

# *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

Music and Lyrics by Jimmy Calire

Adapted From the Novel by Charles Dickens  
by J. B. White

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**Music Cue #1: Overture**

ACT I

*(The stage is dark.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

To begin with Marley was dead. There is no doubt whatever about that. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail. Mind! I don't mean to say that I know what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it. Did Scrooge know Old Marley was dead? Of course he did. He and Marley were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole friend, and sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully saddened by the event.

*(As the LIGHTS COME UP, SCROOGE enters.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

Ebenezer Scrooge! A tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, a squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner!

*(The street starts to fill with people. They wish each other "Happy Christmas!" as they pass, but go out of their way to avoid Scrooge.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

He carried his own cold temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days, and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas. Nobody ever stopped him in the street to say, "My dear Scrooge, how are you? When will you come to see me?" And for good reason.

*(SINGING offstage. As Scrooge tries to exit, CAROLERS enter and corner him with "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen." He turns and faces them. Scowls.)*

## SCROOGE

Bah! Humbug!

*(The carolers stop singing, look confused, and retreat upstage to talk among themselves. Scrooge continues to give them the evil eye, then turns it on us.)*

**Music Cue #2: Leave Me Alone**

## SCROOGE

*WHAT MUST I DO TO BE LEFT HERE IN PEACE?  
WHY WON'T THEY LEAVE ME ALONE?  
HOW MUCH GOOD CHEER CAN ONE MAN ENDURE?  
LEAVE ME ALONE!*

*I WANT NO PART OF THEIR MISERABLE LIVES.  
I JUST WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE.*

*LEAVE ME ALONE  
TO TEND TO MYSELF,  
TO CARE FOR WHAT MATTERS TO ME,  
TO MIND MY OWN BUSINESS  
AND FORGET ALL THE REST.  
LEAVE ME ALONE!*

*INCESSANT CHATTER FOULING THE AIR,  
WHY WON'T THEY LEAVE ME ALONE?  
CONSTANT DISTRACTIONS LEADING NOWHERE.  
LEAVE ME ALONE!*

*LEAVE ME ALONE, YOU CHILDREN WHO RUN,  
YOU WRETCHED OLD HAGS AND INSOLENT YOUNG,  
YOU GENTRY AND PAUPERS,  
YOU STRUMPETS AND WHORES.  
YOU CLUTTER THE STREETS AS YOU PASS BY MY DOOR.*

*YOU STEAL MY GOODS, YOU SQUANDER MY TIME.  
JUST SEE TO YOURS, AND I'LL SEE TO MINE.*

*(Two SOLICITORS approach Scrooge.)*

FIRST SOLICITOR

Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge?

*(Scrooge says nothing. Eyes them with suspicion. The second solicitor hands him credentials. Scrooge frowns.)*

SECOND SOLICITOR

We are soliciting funds for the poor.

FIRST SOLICITOR

We choose this time, because it is a time, of all others, when want is keenly felt. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts.

SCROOGE

Are there no prisons?

SECOND SOLICITOR

Plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE

And the union workhouses? Are they still in operation?

FIRST SOLICITOR

They are. I wish I could say they were not.

SCROOGE

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

SECOND SOLICITOR

Both very busy, sir.

SCROOGE

I'm very glad to hear it.

FIRST SOLICITOR

So what shall I put you down for?

SCROOGE

Nothing!

SECOND SOLICITOR

You wish to be anonymous?

SCROOGE

I wish to be left alone! I help support the establishments I have mentioned—they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there.

FIRST SOLICITOR

Many can't go there.

SECOND SOLICITOR

And many would rather die.

SCROOGE

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

*(He turns his back on the solicitors, who join the others, disgusted. As Scrooge sings the following, they and the others slowly exit.)*

***Music Cue :#2 Leave Me Alone (Finale)***

SCROOGE

*IT'S ALWAYS WORSE AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR.  
WHY WON'T THEY LEAVE ME ALONE?*

*MOVING IN CLOSER, THEY'RE CROWDING SO NEAR.  
I JUST WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE.*

*GRANT ME SOME PEACE, YOU BLACKGUARDS AND KNAVES.  
I BESEECH YOU 'TIL I'M DEAD IN MY GRAVE:  
LEAVE ME ALONE!*

*(He whirls on the others. They are all gone. He got what he wanted. He is alone. The LIGHTS FADE.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

Once upon a time—on Christmas Eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. The firm was known as “Scrooge and Marley.” Scrooge never painted out Old Marley’s name. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge Scrooge, and sometimes Marley, but he answered to both names. It was all the same to him....

*(LIGHTS FADE HALFWAY UP on the offices of Scrooge and Marley. Scrooge at one desk, his back to BOB CRATCHIT at another, which is small, cramped, and as far away from the coal stove as possible.)*

**SFX #1: Cold Wind (21 sec.)**

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

It was cold, bleak, biting weather. The city clocks had only just gone three—but it was quite dark already; it had not been light all day—when Scrooge’s nephew Fred came to call upon his uncle....

*(The LIGHTS on the office come FULLY UP, as FRED enters. Cold and bundled up, but all smiles for his Uncle Ebenezer.)*

FRED

A merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!

*(Scrooge barely looks up from his work.)*

SCROOGE

Bah! Humbug!

FRED

You don't mean that.

SCROOGE

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

FRED

Come, then. What right have you to be dismal? You're rich enough.

SCROOGE

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 but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but 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.

FRED

Uncle!

SCROOGE

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 it has ever done me.

FRED

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

*(Cratchit applauds involuntarily. Immediately turns back to his work as Scrooge scowls at him.)*

SCROOGE

Let me hear another sound from you, Cratchit, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation!

*(turns to Fred)*

You're quite a powerful speaker, sir. I wonder you don't go into Parliament.

FRED

Don't be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us tomorrow.

SCROOGE

I will not.

FRED

But why?

SCROOGE

Why did you get married?

FRED

Because I fell in love.

SCROOGE



Because you fell in love! Good afternoon!

FRED

But you never came to see me before I married. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?

SCROOGE

Good afternoon.

FRED

I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my good humor to the last. So, a Merry Christmas, uncle!

SCROOGE

Good afternoon!

FRED

And a Happy New Year!

SCROOGE

Good afternoon!

*(Fred stops at the door to shake Cratchit's hand and wish him a Merry Christmas. Scrooge watches them, his scowl deepening. Mutters to himself:)*

SCROOGE

My clerk, with fifteen shillings a week, and a wife and family, talking about a merry Christmas. I'll retire to Bedlam.

***SFX #2: Six Bells (28 sec.)***

*(As Fred exits, the town bell TOLLS offstage. Scrooge sighs. Cratchit brightens. They simultaneously set down their pens. Close their books. Rise from their stools. Scrooge with great reluctance, Cratchit eagerly. As they put on their topcoats and scarves:)*

SCROOGE

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 an entire 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. Be here all the bright and earlier the next morning.

CRATCHIT

I will, sir. Thank you, sir.

*(He exits quickly, almost skipping with happiness. Scrooge watches him, shakes his head.)*

SCROOGE

To Bedlam, I tell you. To Bedlam.

**Music Cue #3: Marley's Ghost (Underscore)**

*(He follows Cratchit out the door, and the LIGHTS FADE.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

Scrooge took his melancholy dinner in his usual melancholy tavern; and having read all the newspapers, and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's-book, he went home...to chambers that had once belonged to his deceased partner.

*(LIGHTS COME UP on the exterior of Scrooge's house. Scrooge enters. Trudges to the front door and is about to unlock it—when suddenly the knocker becomes MARLEY'S FACE. Scrooge staggers back, startled. Blinks. And the face is gone. Scrooge collects himself. Unlocks the door and goes in. LIGHTS OUT on the exterior of the house and UP on the interior, as Scrooge starts to close the door—then looks cautiously behind it, half-expecting to see Marley. When he doesn't, he closes the door with a bang.)*

SCROOGE

Pooh, pooh!

