stomach making me hear
and see things that do not exist. Mark my word, you unholy vision, there’s more of gravy than of grave about you, ha, whatever you are!

*MARLEY’s GHOST lets out a horrible cry. He walks forward and wraps a chain around SCROOGE and draws him near.*

**SCROOGE**

No. No. No. Mercy, dreadful phantom! Please release me.

**MARLEY’s GHOST**

Man of worldly mind! Do you believe in me or not?

**SCROOGE**

I do. I do. I do. Please have mercy Jacob. Why do you walk the earth, and haunt me?

**MARLEY’s GHOST**

It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk among his fellow men and if that spirit does not do so in life – it is doomed to do so after death.

**SCROOGE**

After death?

**MARLEY’s GHOST**

Yes, and to wander the world without rest and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared in life, and turned to happiness!

**SCROOGE**

But why are you shackled? Who has done this to horrible thing to you?

**MARLEY’s GHOST**

I have done it to myself. I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link and yard by yard. The weight and length of the chain you bear yourself was as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it since. Your’s is a monstrous chain!

*MARLEY’s releases SCROOGE*

**SCROOGE**

Oh no…no…Jacob…say it is not so…you have done no wrong…you were always a good man of business.
MARLEY’s GHOST
Business! Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business. Charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence were all my business.

MARLEY’s GHOST shakes his chains. SCROOGE cowers.

SCROOGE
Have mercy, Jacob, please.

MARLEY’s GHOST
I have none to give – but you may yet – have a chance and hope of escaping my fate. A chance and hope of my procuring, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE
Thank you. You were always a good friend to me, Jacob.

MARLEY’s GHOST
You are to be haunted by three spirits.

SCROOGE
Oh. Haunted by three spirits? Is that the chance and hope you mentioned?

MARLEY’s GHOST
It is.

SCROOGE
Ah, well…to be haunted…I…I…mean…I think…I think I’d rather not be haunted if it’s all the same to you Jacob…I’m not so sure how much more of this I can take.

MARLEY’s GHOST
Without their visits you will be doomed and cannot hope to shun the path I tread.

SCROOGE
Doomed?

MARLEY’s GHOST
Expect the first, when the bell tolls one.
SCROOGE
What sort of spirits are they, Jacob?

MARLEY’s GHOST
Expect the second when the bell tolls two.

SCROOGE
How will I know them?

MARLEY’s GHOST
And the third when the bell tolls three.

SCROOGE
What sort of things will they do to me?

MARLEY’s GHOST
I can say no more. I can stay no longer. Remember Ebenezer, for your own sake, what has passed between us.

MARLEY’s GHOST steps back towards the door as it blows open and he recedes into the darkness. The sound of tortured souls shackled and chained fills the air. The door slams shut and there is silence.

SCROOGE
No. No, no, no no. This is all nonsense. Nonsense. A nightmare. Nothing more than a bad dream. Yes, of course. That explains it. I’m having a dream. Ha, ha, ha a nightmare. There are no such things as ghosts and spirits. It is all in your mind; do you hear me Ebenezer? All in your mind. You will not be haunted. Humbug!

SFX: A DISTANT CHURCH CLOCK BEGINS THE WESTMINSTER CHIME

In the darkness a few points of light appear – then more – then hundreds – then thousands – they converge in a blinding flash and out of the light emerges the FIRST SPIRIT: THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. SCROOGE uncovers his eyes as the brightness dims. The FIRST SPIRIT is dressed in a white robe.

SCROOGE
Are you the spirit, whose coming was foretold to me?
FIRST SPIRIT

I am.

SCROOGE

Oh, thank God, you are not as terrifying as I feared. *(He laughs)* Who and what are you?

FIRST SPIRIT

I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE

Long past?

FIRST SPIRIT

No, your past.

SCROOGE

My past? Why my past?

FIRST SPIRIT

For your welfare. Come, Ebenezer, take my hand. I have much to show you.

*End Scene*
SCENE v: ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE/SCHOOL ROOM

The scene is split between the English Countryside and a School room. SCROOGE as a young boy is standing in the room with the cook. The COOK is reading a letter. Along the country lane two boys WILLIAM TURNER and CHARLIE CAMPBELL enter. They are talking and playing and enjoying each other’s company as they head home.

SCROOGE
Good heavens. This is where I grew up. I was a boy here! Why look it’s William Turner, bless my soul. He was always getting into trouble that one. Nothing serious mind you, just boyish mischief.

FIRST SPIRIT
These are the shadows of things that have been. They cannot see us, nor can we change or influence them.

SCROOGE
And that’s Charlie Campbell – a bright lad. Very smart. Top of his class, he was. Ah, how good to see them again. How happy they are – not a care in the world – dear lads.

The BOYS exit as lights come up on the school room.

FIRST SPIRIT
Come Ebenezer, the school is not quite deserted. A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.

The COOK finishes reading the letter.

COOK
Well, Master Scrooge, it would appear according to the headmaster that you and I are to spend Christmas together.

SCROOGE AS A BOY
I’m not to go home.

COOK
No. Apparently your father would prefer you to stay here. I must say that’s a bit irregular, but I suppose we must make the best of it, eh?
SCROOGE AS A BOY
Yes, ma’am.

COOK
I like to spend the holidays reading. It is the only time of the year where I don’t have to spend all my time in the kitchen cooking for you lot and I can enjoy some quiet solitude. I do hope you will follow my example and pass the time in such a manner as this. I will have the headmaster select a few books that might be of interest to a boy your age, Robinson Crusoe and the like. You may take your meals in the kitchen with me instead of the dining hall, if that is agreeable.

SCROOGE AS A BOY
Yes, ma’am.

COOK
Oh, come now Master Scrooge, you may not be home for Christmas, but you at least have a roof over your head and food. There are many in this world with far less than that. If you want more than this, then I suggest you put your nose to the grindstone, boy. God rewards those who work hard, and he punishes those who don’t.

SCROOGE AS A BOY
Yes, ma’am.

YOUNG SCROOGE and the COOK exit.

SCROOGE looks upon his younger self and wipes away a tear.

FIRST SPIRIT
What is the matter?

SCROOGE
Nothing.

FIRST SPIRIT
Nothing?

SCROOGE
Well…there was a boy at my door last night.
FIRST SPIRIT
You are reminded of him?

SCROOGE
He was singing a Christmas Carol.

FIRST SPIRIT
Yes.

SCROOGE
I should have given him something, I suppose. But if I was to give every poor child or man or woman, that fell upon hard times, my money – what would be left for me?

FIRST SPIRIT
We can give more than just money, Ebenezer. We can give our time and our labour to help those in need.

SCROOGE
But it’s not my business.

FIRST SPIRIT
If not yours – then whose? Come, Ebenezer, let us see another Christmas.

SCROOGE is now a young man. He is in the school room writing a letter when FAN enters and interrupts him. He is overwhelmed.

FAN
Oh, dear brother.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Fan?

FAN
Yes, dear brother.

SCROOGE
Oh, my word it is Fan…oh dear Fan, how good it is to see you. I have missed you so.

FAN runs over to YOUNG SCROOGE and gives him a big hug.
YOUNG SCROOGE
Why Fan, what a surprise. I am so very happy to see you. Pray, what has brought you here?

FAN
I have come to bring you home, dear brother!

YOUNG SCROOGE
Home, little Fan?

FAN
Yes! Home, for good and all. Home, for ever and ever.

But how?

FAN
Father has changed.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Has he indeed? Well, I’ll believe that when I see it.

FAN
But he has. He has become so much kinder than he used to be, that home’s like Heaven.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Is it? Well, that is a blessing.

FAN
Last night, father spoke so kindly and gently to me 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. You must.” And he sent me in a coach to bring you. Can you believe it?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Hardly, but I am very happy none-the-less.

FAN
Isn’t it wonderful?
YOUNG SCROOGE
Yes! How extraordinary.

FAN
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
Ha, ha, you are quite a woman, little Fan!

_YOUNG SCROOGE and FAN happily hug. YOUNG SCROOGE gathers up his things and they exit._

FIRST SPIRIT
She was always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered.

SCROOGE
Yes, but she had a large heart. She was very generous and kind. She didn’t have an enemy in the world. Oh fan, how I have missed you.

FIRST SPIRIT
She died a woman.

SCROOGE
Yes, and far too young. What kind of a God allows that; I ask you? She should have lived.

FIRST SPIRIT
She had children.

SCROOGE
One child.

FIRST SPIRIT
Your nephew Fred.

SCROOGE
Yes.
FIRST SPIRIT
He is not so unlike his mother in appearance or disposition, is he?

SCROOGE
No, that is true. He is not. But men need to be tough in order to get ahead in this world. My nephew is too soft hearted. I have tried so many times to make him understand the importance of hard work and industry, but my advice seems to have little effect upon him. It goes in one ear and out the other. I am sorry to say this, but he is a fool, and will always be so.

