

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

by Charles Dickens

(As done by the Woodcrest Highschoolers
Christmas, 1982)

Narrator:

Old Marley was as dead as a door nail. This must be distinctly understood or nothing wonderful can become of the story I am going to relate. The register of his burial was signed. Scrooge signed it.

Scrooge and Marley were partners for I don't know how many years. But Scrooge never painted out Old Marley's name. There it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door: Scrooge and Marley.

Oh, but he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge, a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, covetous old sinner. Hard and sharp as flint, and solitary as an oyster. The cold within him froze his features, stiffened his gait, and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice.

Once upon a time, - of all the good days in the year, on Christmas Eve, - old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. It was cold, bleak, biting weather, foggy withal.

Scrooge had a very small fire, but the clerk's fire was so very much smaller that it looked like one coal. Scrooge kept the coal-box in his own room; and so surely as the clerk came in with the shovel, the master predicted that it would be necessary for them to part. Wherefore the clerk tried to warm himself at the candle; in which effort, not being a man of a strong imagination, he failed.

(curtains open)

Scene I - Scrooge's office, stage left. Scrooge is working at his desk. Front right is the "tank" of Scrooge's clerk, Bob Cratchitt, who is busily writing. Occasionally he holds his cold hands over the flame of his candle, first looking towards Scrooge to make sure he is not being observed.

Enter Scrooge's nephew

Nephew: A merry Christmas, Uncle, God save you.

Scrooge: Bah, Humbug.

Nephew: Christmas a humbug, Uncle? You don't mean to say that, I am sure.

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

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

Scrooge: Bah, Humbug.

Nephew: Don't be cross, Uncle.

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

Nephew: (pleadingly) Uncle, Uncle.

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

Nephew: But you don't keep it.

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

Nephew: There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round, as a good time, a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time. The only time I know when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut up hearts freely and to think of people below them as if they were really fellow men and not another race of strange creatures. Therefore, Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good, and I say God bless it.

(Clerk applauds) and says: Well spoken, Mr. Fred.

Scrooge: Turning to clerk) Let me hear another sound from you, Bob Crachitt, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation.

(Clerk nervously pokes the fire)

And as for you, Nephew, you are quite a powerful speaker. I wonder you don't go into Parliament.

Nephew: Don't be angry, Uncle. Come, dine with us tomorrow.

Scrooge: Certainly not.

Nephew: But why? Why?

Scrooge: Why did you get married?

Nephew: Because I fell in love.

Scrooge: (Scornfully) Because you fell in love. Good Afternoon.

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

Scrooge: Good Afternoon.

Nephew: I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you. Why cannot we be friends.

Scrooge: Good afternoon.

Nephew: I am sorry, with all my heart to find you so resolute. We have never had a quarrel to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last. (starts walking out)
So, a Merry Christmas Uncle.

Scrooge: Good afternoon.

Nephew: (near the door) And a Happy New Year.

Scrooge: Good afternoon.....Humbug.

(Nephew stops at outer door to greet the clerk)

Nephew: And a Merry Christmas to you Bob, and to your wife, all the small assorted Crachitts, and Tiny Tim.

Bob Crachitt: Thank you. And a Merry Christmas to you, Mr. Fred.

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

(Clerk rises to let Nephew out, and lets in two pleasant looking gentlemen with books and papers in their hands. They take off their hats and bow to Scrooge.)

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1st. Gent: Scrooge and Marleys I believe. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge or Mr. Marley?

Scrooge: Marley has been dead these seven years. Died seven years ago, this very night.

1st. Gent: (presenting his credentials) We have no doubt his liberality is well respresented by his surviving partner.

(Scroogs says "Hm" at the word "Liberality")

2nd Gent: At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessaries; and many more in want of common comforts, sir.

Scrooge: Are there no prisons?

1st Gent: Plenty of prisons.

Scrooge: And the poorhouses? Are they still in operation?

2nd Gent: They are. Still, I wish I could say they were not.

Scrooge: The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigor I prèsume?

1st Gent: Both very busy, sir.

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

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

Scrooge: Nothing.

1st Gent: You wish to be anonymous?

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

1st Gent: Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

Scrooge: If they would rather die they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides, it's not my business. It's enough for a man to understand his own business and not to interfere with other peoples. Mine occupyes me constantly.

Good afternoon, Gentlemen.

(Gentlemen withdraw. Scrooge resumes his labors. After a little pause, two carol singers come down the street, and enter the office door singing, "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen.")

Scrooge: (taking up his ruler threateningly) Merry gentlemen, bah. They left a minute ago, and you had better go the same way, Quick.

(Singers run off, frightened. Scrooge resumes his work. Then puts it down, gets his hat, and walks over to Bob.)

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

Bob: (standing) If quite convenient, Sir.

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

Bob: Tis only once a year, Sir.

Scrooge: A poor excuse to rob a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December.

Bob: I'm sure I'm very sorry Sir, for causing such an inconvenience - it's the family more than me Sir, They put their hearts into Christmas as it were Sir.

Scrooge: Yes, and they put their hands into my pockets as it were, Sir. But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier the next morning.

Bob: It's more than generous of you, Sir.

Scrooge: Yes I know it is, you don't have to tell me.

(Scrooge walks out. Now Bob gets really alive. He whistles "God Rest You Merry", and dashes around putting things away, then leaves hastily)

(Curtain closes over this half of stage)

Scene II. (Scrooge on street on way to his house)

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Debtor: Mr. Scrooge, Sir -- Samuel Wilkens -- Sir

Scrooge: Oh yes, you owe some 20 odd pounds I believe. Well, if you want to pay it come to my place of business. I don't conduct my affairs in the teeth of inclement weather.