*(But he takes a moment to survey the sitting room, making sure no one is hiding under the table or behind the sofa. Satisfied, he double-locks the door. Takes off his tie. Hangs it on a coat rack. Retrieves his dressing gown and nightcap. Puts them on. Sits down in his chair.)*

**SFX #3: Peals to Chains (36 sec.)**

*(A quiet beat—then a call bell hanging nearby starts swinging on its own. Its PEAL soft at first, then quickly getting louder, joined by other bells in the house, all RINGING loudly. Then—a door offstage BANGS open and the bells STOP. And now, a CLANKING SOUND, as if someone is dragging a heavy chain, coming closer...closer... louder...louder...until MARLEY materializes in front of Scrooge, staring at him with death-cold eyes. Scrooge returns the stare, incredulous.)*

SCROOGE

How now! What do you want with me?

MARLEY

Much!

SCROOGE

Who are you?

MARLEY

Ask me who I was.

SCROOGE

Who were you then? You're particular, for a shade.

MARLEY

In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

SCROOGE

Oh, were you? Can you sit down?

MARLEY

I can.

SCROOGE

Do it, then.

MARLEY

You don't believe in me.

SCROOGE

I don't.

MARLEY

Why do you doubt your senses?

SCROOGE

Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheats. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more gravy than grave about you, whatever you are.

*(Marley raises a frightful cry, shakes his chain.)*

**SFX #4: Marley's Roar (13 sec.)**

*(Scrooge falls upon his knees, covers his face with his hands.)*

MARLEY

Man of the worldly mind, do you believe in me or not?

**Music Cue #4: Marley's Lament**

SCROOGE

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

MARLEY

*IT IS REQUIRED OF THE SPIRIT OF MAN,  
TO WALK FAR AND WIDE,  
DOOMED TO WANDER, TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH,  
TO EVERY KINGDOM, CLAN AND TRIBE.  
IT IS REQUIRED OF THE SPIRIT OF MAN  
TO SPEAK FOR THE DEAD,  
BEARING WITNESS TO MERCIES UNDONE  
AND KIND WORDS LEFT UNSAID.*

SCROOGE

You are fettered. Tell me why.

MARLEY

*I WEAR THE CHAINS I FORGED IN MY LIFE.  
I MADE EACH YARD, LINK BY LINK.  
IN THE FOUNDRY OF MY HEART, I MADE EACH ONE.*

*CAN'T YOU HEAR THE HAMMERS CLINK?*

*EACH LOVELESS DAY, EVERY CRUEL, SELFISH ACT,  
FROM THOSE IN NEED, I TURNED AWAY, I TURNED MY BACK.  
IN THE FOUNDRY OF MY HEART, ANOTHER LINK—  
HEAR THE HAMMERS CLANG AND CLINK.  
IS THIS SO STRANGE TO YOU?  
DEEP WITHIN YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE.  
YOU'LL DRAG A LONG AND HEAVY CHAIN.  
YOURS IS A PONDEROUS CHAIN.*

SCROOGE

Jacob. Old Jacob Marley. Speak comfort to me, Jacob!

MARLEY

*I HAVE NONE TO GIVE.  
VERY LITTLE IS PERMITTED ME.  
I CANNOT REST, I CANNOT STAY,  
I CANNOT LINGER ANYWHERE.  
MY SPIRIT NEVER LEFT OUR MONEY-CHANGING HOLE,  
AND LONG WEARY JOURNEYS LIE BEFORE ME!*

SCROOGE

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

MARLEY

*BUSINESS! MANKIND WAS MY BUSINESS.  
THE COMMON WELFARE WAS MY BUSINESS.  
CHARITY, MERCY, AND BENEVOLENCE WERE ALL MY BUSINESS.  
THE DEALINGS OF MY TRADE WERE BUT A DROP OF WATER  
IN THE COMPREHENSIVE OCEAN OF MY BUSINESS!*

*(He holds up his chain in agony—then flings it heavily on the ground.)*

MARLEY

At this time of the rolling year I suffer most.

*(looks heavenward; his agony deepening)*

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!

*(He fixes his gaze on Scrooge again.)*

MARLEY

Hear me! My time is nearly gone. I am here to warn you. You have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate.

SCROOGE

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

MARLEY

You will be haunted by three spirits.

SCROOGE

I—I think I'd rather not.

MARLEY

Expect the first tonight when the bell tolls one.

SCROOGE

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

MARLEY

Expect the second on the next night at the same hour. The third upon the next, when the last stroke of twelve has ceased to vibrate. And look that, for your own sake, you remember what has passed between us!

***SFX #5: Wails (38 sec.)***

***Music Cue #5: Christmas Past (Underscore)***

*(He starts backing out of the room, as INCOHERENT WAILS of lamentation and regret FADE UP. He stops. Listens a moment. Then disappears, the WAILS FADING OUT with him. Scrooge sits frozen a moment—then leaps from his chair. Goes to the door. Sees that it is still double-locked. He stares at it a long moment, then goes back to his chair. Sinks into it, suddenly quite tired. His head droops to his chest—and he falls asleep. The LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK. A long beat—then:)*

**SFX #6: Loud Dong (10 sec.)**

*(A startlingly loud DONG as an unseen bell strikes one.)*

**Music Cue #6: Past Stinger**

*(LIGHTS suddenly UP, as Scrooge bolts awake—and finds himself face-to-face with the GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Scrooge is frightened but intrigued.)*

SCROOGE

Who and what are you?

PAST

I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE

Long past?

PAST

No. Your past.

SCROOGE

What is your business with me?

PAST

Your welfare!



SCROOGE

I am very much obliged, but I cannot help thinking that a night of unbroken rest would have been more conducive to that end.

PAST

Your reclamation then.

***Music Cue #7: Song of Regret***

*IT IS APPOINTED ME TO SHED SOME LIGHT  
ON THE DARKEST CORNERS OF YOUR HEART,  
WHERE SECRETS HIDE IN THE DUSTY GLOOM,  
LONG FORGOTTEN IN THE DEEP DARK NIGHT.  
YOU HAVE ACCOUNTS TO RECONCILE,  
AND YOU HAVE NOT LONG BEFORE YOU FADE.  
YOU OWE A DEBT TO HUMANITY.  
YOU ARE OVERDUE, AND YOU MUST PAY.  
NOW IS YOUR TIME TO REMEMBER.  
THIS IS THE MOMENT,  
YOUR CHANCE TO REGRET.  
NOW IS THE TIME TO RETRACE YOUR STEPS,  
RELIVE THOSE SCENES, RECALL YOUR DREAMS:  
THOSE BITTERSWEET MEMORIES YOU'VE TRIED TO FORGET.  
IT IS APPOINTED ME TO TELL THE TRUTH.  
THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE.  
TO SAVE YOUR IMMORTAL SOUL.*

PAST

Rise, and walk with me!

SCROOGE

But...I am a mortal and liable to fall.

PAST

Bear but a touch of my hand there...

*(lays a hand on Scrooge's heart)*

...and you shall be upheld in more than this.

***Music Cue # 8: Magic Sounds***

*(Scrooge gets up from his chair, and they walk downstage and look out.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

They passed through the wall, and stood upon an open country road, with fields on either hand. The city had entirely vanished.

*(A transformation in Scrooge. He clasps his hands together.)*

SCROOGE

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

PAST

You recollect the way?

SCROOGE

I could walk it blindfold.

*(They walk slowly, downstage right.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

They walked along the road, Scrooge recognizing every gate, and post, and tree. Some ponies trotted toward them with boys upon their backs, all in great spirits.

***SFX #7: Galloping Horses (14 sec.)***

SCROOGE

I know them!

*(calling out)*

John! Colin! George!

PAST

These are but shadows of the things that have been. They have no consciousness of us.

BOYS' VOICES (O.S.)

Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!

*(Scrooge and Past keep walking. The boys' voices recede. Scrooge glances back at them, with longing.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

They left the high road, by a well-remembered lane, and soon approached a mansion of dull red brick.

*(LIGHTS UP on a lonely, twelve-year-old BOY SCROOGE, reading. Scrooge stops walking. Reacts.)*

SCROOGE

Is that—

PAST

Your younger self.

*(Scrooge peers at the book Boy Scrooge is reading. Laughs excitedly.)*

SCROOGE

It's Ali Baba! One Christmas time, when I was all alone at school, he came, for the first time, just like that. Dear old honest Ali Baba.

