
A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Original Adaptation by Mike Ferrians and Brenda Chapman (2011?)

Shortened and Modified by Jim Meek, 2015

Language changed to match that of the Dickens' 1843 version (<http://nc-chap.org/dickens>)

Additions are in red

All action takes place in front of the Courthouse; bedroom is stage-left, counting house: in front of left steps, Fezziwigs, school house etc in front of main steps. Stage completely bare except for E. Scrooge tombstone in 'cemetery' to far right. Small signs at each location, from left:

Original running time 54 min. current modified run time=26 min

Ferrians script also at <http://nc-chap.org/dickens>

Ferrians audio only <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I888-RWrYvw>

Youtube BBC versions. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XT0Rzy5Op2Q>

Runtime approximately 25' vs approximately 55' for Ferrians original

CAST:

Carolers (4-6 in costume or capes)

Act 1: Scene 1 Here we come a wassailing, (end God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen) 1:5 Deck the

Hall 1:7: Carol of the bells, 1:8: I Saw Three Ships

2:1 Good King Wenceslas, 2:5 We Wish You a Merry Christmas, 2:7 Sussex Carol, 2:8
Caroling Caroling, Hark the Herald Angels

Ebenezer Scrooge *Jim Meek*

Fred Hollowell (Ebenezer's nephew) *George*

Bob Cratchit *James Kasses*

Mr. Jeeves, Charity Solicitor *Greg Haughey*

Mr. Howell, Charity Solicitor *Eric Salee*

Tiny Tim *(NCHS)*

A Boy *Alex*

Spirit of Christmas Past (SCP) *Judy Tigani*

Spirit of Christmas Present (SCP) *Jack Murphy*

Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come (SCY) *Susan Small?*

Jacob Marley, Ebenezer's dead partner) *Greg Tigani*

Secondary

Janet Hollowell, Fred's wife *Barb. Bullock*

Mrs. Cratchit *Judy/Sidney Robinson*

Belinda Cratchit *Ava, 8 years old or
Genevieve*

Two Younger Cratchits ??

Ignorance & Want (boy and girl, 4-6 years old) *Finn, Louise 6 years old*

Old Joe, the junk dealer *Jack Murphy/Brian Cannon*

ACT 1

SCENE 1: THE COUNTING HOUSE Fred, Cratchit, Scrooge, 2 solicitors (5:32)
solicitors hold ledgers and can read their parts

SCENE 2: THE BEDROOM, Scrooge, Marley (3:37)

SCENE 3: THE BEDROOM, Scrooge, SCPast (0:52)

SCENE 4. OUTDOORS Scrooge, SCPast (1:29)

SCENE 5: FEZZIWIG'S ESTABLISHMENT Scrooge, SCPast (1:20)

ï (points at other imaginary characters)

SCENE 6: deleted Scrooge, SCPast, Belle

SCENE 7: THE BEDROOM Scrooge, SCPresent

SCENE 8: CRATCHIT HOME Scrooge, SCPresent, Mrs. Cratchit, Tiny Tim, Peter (son)
Belinda(daughter) (Scene 7 and 8, 3:12)

ACT 2

SCENE 1: FRED HOLLOWELL HOME Fred, Janet, Scrooge, SCPresent (1:52)

SCENE 2: THE DARKNESS Scrooge, SCYet, Old Joe (ragpicker), (Stave 4) (1:20)

SCENE 3: CRATCHIT HOME deleted Scrooge, Cratchit, Peter, Belinda (1:08)

SCENE 4: GRAVEYARD Scrooge, SCYet (0:55)

SCENE 5: THE BEDROOM Scrooge, Boy (Stave 5) (1:56)

SCENE 6: OUTDOORS Scrooge, 2 Solicitors (0:52)

SCENE 7: FRED HOLLOWELL HOME (1:13) Scrooge, Fred, Janet

SCENE 8: THE COUNTING HOUSE Scrooge, Cratchit, Solicitor, Tiny Tim (1:26)

SOUND EFFECTS

Courthouse bell

ACT 1 SCENE 1: THE COUNTING HOUSE

“Stage” is the plaza/porch in front of the courthouse.

