

HUMBUG!

by Daniel Wray



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Humbug!

A modern adaptation of
A Christmas Carol

by Daniel Wray

“I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round, as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys ...”

— Charles Dickens
A Christmas Carol

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Scrooge — Obviously the lead character, he's a mean-spirited, miserly old man who becomes the nicest man alive

Tom — One of Scrooge's employees

Marie — Another of Scrooge's employees

Bob Crachit — Another employee who has a son dying of a degenerative disability

Mary Crachit — His wife

Tiny Tim — The dying, cheerful little boy

Belinda Crachit — His sister

Peter Crachit — Tim's brother

Martha Crachit — His older sister

Fred Scrooge — Scrooge's nephew, not cut from the same cloth at all

Beth Scrooge — Fred's wife, sweet and not at all fond of Scrooge

Elizabeth — One of Fred's kids

Brad — Another of his kids

Sharon — Another

Announcer — Off-stage voice

Belle — Scrooge's lady friend who was to marry him, but he loved money more, and she knew it

Fezziwick — Scrooge's old boss

Fan — Scrooge's sister

Young Scrooge

Solicitor 1 — Comes calling for a donation on Christmas Eve and gets nothing but grief

Solicitor 2 — Same

Salvation Army Bell Ringer**Ghost of Christmas Past****Ghost of Christmas Present****Ghost of Christmas Future**

Marley — The ghost of his long-dead Rastafarian roommate

Carolers — Two or three singers (or more) constantly singing “God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen” and getting soundly rejected until the end, when inexplicably, Scrooge wants them to sing but they don’t know the words

NOTES ON DOUBLING PARTS

There are several opportunities for parts to be doubled if working with a smaller group. The following list contains which scenes the characters play and suggestions for other parts they may play if possible. The play may be performed with as many as twenty-eight players or as few as thirteen.

Scrooge — Main character — all scenes

Tom — 1, 6. Could also play Fezziwick or Young Scrooge

Maria — 1, 6. Could also play Belle or Fan

Bob Crachit — 1, 5, 6, 7. Could also play Young Scrooge or Fezziwick

Mary Crachit — 5, 6, 7. Could also play Fan, Belle, or Beth

Tiny Tim — 5, 7. Could also play Brad

Belinda Crachit — 5, 6, 7. Could also play Elizabeth

Peter Crachit — 5, 6, 7. Could play Fezziwick or Young Scrooge

Martha Crachit — 5, 6, 7. Could also play Sharon

Fred Scrooge — 1, 5, 6. Could also play Fezziwick or Young Scrooge

Fred’s wife — 5, 6. Could also play Mary Crachit, Belle, or Fan

Elizabeth — 5, 6. Could also play Mary Crachit, Belle, Fan, Belinda, or Martha

Brad — 5, 6.

Sharon — 5, 6. Could also play Mary Crachit, Belle, Fan, Belinda, or Martha

Belle — 4. Could also play Mary Crachit, Beth, Maria, Belinda or Martha

Fezziwick — 4. Could also play Bob Crachit, Brad, Tom, Solicitor, Christmas Present, or Christmas Future

Fan — 4. Could also play Mary Crachit, Belle, Fan, Belinda, or Martha

Young Scrooge — 4. Could also play Bob Crachit, Brad, Tom, Solicitor, Christmas Present, or Christmas Future

Solicitor 1 — 1, 5, 6. Could also play Belle, Fezziwick, or Fan.

Solicitor 2 — 1, 5, 6. Could also play Belle, Fezziwick, or Fan

Salvation Army Bell Ringer — 2, 3, 5, 6. Could also play Belle or one of Fred's kids

Ghost of Christmas Past — 4. Also could play any of the Crachit kids or Fred's kids

Ghost of Christmas Present — 5. Could also be Tom or Marie

Ghost of Christmas Future — 6. Could be Marley or Fred

Marley — 3. Could also play Christmas Future or Fred (with costume change)

Carolers — 1, 3, 4, 5, 6. (Could be different persons each time —whoever is not in scene)

PRODUCTION NOTES

Synopsis

What if Charles Dickens had written his masterpiece a century later than he did? Scrooge, an accounting firm head with a bittersweet past and his ex-college roommate Bob Marley (yes, *that* Bob Marley) lead Christmas audiences on a humorous journey through *A Christmas Carol* in an adaptation sure to make your audiences laugh.

Costumes

All costumes of living characters are modern-day dress, although the Crachits should all look very thrift store-like. The exception is Bob Marley, who never really made it out of the '70s. He should be adorned with his typical dreadlocks, a rainbow or fringed vest, tie-dyed shirt, bell bottoms, etc. Costumes for the Ghosts are as follows: Christmas Past should be dressed to look very young, perhaps with pigtails and giant lollipop (if a girl) and a yo-yo if a boy. Christmas Present is very red and green and should reflect a carefree, happy Christmas spirit. Christmas Future should be dressed in a black cloak with hood and reflect a demeanor of death.

Set (by scene)

Scene One: A modern office, complete with workstations and computers.

Scene Two: A city street. A street scene may be painted on a backdrop, or items like a fire hydrant, newspaper machine, lightpost, etc., could achieve the same effect.

Scene Three: Scrooge's bedroom. Should have a bed, nightstand, alarm clock, table with TV, and a door set up Stage Left so that transitions can occur.

Scene Four: Starts same as Scene 3. Center Stage should be set up with schoolhouse scene from Scrooge's youth, simply done with a desk or two, stage right set up as Fezziwig's old place — just an accounting office, with a place for dancing behind it — should have a drink table set up complete with punchbowl and cups.

Scene Five: Same as three and four, except where Fezziwig's place was, set up the Crachit dining room (use the same table as the punchbowl table and add six chairs), complete with mismatched place settings and small chicken for dinner, if possible.

Scene Six: Starts in Scrooge's bedroom, then moves to street scene, then the Crachit house.

Sound Effects

Sound of a deep tone bell for striking one o'clock, chains rattling (optional), reggae music, "Stayin' Alive" or other '70s disco song.

Props and Set Pieces

Scene One: Computer monitors, space heaters, coat rack, desks, tables or workstations, winter coats, folders (empty) for the Carolers (will be used in every scene that they appear).

Scene Two: Salvation Army bucket and two bells (one with ringer and one without, plus a nut or small metal piece that could sound like the detached ringer of a bell being thrown into the bucket), wire cutters.

Scene Three: Bowl that Scrooge eats out of, bed with bedding, TV monitor, remote control, nightstand, door, alarm clock, chains for Marley to rattle, baseball bat.