*(watching his young self, Scrooge is suddenly full of pity)*

Poor boy. Poor, lonely boy.

PAST

But it wasn't just Ali Baba who came, was it?

*(FAN darts in. Throws her arms around Boy Scrooge's neck. Showers him with kisses.)*

SCROOGE

*(with feeling)*

Fan! My darling Fan... Alive again? Oh, would that it were so.

FAN

Dear, dear brother. I have come to bring you home. To bring you home, home, home.

BOY SCROOGE

Home, little Fan?

FAN

For good and all. For ever and ever. Father spoke so gently to me one dear night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you.

***Music Cue #9: Home, Home, Home***

*HOME, HOME, HOME:*

*THE KETTLE SINGS A WELCOME SONG.*

*THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE YOU BELONG.*

*YOU KNOW WHEN YOU ARE HOME.*

*HOME, HOME, HOME:*

*WHERE WE CAN LEAVE THE WORLD BEHIND.*

*WHERE HEARTS ARE WARM AND EYES ARE KIND.*

*THEY TELL US WE ARE HOME.*

*IT'S WHERE OUR JOURNEYS END.*

*IT'S WHERE WE FIND OUR STRENGTH.*

*IT'S WHERE OUR HEARTS DO YEARN*

*TO RETURN ONCE AGAIN.*

*HOME, HOME, HOME:  
OUR PATHS MAY LEAD US FAR AND WIDE,  
BUT ALL IS WELL WHEN WE'RE INSIDE,  
AT LAST WHEN WE ARE HOME.*

*(Scrooge looks at his little sister with deep, aching affection.)*

SCROOGE

Fan, little Fan....

PAST

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

SCROOGE

So she had.

PAST

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

SCROOGE

One child.

PAST

True. Your nephew.

SCROOGE

*(uneasily)*

Yes.

*(LIGHTS OUT on Teenaged Scrooge and Fan. Scrooge and Past continue walking, Scrooge once again looking back with longing.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

They were now in the busy thoroughfares of a city, where shadowy passengers passed and re-passed, where shadowy carts and coaches battle

for the way. It was Christmas here too, but it was evening, and the streets were lighted up.

*(LIGHTS UP on Fezziwig's office. FEZZIWIG lays down his pen. Glances at the clock. Rubs his hand. Scrooge and Past stop walking and watch, as Fezziwig calls out to YOUNG MAN SCROOGE and DICK WILKINS, working nearby.)*

FEZZIWIG

Yo ho, there. Ebenezer. Dick.

SCROOGE

It's old Fezziwig. He gave my first employment! Bless his heart; it's Fezziwig alive again. And Dick Wilkins, to be sure.

FEZZIWIG

Yo ho, my boys. No more work tonight. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer. Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here!

*(As Young Man Scrooge and Dick get to work clearing the office floor, a FIDDLER enters, followed by several young couples, MRS. FEZZIWIG, and two fetching young women—one of whom, BELLE, smiles flirtatiously at Young Man Scrooge, who blushes but can't stop grinning. The fiddler takes his station and starts playing.)*

**Music Cue #10: Sir Roger de Coverly**

*(Fezziwig grabs his wife and starts a lively dance. The others partner up and join them, Young Man Scrooge shyly offering his hand to Belle, who eagerly takes it. They all dance, joyfully and with abandon, Young Man Scrooge and Belle never taking their eyes off each other. Slowly the LIGHTS FADE on the other dancers. A SPOT on Young Man Scrooge and Belle, as he leads her away from the others.)*

PAST

And you remember Belle....

SCROOGE

How could I forget?

*(He reaches out to her, longingly. As Young Man Scrooge kneels. Holds out his open palm to her. On it...a simple ring.)*

**Music Cue #11: I Promise You**

YOUNG MAN SCROOGE

*I PROMISE YOU, WITH THIS SIGN OF MY LOVE,  
THAT I WILL WAIT, AND I'LL BE TRUE.*

*WITH THIS RING, I PROMISE YOU.*

*PLEASE TAKE MY HAND,*

*LET OUR STORY UNFOLD.*

*THIS SIMPLE BAND SOON WILL BE GOLD.*

*THEN YOU'LL BE MINE TO HAVE AND HOLD.*

*I PLEDGE MY HEART, THESE HANDS,*

*AND ALL I EVER WILL POSSESS.*

*FROM THIS DAY ON, I PROMISE YOU.*

*AND WITH THIS RING, I PROMISE YOU.*

*(Eyes glistening with tears, Belle takes the ring. Kisses him tenderly. A kiss that lingers a beat—then LIGHTS UP again, as Young Man Scrooge and Belle join the others, who have finished dancing.)*

**Music Cue #12: Sir Roger de Coverly (Playoff)**

*(Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig stand at the doorway, saying goodbye to their guests who, as they leave one by one, effusively thank their hosts.)*

PAST

A small matter for Fezziwig, to make these silly folks so full of gratitude.

SCROOGE

Small!

## PAST

He has spent but a few pounds: three or four perhaps. Is that so much that he deserves this praise?

## SCROOGE

It isn't that. Fezziwig has the power to render us happy or unhappy; to make our service light or burdensome; a pleasure or a toil. The happiness he gives is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.

*(He stops, hearing himself. Ponders that—not quite able yet to apply it to himself, but self-analysis dawning. The guests have all gone. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig exit after them, arm in arm. The LIGHTS GO OUT on Fezziwig's office.)*

## PAST

My time grows short. Quick.

*(LIGHTS UP, center stage. Young Man Scrooge and Belle sitting side by side. But they are not together. They are turned slightly away from each other. And they have changed. There is an eager, greedy, restless motion in Young Man Scrooge's eyes. And Belle looks like she is in mourning.)*

## BELLE

It matters little. To you, very little. Another idol has displaced me; and if it can cheer and comfort you in time to come, as I would have tried to do, I have no just cause to grieve.

## YOUNG MAN SCROOGE

What idol has displaced you?

## BELLE

A golden one.

## YOUNG MAN SCROOGE



This is the even-handed dealing of the world! There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty; and there is nothing it professes to condemn with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!

BELLE

You fear the world too much. All your other hopes have merged into the hope of being beyond the chance of its sordid reproach. I have seen your nobler aspirations fall off one by one, until the master-passion, Gain, engrosses you.

YOUNG MAN SCROOGE

What then? Even if I have grown so much wiser, what then? I am not changed towards you. Am I?

***Music Cue #13: Belle's Song***

*WHAT MUST I DO?  
AM I SO CHANGED?  
WHY DO I FEEL SO ALONE?*

*(Belle looks at him now. Sadly shakes her head.)*

BELLE

*WHO ARE YOU? I DON'T KNOW YOU.  
I DON'T KNOW THE MAN YOU'VE BECOME.  
YOU ARE DISTANT, SO UNFAMILIAR.  
YOU'RE A STRANGER TO MY LOVE.  
OUR PROMISE WAS MADE WHEN OUR HEARTS WERE AS ONE.  
WE WERE SHARING OUR HOPES AND DREAMS.  
LOST IN THE GLARE OF YOUR NEWFOUND LOVE,  
OUR PROMISE GROWS PALE AND DIM.*

*YOU'VE CHANGED. I DON'T KNOW YOU.  
YOU ARE NOT THE MAN I HAVE LOVED.  
YOU'RE SO MUCH COLDER, SO INDIFFERENT.  
YOU'RE A STRANGER TO MY LOVE.*

*FOR THE LOVE OF HIM THAT YOU ONCE WERE,  
FOR OUR LOVE THAT MAY HAVE BEEN,  
FOR OUR LOVE THAT NOW WILL NEVER BE,  
I RELEASE YOU, I RELEASE YOU,  
I RELEASE YOU WITH A FULL HEART.*

*(She stands. Puts something in his hand—the simple band he gave her.)*

**Music Cue #14: Belle's Farewell**

BELLE

May you be happy in the life you have chosen.

*(She closes his fingers around the ring. Kisses his forehead and exits.  
He watches her, stricken—but he does not follow.)*

SCROOGE

No more.

