

Scrooge

The Musical

Book, Music and Lyrics by

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Note: that this text is taken from the 2004 Samuel French edition and includes the original stage directions which are still very much based on the movie. Our stage directions will be completely revised before rehearsals start.

CHARACTERS

Ebenezer Scrooge

Bob Cratchit

Nephew

Kathy Cratchit

Tiny Tim

Bess

Wine Merchant

Mr Carstairs

Harriett Harty

Jocelyn Jollygoode

Bissett, the butcher

Mrs Dilber

Miss Dilber

Beggar Woman

Urchins

Punch and Judy Man

Tom Jenkins

Jacob Marley

Phantoms

The Ghost of Christmas Past

School Teacher

Jen

Ebby

Fezziwig

Young Scrooge

Dick Wilkins

Mrs Fezziwig

Isabel

The Ghost of Christmas Present

Mrs Cratchit

Peter Cratchit

Martha Cratchit

Belinda

Helen

Topper

Mary

Party Guests

The Ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come

Boy with Sled

Mr Pringle, the toy shop owner

Mrs Pringle, his assistant

Tradespersons, Children, Barrel-rollers, Apprentice Boys, Bakery Girls, Winery Boys, etc.

ACT I

SCENE I

A London Street----Cheapside. Christmas Eve Church bells chime six o'clock

No. 1: Opening

The CURTAIN rises on a tableau of a Dickensian Christmas card--circa 1843 a crowd of Shoppers, Street Vendors and Children. A tumbling profusion of Christmas fare fills the street stalls and shops. The tableau comes to life

Kathy	The first Noel, the angel did say...
Tom Jenkins	God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay...
Jollygoode/Harty	Good Christian men, rejoice with heart and soul and voice
Company	O come, all ye faithful... Good Christian men, rejoice with heart and soul and
Cratchit	Silent night, holy night, silent night. .
Miss/Mrs. Dilber	The first Noel...
Jollygoode/Harty	The holly and the ivy, when they are both full grown
Jenkins	Ding dong ding ding-a dong-a ding ...
All	Sing a song of gladness and cheer, For the time of Christmas is here! Look around about you and see What a world of wonder this world can be! Sing a Christmas carol- Sing a Christmas carol- Sing a Christmas carol- Like the children do! And enjoy the beauty- All the joy and beauty- That a merry Christmas Can bring to you!

The crowd mingle and wish each other a Merry Christmas

Sing a song of gladness and cheer,
For the time of Christmas is here!
Look around about you and see
What a world of wonder
This world can be!

Sing a Christmas carol-
Sing a Christmas carol-
Sing a Christmas carol-
Like the children do!
And enjoy the beauty-
All the joy and beauty-
That a merry Christmas Can bring to you!

The people begin to disperse, revealing:

Scrooge's office

SCENE 2

Scrooge's clerk, Bob Cratchit, is asleep whilst writing at a tall desk in the corner of the dingy room. The front door crashes open and we see the figure of Scrooge with hat coat and walking stick.

Scrooge CRATCHIT!

Bob jolts awake scattering his papers. Scrooge marches in, taking off his outdoor garments

I hate Christmas! Humbug! ... People? I hate people.
Yuletide-loving, second-rate people ... It's all a load of
humbug I tell you ...

We hear Urchins singing just outside Scrooge 's front door

Urchins *(in strident cacophony)* 'Ark the 'erald hayngels si-hing
Glory to the new-born king!
Peace on 'erf an' mercy mi-hild -

1st Urchin *(aggressively)* Jesus Christ, that little child!

They continue to sing as Scrooge mutters angrily to himself

Scrooge Infernal horrible caterwauling! Don't they know I'm
trying to run a business here'?

There is a pounding on the door and Cratchit looks up fleetingly

Get on with yer work, Cratchit! Bah! Humbug! Insolent
young ruffians, coming here with their Christmas
nonsense ... bah!

*The singing gets louder and Scrooge grabs his walking stick and stomps
towards the door*

Hell-fire and damnation! Why can't they leave a man in
peace! (He pulls open the door)

A charming, elegant and smiling young man stands before him, his nephew, Harry. The Urchins run off, laughing

Scrooge (scowling) Oh, it's you.

Nephew Uncle Ebenezer, I cannot tell you what a joy it is to see your happy smiling face. And how are you, Bob?

Bob Cratchit Very well, thank you, sir.

Scrooge scowls his disgust and turns back to his desk. The Nephew follows him jauntily into the office and closes the door: He gives Cratchit a friendly nod and a wink and follows Scrooge to his desk.

Nephew A merry Christmas, Uncle Ebenezer! God, save you!

Scrooge God save me from Christmas! It's a lot of humbug!

(He swiftly and expertly counts up a handful of gold sovereigns, dumps them into the money box and slams it shut to underline the sentiment. He picks up the money box and carries it over to the safe)

The Nephew perches himself in carefree fashion on the corner of Scrooge's desk

Nephew Christmas a humbug? Come now, I'm sure you don't mean that!

Scrooge And I'm sure I do mean that! Merry Christmas, indeed! What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough!

Nephew And what reason have you to be miserable? You're rich enough!

Scrooge There's no such thing as rich enough! Only poor enough!

(He rams the money box deep into the safe and slams and locks the door with much clanging of metal)

Nephew Don't be so dismal, Uncle Ebenezer!

Scrooge What else can I be, when I live in a world of fools babbling "Merry Christmas" at one another? What's Christmas but a time for finding yourself a year older and not a day richer?

(He thrusts his face menacingly at his nephew)

If could work my will, Nephew, 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!

Nephew God forbid, Uncle!

Scrooge You keep Christmas in your way, and let me keep it in mine!

Nephew But you don't keep it!

Scrooge Then let me alone! And be good enough not to bother me, sir, during business hours. And get off me ledger-you'll ruin me binding!

The Nephew gets up off the desk and looks at his fob watch. Scrooge picks up the heavy ledger, examines the binding for possible damage and, with a reproachful glare at his Nephew, carries it across to a dusty bookcase and locks it away with a key from his watch-chain

Nephew Seven o'clock on Ch1stmas Eve? That's not business hours! That's drudgery for the sake of it, and an insult to all men of goodwill!

Bob Cratchit *(muttering under his breath)* Hear, hear!

Nephew Thank you, Bob Cratchit!

Scrooge Another word from you, Cratchit, and you'll celebrate Christmas among the great unemployed.

Bob Cratchit Yes, sir. I'm sorry, Mr Scrooge.

The Nephew pulls a crusty face at his uncle, converting it into an instant smile as Scrooge turns to him

Scrooge You're quite a powerful speaker, sir. I wonder you don't go into politics-you're fool enough!

The Nephew roars with laughter. Scrooge returns to his work

Nephew Come now, don't be angry! Dine with my wife and me tomorrow!