Scene Four: Yo-yo or giant lollipop, book for young Scrooge, sign that says "Fezziwig's," disco ball if possible for above the dance floor punchbowl, table, cups, ring for Belle, sign that says "Scrooge and Marley's."

Scene Five: Wand for Ghost of Christmas Past, mini candy canes in a basket for Christmas Past to throw into the audience, mismatched place settings, chicken for Crachits' table, walker or tiny crutches for Tim, pen and pencil set, tombstone saying "Ebenezer Scrooge, 1955-_____" (insert current year). Tombstone may be projected in PowerPoint. Find a tombstone image and use Photoshop to customize it to Scrooge.

Scene Six: Pen and pencil set, knitting needles and yarn, pillows for creating "dead" Scrooge under covers, money or checkbook for Scrooge.

Scene 1

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(It's Christmas Eve and MARIE, TOM, and BOB, three of SCROOGE's employees, are trying to wrap up their duties so they can get home.)

MARIE: Good grief! Is anybody else freezing in here?!

TOM: Speaking of that, can you see my feet?

MARIE: Yeah, why?

TOM: Oh, good. I can't feel them anymore, and I was getting a little worried that they weren't there ...

MARIE: No kidding.

TOM: Actually, once the numbness sets in, it's quite comfortable. Wait — if I see a bright light, should I walk toward it?

MARIE: Very funny. It's not bad enough that we're here on Christmas Eve — could old Scrooge at least let us turn the heat up a bit?

BOB: Well, at least it *is* Christmas Eve. You know what that means!

TOM: Yep. A day off without old Mr. Sunshine ...

BOB: More than that! It's Christmas! The one day of the year when we all remember that life's meaning is found in the kindness we show to others!

MARIE: Well, not *all* of us ...

BOB: What do you mean?

MARIE: Oh, come on now, Crachit — surely you don't think Scrooge is going to show kindness to anyone.

BOB: I believe there's hope for every one of us!

TOM: Yeah, right. And Santa Claus is real.

MARIE: Shhhh! Here he comes! Try to look warm!

SCROOGE: *(Entering with a grumpy flourish)* Come on, now! Get to work! No time for idle chit-chat!

BOB: Good afternoon, Mr. Scrooge!

SCROOGE: What's good about it?

MARIE: Well, sir, it is Christmas Eve, after all.

- 1 SCROOGE: Bah! Just another day is all!
- 2 TOM: I agree, sir. Just another very *cold* day.
- 3 SCROOGE: Yes, I suppose it *is* cold, isn't it? (*Pause*) Which
- 4 reminds me ...
- 5 MARIE: Yes sir?
- 6 SCROOGE: I've noticed that you've all been using those
- 7 little space heaters to keep yourselves warm ...
- 8 BOB: Yes sir. Not that we mind at all — it's just a little too
- 9 cold in here without them.
- 10 SCROOGE: Yes, well, I don't think it's right!
- 11 MARIE: Really, sir? Does that mean —
- 12 SCROOGE: Yes. Effective immediately, I want them turned
- 13 off.
- 14 TOM: So you'll be turning up the heat then?
- 15 SCROOGE: What? Heavens, no! But I saw the electric bill
- 16 this past month — those space heaters are killing me!
- 17 MARIE: But sir! It's freezing in here!
- 18 SCROOGE: Bah! I'm perfectly comfortable!
- 19 TOM: (*Under his breath*) That's because your blood runs cold.
- 20 SCROOGE: (*Walking over to him*) What did you say?
- 21 TOM: I said, uh, I wish we were *all* so bold ...
- 22 SCROOGE: Yes, well ... (*A knock is heard at the door.*
- 23 *SCROOGE shuffles over to the door and opens it. There is a*
- 24 *group of CAROLERS singing "God Rest Ye Merry,*
- 25 *Gentlemen."*)
- 26 CAROLERS: (*Singing*) "God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let
- 27 nothing you dismay."
- 28 SCROOGE: Bah! (*Slams the door.*) Humbug!
- 29 BOB: Sir, I believe those were the folks from accounting.
- 30 They might be bringing our Christmas bonuses!
- 31 SCROOGE: Ha. (*Pause*) Wow. I haven't laughed that hard in
- 32 years. (*Then to the EMPLOYEES*) Why would I give you
- 33 a Christmas bonus? Haven't I given you all jobs?
- 34 MARIE: But sir, it's Christmas!
- 35 SCROOGE: Oh ... all right.

- 1 TOM: Really, sir?
- 2 SCROOGE: Yes. (*Pause*) I suppose I could let you keep your
3 space heaters on for the next few minutes.
- 4 BOB: Uh ... thank you, sir?
- 5 SCROOGE: (*Loudly*) But tomorrow they go! (*The door flies*
6 *open and FRED SCROOGE emerges.*)
- 7 FRED: Merry Christmas, everyone!
- 8 MARIE: Merry Christmas, Fred!
- 9 TOM: Hey, Fred! Merry Christmas to you!
- 10 BOB: A very merry Christmas indeed!
- 11 SCROOGE: Bah!
- 12 FRED: Well, how's my favorite uncle on this fine Christmas
13 Eve?
- 14 SCROOGE: Your favorite uncle indeed! I'm your *only* uncle,
15 you twit!
- 16 FRED: True, true. But then that does make you my favorite,
17 now doesn't it?
- 18 SCROOGE: Humbug!
- 19 FRED: Yes, about that. I've noticed you use that word a lot.
- 20 SCROOGE: So?
- 21 FRED: So I've never heard it anywhere else — only from
22 you. What on earth does it mean?
- 23 SCROOGE: It means you're getting on my nerves!
- 24 FRED: Then why don't you just say that?!
- 25 SCROOGE: Because it's much more efficient.
- 26 FRED: But it doesn't make any sense!
- 27 SCROOGE: Bah! Just what right do you have to be so
28 happy all the time? You're certainly poor enough!
- 29 FRED: All right, then — what right do you have to be so
30 miserable? You're certainly rich enough!
- 31 SCROOGE: Why are you bothering me, anyway?
- 32 FRED: Oh, yes! Uncle? I'd like you to come over for dinner
33 tomorrow. It would make my wife and I very happy.
- 34 SCROOGE: With you? Why on earth would I do that?!
- 35 FRED: Because it's Christmas! You should be with family