CRATCHIT and SCROOGE walk to ‘office’ next to front entrance to courthouse from among the crowd in courthouse square and stand stage left at the front.

Carolers (on platform? Below platform? are singing “Here we Come A-Wassailing” full volume
Scrooge faces the audience, pretending to write on a ledger. Maybe a quill? Cratchit faces
Kensley Johns house, pretending to write. Fred enters up steps from street
Carolers drop volume.

FRED: A Merry Christmas, Uncle Scrooge! God save you!

SCROOGE: Bah, humbug!

FRED: Christmas a humbug, Uncle! You don't mean that, I am sure?

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

FRED: Come, Uncle Scrooge. What reason have you to be so dismal? You're rich enough.

SCROOGE: Bah Humbug.

FRED: Don't be cross, uncle!

SCROOGE: What else can I be when I live in such a world of fools as this? Merry Christmas. Out upon merry Christmas. What's Christmas time to you, Fred, but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older and not an hour 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 his heart. He should!

FRED: Uncle!

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

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

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

FRED: There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited. Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of silver or gold in my pocket, I believe that Christmas has done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!

(CRATCHIT bursts into applause at this, then stops at SCROOGE'S scowl) SCROOGE:
Cratchit, Let me hear another sound out of *you*, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation!

(CRATCHIT slinks back to his work.)

FRED: Don't be angry, Uncle. Come and dine with us tomorrow. I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you. Why can't we be friends?

SCROOGE: Good *afternoon*

FRED: I am sorry to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel to which I have been a party. But, I'll keep my Christmas humor to the last. So, a Merry Christmas, Uncle!

(FRED hurries off.)

SCROOGE: Good afternoon!

(FRED poking back in)

FRED: And a Happy New Year! (hurries off)

SCROOGE: *Good afternoon!!*

FRED (poking back in): And a Merry Christmas to you, Bob Cratchit!

CRATCHIT (looking up, surprised): Thank you, sir! A Merry Christmas to you!

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

(JEEVES AND HOWELL, Charity solicitors, *enter from in front of main door to CH.*)

MR. JEEVES: 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.

MR. JEEVES: We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner.

(SCROOGE scowls.)

MR. HOWELL: 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 necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, Sir.

SCROOGE (looking up): Are there no prisons

HOWELL: Plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE: And the Union workhouses, Mr. Howell? Are they still in operation?

HOWELL: They are. Still, I wish I could say they were not.

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

HOWELL: Both very busy, sir.

SCROOGE: Oh, well, I was afraid from what you had said that something had occurred to stop them in their useful course. I'm glad to hear it.

JEEVES (exchanging glances with HOWELL): 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, above all others, when Want is keenly felt, and Abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?

SCROOGE: Nothing.

JEEVES: You wish to be anonymous,?

SCROOGE: I wish to be left alone, Mr. Jeeves, 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 institutions I have mentioned, they cost enough, and those who are badly off must go there.

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

SCROOGE: if they would rather die, Mr. Howell, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides—excuse me--I don't know that.

HOWELL: But you might know it.

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

(As SOLICITORS exit, a few CAROLERS approach office. One boy steps up to regale SCROOGE as they sing **“God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen.”** CRATCHIT is pleased.)

SCROOGE (seizing a ruler): Get away from here, you!

(Child, startled, retreats to the CAROLERS, who rush off to West Wing.)

SCROOGE (to CRATCHIT): Cratchit, You'll want all day tomorrow, I suppose?

CRATCHIT: 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!

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

SCROOGE: Hmph! 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 next morning!

CRATCHIT: Oh, yes, sir, I shall. I certainly shall.

(SCROOGE exits. CRATCHIT dons scarf and hat, snuffs his candle)

SCENE 2: THE BEDROOM.

SCROOGE has gone into the west wing, put on white nightshirt & cap and come out standing somewhat away from the railing. He is pretending to eat. Courthouse bells start to ring 3 times. Carolers are silent

MARLEY (comes from west wing, stands behind Scrooge In a booming voice): *Scrooge!*

(Scrooge springs up from his chair, dropping bowl and spoon.)

MARLEY: *Scro-o-ooge!!*

SCROOGE (after a pause): Marley's Ghost! Humbug! I won't believe it!