FIRST SPIRIT
And yet he seems happy. Come, Ebenezer, there is more to see.

End Scene
SCENE vi:  FEZZIWIG’s WAREHOUSE

YOUNG SCROOGE is working at his desk. He is happy having found work and love and is whistling a happy tune.

SCROOGE

Good Lord!

FIRST SPIRIT

You know this place?

SCROOGE

Know it? Why yes, I know it. I was apprenticed here! Ha, ha, ha!

FEZZIWIG enters followed by JACOB MARLEY

SCROOGE

And look it’s old Fezziwig! Bless his heart – it’s Fezziwig alive again!

FEZZIWIG

Ebenezer, I’d like you to meet a business associate of mine, Jacob Marley.

YOUNG SCROOGE

Pleased to meet you, Mr. Marley.

YOUNG SCROOGE crosses and shakes MARLEY’s hand.

JACOB

So, you’re the young man I’ve been hearing so much about.

FEZZIWIG

Ebenezer has a keen mind when it comes to business Jacob. Why, year over year, we’ve more than doubled our profits – can you believe it!

DICK

Mr. Fezziwig, sorry to interrupt, but Harvey Grayson is here to see you.

FEZZIWIG

Oh dear, what does he want now?
SCROOGE
Look at that. It’s Dick Wilkens, to be sure! Bless me, yes. There he is. We were very good friends, once.

FEZZIWIG
Perhaps you could ask him to call back later…let him know that I’m busy.

DICK
I tried sir, but he says the matter is urgent and insists upon speaking with you at once.

FEZZIWIG
Oh dear. Well, I should see him then. If you’ll excuse me Jacob, I won’t be long.

JACOB
Oh, that’s quite alright; you go ahead and attend to Mr. Grayson. I’d like a word with your young prodigy here, Mr. Scrooge.

FEZZIWIG and DICK exit.

JACOB
So, tell me Mr. Scrooge, in your professional opinion, is old Fezziwig conducting his business, in such a manner, as to maximize his profits?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Well Mr. Marley, I don’t think it’s right for me to comment on my master’s business affairs.

JACOB
Oh, come now, I am asking your opinion, not as a friend of Fezziwig’s, but as a man of business. Is old Fezziwig – to put it plainly – making as much money as he could?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Mr. Fezziwig, while a good man – but not always of business unfortunately, has other priorities.

JACOB
Ha ha! I thought so. I was going to buy him out Mr. Scrooge. I’d even made him an offer. And then you come on the scene and suddenly old Fezziwig is drowning in money and I ask myself how did he manage that? Well, he didn’t manage it, did he? You did. Ha, ha!
You’re the one, and a very shrewd man of business you are Mr. Scrooge! I am most impressed.

   YOUNG SCROOGE
   Well, thank you Mr. Marley. That’s very kind of you to say.

   JACOB
   Nonsense, I speak the truth. If you let your heart rule your business, like Old Fezziwig does, I would call you a fool and say you deserve any punishment your foolishness gets you, but you are no fool are you Mr. Scrooge.

   YOUNG SCROOGE
   I don’t think of myself as a fool, but…I do think…there’s more to life than business.

   JACOB
   Ah, that’s Fezziwig talking. Life is business and the business of life is profit. And you and I must talk business. I am fully prepared to offer you a position in my firm.

   YOUNG SCROOGE
   Are you indeed, sir?

   JACOB
   Yes, I have been seeking a keen young man that I can groom to be my partner and I dare say from my inquiries that you appear to be that man. If you hadn’t come along Old Fezziwig would have ended up in the poor house this winter instead of celebrating Christmas. Why not come work for me where you can reap all the profits of your labour? A junior partner to begin with, but I promise you, an equal partnership if you prove yourself worthy.

   YOUNG SCROOGE
   My word Mr. Marley, that’s very kind of you and I am very tempted and overwhelmed by your generous offer, but Mr. Fezziwig has been more than fair with me, and I feel I owe him a debt of gratitude.

   JACOB
   You are loyal, I will say that. Well, you needn’t decide right now, Mr. Scrooge, but you must make a point of coming to see me in the New Year so we can discuss matters further. You have a great future ahead of you Ebenezer – if you’re willing to take it.

   FEZZIWIG and DICK come back.
FEZZIWIG
That Mr. Grayson will be the ruin of me.

JACOB
Why do business with him then?

FEZZIWIG
He has been a client of mine for many years and stuck with me when times were hard, so I feel it only fair that I stick with him during his hard times. Ebenezer make note that Mr. Grayson’s payment for the lumber we shipped to him last month will be moved to the beginning of March.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Yes, Mr. Fezziwig.

FEZZIWIG
Poor fellow. Now Jacob, you must stay and have a glass of punch and join us in celebrating the holiday.

JACOB
Thank you no, Mr. Fezziwig. I’m afraid, I have some other business to attend to.

FEZZIWIG
On Christmas Eve?

JACOB
A small matter, but a matter that demands my attention non-the-less. Good day sir.

FEZZIWIG
Merry Christmas, Mr. Marley.

JACOB
Yes, Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas, Mr. Scrooge.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Merry Christmas, sir.

JACOB exits
FEZZIWIG

Here it is Christmas Eve and here we are still sitting at our desks! That will never do. Come Ebenezer, come Dick, it’s time to forget all about work and have some fun. Alright, everyone, clear the floor – bring on the fiddler and the food and the punch – come now where is my wife and daughters – let us celebrate!

A FIDDLER enters as does MRS. FEZZIWIG and her DAUGHTERS as well as YOUNG MEN of the business and friends and neighbours. Great tables filled with food are set in the corners and the fiddler begins to fiddle as the couples line up and do a traditional ballroom dance or fancy polka of the time. BELLE lines up opposite SCROOGE.

SCROOGE

Oh, my word it is Belle. Look at how young she is. How beautiful.

FIRST SPIRIT

You know this woman?

SCROOGE

Know her? Oh yes, indeed, I do. (To Belle) Oh Belle. Belle how wonderful to see you.

FIRST SPIRIT

She cannot hear you.

SCROOGE

Is there no way for me to speak to her?

FIRST SPIRIT

She is but a memory.

YOUNG SCROOGE dances with BELLE and the two are having a grand time. SCROOGE watches from the side and finds himself enjoying the music and dancing along with the couples clapping his hands and shadowing himself and BELLE as they dance around the warehouse. This is a happy memory for him, and we see that joy is not entirely dead in the old man.

The song ends and the couples applaud. FEZZIWIG and MRS. FEZZIWIG are beside YOUNG SCROOGE and BELLE.
MRS. FEZZIWIG
Why husband, you never told me that our dear Mr. Scrooge was such an accomplished dancer.

FEZZIWIG
Yes, my dear, it would appear that young Ebenezer has feet for dancing as well as a head for business. Ha, ha, ha. Good lad!

MRS. FEZZIWIG
What more could you ask for in a husband, I wonder Belle?

MR. FEZZIWIG
Now, now my dear we’re making the young couple blush. Come let us attend to our other guests.

MR. FEZZIWIG & MRS. FEZZIWIG mingle with the other guests as they talk and drink and enjoy the party.

BELLE and YOUNG SCROOGE move to a more private area where they can talk alone.

BELLE
Don’t be embarrassed Ebenezer, they’re only teasing.

YOUNG SCROOGE
I know, but it takes a great deal more than being able to dance to provide for a family and a wife in this harsh world. It takes time to build wealth and position. Time that you, my dear and beautiful Belle, may not wish to wait. If only there was some small sign by which I could know your heart.

BELLE softly kisses YOUNG SCROOGE. There is tenderness and love between them.

BELLE
I love you Ebenezer and have told you often that I will wait until our fortunes are better.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Well then, speaking of fortunes, Mr. Marley seems willing to make me an offer to be a junior partner in his firm – can you believe it!
BELLE

Are you not happy here?

YOUNG SCROOGE

Very, but if given the opportunity to improve one’s position in life, I see no reason not to take it. Why? Does it trouble you?

BELLE

From what I know of Mr. Marley, I’m not so certain he’s the kind of man you should be working for.

YOUNG SCROOGE

Nonsense. He’s successful and rich and if he takes an interest in my future then I should at least consider his offer.

_DICK interrupts YOUNG SCROOGE and BELLE_

DICK

And what are you two up to?

YOUNG SCROOGE

We’re not up to anything.

DICK

Oh, well then, perhaps I could convince Belle to join me for a dance.

BELLE

I’m sorry Dick, but my dance card is already filled.

DICK

Is it? Come now, what’s going on here? You can tell your friend Dick Wilkens.

YOUNG SCROOGE

Well, if you must know (Belle and Young Scrooge exchange glances) Belle and I plan to marry.

DICK

Do you. Ha. I thought there was something going on between you two. Well, congratulations Ebenezer. Congratulations Belle. I wish the two of you a long and happy life.
YOUNG SCROOGE

Thank you, Dick.

BELLE

And I’m sure that one day you’ll meet a fine young woman and marry her and have a very happy and fine family of your own.