1 for Christmas!
2 **SCROOGE:** Humbug!
3 **FRED:** See, again, I'm just not sure I understand what that
4 means.
5 **SCROOGE:** It means I think Christmas is a humbug!
6 **FRED:** Oh, Uncle Ebenezer! Surely you don't mean that!
7 **SCROOGE:** I do! And if you had any sense, you'd think the
8 same thing!
9 **FRED:** Oh, Uncle. You're impossible!
10 **SCROOGE:** Exactly! Now go away and leave me alone!
11 **FRED:** All right. But remember that if you change your
12 mind, you're always welcome!
13 **SCROOGE:** Bah!
14 **FRED:** I know — humbug. Whatever that means. Do what
15 you will, Uncle — you can't stop me from keeping
16 Christmas in my heart. And so I'll say it again — merry
17 Christmas! Well, I'm off!
18 **MARIE:** Always good to see you, Fred!
19 **TOM:** Yes — say hello to the wife and kids for us!
20 **BOB:** Tell them all merry Christmas from all of us!
21 **SCROOGE:** Humbug!
22 **TOM:** Well, almost all of us ...
23 **FRED:** Will do, guys! Merry Christmas!
24 **ALL:** *(Together)* Merry Christmas! *(As FRED exits, two*
25 **SOLICITORS enter.)**
26 **SOLICITOR 1:** Hello!
27 **SCROOGE:** What is it? What do you want?
28 **SOLICITOR 2:** Good evening, sir! May we trouble you for a
29 moment of your time?
30 **SCROOGE:** You already have.
31 **SOLICITOR 1:** Good one, Mr ... would you be Mr. Marley?
32 **SCROOGE:** I would be if I had been dead for twenty years!
33 Twenty years this very night!
34 **SOLICITOR 2:** Oh. Terribly sorry to hear that. You would be
35 Mr. Scrooge then?

- 1 SCROOGE: I would be if it means you'll leave me alone!
- 2 SOLICITOR 1: Please, sir, we are from the International
3 Benevolence Fund.
- 4 SOLICITOR 2: Yes sir. You know, at this time of the year,
5 there are many folks who are not as fortunate as you.
- 6 SCROOGE: I find it difficult to believe that anyone could be
7 less fortunate than someone having to listen to you.
- 8 SOLICITOR 1: Oh, but there are, sir. There are people who
9 don't have the money for Christmas dinner ...
- 10 SOLICITOR 2: Or shoes and suitable clothing.
- 11 SOLICITOR 1: Not to mention presents for their children.
- 12 SOLICITOR 2: And our fund lets them enjoy this glorious
13 time of the year by giving them a helping hand.
- 14 SOLICITOR 1: So at this most holy time of year, when we
15 remember the gift our Creator has given us, how much
16 shall we put you down for?
- 17 SCROOGE: Nothing!
- 18 SOLICITOR 2: You mean you wish to remain anonymous?
- 19 SCROOGE: I mean I wish to be left alone!
- 20 SOLICITOR 1: But sir, what of the poor families? What are
21 they supposed to do?
- 22 SCROOGE: Have they done away with welfare?
- 23 SOLICITOR 2: Well, no — of course not.
- 24 SCROOGE: And the shelters? The soup kitchens? Did they
25 close those down as well?
- 26 SOLICITOR 1: Unfortunately, no — they're still in demand.
- 27 SCROOGE: Well, good! For a minute I was afraid the tax
28 dollars the government sucks out of me daily were
29 doing no good whatsoever!
- 30 SOLICITOR 2: But sir, many of the families we help are
31 quite proud. They'd rather die than end up in a shelter
32 or beg for food at the soup kitchens ...
- 33 SCROOGE: Well, then let them die! (*Gasps from the*
34 *SOLICITORS and his EMPLOYEES.*) Better that they get
35 on with dying and decrease the surplus population!

1 SOLICITOR 1: But sir, it's Christmas Eve!

2 SCROOGE: I know what day it is, you fool! Now, be gone
3 and leave me to making money by earning it, not
4 begging for it!

5 SOLICITOR 2: But sir, if you could just find it in your
6 heart —

7 SCROOGE: *(Loudly)* I said go away!

8 SOLICITOR 1: Very well, then. Merry Christmas, Mr.
9 Scrooge. *(With that, they exit.)*

10 SCROOGE: **Humbug!** *(He turns to see his EMPLOYEES*
11 *gathering their things.)* **What are you all doing?**

12 BOB: Getting ready to go home, sir. It's five o'clock.

13 MARIE: *(Muttering under her breath)* On Christmas Eve ...

14 SCROOGE: *(Glaring at her)* It's not bad enough that I have
15 to pay you all for being here tomorrow when you're
16 not? Now you're complaining about having to be here
17 during your working hours as well?

18 TOM: No sir, Mr. Scrooge, sir. Marie was just mentioning it
19 to give me the chance to wish you a merry —

20 SCROOGE: Bah! I'm tired of hearing it! Just go — all of you!

21 BOB: Thank you, sir!

22 SCROOGE: And turn off those infernal heaters! Money,
23 money, money.

24 MARIE: Merry ... I mean, have a good day tomorrow, sir.

25 SCROOGE: Oh, I will. I might actually get something done
26 around here without all manner of people coming by to
27 bother me!

28 BOB: Good ... evening, sir!

29 TOM: Yes, we'll see you the day after tomorrow!

30 SCROOGE: Yes — and don't be late!

31 BOB: Never, sir! *(They all exit.)*

32 SCROOGE: *(Pause, looking around his empty office)* **Christmas.**
33 **What a waste of time! What a hum ...** *(Pause, thinking of*
34 *what that word really does mean)* **What a waste of time!**
35 *(Lights down.)*

Scene 2

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3 *(A Salvation Army BELL RINGER stands with her bucket at*
4 *Center Stage. SCROOGE begins to pass, but the bell ringing*
5 *gets to him. He turns toward her as though he may be about*
6 *to make a donation. He reaches into his pocket and takes out*
7 *some wire cutters. Without saying a word, he takes the bell*
8 *from her, snips the clapper, throws it away, and hands the*
9 *bell back. She looks stunned. At that time, the CAROLERS*
10 *enter and begin to sing "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen." As*
11 *they get to the end of the first line, SCROOGE approaches*
12 *and scares them Off-stage. At this point, the BELL RINGER*
13 *continues to shake her bell, but because it is silent, she*
14 *verbalizes the ring.)*

15 **BELL RINGER: Ring-ring. Ring-ring. Ring-ring.** *(Lights down*
16 *on this scene.)*

Scene 3

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21 *(SCROOGE's apartment. He is eating a bowl of Ramen. He*
22 *sits down on his bed.)*

23 **SCROOGE: Christmas Eve. Bah! I'll just watch a little of my**
24 **favorite show.** *(He points the remote at the television and*
25 *the Financial News Network comes on.)*

26 **ANNOUNCER: (Off-stage) And now a look at how the stock**
27 **market fared today. The Dow Jones Industrial Average**
28 **was up one hundred twelve points on news that the**
29 **war would create an increase in the demand for**
30 **military contracts.**