SCROOGE and YOUNG MAN SCROOGE

No more!

SCROOGE

I don't wish to see it. Why do you delight to torture me?

**Music Cue #15: Fugue of Memories**

*(On each of their music cues, the chorus, Fan and Belle enter.)*

PAST

*NOW IS YOUR TIME TO REMEMBER.*

*THIS IS THE MOMENT.*

*YOUR CHANCE TO REGRET.*

*NOW IS THE TIME TO RETRACE YOUR STEPS,*

*RELIVE THOSE SCENES, RECALL YOUR DREAMS.*

*THOSE BITTERSWEET MEMORIES YOU TRY TO FORGET.*

## CHORUS

*EBENEZER, WHAT A WRETCHED LIFE!  
 POOR EBENEZER, WHAT A PATHETIC LIFE!  
 REJECTED, NEGLECTED, ABANDONED IN CHILDHOOD.  
 WHAT A WRETCHED LIFE!  
 POOR EBENEZER, WHAT A PATHETIC LIFE!*

## FAN

*HOME, HOME, HOME, BROTHER, HOME, HOME,  
 YES, YES, YES; HE SAID "YES, YES, YES."*

## BELLE

*FOR THE LOVE OF HIM THAT YOU ONCE WERE,  
 FOR OUR LOVE THAT MAY HAVE BEEN.  
 FOR THE LOVE THAT NOW WILL NEVER BE,  
 I RELEASE YOU, I RELEASE YOU,  
 I RELEASE YOU, I RELEASE YOU.*

## SCROOGE and YOUNG MAN SCROOGE

*WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?  
 WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?  
 PLEASE, WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?  
 WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?  
 LEAVE ME ALONE, LEAVE ME ALONE,  
 LEAVE ME ALONE!*

## PAST

*NOW IS THE TIME TO RETRACE YOUR STEPS,  
 RELIVE THOSE SCENES, RECALL YOUR DREAMS.  
 THOSE BITTERSWEET MEMORIES YOU'VE TRIED TO FORGET.  
 IT IS APPOINTED ME TO TELL THE TRUTH.  
 THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE,  
 THIS IS YOUR VERY LAST CHANCE  
 TO SAVE YOUR IMMORTAL SOUL.*

SCROOGE

Leave me. Take me back. Haunt me no longer.

***Music Cue #16: The Haunted Heart***

*(Suddenly the LIGHTS GO BLINDING WHITE—so bright they hurt. Then—just as suddenly—the stage goes black. A long beat, then slowly a SPOTLIGHT FADES UP on Scrooge. He is alone—and back in his chair, asleep. Another long beat, then...)*

***SFX #8: Dong (10 sec.)***

***Music Cue #17: Christmas Present Entrance***

*(...the unseen bell DONGS loudly. Scrooge's eyes drift open.)*

PRESENT (O.S.)  
*(almost a whisper)*

Ebenezer Scrooge....

*(Scrooge sits up now, on alert, as the LIGHTS GO UP around him...and he sees THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT standing nearby, staring at him. Scrooge averts his eyes, frightened.)*

PRESENT

I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. Look upon me!

*(Reluctantly, Scrooge does.)*

PRESENT

You have never seen the like of me before.

SCROOGE

Never.

PRESENT

Touch my robe.

*(Scrooge hesitates.)*

PRESENT

Do as I say!

*(Scrooge touches Present's robe, hand trembling. And all the stage is NOW LIT. Christmas shoppers and revelers enter, walking past, behind and around Scrooge and Present. Many carrying baskets of food and presents. Laughing, greeting each other, enjoying the spirit of Christmas. As they pass, Present sprinkles them with sparkling dust. Scrooge, curious.)*

SCROOGE

Is there a peculiar flavor in what you sprinkle?

PRESENT

There is. My own.

SCROOGE

Would it apply to any?

PRESENT

To any. To a poor one most.

SCROOGE

Why a poor one most?

PRESENT

Because it needs it most. Especially now...

***Music Cue #18: The Gift of Good Cheer***

*'TIS THE GLORIOUS SEASON,*

*THE BEST DAYS OF THE YEAR,  
WHEN PEOPLE GATHER 'ROUND THE HEARTH  
TO SHARE THE GIFT OF GOOD CHEER.*

*AND AS WE RAISE OUR GLASSES  
AND DRINK THIS SPECIAL BREW,  
WE'LL REMEMBER ALL OUR BLESSINGS  
AND OUR SPIRITS WILL BE RENEWED  
COME ONE, COME ALL,  
LET'S SHARE THE GIFT OF GOOD CHEER.*

*IT ECHOES THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS  
TO THE LOWLANDS FAR AND NEAR.  
IT TOUCHES ALL THE HEARTS OF THOSE  
WHO SHARE THE GIFT OF GOOD CHEER.*

*SO CLIMB UP TO THE STEEPLE  
AND LET THE CHURCH BELLS RING,  
TO REMIND US WHEN WE REACH OUT IN LOVE,  
THE ANGELS SURELY SING.  
COME ONE, COME ALL,  
LET'S SHARE THE GIFT OF GOOD CHEER.  
COME ONE, COME ALL,  
LET'S SHARE THE GIFT OF GOOD CHEER.*

***Music Cue #19: Good Cheer Playoff***

NARRATOR (O.S.)

Soon, their journey brought them to the humble of Bob Cratchit and his family who, despite their constant state of want, made merry in celebration of this happiest of days.

***Music Cue #20: Cratchit's Interlude***

*(As the song ends, the shoppers and revelers exit, and the LIGHTS COME UP on the Cratchits' sitting room. MRS. CRATCHIT and*

*BELINDA enter, carrying the tablecloth, which they proceed to spread on the table. PETER enters, carrying a saucepan. Two younger Cratchits, MATTHEW and REBECCA, run in, dashing around the table, getting underfoot.)*

MRS. CRATCHIT

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

MARTHA

*(entering)*

Here's Martha, Mother!

REBECCA

Here's Martha, Mother! Hurrah!

MATTHEW

There's such a goose, Martha!

MRS. CRATCHIT

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

*(She kisses Martha, helps her take off her shawl and bonnet.)*

MARTHA

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

MRS. CRATCHIT

Well. Never mind so long as you are come. Sit down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm.

REBECCA and MATTHEW

No, no. There's Father coming. Hide, Martha, hide!

*(Martha hides herself, as Cratchit enters, with TINY TIM on his shoulder. The other children run to greet their father and brother with happy hugs and kisses.)*

CRATCHIT  
*(looking around)*

Why, where's our Martha?

BELINDA

Not coming.

CRATCHIT  
Not coming, Belinda! Not coming upon Christmas Day!

*(Laughing, Martha jumps out of her hiding place. Runs to her father's arms. Peter, Rebecca, Belinda and Matthew hustle Tiny Tim off.)*

PETER  
Let's fetch the goose!

REBECCA  
Come to the wash-house!

MATTHEW  
You can hear the pudding—

BELINDA  
—singing in the copper.

*(Mrs. Cratchit watches them, eyes full of sympathy for her crippled son.)*

MRS. CRATCHIT  
How did little Tim behave in church?

CRATCHIT



As good as gold. And better. He gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard.

MRS. CRATCHIT

What did he say?

CRATCHIT

He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember, upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk and blind men see. It's so wonderful, seeing him grow strong and hearty.

*(A look between Cratchit and Mrs. Cratchit—they know that isn't true. The children return with the goose and other dishes. Start setting table.)*

CRATCHIT

I don't believe there ever was such a goose!

*(Mrs. Cratchit looks anxiously at the children.)*

MRS. CRATCHIT

The pudding. Was it—

PETER

—done enough?

MARTHA

Suppose it should break in turning out.

PETER

Suppose someone should come over the backyard wall—

BELINDA

—and steal it while we eat!

REBECCA and MATTHEW

Who would do such a thing! ... How horrible!

*(Everyone laughing—even Mrs. Cratchit.)*

CRATCHIT

Come. Let's eat.

*(The family sits down. Bows their heads. Joins hands.)*

CRATCHIT

A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us.

