

A Christmas Carol

Adapted by Michele L. Vacca

(Based on Charles Dickens immortal classic.)

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PRODUCTION NOTES – CHARACTERS:

EBENEZER SCROOGE

BOB CRATCHIT

MRS. CRATCHIT

TINY TIM

MARTHA CRATCHIT, 19 or 20 years old

PETER CRATCHIT, 15 or 16 years old

ANNIE CRATCHIT, 10 years old

GHOST OF JACOB MARLEY

YOUNG JACOB MARLEY

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PAST

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE

FRED, Scrooge's nephew

ELIZABETH, Fred's wife

CHARITY COLLECTOR, a lady

CHARITY COLLECTOR, a gentleman

FEZZIWIG, Young Scrooge's employer

MISTRESS FEZZIWIG, his wife

YOUNG BOY SCROOGE

YOUNG MAN SCROOGE

MRS. DILBUR, a Cockney laundress

LUCY McDOUGAL, a Cockney charwoman

WILLIE HAGGARTY, a Cockney

CHRISTOPHER SLY, a Cockney shopkeeper

FAN, Scrooge's young sister

DAVID, a young husband

CAROLINE, his wife

BELLE, Young Scrooge's sweetheart

CATHERINE, Belle's friend

A BOY

All the actors can take part in the crowd scenes: and all may double except Old Scrooge and Tiny Tim. This play has been performed with as few as 13 actors playing all the roles listed above.

All 30 roles in this play are based upon characters found in the Dickens short novel. Some roles have been expanded, such as those of Mr. Sly and Mrs. Dilbur, as well as those of Caroline and David. The number of Cratchit children has been reduced to 4. Dialogue has been somewhat Americanized, eliminating or simplifying terms and expressions foreign to modern Americans.

DOUBLING:

If desired, the 30 roles in the play may be doubled or even tripled. Although Old Scrooge and Tiny Tim cannot double, 11 actors can play the other 28 roles as follows: Actress A: Belle/Caroline/Lucy McDougal; B: Martha Cratchit/Elizabeth/Catherine; C: Mrs. Cratchit/Past Spirit/Charity Collector; D: Mrs. Dilbur/Mrs. Fezziwig; Ed: Annie/Fan. Actor A: Fred/Future Spirit; B: Bob Cratchit/Fezziwig; C: Christopher Sly/Boy Scrooge; D: Peter/young man Scrooge/ a boy; E: Charity Collector/Present Spirit/Willie; F: Marley's Ghost/Young Marley/David. Certainly, other combinations are possible.

TIME, PLACE AND COSTUMES:

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London, England, in the 1840's. The flashback sequences take place 40/60 years earlier, depending upon how Old Scrooge is to be played. Most of the costumes, therefore should be early Victorian. Since many of the characters are poor, fabrics and trims need not be elaborate or expensive. However, the scenes from the past could have richer costumes, thus providing a greater contrast between Scrooge past and Scrooge present. The spirits and the Ghost of Marley present opportunities for creative costuming, or a "traditional" approach can be used; the first spirit dressed in a filmy tunic or robe, the second as a St. Nicholas figure, and the third in a long hooded, dark robe. Marley's costume could possibly suggest that he has toiled through his 7 years penance clothed in the same suit.

SETTINGS:

Suggested scenery works best for this play, i.e., a lamppost to suggest a street, door and window frames only and not a full door or wall setting. This way, even the tiniest of theatres can stage the play without a cumbersome amount of scenery and set pieces.

If space is limited, too many set pieces can hopelessly clutter this play's production. Simplicity is best. Each act requires particular areas that should be preset as much as possible to eliminate excessive scene changes. The only permanent portion of the set is an area for Scrooge's bedroom, which need not be large, but should contain a bed, a small table and lamp, and a window frame. Other settings required for Act I are: the street, Scrooge's office, and a small area for the short scene between Fan and Boy Scrooge. Act II requires: the street, the kitchen of the Cratchit home (tables, chairs or benches, a fireplace frame), an area to indicate a corner of Fred and Elizabeth's home, and at the end of the act, the gravestone which the Spirit reveals. Act III: (page 44 – is usually played as a continuation of Act II so the play is two total Acts in length – Act I and then Acts II and III combined as Act II.) Fred's home and the street, plus, of course, Scrooge's bedroom. If a three Act play is desired, Act II can end and Act III can start on page 44.