DICK

If I’m ever fortunate enough to meet someone as beautiful and sweet as you are Belle, then I hope I’m smart enough to let her know how I feel and snatch her up, before someone else does. Again congratulations.

YOUNG SCROOGE

What a grand night.

DICK & SCROOGE

Grand, indeed!

BELLE

Yes, and all thanks to old Fezziwig.

YOUNG SCROOGE

What a fine and generous man he is.

SCROOGE

Hear, hear!

DICK

To our dear Mr. Fezziwig, may he have a long life, and may good fortune follow him all his days.

YOUNG SCROOGE & SCROOGE

Well said.

BELLE

Agreed.

SCROOGE

I had forgotten that Old Fezziwig had such a generous spirit.
FIRST SPIRIT
Generous? How can you say that? He has spent but a few pounds of your mortal money – three or four at the most. Why does he deserve such praise?

SCROOGE
It’s not the amount he spent, Spirit. It’s in his power to make us happy or unhappy to make our work a pleasure or a toil. His power lies in words and looks; in things so slight and insignificant that it is impossible to add and count them up. Why the happiness he gives to his employees is as generous and great as if it had cost a fortune.

FIRST SPIRIT
So, you no longer believe that fools such as old Fezziwig here should be boiled in their own pudding and buried with a stake of Holly through their heart?

SCROOGE
Ah, well… I… didn’t mean old Fezziwig. No. No. No. He was a good master. A very good master. I liked working for him. He treated me well.

SPIRIT
Something troubles you; I think.

SCROOGE
I was just thinking about my own Clerk Bob Cratchit and I would have liked to have said something to him just now. That’s all.

_The FIDDLER begins another tune and the couples line up ready to dance._

DICK
Now I’m sorry, Belle, but if Scrooge gets to spend a lifetime with you, then I think, I should at least get one dance. Is that too much to ask?

BELLE
Ebenezer?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Oh, go on, put the poor man out of his misery. But only one dance, mind you, then she’s all mine Dick.
DICK and BELLE join the other dancers. YOUNG SCROOGE gets grabbed by one of the FEZZIWIG daughters and joins in the dancing.

FIRST SPIRIT
Come, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE
Oh, must we go? Can we not stay a little while longer?

FIRST SPIRIT
We cannot.

SCROOGE
But why not?

FIRST SPIRIT
There is still much to see, and my time grows short. Come, hurry.

SCROOGE reluctantly leaves with the FIRST SPIRIT.

End Scene
SCENE vii: SCROOGE & MARLEY’s

JACOB MARLEY sits at the desk. YOUNG SCROOGE stands to one side. FEZZIWIG is reading the document before him. After some time, FEZZIWIG puts down the document. He is quite defeated.

JACOB
Are you quite satisfied, Mr. Fezziwig?

FEZZIWIG
You offered me a great deal more than this amount five years ago Mr. Marley.

JACOB
That was five years ago, and your fortunes have changed. Two shillings on the pound is more than fair. You won’t get a better offer than that.

YOUNG SCROOGE
And if you wait much longer, Mr. Fezziwig, your holdings may end up being entirely worthless.

JACOB
I offer you this amount only because of our long association and the business we have done in the past. The hard truth is you have little choice in the matter.

FEZZIWIG
So, it would appear.

FEZZIWIG signs the paper.

JACOB
You’ve made the right decision. You have until the end of the week to vacate the premises.

YOUNG SCROOGE
You are free to take whatever personal items you like, but remember, anything in the company name now belongs to us.

JACOB
Cheer up old man. You’re not completely without means.
FEZZIWIG exits silent and defeated.

JACOB
Ah ha Ebenezer, what a bargain, eh! I would gladly have paid twice – three times – the amount. You never accept the first offer. It is always far below what the buyer is willing to pay. Poor fool. With business sense like that, is it any wonder he drove his company into the ground.

YOUNG SCROOGE is silent.

JACOB
Come on, what’s the matter? Feeling sorry for Fezziwig, are we?

YOUNG SCROOGE
I’m just worried about what will become of the old man, that’s all.

JACOB
He’s only in this situation because of his own doing. How many times have I told you Ebenezer, business is business and if you let your emotions and personal feelings interfere it clouds your judgement?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Yes, of course, you are right: business is business.

JACOB
And the only thing that matters in business is making a profit!

YOUNG SCROOGE
And making the biggest profit you can, right Jacob.

JACOB
Right you are. Come on, let’s celebrate. Let’s toast our success.

BELLE enters.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Ah, yes of course. I will but um…
JACOB
But you have some domestic matters to take care of first, it seems. Of course. You do that. I’ll leave you two alone then, shall I? Belle.

BELLE
Mr. Marley.

JACOB exits.

YOUNG SCROOGE
What has brought you here at this time of day?

BELLE
I spoke with our friend, Dick Wilkens, and he told me that you and your partner Jacob Marley are going to buy Old Fezziwig’s.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Yes, we have in fact. The deal is inked. You just missed the old man.

BELLE
You never told me.

YOUNG SCROOGE
I don’t discuss my other business dealings with you, why should this be any different?

BELLE
Dick also told me that you were cutting everyone’s wages by half.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Yes, well that can’t be helped. Why do you think Fezziwig had to sell? He was careless with his money – paying his staff far more than his competitors and extending credit when he shouldn’t. We’ll get the company back on its feet, sell it, and make a good profit.

BELLE
Ebenezer.

YOUNG SCROOGE
It’s business Belle.
BELLE
And what am I to you then? A bad investment.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Don’t be silly.

BELLE
I’m not being silly. Another idol has replaced me in your life and if it can cheer and comfort you in the future, as I would have tried to do, then I have no just cause to grieve.

YOUNG SCROOGE
What are you talking about? What idol has displaced you?

BELLE
A golden one.

YOUNG SCROOGE
There is nothing in this world as harsh as poverty. How can you condemn with such contempt the pursuit of wealth?

BELLE
You fear the world too much.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Because, there is much to fear.

BELLE
You were not like this when we first met. I have seen your more noble aspirations disappear one by one, until all you care about is profit and gain.

YOUNG SCROOGE
I am not changed towards you, am I?

BELLE
You are. Do you not see it?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Everything I have done has been for us.
BELLE
Then why have we not married? You are certainly wealthier now than you were five years ago.

YOUNG SCROOGE
One bad investment, one deal gone wrong, can ruin a man. You think I want to end up like old Fezziwig, I think not.

BELLE
I think, you are changed. When our contract was made you were a different man. I have not changed. When we were of one heart our marriage promised happiness but now that we are of two my heart is filled with misery.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Oh, so I make you miserable, do I?

BELLE
Are you not miserable? You hardly seem happy at the prospect of us spending our lives together and so I have no choice but to release you.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Release me? Have I ever sought release?

BELLE
In words, no. Never.

YOUNG SCROOGE
In what then?

BELLE
In a changed nature. Tell me, if you had never promised to marry would you seek me out and try to win me now?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Of course, I would. You think not?

BELLE
I doubt very much that you would choose a poor and dowerless girl. You who measures everything in financial gain. And if you did choose her and turned your back on your one
guiding principle you would in time come to regret your decision. And so, I release you with a full heart, for the love of him you once were and for what we could have been. May you be happy in the life you have chosen.

BELLE exits

SCROOGE
Go after her you fool! What is wrong with you? Why are you just standing there man – move your feet.

YOUNG SCROOGE considers going after her. He heads towards the door when MARLEY enters from his office carrying two glasses of sherry.

JACOB
Ah, she’s gone then, is she?

YOUNG SCROOGE
Umm, yes.

SCROOGE
Don’t listen to him, go after her. What are you waiting for?

JACOB
Come now Ebenezer let us toast our success. Today is a new beginning. Today you have earned the right to be a full partner. How does that sound?

YOUNG SCROOGE
A full partner!

JACOB hands YOUNG SCROOGE a glass of Sherry.

JACOB
It was promised you and I am a man of my word. You have more than proven yourself, and in honour of the occasion, I am going to the expense of having a new sign made with both our names on it. We will be a force to be reckoned with, I dare say.

YOUNG SCROOGE
Yes Jacob, a force to be reckoned with. A full partner. My word.
JACOB

A full partner. Cheers!

YOUNG SCROOGE

Cheers!

YOUNG SCROOGE and JACOB toast their success.

SCROOGE

Spirit show me no more. Conduct me home. Why do you torture me with these visions? I do not want to think of them. If I cannot change them, why show them to me?

FIRST SPIRIT

So, you may consider the path you have tread. Come, there is more for you to see.

SCROOGE

No more! No more. Please, show me no more.

FIRST SPIRIT

Our time grows short. Hurry.

End Scene
SCENE viii: BELLE’s HOME

BELLE is a much older woman now. Married to her old friend DICK and surrounded by four happy children ranging in age from six to sixteen. SCROOGE and the FIRST SPIRIT watch.