Scrooge There's another thing! As though you hadn't got enough problems, you went and got married! Now why in God's name did you do that?

Nephew Because I fell in love with the lady.

Scrooge *(opening another ledger with a growl)* Love! If there's one thing in the world more nauseating than "Merry Christmas", it's a happy marriage with some love-sick female! Good-afternoon, sir!

Nephew My offer stands. You are always welcome, Uncle-just like Christmas itself!

Scrooge I said good-afternoon!

Nº. 1a: starts (underscore)

Nephew I want nothing from you. I ask nothing of you. Why can we not be friends?

Scrooge Good-afternoon!

Nephew Merry Christmas, Uncle. And you too, Bob Cratchit! And your family!

Bob Cratchit (*with a smile*) Thank you, sir. And to your good lady!

The Nephew exits, then reappears in a second, popping his head round the door

Nephew Oh, and Uncle!

Scrooge Hmmm?

Nephew A happy New Year!

Scrooge (*furiously*) Good-afternoon, sir!

The Nephew exits, grinning

Bob Cratchit, considerably cheered up, warms his hands on the candle on his desk. The chimes of a nearby church are heard

Bob Cratchit Excuse me, sir, but it's----- er-seven o'clock, sir.

Scrooge looks at his watch

Scrooge (grudging(v)) Correct, Cratchit.

Bob Cratchit I don't wish to be impertinent, Mr Scrooge, but will it be too much trouble if I have my wages, sir?

Scrooge growls his disapproval and reluctantly stops work and takes out his purse, carefully counting out fifteen shillings as they talk. He counts it three times-twice in his own hand and finally into Cratchit's hand

Scrooge The trouble with you, Cratchit, is that all you think about is money! You'll be wanting the whole of Christmas Day off tomorrow, I suppose?

Bob Cratchit If it's convenient, sir.

Scrooge It is not convenient, sir. And it is not fair. And yet if I stopped your wages for it you'd think yourself ill-used, no doubt. Aren't I ill-used, when I pay a day's wages for no work'?

Bob Cratchit Well, it is Christmas Day, Mr Scrooge. And it is only once a year, sir.

Scrooge A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December! I don't pay good money for you to be forever on holiday!

Bob Cratchit I appreciate your kindness, Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge That's my weakness-I'm a martyr to me own generosity! I give you one Christmas Day off and you expect' em all! Very well, take the day. But be here all the earlier next morning!

Bob Cratchit Oh, I will, sir. Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. And a merry Christmas, Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge A merry what!?

Bob Cratchit I mean, I beg your pardon, sir. No offence, sir.

Bob scuttles quickly out of the door

Scrooge immediately hurries across to blow out the meagre candle still burning on Cratchit's desk

Scrooge *(grumbling to himself)* There's another one. Fifteen shillings a week, a wife and five children, and still talks about a merry Christmas. Belong in a lunatic asylum, the lot of 'em... Humbug!

(He obsessively starts to lock, bolt, bar and chain every door, drawer, cupboard and window of his establishment He takes every possible precaution. even locking the sole remaining piece of coal in the coal-scuttle in his safe)

No. 2: M.O.N.E.Y.

(Singing) Everywhere you look, everywhere you turn
Someone's after every single penny that you earn!
Everyone's a thief! -that is my belief!
Anyone who says they're not is sure to come to grief.
I seek but I shall never find
A deeper peace of mind
'Cos I'm convinced that everyone is out to rob me blind!
Accumulating money is the quest of all mankind!

And God forbid that Ebenezer Scrooge be left behind!

There is only one God up in heaven on high,
And I'll worship his name till the day that I die!
He alone rules the world from a bright golden sky,
And our saviour's name is M.O.N.E.Y.!

There is only one power man can never deny.
There is only one force that we dare not defy.
Nothing else on this earth do we all glorify
As our one true master M.O.N.E. Y.

Other forms of worship,
They come and they go
And most of them fade in a flash
'Cos most of them are mere cant and trash!
The one faith to believe in, where there's no
misconceivin'
No nonsense and no grievin' is C.A.S.H. cash!
Rough and ready, strong and steady cash!

There is only one cause I can just justify
To make life here in Cheapside at least worth a try,
And since I've no desire to devour humble pie,
I devote my life to M.O.N.E.Y.

I shall spend my whole life gazing at,
Admiring and appraising, that amazing man-made
miracle
There's nothing it can't buy!
And that's the reason why I'll save it till I die!
M.O.N.E.Y.!

The music segues into No. 3: A Christmas Carol underscore

SCENE 3

A London street Cheapside

Outside in the busy street, a lame boy, Tiny Tim, stands with his sister Kathy, gazing in awe at the display window of a large toy shop. The centre-piece of the window is a magnificent model carousel, revolving to the melody of A Christmas Carol. Behind the carousel is a glittering Christmas tree, groaning beneath the weight of every conceivable Christmas toy and treat hanging from its branches

We see Bob Cratchit emerging from the bakery stall with a small parcel in his hands

Bob Cratchit

Fourpence for a Christmas pudding-it's scandalous!

Baker Woman Sorry.

Cratchit joins his two children, clutching their meagre shopping, as they stare into the toy shop: window

Bob Cratchit Well, Kathy, my love, which one do you like best?

Kathy I like that doll in the comer.

Tiny Tim I like all of 'em!

Bob Cratchit Good boy! And why not one in particular?

Tiny Tim Well, you said I can't have none of 'em, so I might as well like 'em all!

Bob Cratchit Tiny Tim, you are a philosopher and a gentleman, and I've still got twelve shillings left in me pocket...

Kathy/Tiny Tim (*impressed*) Twelve shillings!

Bob Cratchit Twelve shillings, which says the Cratchit family will have as good a Christmas as the Lord Mayor of London 'imself.

He kisses the little boy's face and lifts him up on to his shoulder: As they move away from the window, the music starts under

Tiny Tim (in awe) Twelve shillings!

Kathy I do like that doll in the comer!

Christmas Children (No. 4) starts (underscore)

The Cratchits move on to a laden fruit stall

Bess With your lot to feed, Bob Cratchit, I'd say the apples at six a penny are the best bet.

(She puts the apples in Cratchit's basket)

Bob Cratchit (*handing her the money*) True, Bess, true.

Kathy (*to Tim*) I'd rather have that dolly in the comer.

Tiny Tim I'd rather have the oranges.

They move on to the wine store. The Wine Merchant is serving a wealthy customer

Wine Merchant (*placing three bottles into a carpet bag*) Your change, Mr Carstairs. Eighteen-forty is the best vintage in twenty years!

Mr Carstairs At two shillings a bottle, it should be! A happy Christmas to you!

Wine Merchant And a happy Christmas to you, sir!

(He spots Bob Cratchit and fills an empty bottle from a stone jar)

This'll make the finest quality punch, Mr C, and only tuppence a pint.

