

Characters

Adult Roles

Scrooge (**M**)

Young Scrooge / Fred (**M**)

Belle / Fred's Wife / Charwoman(**F**)

Christmas Present / Old Joe (**M**)

Dilber / Christmas Past (**M**)

Narrator 1 / Marley / Christmas Future (**M/F**)

Narrator 2 (**M/F**)

Bob Cratchit (**M**)

Solicitor 1 / Fezziwig (**M**)

Solicitor 2 / Mrs. Fezziwig (**F**)

Mrs. Cratchit (**F**)

Child roles

Martha Cratchit (**F**)

Belinda Cratchit (**F**)

Peter Cratchit (**M**)

Boy Scrooge (**M**)

Tiny Tim (**M**)

Fan / Turkey Boy / Young Assistant (**M/F**)

Act 1

Scene 1 – London Streets

(Townspople, who are spreading joy throughout the town on Christmas Eve, continue about their day fading out and off stage as the narration begins. There are families, charity folk, bread sellers, peddlers, etc. SFX. Big Ben bells sound)

(Song 1. Hark the Herald Angels Sing)

All voices: *On Christmas night all people sing to hear the new the angels bring.
On Christmas night all people sing to hear the new the angels bring.
News of great joy. News of great mirth.
News of our glorious savior's birth.*

*Hark! The herald angels sing "glory to the new born king"!
Peace on Earth and mercy mild. God and sinners reconciled.*

*Joyful, all ye nations rise. Join the triumph of the skies.
With angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! The herald angels sing "glory to the new born king"!*

Narrator 1: **(Together)** Marley was dead to begin with.

Narrator 2: **(Together)** Marley was dead to begin with.

Narrator 2: There is no doubt whatever about that.

Narrator 1: **(as a matter of fact; proof)** The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman.

Narrator 2: The clerk.

Narrator 1: The undertaker.

Narrator 2: And the chief mourner. Scrooge himself had signed it.

Narrator 1: **(Together)** Old Marley was - as dead as a doornail.

Narrator 2: **(Together)** Old Marley was - as dead as a doornail.

Narrator 2: Scrooge knew he was dead, of course he did. Scrooge and Marley were partners for, I don't know, how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor.

Narrator 1: His sole administrator.

Narrator 2: His sole friend.

Narrator 1: And his sole mourner.

Narrator 1: **(Together)** So, there is no doubt that Marley was dead.

Narrator 2: **(Together)** So, there is no doubt that Marley was dead.

Narrator 1: This must be distinctly understood or nothing wonderful can come of the story we are going to relate. Scrooge never painted out old Marley's name. There it stood...years afterward...above the warehouse door.

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Narrator 1: **(Together)** Scrooge and Marley.

Narrator 2: **(Together)** Scrooge and Marley.

Narrator 2: He answered to both names. It was all the same to him. Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! A squeezing, wrenching, clutching old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint. Secret and self-contained. And solitary as an oyster.

Narrator 1: The cold within him froze his old features. Nipped his pointed nose. Shriveled his cheek. Stiffened his gate. Made his eyes red, his thin lips blue, and spoke out shrewdly in his grating voice. Nobody ever stopped him on the street to say...

Narrator 2: My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?

Narrator 1: But what did Scrooge care? It was the very thing he liked.

Narrator 1: **(Together)** Once upon a time

Narrator 2: **(Together)** Once upon a time

Narrator 1: Upon all good days of the year,

Narrator 2: on Christmas Eve,

Narrator 1: old Scrooge sat in his counting house.

Scene 2 - Scrooge's counting house

(The door or scenery to Scrooge's counting house has taken shape behind the actors. Scrooge enters the counting house and slams the door behind him. SFX. A bell jingles as the door opens. His clerk, Bob Cratchit, jumps and drops the piece of coal he has been contemplating adding to the cold stove. Scrooge enters, throwing down a new stack of financial ledgers for Bob to copy.)

Bob: Good evening, Mr. Scrooge

Scrooge: Bah. Why are you standing there Cratchit?

Bob: The fire, sir, I'm cold

Scrooge: You should be working. Keeping those fingers busy.

Bob: I can't feel my fingers. Might I put another coal on the fire?

Scrooge: Let me think about it.

Bob: Yes, sir

Scrooge: I've thought about it.

Bob: What did you decide?

Scrooge: No. **(he sits / slams a book to end the conversation)**

(SFX. A bell Jingles. Fred enters)

Fred: Uncle!

Scrooge: Bah!

Fred: And Bob, lovely to see you

Bob: A Merry Christmas to you, Mr. Fred

Fred: And a Merry Christmas to you, Bob! How's that boy of yours?

Bob: Tim, you mean? As well as can be expected Mr. Fred.

Fred: That's good news.

Scrooge: Are you two going to go on gossiping like a gaggle of old geese? Why are you here?

Fred: Why, it's Christmas Eve. I came to wish you a Merry Christmas!
(Silence. He tries again) Merry Christmas Uncle!

Scrooge: Bah! Humbug!

Fred: **(Surprised to hear such public negativity in front of Bob)**
Christmas a humbug, uncle? You don't mean that, I'm sure.

Scrooge: I do. What reason have you to be merry? It's hardly as if you're rich.

Fred: Come, then what reason have you to be dismal? It's hardly as if you're poor.

Scrooge: Out upon it! What's Christmas time but a time for buying things...for which you have no need. No money. A time for finding yourself a year older and not a pound richer. If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through their heart. Keep Christmas *your* way if you must, just let *me* keep it *my* way.

Fred: But you don't keep it, uncle!