31 **SCROOGE: How delightful.**

32 **ANNOUNCER: And in other news ...** *(There is a knocking at*
33 *the door. SCROOGE stops the TV with the remote.)*

34 **SCROOGE: Who in the Dickens could that be?** *(He goes to the*
35 *door and opens it to the CAROLERS.)*

- 1 **CAROLERS:** “God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let nothing you
2 **dismay...**” (*He slams the door and locks it.*)
- 3 **SCROOGE:** **Bah!** (*He hears a sound.*) **What? Who is it?** (*He gets*
4 *up and looks around cautiously. A clanging chain can be*
5 *heard, faint at first, but growing louder.*) **Who is it? Make**
6 **yourself known, or I’ll be forced to do something rash!**
7 (*Pause*) **I’m not joking around!** (*He picks up a baseball bat*
8 *from beside his bed and moves toward Center Stage, where*
9 *MARLEY is about to enter.*) **Who’s there?!** (*Reggae music*
10 *plays in the background as MARLEY enters slowly, his*
11 *chains rattling. The slower and more dramatic the better,*
12 *with SCROOGE backing away upon seeing him. He raises the*
13 *bat.*)
- 14 **MARLEY:** **Put that ting down, mon!**
- 15 **SCROOGE:** **Who in the blazes ... ?!** (*Pause, drops bat.*) **Marley?**
16 (*With disbelief*) **Is that you, Marley?**
- 17 **MARLEY:** **Now jus’ who you tink it gonna be, mon?**
- 18 **SCROOGE:** **My old partner, Bob Marley!** (*Pause for laughter*)
19 **But it can’t be!**
- 20 **MARLEY:** **Oh, it be, mon.**
- 21 **SCROOGE:** **But you’re ... you’re ...**
- 22 **MARLEY:** **I believe da word you be lookin’ for is *dead*, mon.**
- 23 **SCROOGE:** **No! It’s not possible!**
- 24 **MARLEY:** **You don’t believe in me, now?**
- 25 **SCROOGE:** **No!** (*Pause*) **You are not real.**
- 26 **MARLEY:** **Oh, I be real, mon.**
- 27 **SCROOGE:** **No. I must have eaten something that disagreed**
28 **with me. You’re nothing but a bit of indigestion ...**
- 29 **MARLEY:** **Nuttin’?** (*He draws closer to SCROOGE slowly as*
30 *SCROOGE backs away. As soon as he is closer, he leans in*
31 *slowly, and after a pause, he says ...*) **Boo.** (*SCROOGE*
32 *jumps and MARLEY laughs.*) **How you been doin’, mon?**
- 33 **SCROOGE:** **No! Why have you come back to torment me?!**
- 34 **MARLEY:** **I torment you? Oh no, mon. It is me dat be**
35 **tormented!**

- 1 SCROOGE: What? Why do you say that?
- 2 MARLEY: Oh, come now, Eb! You be my partner, no? You
3 be my friend since we be in school togeder!
- 4 SCROOGE: Yes, of course.
- 5 MARLEY: Den you know what kind of a man I be. How
6 much da world mean to me.
- 7 SCROOGE: Yes, I suppose I do.
- 8 MARLEY: Well, since I been dead deese last twenty years, I
9 been doin' nuttin' but regrettin'.
- 10 SCROOGE: Regretting what, Marley?
- 11 MARLEY: When I was alive, I did a lotta livin' for myself,
12 mon. I never knew what it was like to live for no one
13 but myself.
- 14 SCROOGE: That's not true! You brought a lot of people a lot
15 of joy, Marley!
- 16 MARLEY: But for all dem wrong reasons, ya know? When
17 a man be alive, he should wander de earth, lookin' for
18 ways to help his fellow man. If he don't, then his Spirit
19 must do it after he die, but den he can't do noting 'bout
20 it! Now I walk de world with emptiness. No rest. No
21 hope, mon! *(He lifts his chains and rattles them.)*
- 22 SCROOGE: Marley, tell me why you are bound with that
23 chain.
- 24 MARLEY: Dis chain? Oh, dis chain be mine. I made it
25 myself, link by link. It was dis long twenty years ago
26 when I die — as long as yours. I see you've been addin'
27 to yours since den.
- 28 SCROOGE: I don't have a chain!
- 29 MARLEY: You do, mon. We all do.
- 30 SCROOGE: But I don't understand! You were happy
31 enough. You were rich enough. You were a good man
32 of business!
- 33 MARLEY: Humankind be my business, mon! Charity.
34 Kindness. Benevolence — these all be my business. But
35 I did not carry these tings in life. And now I wander

- 1 hopelessly as you see me.
- 2 **SCROOGE:** Oh, Marley! Why do you trouble me so now?
- 3 **MARLEY:** I come to warn ya, mon, so dat you might escape
- 4 my fate.
- 5 **SCROOGE:** You were always a good friend to me, Marley.
- 6 **MARLEY:** You gonna be visited by tree spirits —
- 7 **SCROOGE:** Spirits of trees? What on earth for?
- 8 **MARLEY:** No, mon. Not trees! Tree! You know — one, two,
- 9 tree ...
- 10 **SCROOGE:** Oh, of course. But I think I'd rather not.
- 11 **MARLEY:** It's da only way, mon! Da only hope! Without
- 12 dem visitin', you be walkin' beside me! Expect da first
- 13 one tomorrow as the bell tolls one o'clock ...
- 14 **SCROOGE:** Couldn't I just take them all at once and be
- 15 done with it?
- 16 **MARLEY:** No, mon. Expect the second da next night at 1:00.
- 17 Da tird one ... *(Pause)* Uh ... da last one come da next
- 18 night before da clock be done strikin' midnight. Don't
- 19 forget da tings we talked about, mon. Dey be your only
- 20 hope ... *(He exits as SCROOGE watches.)*
- 21 **SCROOGE:** Wait, Marley! I don't want to be visited! Marley!
- 22 *(Pause)* Wait a minute. What's happening to me? *(He*
- 23 *walks around to his bedside, where he sits down again. He*
- 24 *looks very puzzled. After a pause)* Bah! It's just indigestion,
- 25 like I said! Or exhaustion. I'm going to sleep. Spirits.
- 26 Bah!