BELLE
Alright, off to bed, all of you.

HUGH
Oh, do we have to mommy?

BELLE
Yes, it’s well past your bedtime.

GEORGE
But we’re not tired.

HUGH
No, we’re not.

GRACE
Can’t we have a story?

BELLE
You’ve already had three.

GEORGE
Just one more – please.

BELLE
More stories tomorrow my dears.

GEORGE & GRACE
Awww.

DICK
Now off to bed all of you. Your mother and I will be up shortly to kiss you goodnight.
But I’m hungry.

Me too.

Hungry? After all the tarts you had for dessert, how can you be hungry?

Can’t we please have another story?

I can tell them a story mother.

Will you my dear?

Oh, yes…you and father rest and I can get the little ones to bed.

Thank you my dear. Now you hear that. Your sister is going to tell you a story.

Yay!

Another story!

What story do you want to hear?

Twas the night before Christmas!

Yes, tell us that story.
TABATHA
But you already heard father tell you that story.

GRACE
We want to hear it again.

GEORGE
Again, and again, and again.

TABATHA
Alright, but I’m not sure I can tell it as well as father does. Come on now.

There is a flurry of kisses and hugs and goodnights as the children run off to bed.

BELLE (Laughing)
Oh my, what a day!

DICK
A wonderful day, my dear. Oh, it feels good to sit down. Do you know I saw an old friend of ours in town this afternoon?

BELLE
Oh, who?

DICK
Guess!

BELLE
Guess? How can I?

DICK
Oh, come on, be a sport.

BELLE
Well give me a clue then.

DICK
I’ll give you one. Humbug.
Mr. Scrooge.

DICK
Ha, ha, ha, Mr. Scrooge it was.

BELLE
And how is Ebenezer?

DICK
Fully engaged with his enterprises it would seem.

BELLE
Focused on some very good business opportunities and timely investments, no doubt.

SCROOGE
And what’s wrong with that?

DICK
We spoke of nothing but business, and I must say he did not seem very happy to see me.

SCROOGE
Why would I be happy to see you – you scoundrel.

DICK
He has a peculiar effect on people these days you know. Crowds part way, like the Red Sea before Moses, when Scrooge walks down the street. But I stood my ground and he had no choice but to acknowledge my presence. “Scrooge, my good man, how are you?” I said!

BELLE
And what was his reply?

DICK
Good day, sir.

BELLE
That was all? Good day, sir. Nothing more.
DICK
Well, who can blame him? His misfortune has been my good fortune. You my dear, have made me rich beyond anything I could have hoped for. He has his money but little else.

BELLE
How very sad.

DICK
Sad?

BELLE
You knew him Dick when he wasn’t so harsh with the world. He changed when his sister became ill and died.

DICK
Sooner or later his true nature would have surfaced, don’t you think?

BELLE
His sister was always able to bring out his good and loving nature.

DICK
If Scrooge ever had a good and loving nature it has long since been buried and is dead to the world.

BELLE
I hope that’s not entirely true.

DICK
You are kind. You see the good in all. I’m so glad you thought me good enough to marry. You certainly made me wait long enough.

BELLE
You should have said something.

DICK
You were engaged. To make my feelings known before you were free to be mine would have been most inappropriate, and I regret nothing because we are together now, my dear, and nothing in this world could make me happier.

BELLE and DICK kiss warmly and lovingly and cuddle by the hearth.
SCROOGE wipes a tear away.

SCROOGE
Spirit remove me from this place. Why do you torture me? Why do you show me these things?

SPIRIT
These are the shadows of things that have been. They are what they are and cannot be changed.

SCROOGE
Please I cannot bear it! Leave me. Show me no more. Haunt me no longer. I do not want these memories. Wash them from my mind and leave me in peace!

The SPIRIT disappears as it had appeared in a blinding flash of light.
SCROOGE finds himself alone in the darkness. Blackout!

End Act One
SCENE i: A LONDON STREET

The stage is dark and in the blackness the WESTMINSTER CHIMES begin.

SFX: WESTMINSTER CHIMES

A dim light falls upon SCROOGE. He is alone in the dark and exhausted from his encounter with the FIRST SPIRIT. He rises to his feet and looks around uncertain of what to expect next. As the hour strikes two a great wind blows and the SECOND SPIRIT the GHOST of CHRISTMAS PRESENT appears surrounded by gifts and food. This giant of a SPIRIT is dressed in one simple green robe bordered with white fur. On his head he wears a holly wreath. His eyes are bright, and his voice is rich and booming. He laughs a great laugh.

SCROOGE

Oh, my word, what sort of Spirit are you?

SECOND SPIRIT

What sort of Spirit am I? Do you not know me?

SCROOGE

I do not. You are unfamiliar to me.

SECOND SPIRIT

Am I? Well then, come closer! Come closer and know me better man!

SCROOGE

Oh Spirit, I am exhausted from my previous encounter and cannot go on. I do not wish to seem ungrateful, but I am tired and in need of sleep.

The SECOND SPIRIT hands SCROOGE a great mug of hot rum punch.

SECOND SPIRIT

Here drink from my cup and you will be restored in more than this and given the strength to continue. We have much to see and little time. Drink up man – drink up!
SCROOGE drinks deeply.

SECOND SPIRIT
I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. You mean to tell me you’ve never shared in the abundance of the season; never given a gift; received a gift; enjoyed a Christmas feast; a plum pudding; a rum punch! Ha, ha, ha. Come now Scrooge, there was a Christmas or two – many years ago – when you were a much younger man and had plans and hopes for a life with Belle when you knew my brothers.

SCROOGE
That may be true, but that was long ago.

SECOND SPIRIT
Well then you know the joy of giving and fun of receiving. It is not dead in you. You can awaken these feelings of generosity and kindness. The choice is yours my friend; live as you have, or change.

SCROOGE
But I am too old to change.

SECOND SPIRIT
Nonsense, come, let me show you the joy of the season. It knows no class boundaries. It knows no age. It is shared by all regardless of race, gender, or wealth. Touch my robe and we shall see how even the poor have much to celebrate on Christmas Day.

End Scene
SCENE ii: BOB CRATCHIT’s HOME

The family is preparing for the Christmas feast. The table is being set by MRS. CRATCHIT. PETER is helping with the meal while ABBY runs about happily.

SCROOGE
Where is this place?

SECOND SPIRIT
This is the home of your clerk Bob Cratchit. It is a modest dwelling, but a happy one.

ABBY dashes about.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Goodness…me…ha, ha, ha, settle down now before you crash into something or make me drop a plate and break it.

ABBY
Where’s daddy, mommy?

PETER
Why isn’t he home yet?

MRS. CRATCHIT
Oh, your father and Tiny Tim are probably up to some mischief knowing those two. They should have been home long before this, and your sister Martha wasn’t nearly this late last Christmas.

PETER
Look, here’s Martha now, mother.

MARTHA enters.

ABBY
Hurrah, here’s Martha!

PETER
There’s such a goose, Martha!
MARTHA

Is there?

ABBY

Yes!

MRS. CRATCHIT

Why bless your heart alive my dear – how late you are!

*MRS. CRATCHIT kisses MARTHA and takes her shawl and bonnet.*

MARTHA

We had a lot of work to finish up last night and there was an awful lot to clear away this morning, mother. I’m sorry, I came as quickly as I could.

MRS. CRATCHIT

Well, never mind, you are here now. Sit down before the fire, my dear, and warm yourself.

ABBY

No, no, no! There’s father coming. Hide, Martha, hide!

MARTHA

Hide?

PETER

Yes, hide.

*MARTHA hides.*

*BOB enters in a grand mood with TINY TIM who carries a small crutch and wears leg braces.*

ABBY

Hello father!

PETER

Happy Christmas Father.
BOB
Yes, Happy Christmas indeed. (To Mrs. Cratchit) How are you my dear?

MRS. CRATCHIT
Very glad you and Tim are finally home.

BOB
Mmmm, it all smells delicious, doesn’t it Tim.

TINY TIM
Yes, father.

BOB
Where is our Martha?

MRS. CRATCHIT
Oh, not coming, I’m afraid.

BOB
What? Not coming! Not coming on Christmas Day. Has something happened?

ABBY
Yes, something has.

BOB
Well, what is it? What’s happened?

PETER
Uh…Martha has…been…summoned to Buckingham Palace to meet the Queen.

BOB (Relieved and joining in the fun)
Oh. Has she indeed?

ABBY
Oh yes, it’s quite true father. They sent a carriage to pick her up.

TINY TIM
Lucky Martha.
BOB
And she’s to have Christmas dinner with the Queen, no doubt.

PETER
I wonder what they’ll have.

BOB
Whatever they have it won’t be near as good as the feast your mother has prepared for us, I am sure of that.

TINY TIM
That’s true.

ABBY
Yummy!

BOB
Dear me, poor Martha stuck having Christmas dinner with the Queen – how horrible – that will never do.

TINY TIM
What are you going to do father?