SPECIAL:

The use of music, live or taped, greatly enhances the production of this play.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Adapted by Michele L. Vacca

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ACT I

(SETTING: LONDON, 1840. A MULTIPLE AREA SET. SCROOGE'S BEDROOM IS ON ONE SIDE OF THE STAGE. THERE IS A STREET AREA WITH STOREFRONTS, PERHAPS, AND A STREET LAMP. SCROOGE'S OFFICE IS ALSO ON ONE PORTION OF THE STAGE. MUSIC. IT IS EARLY MORNING ON CHRISTMAS EVE. BELLS SOUND, AND SCROOGE IS SOUND ASLEEP IN HIS BED. VOICES HEARD OFF STAGE.)

VOICE I: (OFF) A Merry Christmas to you!

VOICE II: (OFF) And to you!

(BELLS RING AND MUSIC PLAYS SOFTLY.)

SCROOGE: (STIRS IN HIS SLEEP, SNORTS, TURNS OVER, AND GRUMBLES) Bah! Humbug! (HE GOES BACK TO SLEEP.)

(SUDDENLY THE STREET BEGINS TO FILL WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE CROSSING BACK AND FORTH. SOME CARRY PACKAGES, SOME ARE ON EARLY MORNING ERRANDS: THEY ARE SHOPPING, OR GOING TO WORK. SOME PEOPLE TO BE FOUND IN THE CROWD ARE: FRED AND ELIZABETH, BOB CRATCHIT WITH TINY TIM AND ANNIE, TWO CHARITY COLLECTORS, A YOUNG COUPLE, DAVID AND CAROLINE, MRS. DILBUR AND CHRISTOPHER SLY. THEY CROSS THE STAGE, GREETING EACH OTHER. AD-LIBS FOR A MOMENT, THEN THE DIALOGUE BEGINS. MRS. DILBUR STANDS OFF TO THE SIDE AND WATCHES THE PEOPLE. SHE HAS A LARGE BUNDLE OF LAUNDRY. CHRISTOPHER SLY, AN

OLD JUNK DEALER, CROSSES TO HER. HE WEARS A NUMBER OF RAGGED CLOTHES, LAYERS OF THEM, ALL PART OF HIS WARES.)

SLY: (SLAPPING MRS. DILBUR ON THE BACK) Well, well, if it ain't me favorite girl!

DILBUR: (SLAPPING HIM ON THE BACK) Well, look who's here! If it ain't Christopher Sly!

SLY: That's right, me dear, and how are you, Mrs. Dilbur?

DILBUR: Could be better.

SLY: Oh?

DILBUR: And could be worse.

SLY: (SLAPPING HER ON THE BACK) That's the spirit, dearie!

(BOB CRATCHIT APPEARS WITH TINY TIM AND ANNIE. TIM RIDES ON HIS FATHER'S SHOULDERS, AND ANNIE FOLLOWS HER FATHER.)

ANNIE: Wait for me, Papa! You're going too fast!

CRATCHIT: (STOPS, WAITS FOR HER) Hold on to my hand, Annie. I want to do some errands for your mother before it's time to go to work. And I don't want to be late. Mr. Scrooge would be very angry.

ANNIE: Would he shout at you?

CRATCHIT: I suppose he might, Annie.

ANNIE: Oh! He's a terrible man.

CRATCHIT: Now, Annie

ANNIE: You're not supposed to shout at people on Christmas Eve! Isn't that right, Papa?

CRATCHIT: Yes, child, I suppose it is. Come along, now. Careful, Tim, don't fall off!

TIM: Yes, Papa. (AS THEY GO) Hurry, Annie!

(THE YOUNG HUSBAND, DAVID, AND HIS WIFE, CAROLINE, ENTER. THEY LOOK RATHER SHABBY, BUT HAPPY.)

CAROLINE: Oh, David, isn't it a beautiful Christmas Eve?

DAVID: It is indeed, Caroline.

CAROLINE: I only wish –

DAVID: I know.

CAROLINE: I only wish we could afford something nice for the children. They're too young to understand about debts and mortgages.

DAVID: Perhaps next year things will be better. If any other man in the world held our mortgage, I'd –

CAROLINE: That Mr. Scrooge! You'd think even he would be generous at Christmas time!

DAVID: Generous? No, Caroline, not Mr. Scrooge. (POINTS) Look! There's Fred and Elizabeth!

(FRED AND ELIZABETH ENTER, WAVING TO SOME PEOPLE OFF STAGE.)