***Music Cue #21: God Bless Us Everyone***

TINY TIM

*GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.  
BLESS THE GREAT AND SMALL.  
BLESS YOUR CHILDREN, YOUNG AND OLD.  
WON'T YOU BLESS US ALL?  
BLESS US WHILE WE SLEEP.  
BLESS US AS WE TOIL.  
KEEP US 'TIL THE DAY IS DONE.  
GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.*

*HEAR A ROBIN SING.  
FEEL THE WARMING SUN.  
I SEE THE MOON AND STARS YOU MADE.  
YOU NAMED THEM ONE BY ONE.*

*BLESS THE RUNNING STREAM.  
BLESS THE CLOUDS IN THE SKY.  
BLESS OUR TABLE THAT YOU SET.  
GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.  
GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.*

*(Scrooge has been touched by the song.)*

SCROOGE

Spirit, tell me if Tiny Tim will live.

PRESENT

I see a vacant seat in the poor chimney-corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the future, the child will die.

SCROOGE

No, no. Oh, no, kind Spirit, say he will be spared.

PRESENT

If he be like to die, he had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.

*(Upon hearing his own words quoted to him, Scrooge hangs his head—then lifts it as Cratchit raises his glass.)*

CRATCHIT

Mr. Scrooge. I'll give you Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast.

MRS. CRATCHIT

The Founder of the Feast indeed. I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it.

CRATCHIT

My dear, the children. Christmas Day.

MRS. CRATCHIT

It should be Christmas Day, I am sure, on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert. Nobody knows it better than you do.

CRATCHIT

My dear. Christmas Day.

MRS. CRATCHIT

I'll drink his health for your sake and the day's, not for his.

*(raises her glass; the children follow suit)*

Long life to him. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt.

***Music Cue #22: God Bless Us (Reprise)***

*(Everyone toasts.)*

CRATCHIT

*GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.*

*BLESS THE GREAT AND SMALL.*

*BLESS YOUR CHILDREN, YOUNG AND OLD.*

*WON'T YOU BLESS US ALL?*

TINY TIM

*BLESS US WHILE WE SLEEP.*

*BLESS US AS WE TOIL.*

*KEEP US 'TIL THE DAY IS DONE.*

*GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.*

CRATCHIT

*HOW ARE WE TO KNOW*

*THE TURNING OF YOUR WAYS?*

*FILL US ALL WITH A GRATEFUL HEART*

*EACH AND EVERY DAY.*

*(Present starts to lead Scrooge away from the Cratchits. Scrooge resists, watches the family, moved by the singing.)*

SCROOGE

Tell me Tiny Tim will live. Say he will be spared.

*(Present says nothing, just leads him offstage.)*

ALL THE CRATCHITS

*BLESS THE RUNNING STREAM.*

*BLESS THE CLOUDS IN THE SKY.*

*BLESS OUR TABLE THAT YOU SET.*

*GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.*

*GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.*

*(On the last notes of the song, the LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.)*

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**Music Cue #23: Entr'acte**

## ACT II

*(The stage is dark.)*

## THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

Scrooge and the Spirit journeyed far and wide that night. Past houses brightly lit by roaring fires...where children ran out into the snow to greet their visiting relatives...streets teeming with others on their way to celebrate with family and friends. And everywhere, the Spirit sprinkled its “peculiar flavor.” On the lamplighter dotting the dusky street with specks of light...on impoverished miners singing Christmas songs in huts of mud and stone...on two men in a solitary lighthouse wishing each other Merry Christmas in their can of grog...on a ship at sea, each sailor humming a Christmas tune, or with a Christmas thought, or sharing a memory of some bygone Christmas Day with his companion. And everyone, good or bad, had a kinder word for another on that night than on any other day of the year, and shared in its festivities.

## FRED (O.S.)

Ha, ha. Ha, ha, ha.

*(LIGHTS COME UP on Fred's living room, filled with partygoers, including FRED'S WIFE and TOPPER—who can't keep his eyes off a comely PLUMP GIRL. Scrooge and Present enter. Stand to the side, unseen. As Fred continues laughing, the others laugh with him, infected by his good cheer.)*

## FRED

He said that Christmas was humbug, as I live. He believed it too.

## FRED'S WIFE

More shame for him.

## FRED

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

FRED'S WIFE

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

FRED

His wealth is of no use to him. He don't do any good with it.

FRED'S WIFE

I have no patience with him. Not that I have ever had occasion. He has never come to call, has never acknowledged me at all.

*(The other women nod and murmur sympathetically.)*

FRED

Still. 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. The consequence? He loses some pleasant moments, which could do him no harm. But I mean to give him the same chance every year, whether he likes it or not. He may rail at Christmas till he dies, but he can't help thinking better of it—I defy him—if he finds me going there, in good temper, year after year, and saying, "Uncle Scrooge, how are you?" If it only puts him in the vein to leave his poor clerk fifty pounds, that's something; and I think I shook him yesterday.

TOPPER

Enough talk. Let's play "Yes and No."

*(Excited agreement from the assembled. Present tries to pull Scrooge away.)*

PRESENT

We must go.

## SCROOGE

Here is a game! One half hour, Spirit, only one!

*(Present relents.)*

FRED

All right. I have one.

TOPPER

Is it a mineral?

FRED

No.

PLUMP GIRL

A vegetable.

FRED

No.

FRED'S WIFE

An animal.

FRED

Yes!

PLUMP GIRL

A savage one?

FRED

Yes—and rather disagreeable.

TOPPER

Does it growl?

FRED

It does.



FRED'S WIFE

And grunt?

FRED

Sometimes.

PLUMP GIRL

Does it live in a menagerie?

FRED

No.

FRED'S WIFE

Is it made show of?

FRED

It is not.

TOPPER

Is it led by anyone?

FRED

Never.

PLUMP GIRL

Is it a horse?

FRED

No.

TOPPER

A cow?

FRED

No.

FRED'S WIFE

A bull?

FRED

No.

PLUMP GIRL

A tiger?

FRED

No.

TOPPER

Is it ever killed in a market?

FRED

No, but it might kill in a market.

*(That strikes a chord in the plump girl, who goes quiet, thinking.)*

FRED'S WIFE

Is it a dog?

FRED

No.

TOPPER

Is it a bear?

FRED

No.

PLUMP GIRL

*(suddenly)*

Does it live in London?

FRED

Yes.

PLUMP GIRL

Does it walk?

FRED

Yes!

PLUMP GIRL

I have found it out! I know what it is, Fred. I know what it is.

FRED

What is it?

PLUMP GIRL

It's your Uncle Scrooge.

FRED

It certainly is.

*(Convulsions of laughter from the others. Congratulations to the plump girl—although Topper looks slightly put out.)*

TOPPER

Well, then you shouldn't have said "no" to "is it a bear."

FRED

*(raising his glass to the plump girl)*

Well done.

*(keeping his glass raised)*

My uncle has given us plenty of merriment, I am sure, and it would be ungrateful not to drink to his health. To Uncle Scrooge.

*(The others raise their glasses, exclaim "To Uncle Scrooge.")*

FRED

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

*(Present again starts to pull Scrooge away.)*

PRESENT

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

SCROOGE

Tonight!

PRESENT

The time is drawing near.

*(Scrooge allows himself to be pulled away. The LIGHTS FADE on Fred's party. Scrooge and Present are SPOTLIT as they walk. Suddenly Scrooge stops. Stares at Present.)*

SCROOGE

I...I see something strange and not belonging to yourself behind your robe. Is it a foot or a claw?

*(Present says nothing, but pulls forward, from behind his robe, a BOY and a GIRL—wretched, abject, frightful, miserable. They kneel at Present's feet, clinging to his robe. Scrooge stares at them, appalled.)*

SCROOGE

Are...are they yours?

***Music Cue #24: Christmas Future***

PRESENT

They are Man's. This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy, for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased.

SCROOGE

Have they no refuge or resource?

PRESENT

“Are there no prisons?” “Are there no workhouses?”

*(The boy and girl stand, still clinging to Present.)*

PRESENT

It ends.

*(An unseen clock starts CHIMING.)*

**SFX #9: 12 Bells (35 sec.)**

*(Present and the children start to recede backwards into the darkness.)*

SCROOGE

No! No!