Debtor: Ah - I cant pay Sir -- not - not unless you give me more time.

Scrooge: Did I ask you for more time to lend you the money?

Debtor: Oh, no sir.

Scrooge: Then why do you ask me for more time back?

Debtor: Ah can't take me wife to a debtor's prison, Sir.

Scrooge: Then leave her behind. Why should she go to a debtors prison anyway -- she didn't borrow the money, you did. Huh, What has your wife got to do with it? For that matter, what have I got to do with it. Good afternoon.

Debtor: But Mr. Scrooge, it's Christmas.

Scrooge: Christmas has even less to do with it than your wife has or I have. Good afternoon.

(Scrooge kicks beggar off his doorstep)

Scrooge: Be off with you.

(Scrooge opens door. Lights dim and Marley's face appears in the knocker. When Scrooge starts to open door he sees it.)

Scrooge: Jacob Marley?

(Lights dim, and face disappears. Scrooge after a moment's hesitation opens door, looks behind it and says: Humbug. Curtain opens to show his bedroom. He lights candle and searches the room.

Scrooge: Humbug, It's all humbug. (He sits on bed, after taking off hat and coat, and putting on robe and night cap.) Bell on bed starts to move by itself and to ring.

(Chain and wind noises are heard. The door opens and ghost enters.)

Scrooge: What do you want with me?

Marley: Much.

Scrooge: Who are you?

Marley: Ask me who I was.

Scrooge: (voice rising) Who were you then?

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

Scrooge: Can you -- can you sit down?

Marley: I can.

Scrooge: Do it then. (Ghost sits)

Marley: You don't believe in me.

Scrooge: I don't

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

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your own senses.

Scrooge: I don't know.

Marley: Why do you doubt your senses?

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

Marley: I do.

Scrooge: You are not looking at it.

Marley: But I see it, notwithstanding.

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

(Marley's ghost raises a frightful cry and shakes his chain. Scrooge falls to his knees on the floor, nearly in a swoon)

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

Marley: Man of the wordly mind. Do you believe in me or not?

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

Marley: It is required to every Man, that the spirit within should walk abroad among his fellowmen, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world -- oh, woe is me. -- and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness. (It groans and raises its chains and wrings its hands)

Scrooge: You are fettered. Tell me why?

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

(Scrooge rises, and looks around him for chain)

Scrooge: Jacob, old Jacob Marley, tell me more. But speak comfort to me, Jacob.

Marley: I have none to give. It comes from other regions, Ebenezer Scrooge, and is conveyed by other ministers to other kinds of

men. Nor can I tell you what I would; a very little more is all permitted to me. I can not rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. My spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me.

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

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

Scrooge: You travel fast?

Marley: On the wings of the wind.

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

Marley: (Sets up another cry and clanks chain hideously) Oh, captive, bound, and double ironed. Not to know that ages of incessant labor by immortal creatures must pass into eternity before its good is all developed. Not to know that any christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere will find its mortal like too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunities misused. Yet, such was I. Oh, such was I.

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

Marley: Business. Mankind was my business; the common welfare was my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business. (Holds up chain and drops it heavily on the floor.) At this time of the rolling year, I suffer most. Why did I walk through crowds of people with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode? Were there no poor homes to which its light would have conducted me? (Scrooge quakes) Hear me. My time is nearly gone.

Scrooge: I will, but don't be hard upon me. Don't be flowerey, Jacob, pray.

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

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

Marley: You will be visited by three spirits.

Scrooge: Is that the chance and hope you mentioned, Jacob?

Marley: It is.

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

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

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

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

(Ghost leads Scrooge to window where spirits are wailing in the night)

Marley: You see the phantoms wandering hither & thither in restless haste and moaning as they go? Everyone wears chains, like me, and many you knew in life. None are free.

Scrooge: Why do they lament?

Marley: You see the one old ghost who cries piteously at being unable to assist that wretched woman with an infant below on a door step? The misery with them all is that they seek to interfere, for good, in human matters and have lost the power forever.

(As Scrooge looks out window Marley exits out door --- Scrooge slams down the window and leaps into bed.)

Scene III.

Scrooge is in bed. Clock strikes. Ding dong, Ding dong, Ding dong, Ding dong. Lights flash up as spirit comes, approaching slowly.

Scrooge: Are you the spirit whose coming was foretold to me?

Spirit: I am.

Scrooge: Who and what are you?

Spirit: I am the ghost of Christmas Past.

Scrooge: Long past?

Spirit: No, Your past.

Scrooge: But tell me what the business is that makes you visit me.

Spirit: Your welfare.

Scrooge: (mutters to himself) Hm. Methinks a night of undisturbed sleep would help me to my welfare.

Spirit: (sternly) Your reclamation then. Take heed. Rise and walk with me. (Takes Scrooge gently by the arm)

(Curtains close behind them. Scrooge follows spirit along front of stage.)

Spirit: Now see this place and tell me if you still remember what it is.

Scrooge: Good heavens. I was bred in this place. I was a boy here.

Spirit: What is it that excites you? What makes your lips tremble. And what is that upon your cheek? Just childish things, or is it more?

might have withered, your little sister. But she had a large heart.

Scrooge: So she had. You're right. I'll not dispute it. No indeed.

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

Scrooge: One child.

Spirit: True -- Your nephew.

Scrooge: She died giving him life.

Spirit: As your mother died giving you life, for which your father never forgave you, as if you were to blame.

(Scrooge and Spirit turn from stage and walk out to left, returning through audience. During this time, the scene is changed;

Spirit: Turn and see yourself in love, Ebenezer.

(Ebenezer and Belle sit on bench)

Ebenezer: This is only an engagement ring, one day it will be a gold one.