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

Fred: There are *many* things from which I have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say, Christmas among them. But, I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time! A kind, forgiving, charitable time. The only time I know of when men and women seem to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe it has done me good; and *will* do me good. And I say God bless it!

(Cratchit stands and applauds.)

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

Fred: Don't be cross, uncle. Come! I am here to invite you to dine with us tomorrow.

Scrooge: Dinner? Christmas? *Bah humbug!* Good Afternoon (**starts to show him out**)

Fred: But why? Why?

Scrooge: Why did you get married?

Fred: Because I fell in love.

Scrooge: Love? (**Scrooge doesn't understand**) Good afternoon.

Fred: I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends? I am sorry to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, so far as I know. And so I shall keep my Christmas humor...and wish you a Merry Christmas, uncle!

Scrooge: Good afternoon!

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(As Scrooge opens the door and Fred exits, a group of carolers or kids sing a capella (Song 2. Deck the Halls) but Scrooge slams the door before the last "La")

Carolers: **(singing)** *Deck the halls with boughs of holly. Fa la la la la, la la la – (door slam)*

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

(SFX. The doorbell jingles – The First and Second Solicitor enter, laughing and talking, disrupting the moment.)

First Solicitor: Scrooge and Marley's, I believe. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?

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

First Solicitor: We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner. **(Beat.)** At this festive time 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 necessities and common comforts, sir.

Scrooge: Are there no prisons?

First Solicitor: Plenty of prisons.

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

First Solicitor: They are.

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

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

Scrooge: Nothing!

Second Solicitor: You wish to be anonymous?!

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

First Solicitor: Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

Scrooge: If they had rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.

Second Solicitor: But Mr. Scrooge –

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

(Scrooge resumes his labors with an improved opinion of himself, the solicitors exit. SFX. The doorbell jingles. Bob and Scrooge work in silence for a moment. SFX. Big Ben style chime, followed by 5 chimes. As it chimes, Bob straightens his work area and begins to put on his thread bare jacket and scarf. He waits by the front door, willing Scrooge, deep in work, to notice him.)

Bob: Ahem. Foggier yet, and colder out!

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

Bob: If quite convenient, Sir.

Scrooge: It's not convenient, and it's not fair. If I was to stop 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 a day's wages for no work.

Bob: It's only once a year, sir.

Scrooge: A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December! But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier the next morning!

Bob: Yes sir!

(Bob is relieved and elated. He exits quickly, met by his older son Peter and younger son Tim, who walks with a crutch. They greet each other joyfully and exit together. Transition from the counting house, through the London streets, and into Scrooge's home. We pass through beggars in the street. SFX. We hear street sounds, horse carriages, cold citizens, and maybe dogs barking. Song 3. God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen)

All voices: *(singing) God rest ye merry gentleman, let nothing you dismay.
Remember Christ our savior was born on Christmas Day.
To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray.
Oh Tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
Oh tidings of comfort and joy.*

Narrator 1: Scrooge took his melancholy meal in his usual melancholy tavern; And after reading all the newspapers, he beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's-book. And then went home to bed.

Narrator 2: He lived in chambers which had once belonged to his deceased partner, Jacob Marley. They were a gloomy suite of rooms in a dreary yard, and had little of what is called fancy about them. Nobody lived in it but Scrooge.

(SFX. As he approaches the home, near the door knocker, we hear a low bass rumble, maybe chains, and the whisper of a demonic 'Ebenezer' as we begin to introduce the haunting of Marley)

Scene 3 - Scrooge's home

(Scrooge is alone in his house and enters his chambers looking suspiciously around the room. He goes to check in his dressing gown, hanging up in a suspicious attitude against the wall. He moves it tentatively. Nothing is there, but he moves it about. There is a music box on the shelf. Mrs. Dilber enters to help Scrooge prepare for bed with his gruel and a candle, but is surprised to see the dressing robe moving around as though it's a ghost.)

Dilber: Ah!

Scrooge: Mrs. Dilber!

(Her Young Assistant enters to see what the matter is)

Dilber: Mr. Scrooge? Oh, you scared me half to death. A ghost, I thought you were.

Scrooge: Nonsense, Mrs. Dilber. There is no such thing, and please, in future, keep your voice to a reasonable volume and compose yourself in a professional manner.

Dilber: Yes'sir, Mr. Scrooge. Certainly, sir. (She helps him change and prepare for bed)

Young Assistant: (in their most overly-rehearsed impeccable speech) Your evening gruel.

Scrooge: Cold, I hope. No money wasted heating it up.

Dilber: Some coal for a fire sir?

Scrooge: Why don't I throw gold coins out the window? No. And Mrs. Dilber? (Scrooge licks his fingers and puts out her candle. SFX. A candle ember sizzling) Darkness is cheaper. That'll be all for tonight. Tomorrow first thing, see to it that your boy cleans the front door knocker thoroughly.

Dilber: Tomorrow, sir?

Scrooge: Is something the matter with him?

Dilber: Tomorrow is Christmas Day, sir.

Scrooge: What of it?

Dilber: I thought I might have the day off to spend with me boy. It's Christmas Day after all!

Scrooge: No, no. Enough. Out on Christmas. I will be working tomorrow, like any honest person, and so shall he. Unless you would prefer to have *all* your days off commencing immediately?

Dilber: Well, good-night, sir.

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Young Assistant: Goodnight, and Merry -

(Dilber stops him/cuts him off. They exit. Slowly, the sounds begin. SFX. A heartbeat on the bass drum. First chains, the sound of moaning, Marley walking up the stairs, things moving on their own within the room, etc.)

Marley: Ebenezer....Ebenezer....

Scrooge: Humbug!

Marley: Ebenezer...

Scrooge: It's humbug still!

Marley: Ebenezer Scrooge!!!!!!