BOB
The only thing I can do. I’ll just have to invite the Queen here for Christmas dinner so Martha can be with her family.

ABBY
Are you really going to invite the Queen?

MRS. CRATCHIT
Oh Bob, don’t be silly.

BOB
I’m not being silly. I’m sure we have room for one more at the table my dear. Now everyone practice your bows and curtseys. We’ll want to show her majesty, that although we may not live in a palace, we do know proper etiquette.

BOB bows and all the children practice their bows and curtseys.
BOB
Come on now Peter, that’s it.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Oh, Abby, what a little lady you are; and Tim, you are very dashing sir. Isn’t he Bob?

BOB
Oh yes, and I dare say, once the Queen gets a taste of your mother’s fine cooking, I have no doubt, she’ll be a regular guest here for Sunday dinners.

TINY TIM
The Queen!

BOB
None other.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Oh, Bob.

*MARTHA comes out of her hiding place.*

MARTHA
Oh father, you are a silly one!

BOB
What’s this? Martha here! Good heavens!

MARTHA
I was here all along and you knew it.

BOB
Heavens no. I’m quite astonished to find you here, but very pleased. Merry Christmas, Martha. I have missed you so.

MARTHA
Merry Christmas, Father.

*Martha and Bob hug.*
MRS. CRATCHIT
And how was Church?

BOB
Grand my dear. The new deacon is a fine fellow.

MRS. CRATCHIT
And how did little Tim behave?

BOB
Better than gold, isn’t that right Tim.

TINY TIM
Yes, father.

BOB
You’re a thoughtful child, you know that. Do you know what he told me, my dears, on the way home?

MARTHA
No, what?

BOB
That he hoped people saw him in church because he was a cripple and that on Christmas Day it would be good for people to remember who made lame beggars walk and blind men see.

PETER
Maybe one day Tim will be a deacon.

BOB
Of course, why not!

MRS. CRATCHIT
Our little Tim, a deacon, wouldn’t that be a blessing.

MARTHA
It certainly would.
BOB
And you are growing stronger my boy. Stronger and more hearty every day, aren’t you? Isn’t he my dears?

_The family agrees although they know the truth as BOB gives TIM a hug._

BOB
Well let’s eat shall we. Everything looks and smells so good. My goodness there never was such a goose as this.

_The family digs into the feast as the scene shifts to SCROOGE and the SPIRIT_

SCROOGE
Seems like a rather small goose for a family this size.

SECOND SPIRIT
And what of it? There are many in this world with far less than that. God rewards those who work hard, and he punishes those who don’t.

SCROOGE
And so, God means to punish this child and this family. I can’t believe that. I can’t believe that’s true. What is to become of Tiny Tim?

SECOND SPIRIT
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.

SCROOGE
Die? No. No, no, no – the Ghost of Christmas past had no power to change things but surely you have that power. You are here in the present. Surely you, or some other emissary from your realm, can provide for the boy.

SECOND SPIRIT
The power to change the world lies not in my realm but in the realm of the living. If these shadows remain unaltered by the future, none other of my race will find him here.

SCROOGE
You can’t let him die, Spirt, if it can be helped.
SECOND SPIRIT
Why not let him die and thereby decrease the surplus population?

SCROOGE
You use my own words against me.

SECOND SPIRIT
And why not? Who are you, to decide what men shall live and what men shall die? In the sight of Heaven, you may be less fit to live than millions of others just like this poor man’s child.

_The family laughs and has just finished dessert._

BOB
Oh, my dear, you have outdone yourself this year. What a feast and your pudding, by far the best you’ve ever made – wouldn’t you all agree.

MARTHA
Oh, yes mother, a very fine pudding.

TINY TIM
Best ever!

ABBY
Deeeelicious!

_BOB raises his glass as do all the other CRATCHITS_

BOB
Ah, the whole family here for Christmas. I could not be happier and so, a Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!

ALL
God bless us!

TINY TIM
God bless us, everyone!

_They all drink the toast._
BOB
You are quite right Tim. God bless us everyone. And so, with that in mind, and in the spirit of the season, I say we toast Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Mr. Scrooge!

BOB
Yes, my dear.

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.

BOB
My dear, the children. Christmas Day.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Only on Christmas Day would one ever drink to the health of such a cruel, stingy, and unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert. Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow.

BOB
My dear, Christmas – a kind, forgiving, charitable time.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Oh, very well, I’ll drink to his health for your sake and the Day’s but 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. Mr. Scrooge.

All
Mr. Scrooge.

TINY TIM
God bless Mr. Scrooge.

_They all drink but are sour and quiet for a long moment after the toast._

BOB
Well…what say we have a song, then eh? How does that sound?
MARTHA
What a good idea.

PETER
What shall we sing?

ABBY
Jingle Bells!

TINY TIM
Yes, Jingle Bells!

BOB
Alright, Jingle Bells it is. *(BOB begins and the family joins in.)*

DASHING THROUGH THE SNOW
IN A ONE HORSE OPEN SLEIGH
O’ER THE FIELDS WE GO
LAUGHING ALL THE WAY
BELLS ON BOB TAILS RING
MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT
WHAT FUN IT IS TO LAUGH AND SING
A SLEIGHING SONG TONIGHT

OH, JINGLE BELLS, JINGLE BELLS
JINGLE ALL THE WAY…

SECOND SPIRIT
Come let us visit your nephew and see how he celebrates the season.

*End Scene*
SCENE iii: FRED’s HOME

Fred’s home is decorated for Christmas. Fred, his wife EMMA, her sister ROSE, and their friend TOPPER are playing a game of Yes and No.

Is it living or dead?

EMMA

Ah, yes or no questions only, remember.

FRED

Sorry. Is it living?

EMMA

Yes.

FRED

Is it an animal?

TOPPER

Oh yes.

FRED

Is it a cow? Moooo!

TOPPER

No.

FRED

Does it live in the country?

EMMA

No.

FRED

In the city then?

ROSE

Yes.

FRED
Does it growl?

Oh, yes.

Is it a dog?

Woof woof!

No.

A cat?

No.

A rat?

Uh, no.

Is it a horse?

No.

A jackass!

Yes and no.
Heehaw!

Oh, I know what it is, Fred! I know it! It’s your Uncle Scrooge!

Yes!

* A roar of laughter from the group. *

Ha, ha, ha! When I saw him yesterday, he said that Christmas was a “Humbug!” can you believe it?

A humbug?

And he believes it too, poor fellow. Ha, ha, ha!

More shame for him, Fred.

What a thing to say.

He’s a comical old fellow that’s the truth and not as pleasant as he could be.

That’s certainly true.

But his offences carry their own punishment, and I have nothing to say against him.

He is very rich.
ROSE
One of the richest men in London.

FRED
What of it? His wealth is of no use to him.

TOPPER
I’d make good use of it.

FRED
I’m sure you would Topper, but what good does he do with it? He certainly doesn’t make himself comfortable with it.

ROSE
I have no patience with him.

FRED
Oh, I have. I am sorry for him. I couldn’t be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his harsh and uncaring attitude? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us and not come to dinner and so he loses a very fine dinner and a chance to celebrate the season.

TOPPER
Very true, I’m sure it will be a very fine dinner.

EMMA
Thank you.

FRED
And yet, there was a time when he wasn’t such an unpleasant old fool.

EMMA
What are you talking about Fred?

FRED
He often wrote to my mother and I came across some letters he’d sent to her when he was a young lad in school and during his courtship to someone named Belle.

SCROOGE
You had no right to read those Fred.
Courtship!

Scrooge was engaged.

I don’t believe it!

Believe it.

Quit right, why shouldn’t you believe it?

Does that change your opinion of him? To know that he once was in love; that he once had hopes of becoming a husband and father.

Not any husband I would like.

They laugh.

What happened?

I made a mistake.

Oh, I don’t know. The engagement was broken off for some reason, I take it.

I guess he lost interest…you know interest…Scrooge is a money lender…um.

Oh, I get it now – laughter from the crowd.

Oh yes, I get it now.
FRED
Well, whatever happened, that’s the Scrooge my mother loved. He was a very different man than the man he has become.

EMMA
How sad.

FRED
Isn’t it? And so, I plan to give him the same chance to have Christmas dinner with us 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 and of all people if he finds me going there, in good cheer, year after year, and saying Uncle Scrooge, how are you? Merry Christmas come have dinner with us. And if the only outcome is that he takes it into his conscience to leave his poor clerk, Bob Cratchit, fifty pounds, then that’s something.

EMMA
Here, here Fred.

TOPPER
Well said.

FRED
And so, in considering the merriment he has given us, I think we should drink to his health. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to the old man, whatever he is!

TOPPER
Heehaw!

FRED
He wouldn’t take it from me, but may he have it, nonetheless. Uncle Scrooge!

ALL
Uncle Scrooge!

They toast Scrooge as the lights fade on the scene. The SECOND SPIRIT and SCROOGE are left standing surrounded by darkness.