Bob Cratchit takes the bottle and pays the two pence

Bob Cratchit Oh, thank you, sir. *(He smiles at Tim and Kathy)*
Christmas punch-a Cratchit speciality.

Tiny Tim pulls Kathy back towards the toy shop window

Tiny Tim Let's look at that toy theatre again, Kathy. I bet it costs about a million pounds!

Kathy The price tag says two pounds and ten shillings.

Tiny Tim Well, that's about a million, isn't it?

No. 4: Christmas Children

Bob Cratchit Christmas children peep into Christmas windows--
See a world as pretty as a dream.
Christmas trees and toys-
Christmas hopes and joys-
Christmas puddings rich with Christmas cream.

As they move along the street full of Christmas shoppers, the laden-down luxury of well-to-do shoppers contrasts with the meagre purchases of the Cratchits. A well-dressed mother and her two daughters emerge from the toy shop with a mountain of beautifully wrapped parcels, carried by their footman and coach driver

Christmas presents shine in the Christmas windows
Christmas boxes tied with pretty bows.

Kathy Wonder what's inside?

Tiny Tim What delights they hide?

Bob Cratchit But till Christmas morning no-one knows.

Kathy *(sighing)* Won't it be exciting if it snows?

Tim and Kathy gaze up at an enormous turkey hanging outside the butcher's shop

Company I suppose that children everywhere.
Will say a Christmas prayer...

Bob Cratchit picks up a somewhat scraggy goose and pays the butcher

Bob Cratchit Till Santa brings their Christmas things ...
(*Speaking*) There, my loves, I've brought the finest bird in
the shop ... Well, the finest for one and fourpence!

Company Christmas children live in a Christmas daydream--
Waiting for the magic to unfold.

Tiny Tim Wond'rous things to eat

Kathy Ev'ry Christmas treat

Bob Cratchit Rich or not, the Christmas pot of gold
Hypnotizes children young and old.

Bob surveys the scene around him with deep satisfaction

Company I suppose
That children everywhere
Will say a Christmas prayer...

Bob Cratchit Till Santa brings their Christmas things.

Company Christmas children hunger for Christmas morning.
Christmas day's a wonder to behold.
Young ones' dreams come true
Not-so-young-ones', too!

Bob Cratchit I believe that story we've been told

Company Christmas is for children young and old!

Piled high with packages, the Cratchits head happily home

*Scrooge enters, scowls into the toy shop window, then spots two chortling
ladies who are full of Christmas cheer, Mrs Dilber and Miss Dilber; owners of
a knitwear stall.*

Mrs Dilber (*fearfully*) Oh-it's Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge Two pounds five shillings, ladies.

Mrs Dilber Mr Scrooge, sir, we've been giving more credit than
usual.

Scrooge So have I. Two pounds five shillings!

Miss Dilber As it's Christmas, sir, we've given people an extra week or
two to pay...

Mrs Dilber Shhh ...

Scrooge Aha! Then I shall give you an extra week to pay!

Mrs Dilber (*incredulously*) Oh, thank you, sir...

Scrooge Which will cost you a further twelve shillings!

Miss Dilber Twelve shillings!

Scrooge Unless you would prefer me to confiscate your stall and its contents which is my legal right...

Mrs Dilber No, sir, we'll pay, sir.

Bissett, the Butcher, passes by, carrying a giant turkey

Scrooge Bissett!

Bissett Please, Mr Scrooge, a few more days.

Scrooge You've already had a few more days! If you can afford to stock turkeys like that, you can afford to pay me! You can give me two pounds of kidneys and I'll give you another three days.

The Butcher is resigned to the inevitable outcome

Bissett Very well, Mr Scrooge. Thank you, Mr Scrooge, two pounds of kidneys.

Scrooge Wrap 'em up and I'll take them home!

Scrooge makes his way to the Punch and Judy show, where a crowd of children are cheering Punch. Scrooge pushes past the children into the tiny Punch and Judy tent

Judy Oh, Mr Punch, I've lost my little baby. Where is she?

Scrooge He's here, Miller. And you owe me two pounds seven and six.

Punch and Judy Man Not now, Mr Scrooge-please.' I'm performing!

Their two heads appear filling in the tiny stage

Scrooge (*surveying the audience of children*) Pity it doesn't pay you better! Where's my money?

Punch and Judy Man Tomorrow, for sure, Mr Scrooge ... it's my best day of the year!

Scrooge Tomorrow it will be two pounds ten ... or your puppets belong to me!

The Children boo him. Scrooge scowls at them

Punch and Judy Man All right, Mr Scrooge. Two pounds ten!

The Children boo again. Judy points at the departing Scrooge

Judy (to Punch) That man's even meaner than you are.

Punch hits Judy with his stick. The Children laugh. The Punch and Judy Man continues his show. Scrooge spies another debtor, Pringle the Toyshop Owner.

A Beggar Woman and her child proffer a begging bowl

Beggar Woman (carrying a baby) Merry Christmas, sir! A penny for the little one?

Scrooge Madam, the financial burdens of my life are already intolerable: pray don't add to them by asking me to pay for the upkeep and education of your entire family!
(Calling) Pringle!

Pringle Mr Scrooge, sir!

Scrooge A word.

Father Christmas (No. 4a) starts (underscore)

Pringle reluctantly opens the door of his shop and the two men enter in to conduct their business in private

Tom Jenkins (sarcastically) There 'e goes - Father Christmas himself!

As Tom sings, other Tradespersons, victims of Scrooge's "Christmas Spirit" gather round the soup trolley to swap opinions. The number has a dark and threatening feel

(Singing) Father Christmas-Father Christmas-
'E 's the meanest man
In the 'ole wide world!
In the 'ole wide world'
You can feel it!

Miss Dither 'E's a miser!

Mrs Dilber 'E's a skinflint!

Tom Jenkins 'E's a stingy lout-
Leave yer stocking out
For yer Christmas gift-

Bess An' 'e'll steal it!

They all roar with laughter

Tom Jenkins It's a shame- 'E's a villain!

Bissett What a game
For a villain to play...

Punch and Judy Man On Christmas Day!

Company After Christmas,
Father Christmas
Will be just as mean
As 'e's ever been...

Tom Jenkins An' I'm 'ere to say
We all should send Father Christmas ...
On 'is merry Christmas way!

Another group of dissatisfied Traders have collected. The song builds into a full company production number, in which the people of Cheapside join Tom Jenkins and the Urchins in venting their spleen on the villainous and miserly Scrooge

Company On Christmas Day!

Beggar Woman 'E's a rascal!

Wine Merchant 'E's a bandit!