Belle: Oh, it's a beautiful ring, but I mustn't accept it.

Ebenezer: Why not?

Belle: It's just that you're so young, you may have a change of heart some day.

Ebenezer: If ever I have a change of heart towards you, dearest Belle, it will be because my heart has ceased to beat.

Belle: And it makes no difference that I am poor?

Ebenezer: I love you because you are poor.

Belle: Will you always be like that?

Ebenezer: As long as I live. --- For ever and ever.

Belle: Then I accept your ring. (Ebenezer places ring on her finger. They walk out together.)

(Scene changes to Fezziwig's warehouse.)

Spirit: You know this house and who once dwelt here?

Scrooge: Know it. Was I apprenticed here?

Spirit: Then let us go closer. (Curtain opens. Mr. Fezziwig sits on his great stool behind his desk. Ebenezer and Dick sit at separate desks writing, glancing off and on a big clock at the back of the wall.)

Scrooge: Just lead on, O Spirit. That pimple on my cheek is nothing.

Spirit: You recollect the way?

Scrooge: (with fervor) Remember it? I could walk it blindfolded.

Spirit: Strange to have forgotten it for so many years. Let us go on. (Curtain opens on stage left, where the scene has been changed to a schoolroom.)

Spirit: You see the school house there, and in it the boy who stayed alone there one Christmas. Alone and yet alive in all his stories.

Scrooge: (enthusiastically) And do I see him. It was Robinson Crusoe I had read that time. Oh yes, the parrot, his parrot, and then came Friday. They were all with me - good old Ali Baba too that Christmas, when I was left all by myself with father being cross, not wanting me to see him over all that year. (becoming serious) Poor boy, poor boy. (wipes his eyes.) I wish --- but it's too late.

Spirit: What is the matter:

Scrooge: Nothing. Nothing. There were some boys singing a christmas carol at my door last night. I should like to have given them something, that's all.

Spirit: Let us see what happened next.

(In schoolroom, the boy Scrooge walks anxiously up and down. Door opens, and in runs his little sister.)

Fan: (running towards him, taking his hands.) Dear, dear brother. I have come to bring you home, dear brother. To bring you home, home, home.

Boy: Home?

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

Boy: You are quite a woman, little Fan.

Fan: (claps her hands and laughs) But dear brother, we must be quick, and waste no time. The coachman is waiting; he said I should hurry. Yes, hurry, he said.

Boy: Hurrah, hurry, yes, hurry, hurry. (He takes Fan's hand and they run out together.)
(Curtain closes on schoolroom.)

Spirit: Always a delicate little creature she was, whom a breath

And bless my heart, there's Jeff. That's nice of you to come -- and George, you made it. Wonderful. (He greets all and all respond.) (To the Fiddler) Hilli ho, John. Are you all tuned? Yo ho there lads, you better choose partners.

(The fiddler starts off with the Durham reel. All dance except Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig)

Fezziwig: Well done, well done, my lads and lasses; now pass the roast, the drinks, the cake; make merry lads, and woe if either drop or crumb is left. (Food is passed around and there is general chatter and merry talking) (Scrooge, Dick and Sally come more to front of stage, conversing.)

Dick: Oh, John is at his best tonight. You will not find another fiddler like him; his fiddle does all he asks of it.

Sally: Yes, what would a dance be without John. He's got it. How that bow eats up the strings, just wonderful.

Ebenezer: But best of all is Fezziwig. You nowhere find a match for him.

Dick: You said it, Ebenezer. Generous, and great-minded, and a heart of gold.

Sally: Oh yes, I could not think of Christmas without Fezziwig. I simply can't. Up to the sixties he's the youngest of us all.

Ebenezer: Indeed. Just wait a minute and he'll call to John to strike "Sir Roger de Coverly" Then you shall see him with our Mother Fezziwig. But we had better join the others.

Fezziwig: Hey, John and Margaret. Have you had food and drink the plenty? Pick up your courage and your fiddles to meet Sir Roger de Coverly in all honor. Hilli ho, Mother, now comes our turn. Take a deep breath and plunge right in. It's only once a year, so don't be sparing. Hey George, where is your partner? - ah yes, there we go. Now ready lads. Chirrup girls.

(All get ready. Dance is lead by the Fezziwigs. After this dance, Mr. and Mrs. F. take their places at the door, shaking hands with each one as he goes out.

Fezziwig: A Merry Christmas Sally. You did well. And you Jeff, don't catch a cold, all hot and panting. (Daughters want to shake hands with guests too) No no, girls, you go up in the living room, and Mother and myself will be right after...Oh John, I thank you, thank you, Margaret, I wish I had you in here all year round. A Merry Christmas to you both...Now Jim, one day you'll lead the dance. You were just wonderful. Keep all this vigor through the year. Dick, Ebenezer, Merry Christmas to you lads. Next year will be the last we have together; then you start a business of your own. Goodnight, my lads.

(Curtain)

Spirit and Scrooge stand in front of curtain.

Scrooge: Why, it's old Fezziwig. Bless my heart; it's himself, Fezziwig alive again. And at the table that is me, and Dick, Dick Wittaker to be sure. Bless me, yes. There he is. He was very fond of me, was Dick. Poor Dick. Dear, dear.

(The clock points to seven. Mr. Fezziwig puts down his pen, looks at the clock, laughs loud and then shouts to the boys.)

Mr. Fezziwig: Yo, ho, there, Ebenezer Scrooge, Dick Wittaker. Yo ho, my boys. No more work tonight - Christmas Eve, Dick, Christmas, Ebenezer. Let's have the shutters up. (He claps hands joyfully, and both boys jump up eagerly, rush out the door, return and take hold of chairs and tables and put them all to the back of the room)

Fezziwig: Hi ho, that's the way, Ebenezer. Clear them away, my lads Let's have lots of room. Hi ho, Dick; Chirrup, Ebenezer.