(SFX. Thunder! Lightning! Fire! Smoke! Hell erupts on stage, throwing the ghost of Jacob Marley into Scrooge's chamber.)

Scrooge: **(almost paralyzed with terror)** What do you want of me?

Marley: Much!

Scrooge: Who are you?

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

Scrooge: Bah!

Marley: You don't believe in me?

Scrooge: I don't.

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

Scrooge: I don't know

Marley: Why do you doubt your own senses?

Scrooge: Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach. You may be an undigested bit of beef. A fragment of under-done potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are! Humbug!

(SFX. Marley lets out a wail that shakes the walls of Scrooge's house.)

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

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

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

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

Scrooge: You are fettered in chains, tell me why.

Marley: I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard. Is its pattern strange to you? Or would you know the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself. It was as heavy as this seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it, since. Yours is a ponderous chain.

Scrooge: I see no chain?

Marley: Mine were invisible until the day of my death, as yours shall be.

Scrooge: Jacob, tell me more. Speak comfort to me.

Marley: I have none to give. My spirit never walked beyond our counting house. In life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money changing hold.

Scrooge: You were always a good man of business.

Marley: Business!?!?!?

(SFX. Thunder/Lightning)

Marley: Humanity was my business. The common welfare was my business. Charity, mercy, were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business.

(SFX. A haunting bell summons Marley back.)

Marley: Hear me! It is too late for me.....my time is nearly gone. But I have come for you. As part of my penance. I have been sent to warn you. And to offer you a hope and chance of escaping *my* fate Ebenezer. You will be haunted by 3 spirits.

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

Marley: It is.

Scrooge: I think I'd rather not.

Marley: Expect the first tonight - when the bell tolls one.

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

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

(SFX. Thunder/Lightning crescendos as Marley lets out on final harrowing scream! Blackout.)

Scene 4 - Scrooge's home

(SFX. A bell tolls. Big Ben style for the hour of one. The Spirit of Christmas past appears. Song 4. Angels we have Heard on High)

All female voices: (singing) Angels we have heard on high.
Sweetly singing o'er the plains.

All female and Past: (singing) Remember Christmas past. Echoing its joyous strains.
Ah (To "Gloria"), Remember Christmas past.

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

Past: I am.

Scrooge: I'm most grateful to you for dropping by. My dear friend Marley said you might. And here you are. I am bound, however, to tell you that my usual business hours run from 8 in the morning until 5 in the afternoon, 6 on the second Thursday of every.....

Past: I. Am. Here.

Scrooge: Yes. You. Are.

Past: Now. I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

Scrooge: Long Past?

Past: No. *Your* past.

Scrooge: What business brings you here?

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Past: Your welfare.

Scrooge: Thank you very much, but I think a night of unbroken rest would be more conducive to that end.

Past: Your reclamation, then. Take heed! Rise and walk with me.

Scrooge: But Spirit, I am mortal and liable to fall.

Past:

Bear but a touch of my hand *there* (**laying a hand on Scrooge's heart**) and you will be upheld in more than this!

(SFX. A gentle bar chime and gust of wind. "Remember Christmas Past" Chorus echoes softly over ethereal transition sounds.)

Scene 5 - The past – school & Fezziwig's

(We transition out of Scrooge's house and into school setting)

Narrator 2: As the words were spoken, they stood upon an open country road, with fields on either hand. The city had entirely vanished!

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

Past: You remember the way?

(SFX. A cast iron school bell rings and children cross the stage laugh and playing)

Scrooge: Remember it?! I could walk it blindfolded. **(to the kids running past)**. Hello- Jim! Phillip! Richard!

Past: These are but the shadows of the things that have been. They have no consciousness of us. It is the Christmas holiday, and they are going home. But, the school is not quite deserted. A solitary, forgotten child is left there still.

Scrooge: I know it, Spirit.

(Scrooge sits down next to his poor forgotten self as he used to be as his younger self sings. Song 5. In the Bleak Midwinter.)

Boy Scrooge: **(singing)** *In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan.
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow.
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.*

*What can you give me, poor as I am?
If you were a shepherd, you would bring a lamb.
If you were a wise man, you would do your part.
Yet, what can you give me? Give me your heart.*

Past: What is the matter?

Scrooge: Nothing! Nothing...there was a boy singing a Christmas carol at my door yesterday. I should like to have given him something that is all

Past: Let us see another Christmas!

(SFX. A gentle bar chime and gust of wind. “Remember Christmas Past” Chorus echoes softly over ethereal transition sounds. Young Fan runs on stage followed by a Schoolmaster.)

Fan: (offstage) Ebenezer???? Dear, dear brother!?

Scrooge: No, Spirit!

Boy Scrooge: Fan!?

Scrooge: Spirit, no!

Fan: Ebenezer! I have come to bring you home, dear brother. Father sent me in a coach to bring you home, home, home!

Boy Scrooge: Home, Fan?

Fan: Yes! Home, for good and for all. Home is like heaven - Forever and ever.

(Song 6. O Come all ye Faithful)

Fan: **(singing)** *Sing, choir of angels. Sing in exultation. Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!*

Fan/Boy Scrooge: **(singing):** *Glory to God. Glory in the highest. O come, let us adore him. O come, let us adore him. O come, let us adore him – Come back home!*

Schoolmaster: Bring down Master Scrooge's trunk!

(An unkempt housekeeper drags Ebenezer's trunk).

Fan: **(pulls a small package from her bag)** Now we get to be together for Christmas. Here, Ebenezer, open it.

(He unwraps it carefully, revealing what looks to be a beat block of old wood)

Boy Scrooge: Thank you Fan, it's – well – what is it?