(MARLEY, a grayish-white figure bound in cash-boxes and thick ledgers on oversized chains secured with huge padlocks, all of the same color.

SCROOGE (eyes wide, incredulous): How now! [coldly]! What do you want with me?

MARLEY (proceeding in a dark, low tone): Much!

SCROOGE: Who are you?

MARLEY: Ask me who I *was*.

SCROOGE: Who *were* you then?

MARLEY: In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley. You don't believe in me. What evidence would you have of my reality, beyond that of your senses?

SCROOGE: I don't know.

MARLEY: Why do you doubt your senses?

SCROOGE: Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You might be an undigested bit of beef, Ha ha!

MARLEY (screaming monstrously): *AAHHH!*

SCROOGE (dropping to his knees): Mercy! Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?

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

SCROOGE: I do. I must! But why have you come to me?

MARLEY: It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellowmen, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit does not go forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared, and turned to happiness!

Marley walks as if dragging a heavy weight; keeping his wrists together as if handcuffed

SCROOGE: You are fettered. Tell me why.

MARLEY: I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, yard by yard, and girded it on of my own free will. Is the pattern strange to you? Or would you know the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as long and heavy as this seven Christmas Eves ago.

You have labored on it since! *It is a ponderous chain!*

(Scrooge looks about him on the floor, seeing nothing.)

SCROOGE: Jacob, old friend Jacob Marley, please, speak comfort to me.

MARLEY: I have none to give. I have little time. I cannot rest, I cannot linger anywhere. My spirit never walked beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunity misused! Yet such was I! Oh, such was I!

SCROOGE (starting to stand): But you always were a good man of business, Jacob Marley.

MARLEY: Business?! Mankind was my business! (Scrooge falls to his knees again.) The common welfare was my business! Charity, mercy, forbearance and benevolence, were all my business! The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business! Oh, why did I walk through crowds of fellow beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode? Were there no poor homes to which its light would have conducted me? (beat) Hear me! My time is nearly done!

SCROOGE: I will, Jacob. But don't be hard on me!

MARLEY: I am here to warn you, that you have yet a chance of escaping my fate, a chance of my procuring, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE: You were always a good friend! Thank'ee

MARLEY: You will be haunted by three Spirits.

SCROOGE (nervously): Is...is that the chance you mentioned, Jacob?

MARLEY: It is. Without their visits, you cannot hope to shun the path I tread.

Expect the first tomorrow, when the bell tolls one.

Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third, upon the next night. Look to see me no more; and for your sake, remember what has passed between us!

(MARLEY backs up, exits L. We hear screams of remorse and suffering off stage. Scrooge attempts to shake the whole thing off.)

3:37

SCENE 3: THE BEDROOM.

SCROOGE: Was it a dream, then?

(Lays back down.) (We hear the Courthouse bell CHIME.)

SCROOGE (jumping out of bed) Ha! The hour itself,...and nothing else!

(Pleased with himself, he gets back into bed. A figure emerges and takes position behind SCROOGE)

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PAST (SCP): *Scrooge!*

SCROOGE (startled, sitting up): Ahh!

(His head swivels left, as of its own accord. He sees SCP, a striking female figure with bright flowing hair in a white robe bedecked tastefully with summer flowers, and a silver sash. Her expression is bright, full of life and hope. She holds a branch of green holly. A bright light accompanies her. Her voice should be firm, yet light.)

SCROOGE: Are you the Spirit whose coming was foretold to me?

SCP: I am!

SCROOGE: Who, and what, are you?

SCP: I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE (looking her over): Long past?

SCP: No. Your past.

SCROOGE: What brings you here?

SCP: Your welfare!

SCROOGE: I think a night of unbroken rest would be more conducive to my welfare.

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

(SCP takes hold of SCROOGE'S arm. He rises and walks with her.)

SCENE 4: OUTDOORS to the right of the “bedroom”; to the far left of the CH door.

CAROLERS quietly sing “**Carol of the Bells.**”)

SCROOGE: Good heaven! I was bred in this place. I was a boy here. I attended the Academy over there which was quite new in 1803.

SCP: Do you recollect the way, Ebenezer?

SCROOGE: Remember it! I could walk it blindfold

SCP: Strange, that you've forgotten it for so many years.