(One of the tables is moved to left for the fiddler. Enter John the Fiddler and his wife Margaret.)

Fezziwig: Hi ho, lads, there is John the Fiddler, right on time. Step in John, and you've brought your wife along, that's splendid. Step in, Margaret. A Merry Christmas - tune the fiddle John - be welcome.

(Enter Mrs. Fezziwig, followed by 3 daughters, and George and Jeff) also Sally the cook and Belle and Jim.

Fezziwig: A Merry Christmas, Mother. A Merry Christmas, my dear girls.

(continued)

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

Scrooge: Small?

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

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

Spirit: What is the matter?

AND HAPPILY UNTIL HE COMES TO THE LAST WORDS "COST A FORTUNE" WHERE HE SLOWS + SPEAKS VERY SABLLY.)

Scrooge: Nothing particular.

Spirit: Something, I think.

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

Spirit: My time grows short. There's more you have to see. Be quick.

Spirit: Belle, the same Belle you promised to love for ever and ever - She is not changed by the harshness of the world but you are.

(Curtain opens showing Scrooge as a young man and his fiance, Belle.)

Belle: I matter little to you, Ebenezer, very little. Another idol has displaced me, and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.

Ebenezer: What idol has displaced you.

Belle: A golden one.

Ebenezer: But that's just the even-handed dealing of the world. There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty.

Belle: You fear the world too much. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master passion, Gain, engrosses you. Have I not?

Ebenezer: What then? If I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed toward you. (She nods) Am I?

Belle: Our engagement is an old one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so. You are changed. When it was made you were another man.

Ebenezer: (Impatiently) I was a boy.

Belle: Your own feeling tells you that you are not what you were. I am. What promised happiness when we were one in heart is

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Bob Cratchit: I'm awfully sorry ma'am but Mr. Scrooge will only be coming in two hours when the office is closed. He will not have anything interfere with his business.

Maid: But after being his partner for 18 years?

Bob: Mr. Scrooge is a hard man.

Maid: I'll try and get Mr. Marley to hold out till then, I'm sure. Much obliged - Good night to ye - and a merry Christmas if it ain't out of keeping with the situation.

Bob: The same to you.

(Ghost exits. Scrooge runs blindly out of side door crying)

Scrooge: No more, no more! I don't wish to see it. Show me no more. O spare me!

(Spirit and Scrooge exit) Curtin.

Scene IV

(Curtin of stage right opens. Scrooge is in bed crying "No more, No more! Clock strikes one. In the chair by fireplace sits the Spirit of Christmas Present.)

Spirit II: Wake up, Ebenezer Scrooge! Get up, and know me better, man. (Scrooge sits up timidly) I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. Look upon me. You have never seen the like of me before!

Scrooge: Never, and I wish the pleasure had been indefinitely postponed.

Spirit: So, is your geart still unmoved towards us then?

Scrooge: I am too old, I am beyond hope; go and redeem some younger, more promising creature. Leave me to keep Christmas in my own way.

Spirit: Mortal, we spirits of Christmas do not live one day of our years - we live the whole 365. So is it true of the child born in Bethlehem. He does not live in men's hearts only one day of the year but in all the days of the year. You have chosen not to seek him in your heart.- therefore you shall come with me and seek him in the hearts of men of goodwill. Come, touch my robe.

(Miners Scene opens - Miners seated around campfire singing "Hark the Herald Angels sing")

Scrooge: What place is this?

Spirit: A place where miners live, who labor in the bowels of the earth, but they know me.

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fraught with misery now that we are two. How often and how keenly I have thought of this I will not say. It is enough that I have thought of it, and can release you.

Ebenezer: Have I ever sought release, Belle?

Belle: In words? No never.

Ebenezer: In what, then?

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

Ebenezer: (Hesitatingly, with struggle) You think not.

Belle: I would gladly think otherwise if I could—Heaven knows! But if you were free today, can I believe that you would choose a dowerless girl - you who weigh everything by Gain; or choosing her, do I not know that your repentance and regret would surely follow? I do, and I release you.* With a full heart. for the love of him you once were. (Ebenezer moves toward her and says:
* (Takes off ring) But Belle.....

Belle: (turning away from him) You may, the memory of what is past half makes me hope you will have pain in this...A very very brief time, and you will dismiss the recollection of it gladly, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke....May you, be happy in the life that you have chosen.

Ebenezer: Thankyou, I shall be! ^{picks up ring and} (he walks off in a puff) (Belle calls "goodbye" after him then begins to weep)

Scrooge: (to spirit in front of the stage) Spirit! Show me no more! conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?

Spirit: These are things of the past; they are what they are - do not blame me! I will show you one shadow more.

(maid runs down street, stops at sign and pulls door bell, - Crachit comes out)

Maid: Pardon me. If you can find the grace to - I've just come from Mr. Marley's with a message for Mr. Scrooge.

Bob Crachit: Can I give it to him?

Maid: I'm to say that Mr. Marley ain't expected to live through the night and that if Mr. Scrooge wants to take his leave of him he should nip along smartly or there won't be no Mr. Marley to take leave of, as we know the use of the word. He's br^{ath}ing very queer - when he does breath at all.

(Bob Crachit goes into office while maid waits)

(Bob Crachit comes out)

(Spirit and Scrooge observe miners for a while)
Curtain closes.

(Spirit leads Scrooge through audience sprinkling torch)

(Spirit and Scrooge re-enter on to front of stage as Nephew's house scene opens. There are several guests present. Loud Laughter)

Nephew: He said that Christmas was humbug, and he believed it too.