Tom Jenkins 'E's a mean old bean
As we all 'ave seen
An' I'm 'ere to say
We should all send Father Christmas
On 'is merry Christmas -

They are cut off in mid-flow by Scrooge who enters from the toy shop, gleefully scribbling a sizeable addition to his accounts. He is followed by a grim-faced Mr Pringle

Scrooge peruses the toy shop window with scorn

Scrooge Dolls, toys, bows and arrows! Waste of money...
Christmas ! Humbug!

Pringle And a merry Christmas to you, Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge consults his black book again and approaches the last stall, run by a personable young man. Tom Jenkins. The music continues quietly under

Tom Jenkins (to a customer) There we are, sir, thank you very much.

Wine Merchant Merry Christmas, Tom.

Tom Jenkins (*spotting Scrooge approaching*) Merry Christmas to you, sir.

Scrooge No.

Tom Jenkins Hot broth, Mr Scrooge ... a small token of Christmas esteem, with the compliments of Tom Jenkins!

Scrooge No.

Tom Jenkins (*hastily*) And there'll be a free can of broth every night throughout the coming year, sir...

Scrooge No.

Tom Jenkins In gratitude for your infinite kindness in giving me another two weeks to pay!

Scrooge One week.

Tom Jenkins Ten days.

Scrooge One week.

Tom Jenkins One week.

Scrooge And put a lid on that stuff-I'll take it home.

Tom Jenkins does as he is bid

Scrooge, muttering and grumbling, is suddenly aware of the two portly gentlemen, Jollygoode and Harty, standing behind him. He scowls suspiciously as they bow to him, smiling.

Jollygoode Good-evening, sir...

Harty Allow us to introduce ourselves ...

Jollygoode Jocelyn Jollygoode ...

Harty And Harriet Harty... Have we the pleasure of addressing Mr Scrooge or Mr Marley?

Scrooge Mr Marley has been dead these seven years; seven years this very night.

There is an ominous rumble of thunder. The company begin to pack up and make their way homewards

Jollygoode We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner.

Scrooge (*his eyes narrowing at the offensive word*) Liberality?

Harty Mr Scrooge, sir, at this festive season of the year, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and the destitute.

Scrooge Excellent. Then I suggest you do so.

Jollygoode You miss our point, sir. The poor suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities.

Scrooge Are there no prisons?

Harty Indeed there are, sir. That's one thing there's no shortage of!

Scrooge And the workhouses? Are they still in operation?

Jollygoode They are, sir, and I wish I could say they were not.

Scrooge The treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, I trust.

Jollygoode Both very busy, sir.

Scrooge I am very glad to hear it! For a moment, I was afraid something had occurred to stop them in their useful purpose!

Harty A few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth.

Jollygoode We choose this time because it is a time when want is keenly felt. and abundance rejoices. What may we put you down for, sir?

Scrooge Nothing, madam.

Harty You wish to be anonymous?

Scrooge I wish to be left alone, madam-that is what I wish. I don't make myself merry at Christmas, and I cannot afford to make idle people merry. I have been forced to support the establishments I have mentioned through taxation ... and those who are badly off must go there!

Jollygoode Many would rather die than go there!

Scrooge If they would rather die, then they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population! Yes, ladies ... decrease the surplus population!

Harty and Jollygoode drift away leaving Scrooge satisfied with his victory

No. 5: I Hate People

(Singing)

Scavengers and sycophants and flatterers and fools'
Pharisees and parasites and hypocrites and ghouls!
Calculating swindlers! Prevaricating frauds!
Perpetrating goodness as they roam the earth in hordes!
Feeding on their fellow men, reaping rich rewards!
Contaminating everything they see!
Corrupting honest men- Like me!

I hate people! I hate females!
Women are a maddening species
Watch one closely and you'll see she's
Out to make you see what she sees.
I hate women
Picked at random
I can't stand them.

Fools who have no money spend it
Get in debt and try to end it!
Beg me on their knees befriend them
Knowing I have cash to lend them!
Soft-hearted me!
Hard-working me!
Clean-living, thrifty and kind as can be!
Situations like this are of "interest" to me! Interest...

Scrooge	Company
I hate Christmas	Father Christmas!
I hate people!	Father Christmas!
Yuletide-loving, second-rate people That is why I treat them like vermin I delight in seeing them squirming Many fools have tried to determine What can his motive be?	
What's the reason?	He's a miser!

<p>I hate Christmas –</p> <p>I hate people Women, children - 'Specially nasty, smelly children! Well, I'll tell you What's the reason?</p> <p>It's because they all Hate me!</p>	<p>He's a skinflint!</p> <p>He's a rascal! He's a bandit! He's a mean old man!</p>
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Scrooge whirls his stick as the crowd scatter in all directions

Scrooge Humbug!

A great crack of thunder as the Lights reveal the front door of

SCENE 4

The exterior of Scrooge's lodgings

Scrooge arrives at his own front door and he fumbles with his keys

Shivering with cold, Scrooge stands in the silent gloom of the doorway. A large gargoyle-head door-knocker glares at him inscrutably. Scrooge finds the right key and places it in the lock As he looks up, the gargoyle-head in the door-knocker becomes a human face. Suffused with a ghastly light, it stares at Scrooge and breathes his name in a deep mournful voice

Marley's face Scroo-0-0-0-ge ...

Scrooge (transfixed with terror) Marley? Jacob Marley?

Marley's face Scroo-0-0-0-ge!

The ghastly light fades. Scrooge shakes his head and goes inside

Scrooge Bah ... Humbug!

SCENE 5

Scrooge's hallway

Scrooge picks up a candle-holder from a table near the doorway and nervously lights the candle. The flickering flame casts macabre and eerie shadows on the walls. The wind gathers strength. Scrooge freezes again, candle and soup-can poised, as the bizarre sound reaches his ears. The wind howls around him, and a ghostly voice seems to call through it

Scrooge Humbug! It's voices in the mind! All voices in the mind!

Marley's voice Scroo-00-00-ooge ...

Scrooge (gulping) It's voices in the wind. Voices in the wind'

Marley's voice Scroo-o-ooge!

Scrooge It's not possible! Not possible!

Scrooge stands transfixed with terror as the volume of sound accumulates. Then he runs for his sitting-room and slams the door, his own footsteps augmenting and multiplying in sound until the entire building is reverberating with the deafening echoes of a thousand running footsteps. Scrooge locks, bolts and bars his door. then leans against it breathing heavily, listening to the retreating sound waves

SCENE 6

Scrooge's bedroom

The room contains Scrooge 's: bed, bedside table with an alarm clock, a straight backed chair. and a hob with a spoon and a bowl ready next to it. An old wing-backed armchair stands near the fireplace. A miserable fire burns.

Scrooge carries the soup-can and the candle across to the fireplace. He places the soup-can on the hob. A mournful wind moans in the chimney. and Scrooge remains ill-at-ease. He takes off his coat and hangs it and his high hat in a cupboard.

He pulls the armchair close to the hearth, pours the gruel from Tom Jenkins' soup-can into the bowl and settles back into his chair to enjoy it.