SCROOGE: Why, that's David Masterson! And Robert Estes! Hello!

SCP: These are merely shadows of the things that have been. They have no consciousness of us.

SCROOGE: Poor boy! My mother died giving birth to my sister. My father grew morose and seemed to begrudge us both ever after. (beat) I wish...but it's too late, now.

SCP: What is the matter?

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

SCP: You went to work for a wonderful man, Mr. Fezziwig, who keeps a warehouse. Your sister died a young woman, but she did have a child, as I recall.

SCROOGE (thoughtful): Yes, a son, my nephew. His name is Fred Hollowell.

SCP: Your nephew, Ebenezer; the only family you have left.

SCROOGE: Yes, that is true.

SCP: Come along, Ebenezer. It is time to see another Christmas at Fezziwig's.

SCENE 5: FEZZIWIG'S ESTABLISHMENT. To right of CH front door

SCP: Do you know this place?

SCROOGE: Know it! This is where I was apprenticed! Look! It's old Fezziwig! Bless his heart! It's Fezziwig, alive again! And there's Dick Wilkins! We were the best of friends!

Fezziwig said "No more work tonight, my boys! It's Christmas Eve! Life is too short for all work and no play. He said "I say it's time for a party! Hilliho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer! " And, we all had a party.

SCP: It's such a small matter, to make these silly folks so full of feel gratitud.

SCROOGE: Small thing!

SCP: Is it not? After all, what did he do, this Fezziwig? Spent a few pounds on a party. Does he deserve such praise as this?

SCROOGE: It isn't that, Spirit. Why, Mr. Fezziwig has the power to make us happy or unhappy. He can make our work light or burdensome, just in the way he looks at us, and the way he addresses us! A thousand such little things add up, you know, until the happiness he gives is as great as if it cost a fortune, and...

SCP: What is the matter?

SCROOGE: Nothing particular.

SCP: Something, I think.

SCROOGE: No, no. It's...it's just that I would like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now. That's all.

Carolers stop

SCP: Come, Ebenezer, my time grows short

[Scene 6, Ebenezer & Belle deleted]

SCENE 7: THE BEDROOM (back to the left door of the CH

Carolers: **“Carol of the Bells,”**)

(SCROOGE wakes himself from a “prodigiously tough snore” and sits up in bed to dim spot. He looks around, expecting another ghost. Just as he goes to lie down again, he hears...)

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT (SCP): Ha ha ha ha! *Ha ha ha Ha ha!* A-HA HA HA HA HA HA HA! SCROOGE! EBENEZER SCROOGE!

(As SCROOGE alights from bed, lights up to reveal SCP seated on a throne upon a platform lit with a thousand lights, bedecked with mistletoe, and heaped with a feast fit for a king. He is an impressive figure in full beard, wearing a green robe trimmed in white fur and crowned with a holly wreath. He holds a golden torch in his hand which is filled with start dust. SCROOGE approaches gingerly.)

Scrooge moves left where SCP is waiting

SCP: Come! Come here and know me better, man!...Come in and know me better, man! I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. You have never seen the likes of me before?

SCROOGE: Never.

SCP (standing): Touch my robe!

SCROOGE: Where are we going?

SCP: You will see!

(SCROOGE reaches out nervously and touches the robe.)

SCENE 8: CRATCHIT HOME. (to right of Fezziwigs)

(CAROLERS **I Saw Three Ships.**)

MRS. CRATCHIT, BELINDA, AND TWO YOUNGER CRATCHITS ARE NEAR THE CH ENTRANCE, THE OLDER ONES SITTING ON THE BENCH, THE YOUNGER ONES PLAYING

MRS. CRATCHIT: What has ever got your precious father then? And your brother, Tiny Tim?

BELINDA: Father will be home any minute!

(CRATCHIT enters just then, bearing TINY TIM, holding his crutch. He is enthusiastically greeted by his family, kissed by his wife.)

TWO YOUNGER CRATCHITS: Come, Tim! Come hear the pudding singing in the copper!

(They bear him off.)

MRS. CRATCHIT: And how did little Tim behave himself in church?

CRATCHIT: As good as gold, and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant for them to remember, on Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see... But he's growing stronger every day, I just know it!