CAROLINE: (TO DAVID) How could a cross patch like Mr. Scrooge ever have such a good-hearted nephew?

DAVID: (WAVES TO FRED) It's a mystery, Caroline, but Fred is certainly the opposite of his Uncle Scrooge.

FRED: (GOING TO THEM) David! Caroline!

ELIZABETH: Merry Christmas!

DAVID: (SHAKING HANDS WITH FRED) Merry Christmas, Fred. Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH: How are the children?

CAROLINE: Wonderful. Are you and Fred going to visit us tonight?

FRED: Definitely. We'll be there.

DAVID: Good. We'll see you then.

(DAVID AND CAROLINE GO OFF. FRED AND ELIZABETH GO OFF ANOTHER WAY, AND THEY MEET CRATCHIT RETURNING WITH HIS CHILDREN.)

CRATCHIT: Let's hurry, children.

FRED: It's Bob Cratchit!

CRATCHIT: (STOPPING) Why, how are you, sir? Children, this is Mr. Scrooge's nephew and his wife. (PRESENTS HIS CHILDREN) Tim, Annie.

FRED: Good day, Annie, Tim.

ANNIE: (HIDES BEHIND CRATCHIT) Oh!

TIM: (AWE STRUCK) You know Mr. Scrooge?

FRED: (LAUGHS) Yes, I do.

ELIZABETH: Why, Fred, they're afraid of you!

CRATCHIT: Ah, you see, sir, I, that is, they have heard me

FRED: (SMILES) I understand, Bob. (TO ANNIE) In fact, I'm

going to pay a call on my terrible uncle this morning and, believe me, even though I've talked to him many times, he still frightens me a little, too.

ANNIE: (COMING OUT FROM BEHIND HER FATHER)
Truly?

FRED: Truly.

TIM: (LAUGHS) Oh! That's very funny!

(THE TWO CHARITY COLLECTORS, A LADY AND A GENTLEMAN, WHO ARE BOTH VERY RESPECTABLE AND PROPER LOOKING, HAVE NOW REAPPEARED. THEY START SINGING CHRISTMAS CAROLS JUST BELOW SCROOGE'S BEDROOM WINDOW. THEY SING "GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN.")

FRED: (POINTS) Look!

TIM: Papa, I want to sing!

ANNIE: Me, too!

CRATCHIT: All right. There's time.

(FRED TAKES ANNIE'S HAND, AND THEY ALL JOIN IN THE SINGING. EVEN SLY AND MRS. DILBUR SING. THEY ALL SING, AND THE NOISE WAKES SCROOGE.)

SCROOGE. (SITS UP IN BED) Bah! What's that? (HEARS THE SINGING) Bah! Singing! (GETS OUT OF BED, STOMPS TO THE WINDOW) Stop that singing! Stop it, I say! (LOUDER) Humbug! (PICKS UP A SHOE TO THROW) Stop that singing! (THROWS HIS SHOE) Bah! (THE SINGING STOPS.)

CROWD: (AS THEY LOOK UP AT HIM AND SPEAK TO EACH OTHER) Oh! What happened? The idea! And on Christmas Eve, too! It's terrible! Oh, my goodness! It's Mr. Scrooge!

SCROOGE: (TO THE CROWD) Humbug! How do you expect me to sleep with all that clatter? If you must sing, go sing somewhere else. Stay away from here, or I'll call the authorities. Go away!

TINY TIM: (AS THEY ALL MOVE AWAY HE CALLS OUT.)
Merry Christmas!

SCROOGE: (SHOUTS) Merry Humbug!

(THE CROWD DRIFTS OFF TO OTHER AREAS OF THE STAGE. SOME RESUME SINGING. MEANWHILE SCROOGE STOMPS AROUND HIS ROOM, TRYING TO FIND HIS CLOTHES.