As he raises the first spoonful to his lips, his hand starts to shake uncontrollably, slopping the gruel back into the bowl. The wind moans mournfully in the chimney and seems to echo his name. Smoke suddenly billows out

Wind Scroo-00-0-ooge!

Scrooge (resolutely) It's humbug still! I'll not believe it!

Wind Scroo-00-0-ooge!

Scrooge stares wild-eyed at a bell beside the fireplace in front of him as it slowly starts to swing. At first it makes scarcely a sound. Then it gathers strength, swinging wildly back and forth. The sound of other bells fills the night with unaccustomed sounds. Scrooge puts down his bowl of gruel and clasps his hands over his ears as the bells reach a deafening crescendo

Suddenly there is total silence. Scrooges eyes dart suspiciously from side to side. He takes his hands from his ears and listens intently. A deep hollow clanking sound and heavy footsteps are audible outside his door. Scrooge rushes to the door and puts his ear to it. Reverberating echoes of dragging chains and creaking doors and dismal wailing and muffled footsteps are intermingled and orchestrated into a mounting nightmare of sound. Scrooge double-locks the door and hurries back to his chair, looking round the edge of it in unconscionable distress. He takes a cash box hidden in the fireplace and puts it under his pillow. He then sits in the chair again

His eyes widen in horror as first one holt of the door, and then anothe1; slide themselves open. The key in the door turns and unlock itself once, twice, without the aid of a human hand

Scrooge jumps to his feet again, grabs a poker from the fireplace to defend himself if necessary. then hurries towards the door as though to re-lock it. He stops short as he suddenly hears an increasing sound of rushing, howling wind assailing the door from outside. The door shakes and rattles under the strain. Scrooge emits a great wail of fear as the door suddenly flies open and a great rush of icy air blows across the room and framed in the doorway, he sees ... the fearful apparition of the ghost of Jacob Marley

Marley (wailing) Ebenezer Scroo-o-ooge!

The door slams shut

Whimpering with fear, Scrooge edges warily forward to the door, opens it and looks out into the blackness beyond. There is no-one there. The door is open 180 degrees

Scrooge Hallo? Hallo? *(He closes the door)* It's all humbug!

Standing behind the door inside the room is Marley's ghost

Marley Ebenezer Scrooge!

Scrooge whirls round with a cry of terror

Marley is swathed in a great chain made up of cash-boxes, ledgers, keys, padlocks, deeds and heavy purses. Scrooge contemplates in horror this fearful reincarnation of his former partner

Scrooge H-how now! What do you want with me?

Marley Much!

Scrooge Who are you?

Marley Better to ask me who I was.

Scrooge Who were you, then?

Marley In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

Scrooge Jacob? Can you sit down?

Marley Of course I can sit down.

Scrooge Please do so, then.

Marley sits, with much clanking and evident relief Scrooge averts his eyes

Marley You don't believe in me, do you?

Scrooge No, I don't.

Marley Why do you doubt what you see?

Scrooge Because I've had a slight stomach disorder. It has undoubtedly affected my vision. You're an hallucination,

probably brought on by an undigested bit of beef, or a blob of mustard. Yes, that's what you are - you're a blob of mustard!

Marley I tell you, Scrooge, there's more of the grave than of gravy about me!

Scrooge You do not exist, Jacob Marley! Humbug, I tell you-humbug!

Marley Humbug-eh? *(He pulls his chin away from his mouth)*
Now do you believe in me?

Scrooge Absolutely! I thank you for your visit and for your good counsel, and now, sir, *(he opens the door)* I bid you a fond farewell.

Marley closes the door with a hand gesture

But why do you walk the earth? And why do you come to me?

Marley I am doomed to wander through the world and witness what I cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness. *(Again, he utters a desolate cry and shakes his chain, as though overwhelmed with remorse)*

Scrooge trembles

Scrooge And why are you fettered by that great chain?

Marley I wear the chain that I forged during my life on earth. I made it link by link and yard by yard, and now I can never be rid of it. Any more than you will ever be rid of yours.

Scrooge *(trembling)* M-m-mine?

Marley Imagine the weight and length of the mighty chain you are making for yourself. It was as heavy and as long as this seven Christmases ago! You have laboured at it mightily ever since! It's a terrible ponderous chain you are making, Scrooge.

Scrooge Jacob! Old Jacob Marley! Speak comfort to me!

He instinctively looks about his person for the chain and is relieved to find it not there.

Marley I have none to give. Very little is permitted to me. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere ...

When I lived, my spirit, like yours, never walked beyond the narrow limits of our counting-house.

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

Marley Business? Mankind is our business, Ebenezer. But how seldom do we attend to it! I know this because I have sat invisible at your elbow many and many a day in your office.

Scrooge (*shivering at the thought*) My office? Watching me?

Marley Hear me, my time is almost gone. I am here tonight to warn you. It is your only hope.

Before Scrooge can object, Marley throws a loop of his chain over his erstwhile partner's neck, and the door and windows slowly open allowing strange lights and mist to enter

Scrooge (*terrified*) No, Jacob! No-0-0-0!

The air around them is filled with moaning Phantoms, ghostly, ghastly figures like Marley, horrific to behold, green and grey and white and yellow, haunted half rotted skeletal figures, their faces and shapes grotesquely distorted by the eternal horrors that haunt them, and fettered like Marley with the appropriate symbols of their selfish lives

Scrooge, shaking with fear covers his eyes and whimpers like a frightened child. Marley pays him no heed. The Phantoms join him in a macabre song of foreboding

No. 7: Make the Most of This World

Marley (*sings with deep gloom*)

See the phantoms filling the room around you!
They astound you, I can tell.
These inhabitants of hell.
Poor wretches
Whom the hand of heaven ignores.
Beware! Beware! Beware!
Lest their dreadful fate
Be yours!

Phantoms moan

Make the most of this world
The next world is worse!
If you think life is miserable now
But the life to come is better somehow
You had better put
All your thinking in reverse

And make the most of this world
For the next world is far, far worse!

Marley and Phantoms Make the most of this life
The next life's a curse!
The man who kicks the present aside
In a quest for things life doesn't provide
Had better know now this theory is perverse
And make the most of this life

Marley For the next life
Is far, far worse!

Let's talk about heaven a minute-
Men dream of it from birth.
Heaven-you idiot!
You're in it on earth!

Marley and Phantoms So, make the most of living-
'Cos dying is worse!
At times, you'll say life isn't worthwhile-
But there's more to life
Than travelling in style!

Marley It's better to walk
Than ride inside a hearse!

Marley and Phantoms So make the most of this world--
Embrace the universe!

Marley For I guarantee
The next world
Is far, far worse!