Scene 4

- 31 *(A bell tolls once and stops. SCROOGE sits bolt upright in*
- 32 *his bed. The Ghost of CHRISTMAS PAST is off to one side*
- 33 *with a yo-yo. He/she is quite young and dresses the part.)*
- 34 **SCROOGE:** What? Still dark out? How is this possible? I
- 35 went to bed at two, but the clock just struck one. It's

- 1 not possible that I slept through the entire day! Maybe
2 my battery is dead.
- 3 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** The clock's electric, Ebenezer!
- 4 **SCROOGE:** Aaaaa! Who are you?
- 5 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Merry Christmas, Ebenezer.
- 6 **SCROOGE:** You didn't answer. Are you a spirit?
- 7 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** I am. I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.
- 8 **SCROOGE:** Long past?
- 9 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** No. Your past.
- 10 **SCROOGE:** My past Christmases? I have no need of
11 Christmas, now or in my past. Why on earth do you
12 visit me?
- 13 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Oh, I dunno. Your education. Your
14 salvation. Your well-being.
- 15 **SCROOGE:** Well, it would seem to me that if you were the
16 slightest bit concerned with my well-being, you would
17 let me get a good night's sleep!
- 18 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Your transformation, then.
- 19 **SCROOGE:** There is no transforming the past. What's done
20 is done. It's stupid to look back.
- 21 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** It is *you* that needs the transformation,
22 Ebenezer.
- 23 **SCROOGE:** Still, I do not wish to see the past. It is
24 unpleasant to me.
- 25 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Well, you're going to. Let's go.
- 26 **SCROOGE:** Without getting dressed?
- 27 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Why? If you were going to impress
28 someone, it would have happened already. Did I
29 mention that we're visiting your past?
- 30 **SCROOGE:** But —
- 31 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Come on. *(They move to Center Stage,*
32 *where YOUNG SCROOGE has entered and leans against a*
33 *desk.)*
- 34 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Do you remember this place?
- 35 **SCROOGE:** Well, what do you know — this is my old

- 1 boarding school! Look! (*He points out into the audience.*)
2 There's old Rick Wilkins. Hello! And there's
3 _____! (*Insert the name of an audience member.*)
4 Merry Christmas!
- 5 CHRISTMAS PAST: They can't hear you. They're just
6 shadows of things that have already been.
- 7 SCROOGE: Then why are they smiling? Oh, and there's
8 _____! (*Insert another name of someone in the audience.*)
9 Merry Christmas!
- 10 CHRISTMAS PAST: Probably because no one has ever
11 heard you say "Merry Christmas" before.
- 12 SCROOGE: Did I? That's odd. I guess I'm happier to see
13 them than I thought I would be.
- 14 CHRISTMAS PAST: But you said that Christmas is a
15 humbug! By the way, what exactly does that mean?
- 16 SCROOGE: It means that it is a waste of time.
- 17 CHRISTMAS PAST: Then why don't you just say that?
- 18 SCROOGE: Look, never mind. I want to say good-bye to all
19 these kids. Everyone is leaving school to go home for
20 Christmas!
- 21 CHRISTMAS PAST: Not everyone.
- 22 SCROOGE: No. Not everyone.
- 23 CHRISTMAS PAST: The school is almost deserted, but a
24 solitary child remains. Why?
- 25 SCROOGE: His father ... my father ... never let me come
26 home for Christmas.
- 27 CHRISTMAS PAST: Why not?
- 28 SCROOGE: Oh, Spirit — you must know! He was a stern
29 man. Wanted me to learn discipline. Christmas was a
30 time for solitary reflection. For catching up on my
31 studies. Or my reading. (*YOUNG SCROOGE opens a*
32 *book.*) There. See? He had friends. Good old *Ali Baba*
33 *and the Forty Thieves*. And *Robinson Crusoe*! And Friday!
34 He lived all their adventures with them.
- 35 CHRISTMAS PAST: But not a solitary other human being

1 to interact with. No real friends.
2 **SCROOGE:** *Robinson Crusoe* not real? And *Huckleberry Finn*?
3 He made do, this boy.
4 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Let's see another Christmas.
5 **SCROOGE:** Why? They were all the same.
6 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Not this one. Have a look!
7 **FAN:** *(From Off-stage)* Ebenezer!
8 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Fan!
9 **SCROOGE:** Fan!
10 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** What are you doing here?
11 **FAN:** I have come to bring you home, dear brother. To bring
12 you home!
13 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Home, Fan?
14 **FAN:** Yes! Home, Ebenezer. At least for Christmas. Father is
15 so much kinder than he used to be. Home's like heaven!
16 He spoke so gently to me one night when I was going
17 to bed that I wasn't afraid to ask him once more if you
18 might come home. And he said that yes, you should,
19 and he sent me on a bus to get you.
20 **SCROOGE:** Fan ...
21 **FAN:** And he has arranged a job for you. You're to be a man
22 and are never to come back here. But first we'll be
23 together all the Christmas long, and we'll have the
24 merriest time in all the world. *(They exit.)*
25 **SCROOGE:** You were quite a little woman, Fan.
26 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Always a delicate creature whom a
27 breath might have withered. But she had a huge heart.
28 **SCROOGE:** You're right. I'll wager that no one's is bigger.
29 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** She died young. I think she had
30 children.
31 **SCROOGE:** One child.
32 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** True. Your nephew, Fred.
33 **SCROOGE:** Yes.
34 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Come, let us see another Christmas!
35 *(They cross to Stage Left, where YOUNG SCROOGE has*

1 gone. SCROOGE and FEZZIWIG, his boss, are there. There
2 is a sign up that says “Fezziwig’s.”)

3 **SCROOGE:** Hey! It’s Fezziwig, my old boss!

4 **FEZZIWIG:** (To YOUNG SCROOGE) Ebenezer! What are you
5 still doing here!

6 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** What do you mean? I work here!

7 **FEZZIWIG:** Of course — and you do a fine job! But it’s
8 Christmas Eve! Come join the party I’m giving!

9 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** In a minute. I’m just trying to finish up
10 a few ledgers.

11 **FEZZIWIG:** That’s it. Eb, you’re one of the best accountants
12 I have. You and Bob are top of the crop. But Bob’s out
13 there having a good time, and you’re in here avoiding
14 it.

15 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** I was just —

16 **FEZZIWIG:** Nope. (Shuts his book.) You’re finished. Come join
17 the party! (He pulls him back to Center Stage, which has
18 been set up as a dance floor complete with a disco ball.)

19 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Why didn’t you want to go to the
20 party?

21 **SCROOGE:** Old Fezziwig was always the life of the party!
22 Not that great a businessman, but he knew how to have
23 fun. (“Stayin’ Alive” or another seventies disco song is playing
24 and several are dancing, including MARLEY, dancing with
25 BELLE.)

26 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Yeah. Let me guess. You didn’t know
27 how to dance, did you?