- SCROOGE: (GRUMBLING) Merry Christmas! Humbug! Can't let decent people sleep! All that bellowing and clattering! Bah! Where's my shoe? (REMEMBERS HE THREW IT OUT THE WINDOW) Agh! (GOES TO WINDOW, SHOUTS DOWN TO CHRISTOPHER SLY, WHO IS THE PERSON NEAREST TO HIM) You! You there!
- SLY: Me, sir?
- SCROOGE: Yes, yes, yes! You! Fetch my shoe!
- SLY: What, sir?
- SCROOGE: My shoe! My shoe! It's right there! In front of you! Idiot!
- SLY: (PICKS IT UP) This shoe, sir?
- SCROOGE: Yes, that shoe! Bring it here! I'll go open the door. (HE GOES OFF ACTUALLY TO CHANGE INTO HIS STREET CLOTHES.)
- SLY: (WITH A MOCKING BOW) Yes, sir. Whatever you say, yer Lordship.
- DILBUR: (WHO HAS BEEN CLOSE BY) The old skinflint. I tell you, Mr. Sly, you should see me trying to get him to pay me for doing his laundry. It's like I was pulling 'is teeth!
- SLY: (NUDGES HER WITH HIS ELBOW) If he had any! (THEY LAUGH) This shoe looks worse than some of the junk I sell in me shop.
- DILBUR: That's old Scrooge fer you. What does he care?
- SLY: I just wish I had his money. I wouldn't be wearing shoes that looked like this, I'll tell you that, Mrs. Dilbur.
- DILBUR: (NUDGES HIM) Well, if you ask me, I think he's saving his money, so he can take it all with him!
- SLY: Well, it would be the first time anybody got away with it! (THEY LAUGH.) I'd better take this shoe to him be fore I get thrown into the nearest prison.
- DILBUR: (AS HE GOES) And don't be thinking you'll get a penny for yer trouble, either! (THEY LAUGH AGAIN.)

(MR. SLY GOES INTO THE HOUSE. MRS. DILBUR JOINS THE OTHERS. THEN THE CROWD STARTS TO SCATTER, A FEW OF THEM STILL SINGING AS

THEY CALL OUT GREETINGS TO EACH OTHER.
SCROOGE SUDDENLY EMERGES FROM HIS
HOUSE. HE IS ON HIS WAY TO HIS OFFICE.)

SLY: (FOLLOWING SCROOGE AS HE COMES OUT BOWS
MOCKINGLY) This way, yer Lordship.
SCROOGE: (FLINGS SLY OUT OF HIS WAY) Bah!
DILBUR: (APPROACHES SCROOGE) Mr. Scrooge, sir. I wonder
if I could take a moment of yer time, sir.
SCROOGE: You already have! Let me by! (STARTS PAST HER)
DILBUR: (SHOUTS AFTER HIM) I just wondered when you're
going to pay me for the laundry.
SCROOGE: Bah!
DILBUR: And the cleaning!
SCROOGE: Bah! (HE CONTINUES WALKING.)
DILBUR: (TO SLY) The old skinflint!
SLY: Right!

(SCROOGE BRISKLY WALKS TOWARD HIS
OFFICE, PUSHING THE OTHER PEOPLE ON THE
STREET ASIDE.

SCROOGE: Out of my way! Stand aside!
CRATCHIT: (SPEAKING HURRIEDLY TO FRED, BEFORE
SCROOGE CAN SEE HIM THERE IN THE CROWD) I
must hurry. Come, children, hurry! You have to go home
now, so I won't be late for work. Hurry!
ANNIE: (POINTS) Is that Mr. Scrooge?
CRATCHIT: Shhhhh! (THEY GO OFF.)
FRED: Let's go, Elizabeth. I don't want to see Uncle Scrooge this
early.
ELIZABETH: (GIGGLES) Oh, Fred! (THEY GO OFF, TOO.)
SCROOGE: (STOMPING INTO HIS OFFICE, SUCCESSFULLY
SCATTERING THE LAST OF THE CROWD) Humbug!
(AS HE SLAMS THE DOOR) All this commotion and
confusion! Bah! (GOES INTO HIS OFFICE AREA)
Cratchit! Cratchit! Where are you? Cratchit! Bah! Late!
(TAKES OFF HIS HAT, HANGS UP HIS SCARF AND
WHILE HIS BACK IS TURNED, CRATCHIT DASHES
INTO THE OFFICE, AND TRIES TO TIPTOE TO HIS
DESK, BUT JUST AS CRATCHIT STARTS TO
BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF – SHOUTS.) Cratchit!
CRATCHIT: Y-yes, sir?

SCROOGE: (SNAPS OPEN HIS POCKET WATCH) You're late, Cratchit.

CRATCHIT: Y-yes, sir.

SCROOGE: Late again, Cratchit.

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir. I had some shopping to do for my wife, and then the children, you see –

SCROOGE: Cratchit! Spare me an account of the humdrum details of your hearth and home. You are supposed to be here on time!

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir.

SCROOGE: To work!