*(He falls to his knees, still pleading. As the clock CHIMES twelve, Present and the children disappear into the darkness—as another figure approaches from the same spot. THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME.)*

**Music Cue #25: Cello Tritone Glissandi (Whenever Future Gestures)**

SCROOGE

I...I am in the presence of the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?

*(Future says nothing. Just stares at Scrooge.)*

SCROOGE

You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us, aren't you?

*(Future nods.)*

SCROOGE

I fear you more than any specter I have seen. Will you not speak to me?

*(Future raises his arm. Points, indicating Scrooge is to follow him.)*

SCROOGE

Lead on. The night is waning fast, and it is precious time to me. Lead on, Spirit.

*(Scrooge follows Future to the side of the stage, as the LIGHTS COME UP on THREE BUSINESSMEN, who have met in the street.)*

FIRST BUSINESSMAN

No, I don't know that much about it. I only know he's dead.

SECOND BUSINESSMAN

Old Scratch has got his own at last, hey. When did he die?

FIRST BUSINESSMAN

Last night, I believe.

THIRD BUSINESSMAN

I thought he'd never die.

SECOND BUSINESSMAN

What has he done with his money?

FIRST BUSINESSMAN

I haven't heard. Left it to his company, perhaps. He hasn't left it to me. That's all I know.

*(The others laugh.)*

FIRST BUSINESSMAN

It's likely to be a very cheap funeral, for upon my life I don't know of anybody to go to it. Suppose we make up a party and volunteer!

THIRD BUSINESSMAN

I don't mind going if lunch is provided.

*(They all laugh and exit.)*

SCROOGE

I know these men! I have made a point always of standing well in their esteem. Of what importance is their conversation? It seems so trivial.

*(Future says nothing. Points again. Scrooge follows him across the stage to the other side.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

They left the busy street, and went into an obscure part of the town, where Scrooge had never penetrated before, although he recognized its situation, and its bad repute. The ways were foul and narrow; the shops and houses wretched; the people drunken, slipshod, ugly. The whole quarter reeked with crime, filth, and misery.

***Music Cue #26: Working Poor***

*(LIGHTS UP on a CHARWOMAN, a LAUNDRESS, and OLD JOE, a pawnbroker.)*

CHARWOMAN, LAUNDRESS, OLD JOE

*WE'RE THE WORKING POOR.*

*WE'LL NEVER GET RICH OR LIVE A LIFE OF LEISURE.*

*WE DO THE WORK, IT IS OUR FATE*

*FOR THIS WE ARE BORN MAKE NO MISTAKE.*

*WE SERVE OUR MASTERS WELL AND THEN WE DIE.*

CHARWOMAN

*LOOK AT ME, THE LOWLY SERVANT.  
YOU PASS ME BY, BUT YOU DON'T SEE  
THAT I HAVE MANY MOUTHS TO FEED.  
THEY'RE FULL OF WANT, THEY'RE FULL OF NEED.  
OH, WHAT A LIFE!*

LAUNDRESS

*OUR DAUGHTER RAN AWAY LAST WINTER.  
DON'T KNOW IF SHE'S ALIVE OR DEAD.  
MY OLD MAN LAYS IN BED ALL DAY,  
TRYIN' TO DRINK THE WORLD AWAY.  
OH, WHAT A LIFE!*

OLD JOE

*HERE I AM, YOUR HONEST BROKER.  
I'M HERE TO HELP YOU BUY AND SELL  
THE CRUMBS THAT FALL FROM RICH MAN'S TABLE.  
SCROUNGE UP ALL THAT YOU ARE ABLE,  
HERE IN THIS LIFE.*

CHARWOMAN, LAUNDRESS, OLD JOE  
*WE'RE THE WORKING POOR,  
THE BACKBONE OF THE LOWER SOCIAL CLASSES.  
WE BEND AND STOOP, SCOUR AND SCRUB,  
WE FETCH AND SCRAPE 'TIL DAY IS DONE  
WE SERVE OUR MASTERS WELL AND THEN WE DIE.  
WE SERVE OUR MASTERS WELL AND THEN WE DIE.*

CHARWOMAN

Look here, old Joe, here's a chance.



OLD JOE

You couldn't have met in a better place. Come into the parlor.

*(The three sit.)*

CHARWOMAN

*(defiantly)*

Every person has a right to take care of themselves. He always did!

LAUNDRESS

That's true. No man more so.

CHARWOMAN

Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose.

LAUNDRESS

No, indeed. If he wanted to keep his things after he was dead, why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck by death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself. Open that bundle, old Joe, and let me know the value of it.

*(Old Joe opens her bundle. Examines the contents.)*

OLD JOE

Hmm... a seal or two, a pencil-case, a pair of sleeve-buttons, and a brooch of no great value...

*(He appraises them. Hands some coins to the laundress.)*

OLD JOE

That's your account—

*(as the laundress starts to protest)*

—and not another sixpence! If I was to be boiled for not doing it!

*(turns to the charwoman.)*

And you? What have you brung me?

*(He drops to his knees to unfasten a large bundle. Drags out a heavy roll of material.)*

OLD JOE

What do you call this? Bed-curtains?

CHARWOMAN

Ah. Bed-curtains!

OLD JOE:

You don't mean to say you took 'em down, rings and all, with him lying there?

CHARWOMAN

Yes I do. Why not?

OLD JOE

*(pulls something else out of the bundle)*

What else? His blankets!

CHARWOMAN

Whose else's do you think? He isn't likely to take cold without them, I dare say.

OLD JOE

I hope he didn't die of anything catching.

CHARWOMAN

Don't you be afraid of that.

*(Old Joe pulls a shirt out of the bundle and looks it over.)*

CHARWOMAN

You may look through that shirt till your eyes ache, but you won't find a hole in it, not a threadbare place. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it, if it hadn't been for me.

OLD JOE

What do you call wasting of it?

CHARWOMAN

Putting it on him to be buried in. Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again. If calico ain't good enough for such a purpose, it isn't good enough for anything. He can't look uglier than he did in that one.

OLD JOE

*(laughing, impressed)*

You were born to make your fortune, and you'll certainly do it.

CHARWOMAN

*(laughing)*

He frightened everyone away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead. Ha, ha, ha!

***Music Cue #27: Working Poor (Reprise)***

CHARWOMAN, LAUNDRESS, OLD JOE  
*LET'S CLOSE UP SHOP; WERE DONE WITH BUSINESS.  
 WE PICKED THE BONES DRY AND CLEAN.  
 ONWARD TO THE PUB FOR GIN.  
 HIP HIP HURRAH, THE DRINK'S ON HIM.  
 HE WASN'T WORTH A PENNY TIL HE DIED.*

*WE'RE THE WORKING POOR.  
 THERE'S NO MISTAKING US FOR LORDS AND LADIES.  
 WE POUR THE ALE, CHANGE THE SHEETS,  
 MOP THE FLOORS, SWEEP THE STREETS.  
 WE SERVE OUR MASTERS WELL AND THEN WE DIE.  
 IF WE'RE INVITED TO THE BALL,*

*WE'RE ONLY THERE TO CLEAN THE HALL.  
WE SERVE OUR MASTERS WELL AND THEN WE DIE.  
WE SERVE OUR MASTERS WELL AND THEN WE DIE.*

*(LIGHTS OUT on them. SPOTLIGHT UP on Scrooge and Future.)*

SCROOGE

Spirit. I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now.

*(LIGHTS SUDDENLY UP on a bare, uncurtained bed. On it, beneath a ragged sheet, an unseen body. Scrooge recoils in terror.)*

SCROOGE

Merciful heaven, what is this?

*(Future points at the bed, ominously.)*

**SFX #10: Minor Wind (38 sec.)**

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

“Oh cold, cold Death, set up thine altar here, and dress it with such terrors as thou hast at thy command: for this is thy dominion. If this man could be raised up now, what would be his foremost thoughts? Avarice and hard-dealing. They have truly brought him to a rich end.” No voice pronounced these words in Scrooge’s ear, and yet he heard them when he looked upon the bed.