Fan: Open it.

(Young Scrooge opens the wooden box and it reveals a music box. SFX. It plays a version of “We Wish You A Merry Christmas”)

Boy Scrooge: A music box!

Fan: Isn't it magic? Just like Christmas! Now, whenever you play your music box, it will be Christmas, with snow and merry music and all. And you will know that I am always with you, and that we have everything we need.

(They run off stage together with the trunk. Boy Scrooge sticks out his tongue and makes a gesture to the Schoolmaster, and all exit except Past and Scrooge)

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

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

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

Scrooge: One child.

Past: True! Your nephew, Fred!

Scrooge: Yes.

Past: Let us see your first Christmas with Fezziwig & Company

(SFX. A gentle bar chime and gust of wind. "Remember Christmas Past" Chorus echoes softly over ethereal transition sounds)

Narrator 2: They were now in the busy thoroughfare of the city. It was made plain enough, by the dressing of the shops, that here, too, it was Christmas-time again. They stopped at a certain warehouse door and asked Scrooge if he knew it.

Scrooge: Know it! Was I apprenticed here?

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(Fezziwig steps to the center of his circle as Fezziwig and Company forms around him. His employees gather round while Mrs. Fezziwig hands out punch)

Fezziwig: Yo Ho my boys!

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

Fezziwig: Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Richard!

(Scrooge himself steps up when called but stopped by the Spirit. Dick Wilkins and Young Ebenezer step forward from the place where Scrooge and Past are standing.)

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

Mrs. Fezziwig: Everyone, Kick up your heels!

(They all dance with their calves shining like half-moons as they bow and curtsy, corkscrew, thread-the-needle, etc. Belle enters just a tad late and see Young Scrooge embrace her upon entrance. Song 7. We Three Kings)

(The dances ends in peals of laughter, hugs, backslaps, and handshakes centered around Mr. Fezziwig. Belle breaks off on her own)

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

Scrooge: Small?

Past: Why is it not? He has spent but a few pounds of your mortal money, three or four perhaps? And yet he has the power to render so many happy. He may make their service light or burdensome....a pleasure or a toil. Thus, our power must lie in words and looks, not pounds and coins. In things so slight and seemingly insignificant that it is impossible to add and count them up.

Scrooge: And yet...

Past: And yet?

Scrooge: The happiness he gives, is quiet as great as if it cost a fortune.

(Past gives an approving nod. Now Scrooge is starting to get it)

Past: What is the matter?

Scrooge: I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk Cratchit just now! That's all.

Past: My time grows short, quick!

(SFX. A gentle bar chime and gust of wind – quick transition/fast forward returning into the scene. Party goers begin to disperse)

Young Scrooge: Belle!

Belle: It's chilly tonight. Christmas weather

Young Scrooge: Belle, you should come back inside.

Belle: It matters little, to you very little. I am going home. A new love has displaced me, and I hope it makes you happy.

Young Scrooge: What new love has displaced you?

Belle: A golden one.

Young Scrooge: This is the even-handed dealing of the world! There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty, and nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth. If my new company Marley & Scrooge is to thrive....there is work to do Belle. Much work to do.

Belle: You fear the world too much. All your other hopes have merged into this one base belief. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you.

Young Scrooge: What then? Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you. **(no response)** Am I?

Belle: Oh Ebenezer, our love is an *old* one. It was made when we were both poor and content to be so. You *are* changed. When we fell in love, you were another man.

Young Scrooge: **(together)** I was a boy.
Scrooge: **(together)** I was a boy.

Belle: **(Hurting)** Your own feeling tells you, you were not what you are. We were one heart, now we are two. How often I have thought through this, I will not say. I release you.

Young Scrooge: **(together)** Have I ever sought release?

Scrooge: (together) Have I ever sought release?

Belle: In words. No. Never.

Young Scrooge: In what then?

Belle: In a changed nature, in an altered spirit. If you met me today, tell me, would you seek me out and try to win me now?

Young Scrooge: You think not.

Belle: I would gladly think otherwise if I could. You weigh everything by gold Ebenezer. That's your guiding rule, and it cannot be mine...so I must release you (**hands him her ring**). May you be happy in the life you have chosen.

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(Scrooge turns away from the scene, moved to tears. Belle approaches Ebenezer and places her hand gently to his face. As she does this, Scrooge touches his own cheek as well, the memory still fresh, and deeply present. Belle fades into the shadows.)

Scrooge: We parted forever. Spirit! Show me no more! Conduct me home. Why do you delight to torture me?

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

(SFX. A gentle bar chime and gust of wind. "Remember Christmas Past" Chorus echoes softly over ethereal transition sounds. Scrooge is left alone on stage.)

Scrooge: Leave me. I cannot bear it! Haunt me no longer!

(SFX. Thunder. Blackout.)

Scene 6 - The present – Cratchit's & Fred's

(SFX. A bell tolls. Big Ben style for the hour of 2. A hidden group of voices sing. Song 8. Here we come-a-caroling)

Present: **(singing)** *Sing we all Noel!*

Scrooge: What?

Present: **(singing)** *Sing we all Noel!*

Scrooge: Hello?

Present: **(entering)** Come in! Come in and know me better, man!

All voices: **(singing)** *Oh, Here we come a-caroling among the leaves so green.
Here we come a-wandering so fair to be seen.
Love and joy come to you, and a Merry Christmas too, so we send you
a wish you a happy new year. And sing you a happy new year!*

Present: I am the Ghost of Christmas Present! Look upon me! You have never seen the like of me before!

Scrooge: Never.

Present: Have never walked forth with the younger members of my family, meaning my elder brothers and sisters born these later years?