SECOND SPIRIT
You treat your nephew with such contempt and yet he drinks to your health. He wishes you well. He invites you to dinner.
SCROOGE
My nephew is young and when you are young you don’t always understand how cruel the world can be.

SECOND SPIRIT
Just because the world can be cruel is no reason for you to be.

SCROOGE
Spirit, I did not want to say anything before, but I have noticed that you are aged.

SECOND SPIRIT
I am. My life upon this globe is very brief. It ends tonight.

SCROOGE
Oh Spirit, do not leave me. I do not want to be left alone. Is there nothing more you can show me?

SECOND SPIRIT
There is one thing more you must see.

The SPIRIT reveals two children – a BOY and a GIRL – frightful, hideous, and miserable. They kneel at the Spirit’s feet, and cling to his robe.

SCROOGE
Oh, my good Lord, are these your children?

SECOND SPIRIT
They are Mans. This boy is Ignorance, and this girl is Greed. Beware them both. But most of all, beware this boy. For, if he is allowed to grow unchallenged, he will bring the world nothing but doom. Those who know him well live in fear and act on fear with violence and hate. If you encounter this boy speak against him and all that would use him. Silence him with love and compassion and knowledge, for this is the long road towards understanding and peace.

SFX: CLOCK BEGINS TO CHIME THE WESTMINSTER AND THEN RING THE HOUR OF THREE.

SCROOGE
Have they no refuge or resource?
SECOND SPIRIT
Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses? Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses? Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

*The SECOND SPIRIT and the BOY and GIRL vanish. As the clock strikes three the THIRD SPIRIT the GHOST of CHRISTMAS FUTURE moves forward out of the darkness. He is a cloaked phantom wearing a hood.*

SCROOGE
Am I in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come?

*The THIRD SPIRIT nods its head.*

SCROOGE
And you are here to show me the shadows of things that have not happened yet, but – will – happen in the future?

*THE THIRD SPIRIT nods its head.*

SCROOGE
Oh, Ghost of the Future, I fear you more than any spectre I have seen tonight. I do not want to continue, but I know your purpose is to do me good, and I know that you have lessons to teach, and so I am prepared to bear you company.

*The THIRD SPIRIT points its bony hand straight before them.*

SCROOGE
Yes, yes, lead on! Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit.

*End Scene*
SCENE iv: LONDON BUSINESS DISTRICT

Two BUSINESSMEN are standing together. SCROOGE and the THIRD SPIRIT stand nearby.

FIRST MAN
I had heard that Mr. Bentley and Mr. Scrooge were joining forces.

SECOND MAN
Yes, I’d heard the very same thing.

FIRST MAN
Two peas in a pod, eh. Those two.

SECOND MAN
Yes, of course that’s all changed now that he’s dead. Dead as a doornail.

FIRST MAN
When did he die?

SECOND MAN
Last night, I believe – and quite unexpected.

FIRST MAN
What was the matter with him?

SECOND MAN
God knows.

FIRST MAN
What has he done with his money?

SECOND MAN
I haven’t heard.

FIRST MAN
Left it to his company, I suppose.

SECOND MAN
He hasn’t left any of it to me. That’s all I know.
They laugh.

FIRST MAN
It will probably be a very cheap funeral, I would imagine.

SECOND MAN
On my life, I don’t know of anybody who will go – do you?

FIRST MAN
Oh, I’ll go but only if a lunch is provided.

SECOND MAN
I don’t think he ever bought anyone lunch when he was alive. Why would he go to the expense of buying us a lunch now that he’s dead?

FIRST MAN
Well, if there is no lunch, I can’t think of any other reason to go – can you?

SECOND MAN
None.

FIRST MAN
Nor I.

Another laugh.

The THIRD SPIRIT and SCROOGE move away.

SCROOGE
Spirit, those men – I know them. How far into the future is this? Is it Mr. Bentley who has died…am I to learn from his life and his nature…so that I do not make the same mistake? Why do you not speak to me?

The THIRD SPIRIT points and moves off. SCROOGE follows.

SCROOGE
Yes, yes, there is more to see…I understand…lead on and I will follow.

End Scene
SCENE v: OLD JOE’s

*OLD JOE’s is on the darker side of town and is a place where illegal goods are bought and sold – and no questions asked. OLD JOE sits counting out his money and making notations in his book.*

SCROOGE
Where is this place? Am I to end up alone and destitute? Am I to lose my fortune? Who is this man and what does he have to do with me?

*MR. NEWBURY, the undertaker enters.*

OLD JOE
Ah Mr. Newbury – evening sir – what brings you out on a cold night like this?

MR. NEWBURY
Business.

OLD JOE
Music to me ears sir. Music to me ears. We are always open for business eh…ha, ha. No matter what the season – no matter what the reason – there’s always money to be made. Just like your profession sir – I’m a 365 day a year enterprise. Death don’t take no holiday so why should we, eh? Now, what have you got for me?

MR. NEWBURY
I have only a few items, but they are of good quality.

*MR. NEWBURY is bumped forward by the entrance of MRS. DILBER.*

MRS. DILBER
Oh dear, I’m sorry sir.

MR. NEWBURY
That’s quite all right mam.

SCROOGE
That’s Mrs. Dilber. What on earth is she doing here?

MRS. DILBER
Oh, ha, ha, ha. Mr. Newbury…I didn’t see you there.
MR. NEWBURY
Ha, ha, ha, Mrs. Dilber.

MRS DILBER
Merry Christmas to you.

MR. NEWBURY
Yes, Merry Christmas. Fancy us meeting up here.

MRS. DILBER
If I’d known you was coming here – we could have split a cab ride I spose – eh?

MR. NEWBURY
Yes. Although, I do not make this a common practice Mrs. Dilber, but with certain clients one needs to cover expenses. I would prefer that we keep this a secret between us.

MRS. DILBER
Of course, Mr. Newbury, I understand completely. I don’t begrudge you for what you do. Every person has a right to take care of themselves they have. And who’s the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose.

MR. NEWBURY
They are of no use to him now.

OLD JOE
Alright then, alright, come on, time’s money. You two can prattle away on your own time – not mine. Now who wants to go first?

MR. NEWBURY
Ladies first.

MRS. DILBER
Oh no Mr. Newbury, you were here first and you should go first.

MR. NEWBURY
Very well.

MR. NEWBURY takes a small bundle and unwraps it. It contains a seal or two, a pencil case, a pair of cuff links, and a brooch.
OLD JOE
Let’s see – high quality eh…that’s what you said.

MR. NEWBURY
Yes. That’s a very fine pencil case.

OLD JOE
There’s a lot of these around – not worth as much as they used to be.

MR. NEWBURY
And those cufflinks are pure gold.

OLD JOE
Plated I think, and if you think different you can take them back. Okay – well that’s not really worth much of anything. I could make a bob or two on this…lets see. That it then?

MR. NEWBURY
That’s it.

OLD JOE
I’ll give ya 12 bob for the lot and I wouldn’t give another sixpence, even if I was to be boiled in oil for not doing it. That’s a fair price Mr. Newbury.

MR. NEWBURY
Is it, indeed?

OLD JOE
That it is. Now, lets see what you’ve got dearie.

MRS. DILBER tosses her bundle on the desk.

MRS. DILBER
Here you go Joe.

OLD JOE
What’s this then? Bed curtains?

MRS. DILBER
Aye! Bed-curtains. And very fine – very nice ones too.
OLD JOE
These are nice…feel that…very good quality. Very nice. So, how did you come by these then…did you take ‘em down, rings and all, with him lying right there?

MRS. DILBER
Yes, I did. And why not? Why shouldn’t I take ‘em – if I can – I’m just looking out for me-self – why should I care about him – he never gave a care about me – why shouldn’t I take his bed curtains? He owed me.

OLD JOE
Alright dearie, alright dearie, you don’t need to defend your actions to me. What’s this then? His blankets?

MRS. DILBER
Of course, they’re his blankets. Whose else would they be? He isn’t likely to catch cold without ‘em.

OLD JOE
He didn’t die of anything catching, did he?

MRS. DILBER
If he had I certainly wouldn’t have come near him.

OLD JOE
Oh now, look at this – this is very fine work – very high quality.

OLD JOE takes a shirt and examines it.

MRS. DILBER
It’s the best shirt he had and a fine one too. You can look through that till your eyes ache but you won’t find a hole in it, nor a threadbare place. They’d have wasted it, if it hadn’t been for me.

OLD JOE
What do you mean wasted it?

MRS. DILBER
They was going to bury him in it. But I took it off him. If calico ain’t good enough for being buried in, it ain’t good enough for anything.
OLD JOE
Much easier to get things off the corpse before it’s buried – if you know what I mean Mrs. Dilber.

They laugh.

MRS. DILBER
Right you are, and if he hadn’t frightened everyone away from him when he was alive, he’d of had somebody there to look after him when he was struck with death, instead of lying there all alone gasping out his last breath.