The Phantoms fade

The door and windows close. At the end of the song, Scrooge drops emotionally exhausted on to the bed and closes his eyes for a few seconds. Suddenly his eyes open wide. He listens. All is quiet

Scrooge (smiling) It was a dream!

Marley's ghost is sitting in the armchair, facing him

Marley It was not a dream, Scrooge.

Scrooge (leaping to his feet) For pity's sake, Marley, leave me in peace!

Marley It was for pity's sake that I came here. Pity for you! I leave you now with just the tiniest chance of escaping my fate!

Scrooge looks slightly cheerful for the first time since he met the apparition

Scrooge You were always a good friend to me, Jacob.

Marley You will be visited by three spirits.

Scrooge I - I think I'd rather not.

Marley The first will appear tonight when the bell tolls one.

Scrooge Couldn't I take 'em all at once, and get it over with?

Marley The second at two o'clock, and the third when the bell tolls three. Listen to them, and learn from them.

in the distance, midnight strikes

I must go now, for I am doomed to wander through the world in everlasting repentance.

Scrooge Marley, wait!

Marley Look to see me no more, and, for your own sake, remember what has passed between us! Farewell, Ebenezer Scrooge! Pray for me!

Marley raises his arm high above his head and rises into the air and disappears from view, back up into the spirit world

Scrooge looks around the empty room. He lights a candle. Both he and the candle are shaking as he carries it nervously across the room towards his curtained four-poster bed. The music starts under as Scrooge undresses for bed, and he sings the song as he goes through the motions of changing into a long nightgown and a pom-pommed nightcap. He keeps on the heavy full-length winter underwear that is revealed when he removes his outer clothes. Bed-socks and slippers complete his night regalia. He then winds and sets the alarm clock on the table beside his bed

No. 7: It's Not My Fault!

Scrooge Damn you, Marley!
This is hardly
How you treat
A trusted friend!

Curse you, Jacob!
Can't you make
A better dream-
And change the end?

I suppose this gives you joy!
You no doubt think it's funny, eh?

Knowing you, it's all a ploy
For you to steal my money, eh?

(Speaking: hysterically) Well, you shan't have it! You shan't have it!
You can't just come back from the dead
An' dump your guilt on me!
Be gone! you and your phantoms, sir!
And leave the living be!
Especially me!
Especially me!

It's not my fault
You are dead and I'm alive!
It's not my fault
You succumbed and I survive!
Is it my fault
Fate has fashioned things this way?
Is it my fault
That tomorrow's Christmas day?
These things happen anyway!

You can't blame me
If the sun decides to shine!
So don't blame me
That the life I live is mine!

(Modestly) A life of quiet sobriety-
Of which I'm justly proud!
A credit to society-
Who shuns the vulgar crowd!
Who uses wisely all the gifts
With which he's been endowed!

(Smugly) A good man-a philanthropist-
Who's truly worth his salt!
No, it's not-my-fault!

Three ghosts? Three humbugs!

It's you who left our counting house-
To find a bigger vault
To find a bigger vault!
No, it's not-my-fault!

He kicks off his slippers and clambers into the four-poster bed, drawing the bed-curtains closed/or warmth and protection. He opens the Font curtains again almost immediately as a nearby church clock strikes the full chimes of one o'clock with a deep melancholy boom

(Counting each quarter of the chimes) A quarter past! ... Half past! ... A quarter to! The hour! ... and nothing else?

A blinding light fills the room as the Ghost of Christmas Past appears. She materializes miraculously out of the high-backed chair in which Scrooge was sitting.

Scrooge sits bolt upright in bed with a startled cry, staring at the unexpected figure that confronts him. It is a pretty, young woman

Who are you?

Christmas Past I am the Spirit whose coming was foretold to you.

Scrooge You don't ... look like a ghost.

Christmas Past Thank you.

Scrooge May I enquire more precisely who or what you are?

Christmas Past I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

Scrooge Long past?

Christmas Past No. Your past. I am the ghost of all the loved ones you have lost.

Voices (off) The loved ones you have lost.

Scrooge And what business brings you here?

Christmas Past Your welfare.

Scrooge To be woken by a ghost at one o'clock in the morning is hardly conducive to my welfare.

Christmas Past Your redemption, then.

Scrooge gasps with fear and recoils as the Ghost reaches out and touches his arm

Come-walk with me.

Scrooge protests as the vice-like grip of the Ghost removes him gently but firmly from his bed

Scrooge Madam! It is a bitter cold night outside, and as you see, I am in my night apparel...

Christmas Past No matter.

Scrooge Where are we going?

Christmas Past We are going to look at your childhood.

Scrooge No!!

SCENE 7

A school-room

The room is sparsely furnished with a row of school benches. There is a pile of labelled suitcases nearby

A happy group of Schoolchildren are celebrating that uniquely wonderful, end-of-term, breaking-up-for-the-school-holidays feeling. The Children are conducted by their Teacher

No. 8: A Christmas Carol

Children and Staff Sing a song of gladness and cheer-
For the time of Christmas is here!
Look around about you and see
What a world of wonder this world can be!
And enjoy the beauty All the joy and beauty
That a merry Christmas
Can bring to you!

Teacher Merry Christmas, boys.

Children (*chattering in unison*) Merry Christmas, Mr Bleak, sir!

The children cheer and disperse

Scrooge, his hands clasped in delight, stands with the Ghost of Christmas Past, re-living a moment of childhood

Scrooge This is my old school. I knew these people ...

The children exit as though in a dream, their voices fading back into the past

Christmas Past Look. The school is not quite empty, is it? A solitary boy, neglected by his father, is left there still.

Voice (off) Neglected by his father.

On the now empty stage, a lonely boy, Ebenezer, sits on a hard chair, reading, half curled up to protect himself from the cold. Scrooge sees his forgotten self as he used to be, and blows his nose.

Scrooge Poor little fellow! It's me! It's poor little me! (*To the Ghost*) But I could never join in those Christmas things ... I wish ...

Schoolroom (No. 8a) starts (underscore)

Christmas Past What is it?

Scrooge Nothing. Nothing.

Christmas Past What do you wish?

Scrooge There were some boys singing a Christmas carol at my door last night. I should like to have given them something, that's all. (He looks sadly at his former self)

The Ghost of Christmas Past smiles at him

Christmas Past But this Christmas was special.

Jen, Scrooges sister, runs in and embraces the little boy, kissing him fondly

Jen Ebby? Ebby?

Scrooge Oh, look, it's my little sister. (*Calling out and waving*) Jenny! ... Jen! Why doesn't she wave back?

Christmas Past She cannot see or hear you. These are but the shadows of things that have been.

Voices **(off)** Shadow of things that have been.

Jen Ebby, dear, dear brother, I have come to bring you home!

Ebenezer Home to Father? No.