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

(All except Present laugh raucously)

Present: More than eighteen hundred!

Scrooge: A tremendous family to provide for. Spirit, conduct me where you will. I went forth last night on compulsion, and I learned a lesson which is working now. Tonight, if you have ought to teach me, let me profit by it.

Present: Touch my robe!

(SFX. A mixture of sleigh bells along with “12 Days of Christmas” as transitional underscore. The market takes shape around Scrooge and the Spirit as the townspeople prepare for their cooking and set up Cratchit scene.)

Narrator 1: Suddenly they stood on the city streets on Christmas morning. There was an air of cheerfulness abroad...for the people were jovial and full of glee...

Narrator 2: The poulterers' shops were still half-open, and the fruiterers were radiant in their glory! And the grocers! Oh the grocers! Almonds, cinnamon, candied fruits and French plums. One or twice, when there were angry words between dinner-carrier who had jostled each other-

Narrator 1: -the Spirit sprinkled a few drops of water on them and their good humor was restored! Their walk became a dance. Deliciousness poured from his torch!

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

Present: There is. My own.

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

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

Scrooge: Why to a poor one most?

Present: Because it needs it most.

(Mrs. Cratchit, Belinda, Peter, Cratchit family enters. Their kitchen is set.)

Narrator 1: The Spirit stopped at a threshold of a door and smiled. He blessed the dwelling of Bob Cratchit.

Narrator 2: Think of that! Bob Cratchit, who had but fifteen shilling a week. And yet the Ghost of Christmas Present blessed his four-roomed house!

Narrator 1: He blessed Mrs. Cratchit, in a thread bear gown made brave by ribbons. Ribbons make a good show for six-pence. He blessed Belinda, the youngest daughter laying the table.

Narrator 2: And he blessed Peter, as he plunged a fork into a saucepan of potatoes.

Mrs. Cratchit: Whatever became of your poor father and your broth Tiny Tim? And Martha, she wasn't this late last Christmas by half an hour.

Martha: Hello?

Belinda: Here's Martha, mother!

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

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

Mrs. Cratchit: Well! Never mind so long as you come. Sit ye down. Lord bless ye!

(Bob and Tiny Tim offstage singing "Deck The Halls" as they enter)

Peter: No, no! There's father coming!

Belinda: **(together)** Hide, Martha, hide!

Peter: **(together)** Hide, Martha, hide!

Bob: Merry Christmas, my dears. Why, where's our Martha?

Mrs. Cratchit: Not coming!

Bob: Not coming! Not coming upon Christmas Day?

Peter: Her shop was ordered to stay open and they were told to work through Christmas Day or don't come back.

Belinda: Poor Martha...

Martha: **(she reveals herself)** Here I am father!

Mrs. Cratchit: Peter, Belinda, Tim, go help Martha get the diner ready. Off with you! **(To Bob)** And how did little Tim behave?

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

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(The children appear with platters – a pudding, a goose, and sides.)

Peter: There never was such a goose,
Belinda: With apple sauce and potatoes,
Tiny Tim: Everyone will have enough!
Martha: And the pudding is boiling on the copper!!!!
Bob: Oh, a wonderful pudding and a wonderful Christmas Dinner. A toast to Mr. Scrooge! I give you Mr. Scrooge, the founder of this feast.
Mrs. Cratchit: The founder of the feast indeed! I wish I had him here! I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and he'd have a good appetite for it.
Bob: **(Attempting to hide her anger in front of the children)** My dear, the children: Christmas Day.
Mrs. Cratchit: It should be Christmas Day, I am sure, on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert. Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow.
Bob: My dear, Christmas Day.
Mrs. Cratchit: I'll drink to his health for your sake and the Day's, not for his. Long life to him! A merry Christmas and a happy New Year! -- he'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt! To Mr. Scrooge.
Bob: And now a toast to us, my dears. A Merry Christmas to us all.
All: To us!
Bob: God bless *us*!
Tiny Tim: God bless us, *everyone*.
(The Cratchits eat)
Scrooge: Spirit, tell me if Tiny Tim will live?
Present: I see a vacant seat in the poor chimney corner, and a crutch without an owner
Scrooge: No, oh no kind Spirit! Say he will be spared.
Present: What then? If he be likely to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.

Scrooge: You mock me with my own words?

(Scrooge hangs his head overcome with penitence and grief)

Present: Who are you to decide who shall live or die? If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die.

Scrooge: *No* wait. What must I do? Tell me, what I must *do*?

(Present has started walking away. SFX. A mixture of sleigh bells along with “12 Days of Christmas” as transitional underscore)

Narrator 2: By this time it was getting dark, and snowing pretty heavily. Scrooge and the Spirit walked along the streets. Here, the flickering blaze showed the preparation for a cozy dinner...

(General hubbub is heard. Fred's laugh is heard. Scrooge and The Spirit find themselves in the middle of a party in a London tenement house. Chairs have been brought in from other apartments. Various bottles and kettles and platters are being passed around.)

Narrator 1: Moving on through the darkness, it was a great surprise to Scrooge to hear a hearty laugh. It was a much greater surprise to Scrooge to recognize it as his own nephew's, and to find himself in a bright, dry, gleaming room.

All: **(sung loudly)** “And a partridge in a pear tree!”

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

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

Scrooge: Is that --

Present: Fred's wife... your niece.

Scrooge: My niece! Oh she is very pretty: exceedingly pretty...the sunniest pair of eyes I've ever seen

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

(The guests react)

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

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

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

Sister 1: Nor I!

Sister 2: Nor I!

All Women: Nor I!

Old Aunt: **(She is hard of hearing and holds a small gramophone funnel up to her ear)** Eeehh?