Wife: I told you so.

Nephew: Well a merry Christmas and a happy New Year to the poor old man.

He wouldn't let me wish it to him personally but here it is, nevertheless. Uncle Scrooge- (he drinks toast- general protest)

Wife: I don't know that our drinking to him will do him much good.

Plump sister: Nor do I, I hate him.

Nephew: Oh I forbid it, I'm sorry for him, I couldn't feel angry with him if I tried, who suffers worse from his humours - himself, always. Look at the way he's disowned us without a shilling and won't even come to dinner with us. And whats the consequence, he's only cheated himself out of a highly indigestable dinner!

Topper: It was a wonderful dinner.

Plump Sister: Yes, it was a wonderful dinner.

Nephew: Well, I'm very glad you think so, because I personally havn't very much faith in their newly wed housekeepers, Have you Topper?

Topper: Ah...Ah...As a bachelor I'm a wretched outcast with no right to express an opinion on such a tender and delicate subject, have I? (He turns to plump sister)
Dear, distant, unmovable, Miss Flora...

Plump Sister: Now, you really are quite incorrigible Mr. Topper, quite beyond hope.

(Dance begins- they form couples and dance as curtains close)

(The two walk out onto street. Ghost sprinkles incense over the people who are passing by on the street. Ex: Bob Cratchit, Nephew, Maid, debtor, beggar, etc.)

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

SpiritII: There is. The Spirit of Christmas.

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

Spirit II: To any kindly disposed. To a poor one most.

Scrooge: Why to a poor one most?

Spirit II: Because he needs it most.

(They have come back to stage left, which has been changed to Bob Crachitt's house. They pause at door)

Spirit II: For instance, your poor clerk, Bob Crachitt.

Curtain opens.

(Inside the house, Mrs. Crachitt lays the table and is helped by Belinda. Peter stands at the fireplace poking his fork into the potatoes. The two small Crachitts, Paul and Gillian, come tearing in)

Paul: Mother, mother, outside the bakers we have smelled the goose.

Gillian: Oh, so delicious Mother. I also smelled the onions. It must be nearly done.

Mrs. Crachitt: Wonderful!

Paul: (turning to Peter) Yes, Peter, you should have tasted that smell. (pause) Are you doing the potatoes quite alone? O Peter, you are big. Look, Gillian, how the water bubbles. Will they be done in time, Peter?

Peter: Yes, Paul, I poked them with a fork just now, A few more minutes and we'll have them out.

Mrs. Crachitt: What has ever got your precious father then? And your brother, Tiny Tim? And Martha wasn't as late last Christmas by half an hour.

(Enter Martha)

Martha: Here I am, Mother!

Paul and Gillian: Here's Martha, Mother! Hurrah, Martha, there's such a goose!

Mrs. Crachitt: Why bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are.

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

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

Paul and Gillian: No, no, there's father coming, Hide, Martha, hide. (Martha hides quickly. Bob comes in with Tiny Tim on his shoulder. He is galloping, playing the horse for Tim)

(All greet them, and take their coats off)

Bob: Why, where's our Martha?

Mrs. Crachitt: Not coming. (looks down to hide smile)

Bob: Not coming. Not coming upon Christmas Day! That's not possible.

She'd work all year through Sundays if it had to be, for celebrating Christmas.

Mrs. Cratchit: But.....(Martha runs out)

Martha: Here I am, Father. I couldn't fool you any longer. It would be cruel. (Great excitement and greeting)

Gillian: Come, Tiny Tim, come and wash.

Tiny Tim: You can hear the pudding singing in the copper. (They take Tim out)

Mrs. Cratchit: (to Bob) And how did Tiny Tim behave in Church?

Bob: As good as gold and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant for them to remember, upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see. He is growing strong and hearty, isn't he my dear?

Mrs. Cratchit shakes head and sighs)
(during this speech, Paul and Gillian and Peter, escorted Tim to his chair by the fire)

(Bob goes to table and starts to mix the punch)

Peter: Now you watch Father, how he can make punch. We will go to fetch the goose. Paul and Gillian, we'll all go along to get her.

Paul and Gillian: Hurrah, we'll get the goose, we'll get the goose.

Paul: Peter, will you carry her all by yourself?

Peter: Yes, Paul, and if she gets too heavy you and Gillian will help me. (They run off)

Mrs. Cratchit: Belinda, has Peter mashed the potatoes?

Belinda: Yes Mother, I'll get them right on the table. And the apple sauce is ready too.

Mrs. Cratchit: Oh wonderful. Good girl

(Enter Peter, Paul, Gillian with goose)

Tiny Tim: Hurrah, the goose.

Paul: Can you smell it, Tim?

Tiny Tim: Ah, yes.

(All settle down for the meal. Mrs. C. carries the gravy to the table. Bob starts to cut the goose)

Gillian, Paul and Tim: Ah look, how juicy.

(Mrs. C. gets up and goes out)

Belinda: Now Mother will go to bring the Christmas pudding. (She and Martha clear the plates off)

Peter: Perhaps it's not done enough yet.

Paul: Oh. Perhaps somebody climbed over the wall in the back yard and ran off with it.

Gillian: And we did not notice it, while we were eating the goose.

(Martha, coming back from off stage where she took dishes)

It's coming.

(Mrs. C. enters with burning pudding)

All: Ah, Oh, the wonderful pudding.

Bob: A wonderful pudding, my dear. That is no doubt the biggest success of mother's since our marriage. And if I say this I know what I say.

Mrs. Crachitt: Dear me yes, that's a weight off my mind. I must confess I did have my doubts about the quantity of flour.

Martha: I knew it would come out all right, Mother.

Belinda: Should I pass it around, Mother?