28 **SCROOGE:** Never saw the need. (Pause) That is, until I saw
29 Belle. Oh, my! (Pause) I’d forgotten how beautiful she
30 was ...

31 **BELLE:** (As the song finishes) Oh, Bob! You’re a great dancer!

32 **MARLEY:** Nuttin’ to it, lady! Not really my kinda music,
33 mon! But we be jammin’!

34 **BELLE:** (Noticing that YOUNG SCROOGE has joined them)
35 Hey, Eb!

- 1 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** *(Shyly)* Hey, Belle!
- 2 **BELLE:** It's about time you came out of that stuffy old
3 office. Don't you think about anything but work?
- 4 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Well, sure! I mean, doesn't everyone?
- 5 **BELLE:** Of course! But you seem to always have that cute
6 nose of yours to the grindstone. *(YOUNG SCROOGE*
7 *looks embarrassed.)*
- 8 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Well, I want to make a good living so
9 that someday I can have something to offer someone.
- 10 **BELLE:** But what if I think you may have something to
11 offer someone now?
- 12 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Well, I —
- 13 **FEZZIWIG:** Gather 'round for a toast, Ladies and Gents!
14 *(They all go over to the punch bowl as the doorbell rings.)*
15 **Eb,** would you mind getting that for me, boy?
- 16 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Not at all, sir. *(He crosses to the door as*
17 *the others laugh and get glasses prepared for a toast. They*
18 *should talk among themselves as YOUNG SCROOGE opens*
19 *the door. It is the CAROLERS.)*
- 20 **CAROLERS:** *(Singing together)* God rest ye merry, gentlemen,
21 let nothing you dismay ... ” *(He slams the door on them*
22 *and returns to the punchbowl.)*
- 23 **FEZZIWIG:** Who was it, boy?
- 24 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Wrong house.
- 25 **FEZZIWIG:** Well, no matter. I'd like to make a toast to you
26 all!
- 27 **ALL:** *(Together)* A toast!
- 28 **FEZZIWIG:** To a great group of folks who know how to
29 work hard ...
- 30 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Here, here!
- 31 **FEZZIWIG:** And who know how to stop working and have
32 a good time!
- 33 **MARLEY:** Here, here, mon!
- 34 **FEZZIWIG:** And to our Lord and Savior's birth, without
35 whom we would all be lost! May we remember his birth

- 1 and his life and do unto others accordingly!
- 2 **BELLE:** Here, here! *(She raises her glass to YOUNG*
3 *SCROOGE, and they freeze for just a moment.)* To
4 Christmas!
- 5 **ALL:** *(Together)* To Christmas!
- 6 **SCROOGE:** Ah, what a great boss he was!
- 7 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Really? It doesn't seem he's all too
8 concerned about the business this day.
- 9 **SCROOGE:** No, but that's why he was such a good boss.
10 What did it take to throw a little afternoon party on
11 Christmas Eve?
- 12 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** A few dollars, to be sure. A couple of
13 hours off for each of his employees ...
- 14 **SCROOGE:** Exactly! And to give us the chance to make
15 merry with each other — to get to know each other
16 better. He had the ability to make all of us so happy ...
17 *(His voice trails off.)*
- 18 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** What's wrong?
- 19 **SCROOGE:** Oh, nothing. It's just that I would like to have
20 the chance to talk with *my* employees about now —
21 that's all.
- 22 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** Let's see another Christmas, shall we?
23 *(They cross to the office again, this time with the sign saying*
24 *"Scrooge and Marley's." YOUNG SCROOGE is still sitting at*
25 *the table as BELLE knocks at the door.)*
- 26 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Belle! What a pleasant surprise!
- 27 **BELLE:** Hello, Ebenezer.
- 28 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** What's this? I know I'm in trouble when
29 you don't call me Eb.
- 30 **SCROOGE:** Spirit, take me away from this place. How can I
31 forget what happens next?
- 32 **CHRISTMAS PAST:** It will only take a moment.
- 33 **SCROOGE:** A very painful moment.
- 34 **BELLE:** I just came to give you something.
- 35 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** A present on Christmas Eve? Can't it

- 1 wait till tomorrow?
- 2 **BELLE:** I'm afraid not, Eb. Here. *(She hands him a ring.)*
- 3 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** *(Pause, recognizing what it is.)* But Belle,
- 4 this is your engagement ring.
- 5 **BELLE:** I know.
- 6 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** But why? What have I done?
- 7 **BELLE:** It's not so much what you have done as what you
- 8 have become, Ebenezer.
- 9 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** What have I become? I'm the same as
- 10 I've always been.
- 11 **BELLE:** Perhaps that's the problem. I thought you could
- 12 change.
- 13 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Change to what?
- 14 **BELLE:** Eb, would you have asked me to marry you now,
- 15 knowing you've become so successful so quickly, and
- 16 knowing that I don't come from a wealthy family?
- 17 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Well, I —
- 18 **BELLE:** See? Your hesitation tells me all I need to know. I
- 19 want a family. I want tons of children, and I need
- 20 someone who is willing to put me first, not second
- 21 behind his career!
- 22 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** But how can you expect to have a
- 23 family if you don't have a hard-working husband?
- 24 **BELLE:** Oh, Eb. You're more than hard-working. You're
- 25 obsessed.
- 26 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Am not.
- 27 **BELLE:** Are too.
- 28 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Am not!
- 29 **BELLE:** Oh, yeah? How much did this ring cost?
- 30 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Nine hundred seventy-nine dollars and
- 31 sixty-four cents ... *(Pause, realizing this is the wrong*
- 32 *answer)* I mean, roughly ...
- 33 **BELLE:** This is my point. You know exactly how much it
- 34 costs because it's important to you.
- 35 **YOUNG SCROOGE:** Yes, well ... I bought it for you!