Fred: Oh, I have! I am sorry for him; I couldn't be angry with him if I tried. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes into his head to dislike us, and he won't come and dine with us. What's the consequence? He don't lose much of a dinner.

(All gasp. Holding in their laughter.)

Fred's Wife: Indeed, I think he loses a very good dinner!

Sister 1: So do I!

Sister 2: And I!

All Women: And I!

Old Aunt: **(She is hard of hearing and holds a small gramophone funnel up to her ear)** Eeehh?

Fred: Well, I am very glad to hear it because I haven't any great faith in these young housekeepers. What do you say, Topper?

(Topper is caught flirting with one of the sisters. All eyes are on him.)

Sister 1: Topper had clearly got his eye upon one of the young ladies, for he answered that

Topper: ...A bachelor was a wretched outcast, who had no right to express an opinion on the subject.

(Laughter.)

Sister 1: Whereas Scrooge's niece's sister –

Sister 2: – the one with the lace tucker –

Sister 1: – not the one with the roses –

Sister 1: **(together)** blushed

Sister 2: **(together)** blushed!

Fred's Wife: Do go on, Fred!

Fred: I was only going to say that the consequence of his taking a dislike to us, and not to make merry with us, is, as I think, that he loses some pleasant moments, which can do him no harm. I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not, for I pity him. **(A small reaction from the guests. Some are surprised, some disagree, and some admire his positivity).** He may rail at Christmas 'til he dies, but he can't help thinking better of it -- I defy him -- if he finds me going there, in good temper, year after year, and saying Uncle Scrooge, how are you? If it only puts him in the vein to leave his poor clerk Cratchit fifty pounds, *that's* something!

Topper: **(imitating Scrooge)** Bah! Humbug!

(All laugh.)

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

All: **(Cheers)** Uncle Scrooge!

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

(The Spirit pulls Scrooge away. He is reluctant to leave. Fred and His Wife say 'good-night'. Topper kisses the hand of a Sister, all exit. SFX. A mixture of sleigh bells along with "12 Days of Christmas" as transitional underscore. Scrooge and the Spirit stand center)

Scrooge: Spirit, you look older. Are Spirit's lives so short?

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

Scrooge: Tonight?

Present: Tonight at midnight.

(SFX. A chimes begin to toll calling Present back)

Present: Hark! The time is drawing near...Look here.

(Past reveals two children from behind him or hiding beneath his large robe. They are ragged, hungry, afraid, and almost ghost-like. They crawl and circle Scrooge)

Scrooge: Spirit! Are they yours?

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Present: They are man's. All of ours. And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both. But, most of all, beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it! Slander those who tell you of it!

Scrooge: Have they known refuge or resource?

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

Present: **(together)** Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

Ignorance: **(together)** Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

Want: **(together)** Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

All voices: **(together)** Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

(SFX. Thunder and the bell begins to toll Big Ben style for the hour of 3, transitioning us into "Future". Scrooge is left alone on stage.)

Scene 7 - The future, graveyard

(Song 9. Coventry Carol)

All voices: **(singing together)** *Lully, lullay. Lully, lullay. Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child. By-by, lully, lullay*

(A tall, gaunt figure, robed in black, faceless approaches Scrooge.)

Scrooge: I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come? **(No answer.)** 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? **(No answer.)** Ghost of the Future! I fear you more than any Spectre I have seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear your company, and do it with a thankful heart. **(No answer.)** Will you not speak to me? **(The Spirit points.)** Lead on! Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it was a precious time to me, Lead on, Spirit.

(SFX. Wind and low thunder rumble sounds. A funeral parade enters carrying a coffin – Narrator 2, The 3 Traders, Old Joe, Charwoman, Robbers, and Dilber.)

Narrator 2: They scarcely seemed to enter the city; an obscure part of town. Here were men of business and Scrooge had made a point of always standing well in their esteem at the Exchange. The whole quarter reeked with crime, with filth, and misery.

Trader 1: No, I don't know much about it, either way, I only know he's dead.

Trader 2: When did he die?

Trader 3: Last night, I believe.

Trader 1: What was the matter with him? I thought he'd never die.

Trader 2: God knows.

Trader 3: What has he done with his money?

Trader 1: I haven't heard.

Trader 2: Left it to his company, perhaps.

Robber: He hasn't left it to me, that's all I know.

Trader 1: It's likely to be a very cheap funeral. For, upon my life, I don't know anybody to go to it.

Trader 2: Suppose we make up a party and volunteer?

Trader 3: I don't mind going if lunch is provided. But I must be fed.

Trader 1: Well, I am the most disinterested among you, after all, for I never wear black gloves, and I never eat lunch.

Trader 2: I'll offer to go, if anybody else will. When I come to think of it, I'm not sure I wasn't his most particular friend, for we used to stop and speak whenever we met.

(Traders exit)

Scrooge: Spirit, these men can scarcely have any bearing on the death of Jacob Marley. That was Past. This is the Future.

Narrator 1: Scrooge looked about for his own image. But another man stood in his corner...and he saw no likeness of himself among the multitudes. Sitting in among the wares he dealt in was a gray-haired rag and bone man – Old Joe.

(All remaining prepare to rob the grave at the same time)

Dilber: Look here, Old Joe, If we haven't all three met here without meaning it. Let the Charwoman alone to be the first! I'll be the second! And let the undertaker's boy alone to be the third.

Old Joe: You couldn't have met in a better place. Come into the parlor. You were made free of it long ago, you know, and the other two ain't strangers. We're all suitable to our calling. We are well matched. Come into the parlor. Come into the parlor.

(He begins to sing. Song 10. Master in this Hall)

Old Joe: *Masters in the this hall, hear ye new to-day. Christmas has come in and no man should be sad.*

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

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

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

Dilber: No indeed!