Mrs. Crachit: Yes, Belinda.

(As they are eating pudding)

Bob: And now, I have some news I want to tell you - that I have a situation for which will bring in full five and sixpence weekly.
Master Peter

Paul and Gillian: Peter, Peter, you will be a real businessman.

Peter: (proudly) Yes, I know.

Bob: And now let's also wish good luck and long life to the founder of this feast, Mr. Scrooge.

Mrs. Crachit: Robert, Mr. Scrooge? The founder of this feast, indeed. I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it.

Bob: My dear, the children, Christmas Day.

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

Bob: My dear -

Mrs. Crachit: Well, all right. I'll drink his health for your sake and because of Christmas Day. Long life to him and Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. He'll be very happy and very merry no doubt.

Bob: And most important of all, let's wish a merry Christmas to each other. A merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us.

All: A merry Christmas to us all. God bless us.

Tiny Tim: God bless us, every one.

Curtain.

Scrooge: (infront of curtain): Spirit, tell me if Tiny Tim will live.

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: No, no, oh no, kind Spirit. Say he will be spared.

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

(Scrooge is shocked)

Spirit II: Man, if man you be in heart, not adamant, forbear that wicked cant of surplus population. Will you decide what men shall live and what men shall die? It may be that in the sight of heaven you are more worthless and less fit to live than millions like this poor man's child. O God! To hear the insect on the leaf pronouncing on the too much life among his hungry brothers in the dust.

(Poor house scene opens)

NARRATOR : And though I have the gift of prophesy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have faith that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.

(Belle, aged, nurses sick lying here and there in poor house.)

Belle: (to old woman, bringing bowl of soup) Do you feel more rested now my dear?

Old Woman: I do, bless your dear gentle heart.

Scrooge: (steps forward), Belle, Belle...

Old Woman: (to Belle) You know me darling, I never t'ought dere were anyone left in the whole wide worldt...cut me trote, rip me liver, condemn me life, dis is da happiest Christmas I ever had.

Scrooge: (steps forward again) Belle, Belle,...Spirit are these people real or are they shadows.

Spirit: They are real, we are the shadows. Did you not cut yourself off from your fellow beings when you lost your love for that gentle creature.

Curtain closes.

(Scrooge and Spirit out on street)

Scrooge: Where are you taking me now?

Spirit: My time with you Ebenezer is almost done - Will you profit by what I have shown you of the good in most men's hearts?

Scrooge: I...I...don't know. How can I promise?

Spirit: If it's too hard a lesson for you to learn, then learn this lesson. (Spirit throws back robe, revealing two impoverished children, a boy and a girl)

Scrooge: (taken aback) Spirit, are these yours?

Spirit: They are man's. They cling to me for protection from their fetters. This boy is ignorance and this girl is want. Be ware of them both, but most of all beware of this boy.

Scrooge: But have they no refuge, no resource?

Spirit: Are there no prisons?
Are there no poor houses?

Are there no prisons?
Are there no poor houses?

Are there no prisons?
Are there no poor houses?

Are there no prisons?
Are there no poor houses?

(Scrooge clutches his head and runs madly up and down the street. Lights dim. exit Spirit II.) Scrooge meets Spirit III in center of stage who stands with upraised hand. Scrooge staggers back and falls on his knees, crying in fear.)

Scrooge: Am I in the presence of the ghost of Christmas yet to come?

(Spirit makes no answer, but points onward with its hand.)

Scrooge: You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us. Is that so, Spirit?

(Spirit inclines its head. Scrooge trembles.)

Scrooge: Ghost of the Future! I fear you more than any specter I have seen. ...but even in my fear I must tell you-I am too old...I cannot change, it is not that I am impenitent, it is just that I... wouldn't it be better if I just went home to bed? No?
Lead me then.

(Spirit points straight before it. Cratchit scene opens)

(Mother and children seated around the fire. All the children are very quiet. Peter is reading from a book.)

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

(Mrs. Cratchit and daughters are sewing and knitting. Mrs. Cratchit puts her work on the table and puts her hand to her face.)

Mrs. Cratchit: The color hurts my eyes. The color? Ah, poor Tiny Tim! (After a pause) They're better now again. It makes them weak by candle-light; and I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father when he comes home, for the world. It must be near his time.

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

(They are quiet again for a while.)

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

Peter: And so have I. Often.

Belinda: And so have I.

Mrs. Cratchit: But he was very light to carry. (Resumes her work) And his father loved him so, that it was no trouble -- no trouble. *And there is your father at the door.*

(Mrs. Cratchit hurries to meet him. The tea is ready for him on the hob. They all try to help him.)

Bob: I'm a little late my dear - please forgive me.

Mrs. Cratchit: You must be cold and tired, sit near the fire.

Bob: Oh no, I'm very content my dear - very content. I went to see the place where he rests, it's sheltered by green trees my dear, and very quiet and still. It was strange, but as I stood there I felt his hand slip in mine as if he was standing beside me comforting me. I felt very peaceful my dear - he was telling me, you see, in his own little way, that he is happy, truly happy now, and that we must cease to grieve for him and try to be happy too. ... Oh Tim... my Tiny Tim...

Mrs. Cratchit: Oh Robert...

Curtain closes.

(Spirit points to women on street)

(Two women enter, 1st. from stage right, and 2nd from left.) They carry bundles.

Maid: Eeeeeah! Lookee here, what we got!

Laundress: Have you been and stole it from his house?

(Looking closely)

Maid: I cleaned his house for the last time.

Laundress: You mean he's dead?

Maid: (nods).

Laundress: What you doing with it all?

Maid: Oh, I'm bringing it over to old Joe's.

Laundress: I have some of his laundry here -

Maid: Come along, we'll see wot Joe will give us for it!