MRS. CRATCHIT: Martha, help me with the goose. (Children cheering.)

BELINDA: There's such a goose, Father, such as we've never had before!

(MRS. CRATCHIT re-enters in high procession with a small goose on a platter, followed in parade by THE TWO YOUNGER CRATCHITS. It is placed on the table and all are seated.)

THE CHILDREN: Such a goose!...Just smell the sage and onion!...

BELINDA: Mother outdid herself this year...We got it for a good price, Father!...It wasn't expensive at all!

CRATCHIT (standing and raising his cup): A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!

ALL: God bless us!

TINY TIM: God bless us, everyone!

SCROOGE: Spirit. Tell me if Tiny Tim will live?

SCP: I see a vacant seat at this table, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the future, the child will die.

SCROOGE (startled):No, no, kind Spirit. Say he will be spared.

SCP: If these shadows remain unaltered by the future, none other of my race will find him here. What then? Your words were "If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population"!

SCP: Yes! In the future perhaps you will hold your tongue until you have discovered what the surplus population is, and *where* it is. 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!

CRATCHIT: Mr. Scrooge. I give you Mr. Scrooge, the founder of our feast.

MRS. CRATCHIT: Hmph! The founder of our feast, indeed! I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and hope he'd have a good appetite for it.

CRATCHIT: My dear, the children, Christmas Day..

MRS. CRATCHIT (after a pause): I'll drink his health, for your sake and the Day's, not for his. (raising her cup) Long life to him! A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!

CRATCHIT: To Mr. Scrooge.

[THE REST DRINK WITH NO HEARTINESS]

BELINDA: To Mr. Scrooge.

ALL: To Mr. Scrooge. [Tiny Tim with no enthusiasm]

(All drink. SCP approaches and sprinkles star dust liberally on the Cratchit table. At which the family brightens up.)

CRATCHIT: I think it's time for a song.

TINY TIM: A Christmas Carol!

MRS. CRATCHIT: What shall we sing?

(TINY TIM begins **“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!”** All join in.) 3:51 0:27

ACT 2

SCENE 1: HOLLOWELL HOME. (to right of Cratchit's home)

(Curtain opens to a small crowd at a party on Christmas Day. They sing a stanza of "Good King Wencelas." After which, they DANCE. Afterward, all are holding drinks. SCROOGE and SCP enter to behold the scene.)

FRED: Janet, Scrooge said that Christmas was a humbug. He believed it too!

JANET: More shame for him, Fred!

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

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

FRED: But his wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it. He doesn't make himself comfortable with it. Ha ha ha! (general laughter)

JANET: Well, I have no patience with him.

FRED: Oh, I have! I am sorry for him. Who suffers by his ill whims? Himself, always. Here, he takes it into his head to dislike us, and he won't come and dine with us. What's the consequence? He loses some pleasant moments, which could do him no harm. I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not. He has given us plenty of merriment, I am sure, and it would be ungrateful not to drink his health. Here's to Uncle Scrooge!

ALL: Uncle Scrooge! (laughter, as all drink.)

(We see something at SCP's feet. SCROOGE notices it.)

SCROOGE: Forgive me, if I am not justified in what I ask, but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding there, from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw?

SCP: It might be a claw, for all the flesh there is on it. Look here!

(SCP draws aside the folds of his robe to disclose WANT and IGNORANCE—two thin, dirty, wretched, scowling waifs crouched and clutching at his feet. We hear "Coventry Carol")

SCROOGE (alarmed): Spirit! Are they yours?

SCP: No! They are Man's! Do you not know them? This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their kind, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see written the word DOOM, unless the writing be erased. Deny it! Slander those who tell it ye, And bide the end!

SCROOGE: Have they no refuge or resource?

SCP: Your words were: 'Are there no prisons? Are there no *workhouses*'?

(Suddenly the chime of twelve is heard)

SCENE 2: THE DARKNESS Move towards end. A body (manikin under a sheet) is next the CH, a graveyard is at the end. Old Joe is standing near the body with a pile of old curtains and a mans shirt

(SCP has disappeared and in his place approaches the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come (SCY). It is a tall figure, entirely cloaked and hooded in black. All that we will see of this figure are its bony hands.)