Robber: We should hope not!

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

Dilber No, indeed!

Charwoman: If he wanted to keep 'em after he was dead, why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with Death, instead of lying alone by himself.

Dilber: It's the truest word that ever was spoke.

(Charwoman pulls out the music box from the open coffin)

Scrooge: **(seeing the music box)** No!

All: **(singing)**
*Masters in this hall, Master ye be glad
Christmas has come in and no man should be sad.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel sing we clear, "Holpen are all folk on earn,
born is God's son so dear."
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel sing we loud, "God today hath poor folk raised
and casted down the proud!"*

(Ending in uproar and mad laughter.)

Old Joe: I hope he didn't die of anything catching?

Charwoman: Don't you be afraid of that, we ain't so fond of his company. You can look through that shirt; but you won't find a hole. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for us.

(All laugh)

Charwoman: This is the end of it, you see. He frightened everybody away while he was living only to profit *us* when he's dead!

(All grab belongings and exit - except Scrooge and Future)

Scrooge: Spirit, I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way now. Let me see some tenderness connected with a death.

(SFX. Wind and low thunder rumble sounds. We transition to the Cratchit House. Just a stool on which Mrs. Cratchit sits, trying to sew. Her children surround her reading and writing. Off stage voices can be humming “In The Bleak midwinter” song)

Peter: **(reads)** And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven." Are you alright Mother?

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Mrs. Cratchit: The dim light hurts my eyes. It makes them weak by candlelight, and I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father.

Scrooge: Ah! Poor Tiny Tim!

Martha: It must be near his time.

Peter: Past it, rather. But I think he's walked a little slower than he used to.

Martha: I have known him to walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder, very fast indeed.

Peter: And so have I.

Belinda: And so have I.

Martha: But he was very light to carry, and his father loved him so that it was no trouble -- no trouble...

(Bob enters.)

Mrs. Cratchit: And here your father is at the door. Your home! You went today then, Robert?

Bob: Yes, my dear. I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you'll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on Sunday. Our little, little child! I met Mr. Scrooge's nephew Fred on the street. I've only met him once or

twice. But he stopped me and enquired how we were. "I am heartily sorry for you, Mr. Cratchit, and heartily sorry for your good wife. By and by, how he ever knew that, I don't know.

Mrs. Cratchit: Knew what, my dear?

Bob: That you were a good wife.

Belinda: Everybody knows that!

Bob: Very well observed, my girl! I hope they do! "Heartily sorry", he said, giving me his card, "that's where I live. Pray come to me." It really seemed as if he knew our Tiny Tim, and felt with us.

Mrs. Cratchit: I'm sure he's a good soul!

Bob: You would be surer of it, my dear, if you saw and spoke to him. I shouldn't be at all surprised, mark what I say, if he got Peter a better situation.

Mrs. Cratchit: Only hear that, Peter!

Martha: And then Peter will be keeping company with someone, and setting up for himself.

(Laughter.)

Peter: Get along with you

Bob: It's just as likely as not...one of these days, though there's plenty of time for that, my dears. But however and whenever we part from one another, I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim -- shall we -- or this first parting that there was among us?

Children: Never, father.

Bob: And I know, I know, my dears, that when we recollect how patient and how mild he was, although he was a little, little child, we shall not quarrel easily among ourselves, and forget poor Tiny Tim in doing it.

Children: No, never, father!

Bob: Then I am very happy! I am very happy!

(They all embrace. The Cratchits exit. SFX. Thunder and Wind.)

Scrooge: Spectre, something informs me that our parting moment is at hand, Let me see what I shall be, in days to come?

(The Spirit points.)

Scrooge: My place of business...my house is yonder. Why do you point away?

(The Spirit points. Gates of a cemetery appear. The silhouette of a tombstone)

Scrooge: Before I draw nearer to that stone, answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that will be, or are they the shadows of things that may be?

(The Spirit remains pointing.)

Scrooge: But if our actions change, will the ends not change? Say that I may change these things by an altered life!

(The Spirit remains pointing. SFX. Thunder and lightning. Howls of spirits.)

Scrooge: **(reading his name on the gravestone)** Ebenezer Scrooge!

(SFX. Louder thunder and lightning.)

Scrooge: No!

(The Spirit begins to recede into the shadows.)

Scrooge: No Spirit. Oh no, no. Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I was. **(A beat. He gathers himself in slow reflection)** I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. Christmas-time be praised I say on bended knee. I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will not shut out the lessons that you teach. I will live in the Past, the Present, and Future. The Spirits of all three shall strive within me.

(SFX. A crescendo of the sound effects from Past, Present, and Future all blended together grows into a Blackout. A beat. SFX. Live Big Ben bells. We transition back into Scrooge's home the next morning)

Scene 8 - Scrooge's home/finale

(Scrooge tossing, turning, and mumbling comes fully awake with a jolt, looks around.)

Dilber: Mr. Scrooge! Mr. Scrooge!

Scrooge: Jacob Marley is that you?!

Dilber: Mr. Scrooge! It's me! Mrs. Dilber!

Scrooge: Heaven be praised – Mrs. Dilber! My heavens. I'm alive!

Dilber: That you are, Mr. Scrooge. That you are.

Scrooge: And the time before me is my own, to make amends! I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future! The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. O Jacob Marley! Heaven and Christmas Time be praised for this! **(Scrooge springs up, runs around his bedroom)** The chair is my own. My curtains are not torn down, rings and all. They are here: *I* am here: the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They *will* be. *I know* they will! I will *make* it so!