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir. (SEATS HIMSELF, PULLS OUT A LEDGER AND BEGINS TO WORK)

SCROOGE: Bah! (GOES TO HIS OWN DESK, PULLS OUT A SACK OF GOLD AND BEGINS TO COUNT) . . . 25, 35, 40, 45, 50.

(TIME PASSES, THEN FRED ENTERS THROUGH THE OUTSIDE DOOR. HE SIGNALS CRATCHIT TO BE QUIET, AND TIPTOES OVER TO SCROOGE. THE CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE.)

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

SCROOGE: (STARTLED, SCATTERS HIS GOLD PIECES) Bah! (STARTS TO PICK THEM UP) Humbug!

FRED: (SMILES) Christmas a humbug, Uncle? You don't mean that, I'm sure!

SCROOGE: I do! (SCORNFULLY) Merry Christmas! What right have you to be so merry? You're poor enough.

FRED: Come then. What right have you to be so gloomy? You're rich enough.

SCROOGE: (PICKING UP THE GOLD PIECES) Bah! Humbug! Merry Christmas, indeed! If I had my way, every idiot who goes about with "Merry Christmas" on his lips would be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart!

FRED: (SHOCKED) Uncle!

SCROOGE: (MOCKING) 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. Christmas! Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!

FRED: But, Uncle, I've always thought of Christmas as a good time, a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time. Christmas is the only time I know when people open their hearts freely. (HE'S GETTING CARRIED AWAY.) 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: (WHO HAS BEEN LISTENING WITH APPROVAL) Yes, sir! (HE APPLAUDS.)

SCROOGE: (ADVANCING TOWARD CRATCHIT) Let me hear another sound from you, and you'll keep Christmas by losing your situation!

CRATCHIT: (RETREATS TO HIS DESK) Y-yes, sir.

SCROOGE: (TO FRED) You're quite a powerful speaker, sir. I wonder you don't go into politics.

FRED: Now, don't be angry, Uncle. Come and have dinner with us tomorrow!

SCROOGE: You'll see me dead first!

FRED: But why? Why?

SCROOGE: (TURNS ON HIM SUDDENLY) And why did you get married?

FRED: (STARTLED) Why, because I was in love.

SCROOGE: (MOCKING) Oh, you were in love! Bah! Good afternoon!

FRED: But, Uncle, you never came to see me before I was married, so why give it as a reason for not coming now?

SCROOGE: Good afternoon!

FRED: I want nothing from you. I ask nothing of you. Why can't we be friends?

SCROOGE: Good afternoon!

FRED: I'm sorry to find you so stubborn, Uncle, but I'll keep my good humor to the last. Merry Christmas, Uncle!

SCROOGE: Good afternoon! (HE PUSHES FRED TO THE DOOR.)

FRED: And a happy New Year!

SCROOGE: Good afternoon! (HE OPENS THE DOOR.)

FRED: Very well, Uncle. Good afternoon. Merry Christmas, Bob!

CRATCHIT: Thank you, sir!

FRED: And best wishes to your family.

CRATCHIT: Thank you, sir. Merry Christmas!

(FRED GOES OUT.)

SCROOGE: (MUTTERS TO HIMSELF AS HE CLOSES THE DOOR) Merry Christmas! Bah! Merry Humbug!

(SCROOGE GOES BACK TO HIS DESK. TWO CHARITY COLLECTORS APPEAR, A GENTLEMAN AND A LADY OUT TO DO “GOOD WORKS.” THE GENTLEMAN CONSULTS A LITTLE NOTEBOOK. AS THEY APPEAR, VOICES OF CHRISTMAS CAROLERS ARE HEARD OFF STAGE.)

VOICES: (SINGING) “Deck the halls with boughs of holly, fa la la la la, la la la la. ‘Tis the season to be jolly, fa la . . .”

SCROOGE: (GOING TO THE DOOR, SHOUTS TO THE OFF – STAGE SINGERS)
Begone! Go away! Christmas Carols! Bah! Take your fa la’s somewhere else! Bah! (HE STOMPS BACK TO HIS DESK.)

GENTLEMAN: (TO THE LADY AFTER WATCHING THIS LITTLE SCENE) Oh, my goodness.

LADY: I fear we may have some difficulty here.

GENTLEMAN: Well, let’s go inside and try. Our cause is a worthy one, after all.

(THEY STEP INTO THE OFFICE. SCROOGE GLARES AT THEM.)

GENTLEMAN: (CLEARING HIS THROAT) Ahem!