SCROOGE: I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come? (SCY slowly nods, points onward)

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?

(SCY nods.)

SCROOGE: Ghost of the future! I fear you more than any specter I have seen. Will you not speak to me? (SCY lifts its arm and points beyond SCROOGE.)

SCROOGE (seeing that he is powerless to engage it): Lead on! The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me, I know. Lead on, Spirit!

(SCY turns and points in the opposite direction, revealing a greasy, bedraggled old man wheeling a wheelbarrow filled with shirts, curtains and sheets

OLD JOE: Four pounds, six shillings and twopence—for his bed curtains and clothes. Took it down, rings and all with him lying there. And why not? He isn't likely to take cold without em, I dare say. And his best silk shirt. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for me – putting it on him to be buried in.

This is the end of it you see.. He scared every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead! Ha ha ha! He had no one to care for him, to bury him proper with a hearse and all.

SCROOGE: Spirit, I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. Spirit, this is fearful place. In leaving it, I shall not leave its lesson, Trust me, Let us go.

SCENE 3: CRATCHIT HOME. [deleted]

SCENE 4: GRAVEYARD.

SCROOGE: Spectre, something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it but I don't know how. Tell me, what man that was whom we saw lying dead?

(SCY points opposite—or to apron—where lights come up on a graveyard scene.)

SCROOGE is hesitant, loathe to go.)

SCROOGE (nervous and afraid): 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 the shadows of things that *may* be, only?

(SCY points to the gravestone.)

SCROOGE (desperate): Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, which, if persevered in, they must lead; But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!

(SCY continues pointing. SCROOGE creeps toward the stone, trembling. Seeing the name inscribed there, he falls to his knees.)

SCROOGE: Am I that man whom no one mourned? No, Spirit, Oh no, no!

(SCY points to SCROOGE and back to the stone.)

SCROOGE (crying now): *Spirit!* Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for your intervention. Why show me this, if I am past all hope?

(SCY hand begins to shake.)

SCROOGE: I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will remember the lessons of the Past; I will live in the Past, the Present and the Future. The spirits of all three will strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach. Oh, tell me that I may sponge away the writing on this stone!

SCENE 5: THE BEDROOM. (Stave five)

(We hear CAROLERS with “**We Wish You A Merry Christmas**” on SCROOGE'S bedroom at right, as before. He is “waking” from a sob The chimes are tolling EIGHT.)

SCROOGE: I will live in the Past, Present and the Future. Jacob Marley, I say it on my knees! *Wha...?* Where am I? Wait...what day is this? It's morning, but what day? How long have I been with the Spirits? I don't know. (pinching himself) But I'm alive. I'm **alive**. **The Courthouse is here**. The bank and Jessops are all here. I am here! Woo-hoo! I don't know what to do! I feel light as a feather. I'm happy as an angel! I'm as merry as a school-boy! A merry Christmas to everybody.

I don't know what day of the month it is. I don't know how long I've been among the Spirits.

(He runs to his window, looking out. A boy appears, R. He is the same boy who attempted to sing to SCROOGE at the counting house.) [Start ringing in CH bells to welcome Christmas?]

SCROOGE: What's today?

(BOY, seeing SCROOGE, makes to turn and run)

BOY Eh? [full of wonder]

SCROOGE: What's to-day, my fine fellow?

BOY: To-day, Why, it's Christmas Day!

SCROOGE: It's Christmas Day! [to himself] I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. Hallo, my fine fellow!

BOY: Hallo!

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

BOY: I should hope I did.

SCROOGE: An intelligent boy. A remarkable boy. Do you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging up there?

BOY: What, the one as big as me?

SCROOGE: Yes the one as big as you!

BOY: It's hanging there now.

SCROOGE: It is? Why, then you must go and buy it. Yes, go and buy it now.

BOY (looking around): Police!

SCROOGE: Oh, no, no. I really do mean it. Go and buy it, and tell 'em to bring it here, so that I may give them direction where to take it. Come back with the man and I'll give you a shilling. Come back with him in less than five minutes and I'll give you *half a crown!*

(BOY turns and is off like a shot.)