Laundress: Yes, I'll come.

Maid: His death has improved his generosity greatly, hasn't it?

(They laugh as they arrive at the pawnshop)

Pawnshop- (dealer in rags and bones)

Maid: (calls) Joe! Joe!

(old man comes out on to street.)

Laundress: Hello Joe.

Joe: Well, Well.

Maid: Let the laundress go first.

Laundress: No, No dearie, you had the idea first.
After you, I'm sure.

(Laughter as caretaker enters)

Maid: If the charlady, the laundress and the caretaker aren't all here at the same time!

(More laughter)

Curtain opens.

Joe: Come into the parlor, come into the parlor.
Well met! They couldn't come to a better place- Let me shut the door to the shop...Ah it creaks like there wasn't a rustier piece of metal than its own hinges, I and I'm sure there are no old bones here like mine. We're suitable to our calling.

(Laughter)

Maid: Who goes first? Don't stand there staring like you was afraid woman. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man I suppose?

Laundress: No indeed. (laughs)

Maid: If he wanted to keep them after he was dead why wasn't he amiable in his lifetime. If he had been, he'd of had somebody with him when he was struggling there, still a-gasping out his last all alone by himself.

Laundress: Never a truer word spoken. It's a judgement on him.

Maid: I wish it had been a heavier one. And it would have been if I could have laid my hands on everything else. We knew pretty well we was helping ourselves before we came here, I believe. It's no sin ---- Open the bundle Joe.

Caretaker: Oh no, I'll go first. Just to show we've all got trust in one another.

Maid: You're very polite, I'm sure.

Caretaker: (reads list, Joe checks off)
Watch, pencil case, sleeve buttons, brooch.

Joe: Yes. 8 shillings, this lot, and I wouldn't give you another six pence. Not I was boiled alive for not doing it. Who's next?

Maid: (to Laundress) You first dear. But I shall have to insist that you all stop and watch mine.

Laundress: (Lists off, Joe checks) Two sheets, two towels, shirt, nightgown, handkerchief. (Joe affirms each entry)

Joe: 17 and 6. I always give too much to my ladies. ^{It's a weakness of mine.} And so I come to ruin myself.

Maid: Now my bundle Joe.

Joe: Come on what's in it?

Maid: Ah, you wait and see. (opens bundle in front of Joe) Bed Curtains!

Joe: Bed curtains?

Maid: Ah.....bed curtains.

Joe: But you don't say you took these down, rings and all, ugh, and him lying there.

Maid: Yes I did and why not?

Joe: You was born to make a fortune ma'm and you certainly will.

Maid: I certainly won't if I can find it in my heart to reach out to such a man as he was, I can promise you that Joe.

Joe: Are these his blankets too?

Maid: Whose else do you think? He's not likely to take cold without

them, I dare say. (laughter)

Joe: He didn't have anything catching, did he?

Maid: Oh, don't you be afraid of that Joe. You see this shirt here? You can look through it till your eyes ache and you'll not find a hole in it. It was the best one he had - They'd have wasted if it hadn't been for me.

Joe: What do you mean - wasted it?

Maid: Why they would have buried him in it of course.

Caretaker: Its poetic justice. He didn't benefit anyone when he was alive but now he benefits us when he's dead. (Laughter)
(Curtains close)

(Spirit points to two gentlemen on street)

1st Businessman: Well he's dead.

2nd Businessman: When did he die?

1st: Last night, I believe.

2nd: What was the matter with him. I thought he'd never die.

1st: So did he, I dare say.

2nd: What's he done with all his money?

1st: Left to his company, where else? He didn't leave it to me, that's all I know.

2nd: Well, its likely to be a cheap funeral, for upon my life, I don't know of anyone to go to it.

1st: I would'nt mind going if there is a lunch provided. But I must be fed or else I'll stay at home. (EXIT - 2 BUSINESSMEN)

Scrooge: I know those men - They are men of business, very wealthy and very important. Who's funeral were they talking about, who is this unfortunate man?

(While Scrooge is talking, the scene is changed to a graveyard)
(curtain opens slowly)

Scrooge: Specter, something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it, but I know not how.

(Spirit and Scrooge have entered into the graveyard. Spirit points down to one grave.)

Scrooge: Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point, answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that WILL be, or are they only shadows of things that MIGHT be.

(Wind noises. Spirit continues to point down to the grave. Scrooge

21.
creeps toward it, trembling as he goes, and following the finger, reads his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE, aloud) He falls down crying.

Scrooge: No, Spirit. Oh no, no. Tell me I am not dead yet. Forgive Spirit, I am not the man I was, believe me, I am not the man I was. Good Spirit, help me sponge away the writing on this stone. If I repent I'll make good the wrongs I've done in life. Oh, believe me. I'm not the man I was, etc..... (Curtains close)

Scene VI (Curtains open)

(Scrooge is in bed moaning and muttering: I'm not the man I was etc.... He is holding on to his bed post.)

(there is knocking. Scrooge awakens)

Maid: Good Morning, Sir.

Scrooge: Tell me, what day is it?

Maid: What day? Why its Christmas day.

Scrooge: Christmas Day, Christmas Day. Why, then I haven't missed it. (bells in background begin to peal for Christmas morning.) The Spirits must have done everything all in one night. Of course they can do anything can't they? Of course they can. (Laughs)

Maid: Are you quite yourself, Sir?

Scrooge: Why, I don't know. No I ----I don't think so. I hope NOT.

Maid: What?