(Scrooge sees his music box. Dilber enters with Scrooge's hat and coat. Scrooge kisses her. She reacts with a short scream. He hears a boy caroling "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" outside his door. He runs over to the door\)

Scrooge: You there! Boy! Yes! You! What's today?

Turkey Boy: Eh?

Scrooge: What's today, my boy?

Turkey Boy: Why...it's Christmas Day!

Scrooge: It's Christmas Day! I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. Of course they can. **(a reminder to himself)** I shall live in the Past, Present, and Future. The spirits of all three shall strive within me. **(circles the boy)** I don't know what to do! I am as light as a feather, I am happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. **(directly to boy, with sudden certainty)** Boy! Do you know the Poulterer's in the next street, at the corner?

Turkey 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?

Turkey Boy: What, the one as big as me?

Scrooge: What a delightful boy! A pleasure to speak with you. Yes, my boy!

Turkey Boy: It's hanging there now.

Scrooge: Is it? Go and buy it.

Turkey Boy: Humbug!

Scrooge: No, no, I am in earnest. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, that I may give them directions where to take it. Come back with the man and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than 5 minutes and I'll give you half a crown! And – **(he stops him)** – Mmm – Merry Christmas. I'll send it round to Bob Cratchit's. He shan't know who sent it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim.

(outside – the townspeople begin to trickle in)

Scrooge: A Merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! There's the saucepan that the gruel was in. There's the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered. There's the corner where the Ghost of Christmas Present stood! It's all right, it's all true, it all happened, Ha ha!

Narrator 1: The boy was off like a shot. He must have a steady hand at the trigger who could have got a shot off half so fast.

Narrator 2: And really, for a man who had been so out of practice for so many years, he had a splendid laugh. The father of a long, long line of brilliant laughs.

(The boy returns carrying a gigantic turkey, followed by the Butcher who carries the bill.)

Scrooge: Ha! Here's the turkey! Hallo! Whoop! How are you? Merry Christmas! *It is a turkey!* What a turkey! It could have never stood on its own two legs, that bird. Why that's impossible to carry to Camden Town. You must have a cab.

Narrator 1: The chuckle with which he said this...And the chuckle with which he paid for the turkey...

Narrator 2: And the chuckle with which he paid for the cab...

Narrator 1: Were only to be exceeded by the chuckle with which he greeted every one he met that day.

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(The two Solicitors enter.)

Scrooge: My dear sir! My dear lady! I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. A Merry Christmas to you, sir!

First Solicitor: 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 to accept...

(Scrooge whispers in the man's ear. He reacts, whispers in the 2nd Solicitor's ear.)

Second Solicitor: Lord bless me!

First Solicitor: My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?

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

First Solicitor: My dear sir, I don't know what to say to such munifi--

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

Second Solicitor: We will! Merry Christmas!

Scrooge: **(to himself for the first time)** Merry Christmas!

Narrator 1: He went to church, and walked about the streets, and watched the people scurrying to and fro.

Narrator 2: He never dreamed that any walk -- that anything -- could yield him so much happiness. In the afternoon, he turned his steps towards his nephew's house.

Scrooge: Good day, Fred. Good day, niece!

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

Scrooge: It is I. Your Uncle Scrooge. Your poor old Uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?

Fred: Why, Uncle...I...

Fred's Wife: Dear uncle, please, come to dinner.

(The rest of the guests engulf him, removing his coat, bringing him some wine, shaking his hand, kissing his cheek, etc.)

Narrator 1: He was at home in five minutes. He hugged his nephew, and kissed his niece. Wonderful party! Wonderful family!

Narrator 2: But he was early at the office next morning. Oh yes, he was early there. If he could only be there first, and catch Bob Cratchit coming late! That was the thing he had set his heart upon.

(Cratchit has rushed into the Counting-House)

Scrooge: Hallo! What do you mean by coming here this time of day?

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

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

Bob: It's only once a year, sir. It shall not be repeated. I was making rather merry yesterday, sir.

Scrooge: Now, I'll tell you what, my friend...I am not going to stand this sort of thing any longer. And therefore...and therefore...and therefore, I am about to raise your salary!

(The whole company gasps. Silence. Bob is speechless.)

Scrooge: A Merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you in many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family. We will discuss your affairs this very afternoon. Over a steaming bowl of Christmas punch. Now make up the fires, and buy another scuttle of coal to warm this place. Do it before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit!

(They embrace. The rest of the cast joins them. “Here Heres” are heard throughout each of the ending lines. SFX finale music begins. Song 11. We Wish You a Merry Christmas)

Narrator 1: Scrooge was better than his word. He did all that he promised, and infinitely more.

Narrator 2: And to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father.

(Tiny Tim runs out.)

Scrooge: Tim, one last thing, I have a special present for you. **(He kneels down to present Tim with the music box.)** It’s a music box. It may not look much on the outside, but in it. It has magic. When you open it, it can be Christmas whenever you like.

(He opens it and throws himself into the arms of Scrooge. He is frozen for a moment, and then – overwhelmed – embraces Tim. The remaining lines are all direct address to the audience.)

Bob: He became as good a friend, and as good a master and as good a man as the good old city ever knew.

Dilber: Or any other good old city, town, or borough in the good old world.

Present: He had no further dealing with Spirits.

Past: But lived by their precepts all the year.

Fezziwig: And it was always said of him that he knew how to keep Christmas well.

All: May that be truly said of all of us.

Scrooge: And so, as Tiny Tim observed.

Tiny Tim: God bless us, everyone!

All: **(together)** God bless us, everyone!

(Snow begins on stage. All voices sing together)

All: *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.

We wish you a Merry Christmas.

We wish you a Merry Christmas.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

(SFX. Bells of London ringing. The End.)