SCROOGE

*(to Future, imploring)*

Let me see some tenderness connected with a death, or this dark chamber will be forever present to me.

*(LIGHTS OUT on the bed.)*

**Music Cue #28: We Will Live On (Prologue)**

MRS. CRATCHIT (O.S.)

*HE WALKS A BIT SLOWER, HIS HEAD HANGS LOWER.  
HE'S LOST IN THOUGHTS OF OUR BOY.*

*(SPOTLIGHT UP on Cratchit. Kneeling by a small, simple gravestone.  
"Timothy Cratchit, 1837-1843.")*

**Music Cue #29: More Than You Can Know**

CRATCHIT

*MORE THAN YOU CAN KNOW,  
I MISS YOU SON, I MISS YOU SO.  
I WANDER THROUGH MY DAYS.  
I'M EMPTY NOW, I'M JUST A SHELL,  
TALK TO GOD FOR ME,  
I KNOW YOU HAVE HIS EAR.  
ASK HIM TO RELIEVE  
MY ANGER AND DESPAIR.*

*MORE THAN YOU CAN KNOW,  
I MISS THE SOUND OF YOUR HELLO  
AND HOW I HELD YOU HIGH  
SO YOU COULD SEE THE WORLD BELOW.*

*I'D BEAR THE PAIN OF LOSING YOU,  
IF I COULD HAVE BUT PRECIOUS FEW  
MOMENTS HERE TO HOLD YOU TIGHT  
AND SHARE WITH YOU THE STARRY NIGHT,  
TO SEE YOUR FACE AGAIN.*

*WINTER, SUMMER, SPRING AND FALL,  
THE YEARS WILL PASS, BUT I'LL RECALL  
HOW YOU'D TURN YOUR HEAD  
AND LAUGH ALOUD AT WHAT'S BEEN SAID.  
TALK TO GOD FOR ME, I KNOW HE HOLDS YOU NEAR.*

*PRAY FOR US THE STRENGTH,  
TO BRAVE ON THROUGH THE YEARS.*

*I KNOW SOMEDAY WE'LL MEET AGAIN,  
WE'LL SAIL THE CRYSTAL SEA.  
AND YOU CAN GUIDE US  
ALL AROUND THE STREETS OF GOLD  
THAT LIE BEYOND WHERE ANGELS GUARD THE DOOR.*

*MORE THAN YOU CAN KNOW,  
I MISS YOU SON, I MISS YOU SO.*

*(LIGHTS UP on Mrs. Cratchit and all the Cratchit children—except Tiny Tim.)*

**Music Cue #30: We Will Live On**

MRS. CRATCHIT

*HIS STEPS WERE MUCH BOLDER  
WITH TIM ON HIS SHOULDER,  
BUT NOW HE MOVES WITHOUT JOY.  
HE NEEDS ME NOW MORE THAN EVER,  
JUST AS HE NEEDS EACH ONE OF YOU.  
HOLD ON TO ONE ANOTHER,  
CLING TO ALL THAT IS TRUE.  
SOME DAYS WILL BE DREARY,  
AND WE MAY GROW WEARY.  
DON'T FALL TO THE WEIGHT OF YOUR CARES.  
WE MUST REMEMBER THOSE MOMENTS SO TENDER,  
THE PRECIOUS TIMES WE HAVE SHARED.*

*(Cratchit enters. The children run to greet and kiss him with cries of "Father!" A meaningful look between Cratchit and Mrs. Cratchit.)*

MRS. CRATCHIT

You went then?

CRATCHIT

Yes, my dear. I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you'll see it often. My little, little child. My little child.

*(He fights back tears. The others comfort him. He regains his composure.)*

CRATCHIT

I met Mr. Scrooge's nephew Fred on my way home. He was extraordinarily kind. He said he was heartily sorry to hear about Tiny Tim's...

*(can't bring himself to say it)*

He said he was heartily sorry for it and heartily sorry for my good wife. By the bye, how he ever knew that, I don't know.

MRS. CRATCHIT

Knew what, my dear?

CRATCHIT

Why, that you were a good wife.

PETER

Everybody knows that!

CRATCHIT

He said if he could be of service to us in any way to contact him, and he gave me his card. It really seemed as if he had known our Tiny Tim, and felt with us.

MRS. CRATCHIT

I'm sure he's a good soul.

CRATCHIT

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

MRS. CRATCHIT

Only hear that, Peter.

REBECCA

*(to Peter, teasing)*

And then you will be keeping company with someone and setting up for yourself.

PETER

*(grinning)*

Get along with you!

CRATCHIT

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

THE CHILDREN

Never, father!

CRATCHIT

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

THE CHILDREN

No, never, father!

BOB and MRS. CRATCHIT

*OUR LIVES ARE BOUND TOGETHER.*

*WE MISS OUR SON SO VERY MUCH.*

*HOLD ON TO ONE ANOTHER.*

*WE NEED EACH OTHER'S TOUCH*



*WE'RE LOST AND FORSAKEN.  
OUR FAITH HAS BEEN SHAKEN,  
BUT WE WILL STAND THROUGH IT ALL  
WITH OUR BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES  
AND EACH OTHER'S ARMS.  
WE WILL LIVE ON IN LOVE.*

*(LIGHTS FADE SLOWLY on the Cratchits. SPOTLIGHT ON Scrooge and Future.)*

SCROOGE

Specter, I know not how, but something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. Tell me what man that was whom we saw lying dead.

*(Future points.)*

*(LIGHTS UP on the spot where Cratchit knelt at Tiny Tim's grave. Now the gravestone is bigger, shrouded in fog, its inscription blurred.)*

***SFX #11: Grave Wind Into Thunderclap (31 sec.)***

SCROOGE

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

***Music Cue #31: Scrooge's Grave ( Marley's Reprise)***

*(And now Marley emerges from the fog.)*

MARLEY

*YOU WEAR THE CHAINS  
YOU FORGED IN YOUR LIFE.*

YOU MADE EACH YARD LINK BY LINK,  
 IN THE FOUNDRY OF YOUR HEART,  
 YOU MADE EACH ONE.  
 CAN'T YOU HEAR THE HAMMERS CLINK?  
 EACH LOVELESS DAY, EVERY CRUEL SELFISH ACT,  
 FROM THOSE IN NEED YOU TURNED AWAY,  
 YOU TURNED YOUR BACK.  
 IN THE FOUNDRY OF YOUR HEART ANOTHER LINK.  
 HEAR THE HAMMERS CLANG AND CLINK.  
 IS THIS SO STRANGE TO YOU?  
 SURELY NOW YOU KNOW IT'S TRUE.  
 OH WHAT A LONG AND HEAVY CHAIN!  
 YOURS IS A PONDEROUS CHAIN.  
 BUSINESS...MANKIND WAS MY BUSINESS....

*(Marley disappears back into the fog—which slowly dissipates, revealing the inscription on the gravestone. “Ebenezer Scrooge.” Scrooge falls to his knees before Future.)*

SCROOGE

No, Spirit. Oh no, no! Hear me. I am not the man I was. Why show me this, if I am past all hope?

*(And, for the first time, Future’s hand begins to shake.)*

SCROOGE

Good Spirit, your nature intercedes for me, and pities me. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life.

*(Future’s hand keeps trembling.)*

SCROOGE

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

*(In his agony, he grabs hold of Future's hand—and the stage GOES BLACK. A long beat, then LIGHTS SLOWLY UP on Scrooge—back in his chair, asleep. He stirs awake. It takes him a moment to realize where he is. Then he jumps up, quivering with excitement and emotion.)*

SCROOGE

I am here! The shadows of the things that would have been may be dispelled! They will be. I know they will.  
*(He falls to his knees.)*

SCROOGE

I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. I say this on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees.

*(He jumps up again, twirls around, laughing and crying at the same time.)*

SCROOGE

I...I don't know what to do. I am as light as a feather. I am as happy as an angel, as merry as a schoolboy, as giddy as a drunken man!