MR. NEWBURY
Truer words have never been spoken. It was a judgement upon him.

OLD JOE
Alright here you go dearie – this is more than fair. I always give too much to the ladies. It’s bound to be my downfall.

MRS. DILBER
Thank you, Joe.

SCROOGE
Oh, Spirit, is there no man, woman, or child to grieve for this poor man? To offer a kind word. To feel some emotion at his passing. If there is any person in this town who feels anything because of this man’s death please show that person to me, Spirit, I beg of you!

The SPIRIT moves off and SCROOGE follows.

End Scene
SCENE vi: THOMAS & CAROLINE’s HOME

THOMAS enters the home. HE is happy but feels guilty about the happiness he feels.

CAROLINE
You were gone so long that I was worried.

THOMAS
Yes, well I’m back now my dear and I have some very good news.

SCROOGE
Who are these people? I don’t know them. Are they any relation to the man that died?

The THIRD SPIRIT points to the couple.

CAROLINE
Tell me what has happened?

THOMAS
What has happened is – we are not to be ruined. He is dead.

CAROLINE
Dead!

The two laugh and hug.

THOMAS
Yes.

CAROLINE
Oh, Thomas this is – as you say – although I regret to repeat it – good news.

THOMAS
Very good news.

CAROLINE
For us, God forgive me.
THOMAS
That cleaning woman I told you about last night that turned me away when I tried to see him and get a week’s delay was telling the truth. He was ill – and not only ill – but dying.

CAROLINE
To whom will our debt be transferred?

THOMAS
I don’t know. But this gives us some time, and when our debt is transferred, we shall be ready with the money.

CAROLINE
And even if we’re not it’s very unlikely that we’ll be dealing with so merciless and cruel a creditor in his successor as he was.

THOMAS
Yes, we may sleep well tonight with light hearts. He is gone and his shadow will no longer haunt our days.

SCROOGE
You show me this…this is not what I asked to see…can you not show me some tenderness connected with death…some grief for a soul that walked this earth.

*The THIRD SPIRIT moves off and SCROOGE follows.*

*End Scene*
SCENE vii:  BOB CRATCHIT’s HOME

*PETER is reading from the bible. ABBY sits listening. MARTHA and MRS. CRATCHET are working on their knitting.*

**SCROOGE**

Oh Spirit no. No. No. No. Please spirit…no…not Tiny Tim.

*The THIRD SPIRIT points to the family.*

**PETER**

The Lord is my Shepard; I shall not want.
He maketh me lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

*PETER stops reading. After a moment MARTHA takes the bible from her brother and continues. MRS. CRATCHIT puts down her knitting.*

**MARTHA**

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

**PETER joins in with MARTHA**

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

**MRS. CRATCHIT joins in with PETER & MARTHA**

Thou prepares a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**MRS. CRATCHIT**

Very nice Peter. What a fine voice you have. Very nice Martha. You two must read to your father when he gets home.

**PETER & MARTHA**

Yes, mother.

**MRS. CRATCHIT**

He is very late. It is well past his time.
MARTHA
He seems to walk so much slower these last few evenings, mother.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Yes, but I have known him to walk very fast with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder, very fast indeed.

PETER
And so, have I. Often.

ABBY
Me too.

MRS. CRATCHIT
But he was very light to carry, and your father loved him so, that it was no trouble; no trouble, at all. Ah, at last there is your father at the door.

*BOB enters*

BOB
Hello my dears.

MARTHA
Hello father.

ABBY
Father.

MRS. CRATCHIT
I am so glad you are home.

BOB
As am I. What have you been up to my dear?

MRS. CRATCHIT
Peter has been reading to us and Martha, Abby and I have been doing our knitting, haven’t we?

ABBY
Yes, we have.
MRS. CRATCHIT

What took you so long Robert?

BOB

I was making some final arrangements my dear. I wish you could have come. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. How peaceful. But you’ll see it often. We all will. We shall go there on Sundays won’t we my dears.

MARTHA

Yes, father.

ABBY

Yes.

PETER

Every Sunday, father.

BOB

Yes, every Sunday. My little child. My little, little child.

MARTHA

Don’t be sad father.

ABBY

We love you.

BOB

Of that, I am certain of, my dears.

The children surround BOB and give him kisses and hugs.

BOB

Do you know I ran into Mr. Scrooge’s nephew on my way to the Church and seeing that I was not myself he asked what had happened to upset me so? I am heartily sorry for your loss, Mr. Cratchit he said, and heartily sorry for your good wife. If I can be of service to you in any way Pray come, see me.”

MRS. CRATCHIT

I’m sure he’s a good soul.
BOB
You would be sure of it, my dear, if you saw and spoke to him. He is as kind-hearted and loving as his Uncle Scrooge is cold-hearted and bitter. I shouldn’t be at all surprised – mark what I say – if he got Peter a better situation.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Hear that, Peter?

MARTHA
And then Peter will be keeping company with someone and setting up for himself.

PETER
And what’s wrong with that?

BOB
Not a thing, you’re a handsome fellow and good man, Peter.

MRS. CRATCHIT
And one of these days, if you’re lucky, you’ll meet someone nice that you’ll want to spend your life with.

BOB
Very true my dear, though there’s plenty of time for that. And I do hope that in the years to come, however and whenever we part from one another, for whatever reason, I am quite certain that none of us will forget our little Tiny Tim – shall we – and this first parting among us.

ALL
Never, father!

BOB
And I know, my dears, that when we remember how patient and how kind he was; even though he was only a little child; we shall not quarrel easily among ourselves, and forget our little Tim in doing it.

ALL
No, never, father!

BOB
I am very happy. I am so very…very…happy!
The family gathers around BOB and huddle together in their grief.

SCROOGE
I do not belong here…I should not be here…I should let this poor family grieve in peace. Oh Spirit, I sense our parting is at hand, although I do not know why – can you not tell me who is the man that has dyed.

The THIRD SPIRIT turns, and SCROOGE follows.

End Scene
SCENE viii: CHURCHYARD

A large, unmarked tombstone looms out of the darkness. Fog drifts through the graveyard.

**SFX WHISPERING SPIRITS CALLING EBENEZER SCROOGE**

**SCROOGE**

Spirit, 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?

*The THIRD SPIRIT points to the grave.*

**SCROOGE**

Yes, men’s actions foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered, they must lead. But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Is this not true? Answer me, who lies buried here – what fate awaits me?

*The name EBENEZER SCROOGE appears across the gravestone.*

**SCROOGE**

Oh, no spirit! It is as I feared, no! Please have mercy…I am not the man I was. Why show me this if I am past all hope? Assure me that I may yet change the shadows you have shown me by an altered life. No, no, no please…I beg of you…forgive me spirit…forgive me…and I will honour Christmas in my heart. I will not shut out the lessons of this night. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh, tell me I may sponge away the writing on this stone!

*End Scene*
SCENE ix: SCROOGE’s BED CHAMBER

SCROOGE appears in the bed or beside the bed thrashing about caught in the bed curtains until he realizes that he is in his own bed chamber.

SCROOGE
No, Spirit…please…forgive me I am a changed man…a changed man…oh…where am I. Oh, my word…ha, ha, ha, this is my own bed. Oh, thank the Lord. Thank the Lord, this is my own bed, and I am alive! I am alive! Oh, here it is Christmas morning, and I am alive.

SCROOGE falls to his knees on the floor in thanks.

SCROOGE
Ha, ha, ha, I am not dead…Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Spirits of Christmas be praised…I say it on my knees Jacob – on my knees. I am alive. Ha, ha, ha.

SCROOGE gives a great sigh of relief and falls back on the floor as MRS. DILBER comes in with a breakfast tray. She stops when she sees SCROOGE lying on the floor laughing.

MRS. DILBER
Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE
Mrs. Dilber!

MRS. DILBER
Are you quite alright Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE jumps to his feet.

SCROOGE
Oh, yes Mrs. Dilber. Ha, ha, ha! I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. Ha, ha, ha. I am as giddy as a drunken man. Ha, ha, ha. How wonderful to see you. And look at that – you have not torn down my bed curtains – rings and all. They are here! I am here! You are here! The shadows of things that would have been – will not be. I will make certain of that!

MRS. DILBER
Will you sir.
SCROOGE
Oh yes! I say, there’s the door by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered!

MRS. DILBER
The ghost of Jacob Marley.

SCROOGE
And here’s where the Ghost of Christmas Past – long past – no, my past – appeared. Ha, ha, ha.

MRS. DILBER
Did it, sir?

SCROOGE
And here’s where I saw the wandering Spirits! Ha, ha, ha!

SCROOGE looks at MRS. DILBER. She screams and runs around the room with SCROOGE chasing her trying to catch her and calm her down.

MRS. DILBER
Ahhhhhh!

SCROOGE
Oh, I’m sorry – I’m sorry Mrs. Dilber. Calm yourself. I do not mean to scare you.

MRS. DILBER
I don’t know what you’re talking about Mr. Scrooge!