Scrooge: The curtains are still here. You didn't tear them down and sell them. There, here, everything's here. I'm here. And the shadows of things that would be can still be dispelled. And they will be. I know they will be. (laughs) I, I, I don't know what to do. I'm as light as a feather, I'm as happy as an, as an angel and as merry as a school boy. I'm as giddy as a drunken man. I don't know.....A Merry Christmas Ebenezer. (looks in mirror)... You old Humbug. And a Happy New Year, that's if you deserve it. Merry Christmas Mrs. Dilber.

Maid: The same to you ,Sir.

Scrooge: Thank you, thank you, thank you. And many many of them. Look Mrs. Dilber, there is the corner where the spirit of Christmas Present sat. And there the door where Jacob Marley's Ghost came through. And there's the window where I saw the wandering spirits. It's right, it's true, it all happened. Oh, I, I don't know what day of the month it is. I don't know how long I've been amongst the spirits. I don't know anything. I never did know anything, but now I know that I don't know anything. Sings: Now I know that I Don't know all on a Christmas morning. I must stand on my head. I must stand on my head.

Maid: (Screams) (exits out front door with apron over her head)

Scrooge: (chasing) Hold it. Hold it. Please, please Mrs. Dilber.
(grabs her arm) I'm not mad.

Maid: No farther Mr. Scrooge, your forcing me to scream for the beadle.

Scrooge: (gives her a guinea)

Maid: A guinea? Dear .. What for?

Scrooge: I'll give you one guess.

Maid: To keep me mouth shut?

Scrooge: (laughs) No, no, no Mrs. Dilber. It's for a christmas present.

Maid: A Christmas present for me?

Scrooge: A Merry Merry Christmas dear Mrs. Dilber How much do
I pay you?

Maid: Two shillings a week.

Scrooge: What two shillings? Hence forth it's raised to ten.

Maid: Ten Shillings a week Sir? Are you sure you don't want to see
a doctor?

Scrooge: The doctor? Certainly not. . . . Hmph. Now
you go off and enjoy yourself, like a good girl.

Maid: Merry Christmas Mr. Scrooge. In keeping with the situation.

(Scrooge reenters bedroom, bells peal and open window and looks out.)

Scrooge: You, Boy.

Boy: Who, me?

Scrooge: Yes, you. Do you know the butcher in the next street but one,
at the corner?

Boy: I should hope I did --

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

Boy: What, the one as big as me?

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

Boy: It's hanging there now.

Scrooge: Is it: Go and buy it.

Boy: Walk-er.

Scrooge: No, no. I'm in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them the directions 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. Enchanting boy.

(Boy runs off with speed)

Scrooge: I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's. (Rubs his hands together and laughs) He shan't know who sent it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim. O bless his heart.

(Scrooge exits into backroom where he dresses and reappears with label)
(Man and boy appear with turkey)

Scrooge: Here's the turkey -- hello. Whoop. How are you? Merry Christmas

Man: A merry christmas, Sir.

Scrooge: (Looking at the turkey) Why, but that's impossible to carry to Camden Town. You must have a cab. Ha ha ha. Here's the money for the turkey; this for the cab -- and this, boy, is what I promised you. (Exit man and boy)

Scrooge: What glorious weather. (on street)
(He walks out toward front of stage and meets First Gentleman)
My dear Sir, how do you do? Did I not see you on my office yesterday evening?

Gentleman: I -- I believe so.

Scrooge: How do you do, Sir? I hope you succeeded yesterday. A Merry Christmas to you, Sir.

Gentleman: Mr. Scrooge???

Scrooge: Yes, that is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness..(He whispers into the gentleman's ear.)

Gentleman: Impossible. My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?

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

Gentleman: (shaking hands with him) My dear sir, that is too gener--

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

Gentleman: I will.

Scrooge: Thank 'ee. I am much obliged to you, I thank you fifty times. Bless you. (They part and exit.) Now I'll surprise my nephew by dropping in to dinner.

(Scrooge enter Nephews house. Nephew and company inside merry making; suddenly see him.)

Nephew: Uncle Ebenezer.

Scrooge: Fred, is it to late to accept your invitation to dinner?

Nephew: Too late? I'm delighted, I'm delighted. My dear, look who it is.

Scrooge: Can you forgive a pig headed old fool for having no eyes to see with, no ears to hear with, all these years.

Niece: Yes, Dear Uncle, you've made Fred so happy. Bless you.

Fred: Denise - Polka.
(Dance - first Scrooge and Niece)

All: Bravo (aplaud)
(They all join in the dance)

Scene VII

(Scrooge's office) (He gets busy and then sits down to work, watching the door intently.)

(Bob enters quietly in great hurry. Trying not to be observed he sits down and starts writing at a great pace.)

Scrooge: (growling) Cratchit, you're late. What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?

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

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

Bob: (coming towards him very hesitantly) It's only once a year, Sir. It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, Sir.

Scrooge: Hm Hm, I'm sure you were. Well we won't beat around the bush, my friend, I'm not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. Which leaves me no alternative but to raise your salary.

Bob: (tumbling back, holding his head, trying to catch his senses)
I beg your pardon, Sir. You are -- Sir -- you feel unwell, Sir.
I mean to say Sir, shall I --

Scrooge: I haven't taken leave of my senses Bob. I've come to them. From now on I want to try to help you to raise that family of yours if you'll let me. We will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a hot Punch. Make up the fires, and buy another coal scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Crachit.
(Curtain closes)

Narrator: Scrooge was better than his word. He became as good a friend, as good a master and as good a man as the good old city ever knew, or any other good old city, town or borough in the good old world. And to Tiny Tim, who lived and got well again, he became a second father.

(Enter Scrooge onto street who is then met by Tiny Tim, who is calling "Uncle Scrooge". Scrooge carries Tiny Tim out through audience as narrator finishes paragraph.)

Narrator: And it was always said of him that he knew how to keep Christmas well if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us. And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us. Everyone.