- 1 BELLE: OK. So when is my birthday?
2 YOUNG SCROOGE: Uh ... January?
3 BELLE: It's February!
4 YOUNG SCROOGE: Oops. I knew it had an "ary" in it ...
5 BELLE: Good-bye, Eb. I hope you find happiness.
6 YOUNG SCROOGE: Belle, I want you to be a part of that.
7 BELLE: Eb, there's not enough room in your heart for me
8 and money both.
9 YOUNG SCROOGE: But Belle —
10 BELLE: I'm sorry. *(She rises.)* Good-bye, Ebenezer. *(He rises*
11 *and watches her go, staring at the ring.)*
12 SCROOGE: Go after her, you fool! *(Pauses with hands on his*
13 *head)* I almost did, you know.
14 CHRISTMAS PAST: She eventually married and had a
15 large family, didn't she?
16 SCROOGE: Yes. *(Pause)* I truly loved her.
17 CHRISTMAS PAST: But not as much as you loved
18 money ...
19 SCROOGE: Says who?
20 CHRISTMAS PAST: Says you.
21 SCROOGE: How do you know?
22 CHRISTMAS PAST: Do you still have the ring?
23 SCROOGE: Well, no ...
24 CHRISTMAS PAST: And what happened to it?
25 SCROOGE: Well, I always keep my receipts.
26 CHRISTMAS PAST: I think I've made my point.
27 SCROOGE: Then why does my heart ache?
28 CHRISTMAS PAST: Perhaps you're starting to recognize
29 the emptiness of your life.
30 SCROOGE: I'm so tired, Spirit. Stop torturing me! Take me
31 home.
32 CHRISTMAS PAST: I have nothing left to show you. Home
33 we are.
34 SCROOGE: My bed! *(He goes to it and falls onto it.)* Ah, sleep
35 at last. For once, I'm glad tomorrow is Christmas!

Scene 5

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(SCROOGE is in his bed, snoring loudly. One rather large snore wakes him up. He looks around, confused.)

SCROOGE: What time is it? Is it morning yet? *(He hears the bell chime one again.)* What? It can't be one o'clock! Did I sleep all through the day? *(Laughter from the Ghost of CHRISTMAS PRESENT comes from the other room.)* Who is it? What's so funny? *(He rises and goes into the next room. As he does, CHRISTMAS PRESENT goes into his room through the other entrance. CHRISTMAS PRESENT laughs again and tosses candy canes from his bag into the audience. Eventually, SCROOGE re-emerges to find the rather happy CHRISTMAS PRESENT sitting on his bed. He holds a wand that he uses to change people later in the scene.)*

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Hello there! *(Laughs again.)*

SCROOGE: Are you the next spirit to visit me?

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Well, of course! Come on over here!

SCROOGE: No thank you. I'm good.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Well, if anyone were to know that, it would be me, now wouldn't it?

SCROOGE: Who are you?

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: I'm the Ghost of Christmas Present! Don't you recognize me?

SCROOGE: No, I'm afraid not.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Well, how about one of my brothers then?

SCROOGE: You have brothers?

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Why, yes! More than two thousand!

SCROOGE: Wow! That's quite a family to provide for!

CHRISTMAS PRESENT: You *would* be the one to worry about that, now wouldn't you? But rest assured, they're

1 all well provided for.

2 SCROOGE: Spirit, conduct me wherever you will tonight.
3 I'm anxious to learn what you have to show me. I
4 believe I learned a great deal from the Spirit of last
5 night's visit, and I want to see if you can show me more
6 things that I can profit by!

7 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Profit? My, I think we do have
8 some lessons to learn. Grab my robe, and we're off!
9 (*SCROOGE touches his robe, and they move from his*
10 *bedroom to the street scene. They pass by the Salvation Army*
11 *BELL RINGER who, though ringerless, still tries to solicit*
12 *funds.*)

13 BELL RINGER: (*Ad lib*) Ring-ring! Ring-ring! Oh, ring. Ring-
14 a-ling. (*SOLICITORS 1 and 2 enter.*)

15 SOLICITOR 1: Well, I think you could have tried just a little
16 bit harder on that last one.

17 SOLICITOR 2: Me? I think I talked a lot more than you did!
18 What makes you think it was *my* fault?

19 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Uh-oh. (*He quickly runs over and*
20 *shakes his wand at the SOLICITORS.*)

21 SOLICITOR 1: You know, you're right. I'll take the lead on
22 this next one. After all, we know how important it is for
23 the children.

24 SOLICITOR 2: Absolutely. Let me know what I can do to
25 help. (*They shake hands and exit.*)

26 SCROOGE: Wow! How'd you do that?

27 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: It's what I do. OK, we're here. Just
28 a second. (*He shakes his wand on the house.*)

29 SCROOGE: Why did you sprinkle this house, Spirit?

30 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: I bless all homes, but especially
31 the poor ones.

32 SCROOGE: Why especially the poor ones?

33 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Because they need it the most.

34 SCROOGE: What place is this, Spirit?

35 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: You'll see. (*They cross to the scene of*

1 *the CRACHITS getting ready for Christmas dinner. MARY is*
2 *in the room, setting the table. PETER is also On-stage.)*

3 **MARY:** I wonder what on earth is taking your father so
4 long. And your brother Tiny Tim as well! And where is
5 Martha? She's a half hour later than she was last
6 Christmas! (*MARTHA enters.*)

7 **BELINDA:** Here comes Martha, Mother! She just came in.

8 **PETER:** Martha! It's good to see you!

9 **BELINDA:** Martha, you have to see the turkey we got this
10 year! I think it's as big as last year's.

11 **MARY:** What kept you, Martha? I was beginning to worry!

12 **MARTHA:** Sorry, Mom! We had a big group of people at the
13 restaurant last night, and I had to stay late to clean up.

14 **MARY:** Well, never mind. I'm just glad you could make it.
15 Why don't you have a seat? As soon as your father gets
16 here with Tiny Tim, we can —

17 **BELINDA:** Daddy's coming! He just came through the door!

18 **PETER:** Quick, Martha! Hide! We'll tell him you couldn't
19 come! (*She quickly hides in a corner of the room as BOB*
20 *comes through the door, TINY TIM riding on his shoulders.*)

21 **BOB:** Hello, all! How's everyone on this fine Christmas Day?
22 (*Looking around*) And where's Martha?

23 **MARY:** I'm afraid she won't be joining us today. She got too
24 busy at work.

25 **BOB:** Too busy? For Christmas dinner? But how can that
26 be? I thought she told us the restaurant was closed on
27 Christmas!

28 **BELINDA:** Maybe she got tied up with other things then.

29 **MARTHA:** (*Jumps up.*) Or maybe she's just trying to fool
30 you! Merry Christmas, Daddy! (*She gives him a hug.*
31 *Then, to TINY TIM*) Well, who's this big man?

32 **TINY TIM:** You know me! I'm Tim!

33 **MARTHA:** Well, of course I know you! Come on, let's go
34 play in your room. I think I've forgotten what it looks
35 like!