SCROOGE
I’m talking about Christmas Mrs. Dilber. The joy of the season. I’m sorry if I frightened you.

MRS. DILBER
Here Mr. Scrooge, are you quite alright? You are acting a bit peculiar and – forgive me for saying so – but maybe you should have your head examined.

SCROOGE
Maybe I should. What a good idea. I wonder what they’d find in it? Ha, ha, ha!
MRS. DILBER

I’ll fetch the doctor, shall I?

SCROOGE

No, no, no. No need, I’m quite sane. Now run along home to your family. What are you doing here with me on Christmas morning? What horrible old penny-pincher would make you work on Christmas Day?

MRS. DILBER

Why, you would Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE

I would – that’s true I would – ha, ha, ha – but I won’t any longer. Here’s a pound note for you to take and spend on you and your family this Christmas!

MRS. DILBER

A whole pound! Are you sure? That’s a lot of money that is.

SCROOGE

Oh, I’m very sure.

MRS. DILBER

Thank you Mr. Scrooge. That is most kind and generous of you. Thank you.

SCROOGE

Merry Christmas, Mrs. Dilber.

MRS. DILBER

Merry Christmas, Mr. Scrooge.

MRS. DILBER exits

SCROOGE throws open his window and looks out at the city.

SCROOGE

A Merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world. Ha, ha, ha. Hallo there! Hello! You there, girl – boy! Hello!

GIRL & BOY

Hello!
SCROOGE
Do you know the butchers in the next street but one, at the corner?

GIRL
We do.

SCROOGE
Ah, an intelligent girl! Do you know whether or not they’ve sold the prize turkey that was hanging there? Not the little prize turkey – the big one?

BOY
The one as big as me?

SCROOGE
What a delightful child. Yes, that one!

GIRL
It’s hanging there still.

SCROOGE
Is it? Good. Go and buy it.

GIRL
Go buy it?

BOY
Are you off your nut?

SCROOGE
Ha, ha, ha. No, no, no. I am not off my nut – good Heavens – I am in earnest – I assure you. Go and buy it and tell them to bring it here to Mr. Scrooge, so that I can tell them 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!

GIRL
Yes sir!

BOY
Right away gov!
SCROOGE

Ha, ha, ha. Look at them go.

_The CHILDREN run off._

SCROOGE

I’ll send it to Bob Cratchit! He won’t know who sent it. Ha, ha, ha. It’s twice the size of Tiny Tim. Oh, I don’t deserve to be so happy! But I am. I can’t help it. Ha, ha, ha. What to do? What to do? A whole day – a whole day to spend celebrating the season! Ha, ha, ha!

_End Scene_
**SCENE x: A LONDON STREET**

_It is Christmas Day, and the street is filled with people. There is a group singing Christmas Carols. There is lots of laughter and conversation. SCROOGE enters the street greeting all those he sees._

**SCROOGE**

Good morning to you. Merry Christmas. A Merry Christmas to you!

_SCROOGE see’s MR. GRANGER and approaches him._

**SCROOGE**

My dear Mr. Granger, how are you?

**MR. GRANGER**

Mr. Scrooge?

**SCROOGE**

I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. A Merry Christmas to you sir!

**MR. GRANGER**

You are Mr. Scrooge, aren’t you?

**SCROOGE**

Yes, that is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon, I would like to make a donation of a thousand pounds to your fund.

**MR. GRANGER**

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, and a great many more donations are to come, I assure you. Will you do me that favour?

**MR. GRANGER**

My dear sir, I don’t know what to say to such generosity.

**SCROOGE**

Don’t say anything. And do include my partner Jacob Marley’s name on the donation if you please. This was all his doing you see.
MR. BENTLEY enters  

MR. BENTLEY  
Ah, Mr. Scrooge I was just on my way to your office.

SCROOGE  
Well, you may go to my office, but you won’t find me there.

MR. BENTLEY  
No of course not Mr. Scrooge. You are here.

SCROOGE  
I most certainly am. Mr. Bentley I would like you to meet Mr. Granger.

MR. BENTLEY  
How do you do Mr. Granger.

SCROOGE  
Mr. Granger and I happen to belong to a group of businessmen that are raising a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink and means of warmth at this festive time of year and I would be most pleased if you would make a donation.

MR. BENTLEY  
Uh, Mr. Scrooge I don’t make merry myself at Christmas…

SCROOGE  
…and I can’t afford to make idle people merry. Yes, yes, I’ve heard it all – said it all – and it’s all a bunch of codswallop. Now why don’t you take that hundred pounds you made yesterday and donate it.

MR. BENTLEY  
Mr. Scrooge have you lost your mind?

SCROOGE  
You’re not the first one to accuse me of losing my mind today and you probably won’t be the last but that is no reason for you not to donate. You can afford it.
MR. BENTLEY
If I was to give away my money to anyone who asked for it – it would not be long before I found myself in the poor house. Good day, sir.

*MR. BENTLEY turns to leave.*

SCROOGE
Merry Christmas.

MR. BENTLEY
Bah!

SCROOGE
And a happy New Year!

MR. BENTLEY
Humbug!

SCROOGE
Humbug indeed. Ha, ha, ha. He’ ll take some work, that one. Now Mr. Granger I have some ideas about creating a Merchant Association to raise funds for the poor throughout the year. You must come and see me in the new year and we can discuss this further.

MR. GRANGER
Yes, Mr. Scrooge. Thank you. Merry Christmas.

MR. SCROOGE
Merry Christmas, my good man! Thank you very much. I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times, bless you.

*The CRATCHITS appear on the street and stand listening to the carolers. SCROOGE walks over and stands behind BOB and his family.*

CAROLERS
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
GOOD TIDINGS WE BRING TO YOU AND YOUR KIN
GOOD TIDINGS FOR CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR
BOB
Ah, ah very nice – very beautiful. Merry Christmas. What a wonderful song.

*BOB and his family turn and find themselves face to face with SCROOGE.*

SCROOGE
And what have we here, Mr. Cratchit?

BOB
Oh dear, Mr. Scrooge. I’m so sorry. I did not see you there.

SCROOGE
So, this is how you spend your day, is it? Out in the streets singing silly songs when you should be at the counting house working.

BOB
But Mr. Scrooge it’s Christmas day, and you said I could spend it with my family.

SCROOGE
Did I indeed. I can’t imagine I’d ever agree to such nonsense. I suppose you and your family will be feasting on plum pudding and turkey, no doubt.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Yes, we will Mr. Scrooge. A kind and generous soul – out of the blue – without even so much as revealing his name – sent us a turkey for our Christmas dinner.

SCROOGE
Did he indeed.

MRS. CRATCHIT
Not everyone in this world is as cold hearted as you, Mr. Scrooge. Bob has been a loyal and dedicated employee all these years and he deserves better.

BOB
My dear, please.

*FRED and EMMA enter the street and observe the scene.*
SCROOGE
Very well, considering what your wife has said I’m not going to stand for this sort of thing one minute longer Mr. Cratchit and therefore… I have no choice but to triple your salary.

BOB
I’m sorry, did you say triple my salary?

SCROOGE (Laughs)
Yes.

BOB
My salary.

SCROOGE
Your salary.

BOB
Are you quite yourself Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE
I have never been more myself. A merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I’ll triple your salary, and assist your struggling family here, and we will discuss your affairs tomorrow, over a cup of Christmas cider, my friend. How does that sound?

BOB
Very good, Mr. Scrooge. I am overwhelmed. Thank you. Bless you.

FRED and EMMA cross over to SCROOGE

FRED
Good heavens, Uncle Scrooge. It is you. Emma come meet my Uncle Scrooge. Pray what brings you out on Christmas day and from all appearances in such good cheer.

SCROOGE
Ah, my dear nephew Fred and his wonderful wife Emma I am overjoyed to see you. You must forgive me. I have been very much the fool and I was hoping that I might – that is if the invitation still stands – take you up on your very kind offer of Christmas dinner. If you will still have me.
FRED
Of course, Uncle. I am so glad that you will be spending Christmas with us. What changed your mind?

SCROOGE
The Ghost of Jacob Marley changed my mind. The spirit of Christmas past, present, and future changed my mind. Your words changed my mind, Fred. You’re right. Christmas is a kind, forgiving, and charitable time. A time when men and women open their hearts and think of their fellow man. A time for mercy, charity, and benevolence. And so, in the memory of your dear mother, I will honour Christmas and keep it all the year – and I say along with you, God bless it!

*FRED moves forward and speaks his final lines to the audience.*

FRED
And do you know my Uncle Scrooge was better than his word.

EMMA
He did it all and much more.

BOB
And to Tiny Tim, who I’m happy to say, did not die, he was a second father.

MRS. DILBER
Scrooge became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city of London knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world.

FRED
And from that time on 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 all.

MRS. CRATCHI
And so, as Tiny Tim observed.

ALL
God bless us everyone!

*END PLAY*