SCROOGE RUBBING HIS HANDS AND LAUGHING: I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's! He shan't know who sent it. It's twice the size of Tiny Tim! Oh...Tiny Tim...Tiny Tim will live. On my soul, Tiny Tim will live. A Merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Ha ha ha

SCENE 6: OUTDOORS. (SCROOGE goes in main door, dresses)

(MR. JEEVES and MR. HOWELL enter R, quietly chatting. SCROOGE turns, sees them, hurries to them.)

SCROOGE: My dear Jeeves (taking JEEVES by both hands) How do you do? I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. A merry Christmas to you sir!

JEEVES (incredulous): Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE: Yes. That is my name. I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And yours, too, sir! And Howell will you have the goodness—(SCROOGE whispers in HOWELL'S ear)

HOWELL: Lord, bless me! My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?

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

HOWELL: My dear sir, I don't know what to say to such munifi...

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

JEEVES & HOWELL: We will! We will!

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

(SCROOGE, JEEVES, and HOWELL exit.)

SCENE 7: HOLLOWELL HOME.

(We hear “Sussex Carol” off.) SCROOGE walks about waving to audience, MERRY CHRISTMAS
(There is a knock.)

JANET: Fred, Now who can
that be?

FRED: I don't know, Janet. No one's expected at this hour.

(FRED answers door off. He reappears, walking backward, with SCROOGE.)

SCROOGE: Fred!

(JANET gasps.) FRED: Why bless my soul who's that?

SCROOGE: It is I, your Uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner, will you let me in, Fred?.

FRED (with a look at JANET): Why, I don't know what to say!

SCROOGE: Well, you could say bah-humbug—a retort I heartily repent of and shall never use again—or, you could say, Come in!

FRED: Come in? Why, of course! Of course you shall come in! Hoorah! Uncle Scrooge, you have made us both very happy! Oh, may I introduce my wife, Janet? Janet, my Uncle Scrooge.

SCROOGE My dear Janet

JANET: Why, thank you...Uncle Scrooge. We are very happy you are here!

SCROOGE (turning to FRED): I am sorry for the things I said about Christmas. And sorry for the poor reception I gave you yesterday, of which you were so undeserving. I see the image of my sister in your face. I loved her, you know. And she, you.

FRED: I know it, Uncle Scrooge. She loved you very much, and wished until her dying day that we should always be close.

SCROOGE: And so we are, Fred, and so we shall be. So we shall be.

SCENE 8: THE COUNTING HOUSE.

(SCROOGE is standing at his desk with a mischievous smile on his face, waiting for Cratchit humming to himself as he works. **“Caroling, Caroling”** off quietly. CRATCHIT enters.)

SCROOGE (looking up with a feigned scowl and growl): Hallo! What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?

CRATCHIT (terrified): I am very sorry, sir. I *am* behind my time.

SCROOGE (alighting from his desk): You are? Yes, I think you are. Step this way, if you please.

(They meet at CRATCHIT'S desk.)

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

SCROOGE: Now, I'll tell you what, my friend. I am not going to stand for this sort of thing any longer. And therefore...and therefore...

(From behind his back he produces a leather bag full of coins)

SCROOGE: And therefore...*I am going to raise your salary!* (throws the bag on the desk and crunches CRATCHIT in a magnificent embrace) A merrier Christmas than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary and endeavor to assist your struggling family. Now, you needn't say a thing. Come with me. We will discuss the particulars over a bowl of smoking bishop before you so much as dot another i, Bob Cratchit!

(SCROOGE and CRATCHIT exit L. Lights up on stage. CAROLERS appear, singing. NARRATOR stands at left apron, as before.)

SOLICITOR1 *Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more. And to Tiny Tim, who did NOT die, he was a second father.*

(SCROOGE appears L with TINY TIM in hand, who is walking without his crutch; and the CRATCHIT family following.)

SOLICITOR1 He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew.

(SCROOGE and CRATCHIT'S center stage, surrounded by CAROLERS.)

SOLICITOR1: *And ever afterward it was always said of Ebenezer Scrooge that he knew how to keep Christmas, and keep it 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...*

CAST: GOD BLESS US, EVERYONE!

(CAST breaks out in **“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!”**, audience to join in, under bows.)

THE END