- 1 MARY: Good idea. And don't forget to wash up on your way
2 back. We'll be eating dinner very soon.
- 3 PETER: Good — I'm starving!
- 4 BELINDA: I'll race you!
- 5 PETER: You'll lose. *(They all take off for the other room.)*
- 6 MARY: So how was he today? Did you go to the 10:30
7 service like you promised?
- 8 BOB: Yes, right on time. He loves it when you do special
9 things with him — just him. He was good as gold as
10 usual.
- 11 MARY: Of course. Was he able to stay awake?
- 12 BOB: Oh, Mary — he said the sweetest thing. He said he
13 was glad that the people could see him in church on
14 Christmas morning because of his disability, so that
15 they could remember who it was that made the lame
16 men walk and the blind men see.
- 17 SCROOGE: Tell me, Spirit — will Tiny Tim live?
- 18 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: I see a crutch without an owner in
19 the corner by the chimney in this shabby little house,
20 and an empty seat at their wobbly table. If these
21 shadows are not changed by events in the near
22 Christmas future, Tim will not see another Christmas.
- 23 SCROOGE: Oh, no. Please say it isn't true.
- 24 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Wouldn't it be better that he get on
25 with dying and decrease the surplus population?
- 26 SCROOGE: How could you say such a ... *(Moment of self-*
27 *recognition)* Oh. Oh my.
- 28 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Tell me, sir. His disease is not
29 curable, but very treatable. He should be able to live
30 with it. How is it that the family is unable to get such
31 treatment?
- 32 SCROOGE: Well, I —
- 33 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Could it be that you fail to provide
34 health insurance to those who work for you?
- 35 SCROOGE: Well, I can't afford to —

1 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Can't? Or won't? And the wage
2 you pay — is he not able to afford the proper care with
3 that?

4 SCROOGE: I'm sure I don't know.

5 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: I'm sure you do.

6 MARY: Come along, children — let's eat!

7 BOB: (*As the children are assembling*) Everything smells
8 wonderful, Mary! The turkey, the stuffing — I could
9 smell the pie from a block away!

10 SCROOGE: But their turkey — will it even feed them all? It
11 looks so small!

12 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Oh, they manage. Every year, they
13 manage.

14 BOB: (*After ALL sit*) Before we eat, I'd like to say a prayer.
15 (*They all bow their heads.*) Dear God, thank you so much
16 for all you have given us this Christmas. Thank you for
17 sending your Son so that we may have the hope of a
18 new birth. Thank you for the family we are blessed
19 with and the love we share. And thank you for my job
20 that allows us to share moments like these. Amen.

21 MARY: Amen.

22 BOB: And before we carve this beautiful bird, I'd like you
23 all to raise your glasses for a Christmas toast.

24 ALL: (*Raising glasses*) Here, here!

25 BOB: To your mother, for preparing this bounty. (*ALL*
26 *enthusiastically clink their glasses.*) And to Mr. Scrooge,
27 the founder of the feast! (*Much quieter clinking of glasses.*)

28 MARY: The founder of the feast indeed! Why, if he were
29 here right now, I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast
30 upon, and he'd like it!

31 BOB: Now, dear, it's Christmas day ...

32 MARY: I don't care what day it is. He gives you nothing but
33 grief, and you take it. On my life, I have no idea what
34 God was thinking making that man as stingy and
35 unforgiving as he is ...

- 1 **BOB:** Now, dear — the children ...
- 2 **MARY:** All right. I'll drink a toast to him for the children's
3 sake. And because it's Christmas. But for no other
4 reason, 'cause he hasn't given us one.
- 5 **BOB:** Very well. And one last toast. To a very merry
6 Christmas for all of us. God bless us.
- 7 **ALL:** *(Ad lib)* Merry Christmas! God bless us!
- 8 **TINY TIM:** God bless us, every one! *(CRATCHITS exit.)*
- 9 **SCROOGE:** No more of this, Spirit. I wish to go home now.
10 I'm feeling quite depressed all of a sudden.
- 11 **CHRISTMAS PRESENT:** Just one more stop, Ebenezer.
- 12 **SCROOGE:** Pray tell, where am I going now?
- 13 **CHRISTMAS PRESENT:** To a Christmas party at your
14 nephew's, of course. *(He can hear the laughter of his*
15 *nephew FRED at Stage Right, at the same table the*
16 *CRACHITS were at. He is joined by his wife BETH and his*
17 *children, SHARON, BRAD, and ELIZABETH.)*
- 18 **FRED:** *(Laughing heartily)* He called Christmas a humbug!
- 19 **BETH:** What exactly is a humbug?
- 20 **FRED:** That's just it. I think he's made it up! Maybe it's like
21 a cockroach of some kind ...
- 22 **BETH:** He's a sad old man, all right. And for being as rich
23 as he is, too!
- 24 **FRED:** Doesn't really matter that he's rich. He doesn't do
25 any good with the money. He doesn't even make
26 himself comfortable with it. And he doesn't even give
27 himself the satisfaction that he'll somehow leave it to us
28 someday!
- 29 **BETH:** I have no patience for him.
- 30 **FRED:** Oh, I do. I feel sorry for him. And he's got to realize
31 that in his discontent, he's only hurting himself.
- 32 **BETH:** I'll say! I mean, look at this feast laid out today that
33 he's missing!
- 34 **FRED:** Not to mention the company! *(They both laugh.)*
- 35 **SCROOGE:** Spirit, I wish I would have accepted Fred's

1 invitation to go to his house. It does seem they're
2 having a good time ...
3 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Oh, just wait — they're about to
4 start a game. Too bad we need to leave.
5 SCROOGE: Oh, Spirit — a game? I haven't played a game in
6 years! Can we stay? Please?
7 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Well, only for a few moments.
8 BRAD: OK, let's play twenty questions. Sharon, you go first.
9 FRED: Wait — I get to go first. I already have something in
10 mind.
11 SHARON: Good, 'cause I don't! But I'll guess first. Is it an
12 animal?
13 FRED: Yes. (*Laughs.*)
14 BRAD: Does it walk on all fours?
15 FRED: No.
16 ELIZABETH: Does it growl?
17 FRED: Yes. Often. (*Laughs.*)
18 SHARON: Only yes or no, Dad.
19 FRED: Sorry.
20 SCROOGE: Does it have fur?
21 CHRISTMAS PRESENT: You know, they can't hear you ...
22 BRAD: Does it have fur?
23 SCROOGE: Maybe they can!
24 FRED: Sort of ... I'd say yes. (*Laughs.*)
25 ELIZABETH: Is it dangerous?
26 FRED: No, not really. (*Laughs.*)
27 SHARON: Is it a bear?
28 FRED: No. (*Laughs.*)
29 BRAD: Is it a gorilla?
30 FRED: Hmmmm. No. (*Laughs.*)
31 ELIZABETH: Do you find it in town or in the country? I
32 mean, do you find it in town?
33 FRED: Yes.
34 SHARON: Wait a minute! I think I know!
35 FRED: Go ahead, then. (*Laughs.*)



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