Jen Father has paid off all his debts and is so much kinder than he used to be so I was not afraid to ask him if you might come home. He sent me in a coach to bring you. And you're going to be a man, Ebby, and never come back here again. We'll be together all Christmas long and have the merriest time in all the world. Collect your things.

Ebenezer picks up his few meagre possessions, and follows his sister off

Christmas Past (*watching them*) Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered. But she had a large heart.

Scrooge So she had, I'll not deny it.

Christmas Past She died a young woman, and had, I believe, children.

Scrooge She had one child.

Christmas Past Ah yes ... your nephew! Harry...

Nephew (off) I ask nothing of you. Why can we not be friends?

Scrooge (*a bit uneasy*) Yes ... My nephew...

Christmas Past (*looking into the distance, pointing*) Now there's a Christmas you really enjoyed!

Mr Fezziwig (off) Christmas you really enjoyed.

SCENE 8

Fezziwig's warehouse

December the 25th (No. 9) starts (underscore)

Two Young Men wheel in a desk so tall that the head of the plump, jolly, middle-aged gentleman sitting at it is near the ceiling. He looks at his fob watch, roars with laughter and rubs his hands with delight. The Young Men start to re-arrange the benches

Scrooge (amazed) It's old Fezziwig! I was his apprentice!

Fezziwig (raising his desk bell) Ebenezer! Dick!

Scrooge's former self, now a young man in his twenties, comes forward. He is played by the same actor who plays Scrooge's nephew. The y must not be too identical, but bear a strong family resemblance. He is accompanied by his fellow apprentice, Dick

Yo-ho, Ebenezer! Yo-ho, Dick! No more work today, my boys! Hilliho! Chirrup! It's Christmas Eve, Dick! Christmas, Ebenezer! Now come along, clear everything away before a man can say Jack Robinson and make some room here, before Mrs Fezziwig and me daughters arrive with the punch bowl.

Ebenezer and Dick leap into action. Other Apprentice Boys and Men swarm about.

Scrooge nudges the Ghost

Scrooge My word, I am a good-looking chap! And that other fellow! Dick Wilkins, his name was. Best friend I ever had.

Fezziwig scuttles up and down as the office and warehouse are transformed in an instant from a place of business to a party setting. Balloons and multi-coloured twists of ribbon are festooned around the warehouse signs, which read "Fezziwig's Fine Wines and Ales", and "Mrs Fezziwig's Famous Foodstuffs-Cakes and Pastries a Speciality"

The equally jolly, Mrs Fezziwig approaches at the head of a Christmas party procession bearing all manner of delicious burdens. She erupts into the room. She has brought the entire party with her--food, drink, decorations and music, together with the Bakery Girls and Winery Boys as her party guests, laden with packages. Everybody carries something. A very pretty girl, Isabel, walks smilingly alongside Mrs Fezziwig, carrying a beautifully decorated, multi-tiered Christmas cake

Ebenezer *(nudging Dick Wilkins; indicating the girl)* That's Isabel, old Fezziwig's daughter, isn't she wonderful? (He sighs dreamily)

Dick Wilkins *(grinning at him)* You've got about as much chance of getting close to her as I have ...

Isabel trips. The multi-tiered cake teeters alarmingly Both are about to fall. In a flash, Ebenezer is beside her. He puts his arm around her waist to steady her, and with the other he steadies the cake. Everybody cheers

Fezziwig Well done, Ebenezer!

Isabel dazzles him with a grateful and flirtatious smile

Isabel Thank you, Ebenezer.

Dick Wilkins *(nudging Ebenezer)* You are a fast worker. Now you can have your cake and eat it, too!

The merriment redoubles as the embarrassed Ebenezer grins and shrugs awkwardly and re-joins Dick Wilkins. Fezziwig greets his wife with a smacking kiss and holds up his hand for silence

Fezziwig Mrs Fezziwig, my darling Isabel, my dear friends, thanks to our heroic Ebenezer there will now be happiness and contentment in this room, the like of which none of us has ever seen before!

Mrs Fezziwig *(beaming)* Consumption of fewer than six cakes and three beakers of punch per person will be penalized by instant dismissal from the party!

Everybody cheers

Fezziwig Splendid! Begin!

The Fiddler starts playing, and to a roar of approval from the Company. Old Fezziwig launches into the opening song and dance of the party with his lady

Fezziwig Of all the days In all the year
That I'm familiar with-
There's only one
That's really fun

Chorus December the twenty-fifth!

Fezziwig Correct!

Mrs Fezziwig Ask anyone called Robinson or Brown or Jones or
Smith Their favourite day
And they will say

Chorus December the twenty-fifth!

Mrs Fezziwig Correct

Chorus December the twenty-fifth, me dears.
December the twenty-fifth.
The dearest day in all the year
December the twenty-fifth!

Both Correct!

Scrooge, lost in reverie. taps his toe in time to the music

Christmas Past *(to Scrooge)* And why didn't you join in?

Scrooge *(embarrassed and crusty about it)* Because I couldn't dance.

Chorus December the twenty-fifth!

Fezziwig At times we're glad
To see the back
Of all our kin and kith

Mrs Fezziwig But there's a date
We celebrate

Chorus Fezziwig December the twenty-fifth!

Mrs Fezziwig Correct

Fezziwig At times our friends May seem to be
Devoid of wit and pith
But all of us
Are humorous

Chorus December the twenty-fifth!

Mrs Fezziwig Correct

Chorus December the twenty-fifth, me dears.
December the twenty-fifth.
The dearest day in all the year
December the twenty-fifth!

The Ghost of Christmas Past points across the room to the lonely figure of the young Ebenezer watching the dance

December the twenty-fifth, me dears.
December the twenty-fifth.
The dearest day in all the year
December the twenty-fifth!

Mrs Fezziwig If there's a day in history
That's more than any myth-
Beyond a doubt
One day stands out

Chorus December the twenty-fifth!

Mrs Fezziwig Correct!

Fezziwig I don't hear any arguments

Mr and Mrs Fezziwig So may I say forthwith
I wish that every day could be
December the twenty-fifth!

Chorus Correct!

Scrooge punches the Ghost's arm enthusiastically. The Ghost winces. The dance continues against the dialogue. The Fiddler controls the operation from atop Fezziwig's lofty desk, and the warehouse is now a whirl of dancing figures

Fezziwigs & Company December the twenty-fifth, me dears.
December the twenty-fifth.
The dearest day in all the year
December the twenty-fifth, me dears.
December the twenty-fifth, me dears.
December the twenty-fifth, me dears.
December the twenty-fifth!
Correct!

Scrooge (*speaking*) What a marvellous man!

Christmas Past He has merely spent a few pounds of your mortal money-
three or four, perhaps. What is that to be deserving of so
much praise?

Scrooge (*looking at her disapprovingly*) You don't understand. He
had the power to render us happy or unhappy-to make
our work a pleasure or a burden. It's nothing to do with
money! ... nothing to do with money!