***Music Cue #32: Look At This World***

*(He runs out of his house. LIGHTS UP on the city street. People passing, smiling and greeting each other. Scrooge weaves his way among them, the happiest of all.)*

SCROOGE

***JUST LOOK AT THIS WORLD!  
WHAT A WONDROUS SIGHT!  
JUST SEEING IT ALL, I'M FILLED WITH DELIGHT.  
THE PEOPLE, THEIR FACES,  
THAT WONDERFUL BOY!  
ALL ARE TO ME UNSPEAKABLE JOY.  
I'LL FLY INTO LIFE, I'M SPREADING MY WINGS.***

*I'LL SAVOR EACH MOMENT AND EACH LITTLE THING.*

*(He stops a passing LAD.)*

SCROOGE

What's today?

LAD

Eh?

SCROOGE

What's today, my fine fellow?

LAD

Today? Why...Christmas Day!

SCROOGE

*(to himself, rapturous)*

It's Christmas Day! I haven't missed it! The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like—of course they can!

*(a sudden thought; to the lad)*

Do you know the poulterer's, in the next street but one, at the corner?

LAD

I should hope I did.

SCROOGE

What an intelligent boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging there—not the little prize turkey, the big one?

LAD

What, the one as big as me?

SCROOGE

Yes, my buck.

LAD

It's hanging there now.

SCROOGE

Go and buy it.

*(The lad looks at him, incredulous.)*

SCROOGE

I am in earnest. Go and buy it and...

*(jots an address on a scrap of paper)*

...and deliver it to this address. In Camden Town.

*(chuckles to himself)*

I'll send it to Bob Cratchit—and he shan't know who sends it!

*(gives money to the lad)*

Here's money for the bird... a shilling for your trouble... no! Half a crown!  
And money for a cab. You must have a cab. The bird will be impossible to  
carry to Camden Town. Hurry, my buck, hurry!

***Music Cue #33: Scrooge's Joy***

*(The lad runs off. Scrooge sees the first solicitor walking toward him.  
Steps into his path, stopping him.)*

SCROOGE

My dear sir, how do you do? I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very  
kind of you. A Merry Christmas to you, sir.

FIRST SOLICITOR

*(eyeing Scrooge warily)*

Mr. Scrooge...

SCROOGE

Yes, that is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. Allow me to  
ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness...

*(He whispers something in the man's ear. The solicitor's eyes go wide with surprise.)*

FIRST SOLICITOR

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?

FIRST SOLICITOR

My dear sir, I don't know what to say to such munificence.

SCROOGE

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

FIRST SOLICITOR

I will!

SCROOGE

Thank you. I am much obliged to you. I thank you fifty times. Bless you!

***Music Cue #34: Scrooge's Joy***

*(He turns to everyone passing by, addresses them.)*

SCROOGE

Bless you all! A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world!

*(Scrooge touches his scratchy face. Looks himself over—the dressing gown...the nightcap.)*

SCROOGE

It is late! I must shave! I must dress!

*(LIGHTS OFF on the street. Unseen voices start SINGING “Silent Night.” LIGHTS UP on Fred’s parlor. Fred, his wife, and their friends around Topper, who’s playing the piano. Everyone singing sweetly and reverently.)*

**Music Cue #35: Silent Night**

FRED AND COMPANY

*SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT.*

*ALL IS CALM, ALL IS BRIGHT*

*ROUND YON VIRGIN, MOTHER AND CHILD.*

*HOLY INFANT, SO TENDER AND MILD,*

*SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE.*

*SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE.*

*(Scrooge, in a jacket, hair combed, carrying Christmas presents, enters near the end. As the last note fades, Fred sees him.)*

FRED

Why, bless my soul! Who’s that!

*(Scrooge approaches, timidly.)*

SCROOGE

It’s I. Your uncle Scrooge. I have come to dinner. Will you let me in, Fred?

*(Fred stares at him a moment, stunned. Then breaks into a huge grin.)*

FRED

Let you in? I should say so!

*(He turns to the others.)*

FRED

Everyone! This is my uncle Scrooge. Ebenezer Scrooge.

*(The others gather around Scrooge. Greet him warmly. Fred brings his wife forward.)*

FRED

Uncle...this is my wife.

SCROOGE

*(smiling shyly)*

How lovely you are, my dear.

*(hands her the presents)*

These are for you. Merry Christmas.

FRED'S WIFE

*(blushing, pleased)*

Why, thank you...uncle.

***Music Cue #36: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen***

*(Topper sits back down at the piano. Starts playing "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen." Everyone joins in singing.)*

EVERYONE

*GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN,  
LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY.  
REMEMBER, CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR  
WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY,  
TO SAVE US ALL FROM SATAN'S POWER  
WHEN WE WERE GONE ASTRAY.  
OH TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY,\_  
COMFORT AND JOY,  
OH TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY...*

*\_(Near the end of the song, the LIGHTS and VOICES FADE. Scrooge steps into the SPOTLIGHT.)*



***Music Cue #37: Home, Home, Home (Scrooge's Reprise)***

SCROOGE

*HOME, HOME, HOME:  
THE KETTLE SINGS A WELCOME SONG.  
THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE I BELONG.  
I KNOW THAT I AM HOME.*

*HOME, HOME, HOME:  
WHERE I CAN LEAVE THE WORLD BEHIND.  
WHERE HEARTS ARE WARM AND EYES ARE KIND.  
THEY TELL ME I AM HOME.*

*IT'S WHERE MY JOURNEY ENDS.  
IT'S WHERE I FIND MY STRENGTH.  
IT'S WHERE MY HEART DOES YEARN  
TO RETURN ONCE AGAIN.*

*HOME, HOME, HOME:  
MY PATHS HAVE LEAD ME FAR AND WIDE,  
BUT ALL IS WELL NOW I'M INSIDE,  
I'M HOME, AT LAST, I'M HOME.*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

Scrooge was early to the office next morning, hoping Bob Cratchit might be late—so he could confront him on the way in.

*(LIGHTS UP on Cratchit hurrying across stage. Scrooge waylays him.)*

SCROOGE

*(gruffly)*

Hallo. What do you mean by coming here at this time of day?

CRATCHIT

I am very sorry, sir. I am behind my time.

SCROOGE

Step this way, sir, if you please.

*(Cratchit approaches, trembling.)*

CRATCHIT

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

SCROOGE

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

*(He digs his finger in Cratchit's chest. Cratchit staggers back, startled.)*

SCROOGE

...and therefore I am about to raise your salary!

*(Cratchit stares at him, stunned. Scrooge breaks into a huge smile. Laughs.)*

SCROOGE

A merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year! I'll raise your salary, and endeavor to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop! Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another "i," Bob Cratchit!

*(Slowly, as what he just heard begins to sink in, Cratchit breaks into a huge smile, too. Scrooge claps him on the back. Then hugs him, emotional.)*

SCROOGE

Before you dot another "i," Bob Cratchit...before you dot another "i"...

***Music Cue # 38: Scrooge's Joy***

*(LIGHTS OUT on Scrooge and Cratchit. As The Narrator recites the following, the LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE UP AGAIN. The whole cast on stage, in a semi-circle, holding hands.)*

THE NARRATOR (O.S.)

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. He became as good a friend, and as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other city, town, or borough, in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them—because his own heart laughed. He had no further interaction with spirits, and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed:

TINY TIM

*(stepping forward)*

God Bless Us, Every One!

***Music Cue# 39: We Wish You A Merry Christmas***

*(LIGHTS FULLY UP NOW. The whole cast sings WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS.)*

EVERYONE

*WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS;*

*WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS;*

*WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS;*

*WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.*

*GOOD TIDINGS WE BRING TO YOU AND YOUR KIN;  
GOOD TIDINGS FOR CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.*

*OH, BRING US A FIGGY PUDDING;  
OH, BRING US A FIGGY PUDDING;  
OH, BRING US A FIGGY PUDDING AND A CUP OF GOOD CHEER.  
WE WON'T GO UNTIL WE GET SOME;  
WE WON'T GO UNTIL WE GET SOME;  
WE WON'T GO UNTIL WE GET SOME,  
SO BRING SOME OUT HERE.*

*GOOD TIDINGS WE BRING TO YOU AND YOUR KIN;  
GOOD TIDINGS FOR CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.*

*WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS;  
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS;  
WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.*

**THE END**

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