SCROOGE: Yes? What d’you want?

GENTLEMAN: (CONSULTING HIS NOTEBOOK) “SCROOGE AND MARLEY’S,” I believe.

SCROOGE: It is.

LADY: Have we the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge, or Mr. Marley?

SCROOGE: Mr. Marley is dead. He died seven years ago this very night.

LADY: Oh, my!

GENTLEMAN: (OFFERS NOTEBOOK) Our credentials, sir. (SCROOGE LOOKS.) We have no doubt, sir, that Mr. Marley’s generosity is well represented by his surviving partner.

SCROOGE: (FROWNS) Generosity?

LADY: (VERY EARNESTLY) 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.

SCROOGE: Are there no prisons?

GENTLEMAN: (STARTLED) Why, plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE: And the Union workhouses? Are they still in operation?

GENTLEMAN: They are, sir. But I wish I could say they were not.

SCROOGE: (ENJOYING HIMSELF) Oh, well, I was afraid from what you said at first, that some lunatic had interfered with those excellent establishments.

LADY. (TO THE GENTLEMAN) Oh, my goodness!

GENTLEMAN: Sir. We feel that prisons and workhouses scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitudes.

SCROOGE: Hmph!

LADY: That is why at this special time of year a few of us are trying to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth.

GENTLEMAN: (READY TO WRITE IN HIS BOOK) What shall I put you down for?

SCROOGE: Nothing!

GENTLEMAN: You wish to remain anonymous?

SCROOGE: I wish to be left alone!

LADY: Oh!

SCROOGE: I can't afford to make idle people merry! Let those who are badly off go to the prisons and workhouses!

GENTLEMAN: Sir, many of them can't go there, and many would rather die.

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

LADY: Mr. Scrooge!

GENTLEMAN: Sir!

SCROOGE: It's enough for a man to care for his own business, without interfering with other people's! Sir, Madam, good afternoon! (HE OPENS THE DOOR.)

LADY: Well! Of all the –

GENTLEMAN: (TO THE LADY) It seems we've wasted our time here.

LADY: I should say so! (THEY GO OUT AND DISAPPEAR DOWN THE STREET.)

SCROOGE: Bah! (GOES BACK TO HIS DESK)

(A PAUSE. THE SHADOWS LENGTHEN, AND TIME PASSES. THE CLOCK CHIMES FIVE. CRATCHIT

STIRS AT HIS DESK, RISES, GOES TO SCROOGE.)

SCROOGE: Well, Cratchit, what do you want?

CRATCHIT: Mr. Scrooge, sir, I just wanted to remind you, that is, the bells just chimed five o'clock, sir.

SCROOGE: So?

CRATCHIT: Well, it's Christmas Eve, sir, and I wanted to do some shopping

SCROOGE: Shopping? On fifteen shillings a week?

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir.

SCROOGE: Hmph!

CRATCHIT: And you did say that I could leave early today

SCROOGE: I did? When did I say that?

CRATCHIT: Well, sir

SCROOGE: Never mind! If you're going to pace around telling me what time it is for two more hours, you might as well go. You're no good to me here.

CRATCHIT: Thank you, sir!

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

CRATCHIT: If it's quite convenient, sir.

SCROOGE: It is not convenient. And it's not fair.

CRATCHIT: No, sir.

SCROOGE: It's not fair that I pay a day's wages for no work.

CRATCHIT: 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. But be here all the earlier the next morning!

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir, I will. I promise. Thank you, sir. Good night, sir. (DASHES OUT THE DOOR) Merry Christmas!

SCROOGE: (ALONE) Humbug! (HE STARTS TO PUT HIS THINGS AWAY.)

(LIGHTS DARKEN. A FEW VOICES ARE HEARD OFF STAGE. SOME ARE SINGING.)

VOICE I: Merry Christmas!

VOICE II: Merry Christmas!

SCROOGE: (PUTS ON HIS HAT) Bah!

(THE LIGHTS DARKEN FOR A MOMENT AND MYSTERIOUS MOANING VOICES ARE HEARD FROM SEVERAL DIRECTIONS. THE EFFECT IS QUITE UNEARTHLY. MUSIC PLAYS UNDER THE

VOICES.)

VOICES: Ebenezer . . . Ebeneeeeezer . . . Scrooooooge . . .
Ebeneeeeeeezer Scrooooooooooge

– **END OF E-MAIL SEGMENT** –

There are a total of 52 pages in
the complete playscript.