He sees the Ghost looking at him knowingly

Happiness (No. 10) starts (underscore)

Christmas Past What's the matter?

Scrooge Thinking again.

Christmas Past Of what?

Scrooge Bob Cratchit.

Christmas Past Who's Bob Cratchit?

Bob Cratchit (off) It's seven o'clock. Can I have my wages, please, sir?

Scrooge (*hastily*) No-one.

He dismisses the matter and returns his attention to the festivities around him

The music of December the Twenty-fifth has now dissolved into Happiness, and the dancers waltz gently around the floor to its easy rhythm. Isabel is watching the young Ebenezer. Scrooge catches his breath. He cannot take his eyes from her. Isabel walks over to Ebenezer, inviting him to dance. Ebenezer's shyness borders on panic, but with a warm and reassuring smile she gently coaxes him on to the floor. He is gauche and uncoordinated, but Isabel nods her encouragement

The other dancers slowly disappear from view, until Isabel and Ebenezer are dancing alone

(*Whispering*) She taught me to dance ... Isabel... Ah, those were wonderful days, you know.

No. 10: Happiness

Ebenezer They say happiness is a thing you can't see
A thing you can't touch

Isabel I disagree.
Happiness is standing beside me.
I can see him. He can see me.
Happiness is whatever you want it to be.

Scrooge (speaking) She adored me. I can't say I blame her.

Isabel Happiness is a high hill.
Will I find it? Yes, I will.
Happiness is a tall tree.
Can I climb it? Watch and see.

Scrooge They say happiness is the folly of fools.
Pity poor me-one of the fools

Ebenezer Happiness is smiling upon me.
Walking my way, sharing my day.

Scrooge and Ebenezer Happiness is whatever you want it to be.

Scrooge (speaking) She was so sweet and kind.

Christmas Past Yes, she was. She still is. Adored by her family, her children, her grand-children. You missed it all, Scrooge, Why?

Isabel and Ebenezer Happiness is a bright star. Are we happy?

Isabel Yes, we are.

Isabel and Ebenezer Happiness is a clear sky
Give me wings and let me fly.
Let me fly.

Ebenezer kisses Isabel's hand

Scrooge, Ebenezer & Isabel (sadly) For happiness is whatever you
want it to be.

Christmas Past Yes. happiness is whatever you want it to be.

As the song ends, Ebenezer slips a ring on to Isabel 's finger. Gazing lovingly into each other's eyes, they return to the slow waltz

Music segues into 10a: You - you underscore

10a: You - you underscore

Scrooge sniffs audibly and gazes wistfully at the Ghost of Christmas Past as the figures fade from view

Scrooge I did love her, you know.

Christmas Past Did you?

Scrooge Oh, yes. I loved her.

Christmas Past Then why did you let her go?

Isabel (voice off) Why did you let her go?

Scrooge smiles in sad bewilderment

Scrooge (guiltily) I didn't.

Christmas Past Really?

Scrooge She left me.

Christmas Past (with some anguish) Quick. My time grows short.

Scrooge No!!

Scene 9

Ebenezer's Office

A more mature-looking Ebenezer is engrossed in work at his desk as Isabel enters carrying a bunch of flowers

Isabel Ebenezer?

Ebenezer Yes. (He does not look up from his work)

Isabel picks out the fading flowers from the vase on Ebenezer's desk and replaces them with the fresh ones. Old Scrooge is right beside her, and now looks at her with a sadness greater than her own

Ebenezer is preoccupied

Isabel We have talked of marriage for quite some time. But there is still no plan for a wedding.

Ebenezer There will be a wedding when I have enough money to support such an enterprise.

Isabel When will that ever be, Ebenezer? How much is "enough"? I want to marry you, not your cash box.

Slowly Ebenezer looks up at Isabel as her words penetrate

Ebenezer I will decide when. I will know. Now I have work to do. Isabel shakes her head. She looks sadly at the ring Ebenezer gave her.

Isabel No. You have found another love to replace me - and she is much more desirable than I am.

Ebenezer I have no idea what you're talking about.

Isabel puts her hand in the open money box on the desk and lets a handful of golden sovereigns trickle through her fingers

Isabel This lady here.

Ebenezer puts his pen down and looks at the gold, and then at Isabel

Ebenezer How shall I ever understand this world? There is nothing on which it is so hard as poverty, and there is nothing it condemns with such severity as the pursuit of wealth!

Scrooge He's right! It was true then and it's true now!

Isabel All your nobler dreams, that I loved, I have seen die off one by one, until only the desire for gain is left.

Ebenezer I am not changed towards you ... am I?

Isabel Yes, Ebenezer. You are. Your promise to me was made when you were poor, and content to be so. You were someone else then, I see that only too clearly, and so I can release you. *(She looks sadly again at the ring, then removes it from her finger and offers it to Ebenezer)*

Ebenezer does not take it

Ebenezer Have I ever asked to be released?

Isabel In words, no. But in a changed nature, yes. In everything that made my love of value to you, yes. If you met me today, you would not love me.

Scrooge *(vehemently)* I would! I do!

Christmas Past Ssssh!

Scrooge *(sadly)* I still do...

Ebenezer remains silent. Isabel touches the pair of scales on the desk, placing the little ring on one side, and a pile of gold coins on the other: The scale moves accordingly

Ebenezer Isabel, I find it impossible to discuss personal affairs during business hours. Now please.

Isabel You see? If you weigh me by gain, I weigh very little. And so I am not enough for you, and I release you - with a full heart, for the love of him you once were.

Ebenezer goes to speak, but Isabel turns away.

Scrooge Say something, you fool! Say something!

Ebenezer struggles to say something

Isabel You may have pain in this. But it will pass, and you will dismiss the recollection of it gladly, as an unprofitable dream, from which it happened well that you awoke.

Ebenezer shakes his head. Isabel kisses his cheek

Scrooge Don't go... It's a mistake ... don't go!

Isabel Be happy in the life you have chosen.

Isabel walks to the door and exits

Scrooge Isabel. Isabel!

Ebenezer Isabel...

But she has gone. Scrooge looks brokenly at Ebenezer

Scrooge Go after her!

Ebenezer I can't!

Ebenezer turns his back and walks away

Scrooge You fool! *(To himself)* You fool!

No. 11: You -You

Scrooge You - you were new to me
 You - you were spring.

Ebenezer You - you were true to me

Scrooge You - you were everything.

Ebenezer You-you were good for me.

Scrooge You were my day.

Ebenezer Did all you could for me.

Scrooge I let you go away.
 And now I can see –
 Now you're a dream gone by.

Both Oh, how could there be
 Such a fool as I?

Ebenezer returns to his desk and his work. Scrooge remains looking out after the lost Isabel

Both You-you were sweet to me,
 You filled my heart,
 Life seemed complete to me-
 I thought we'd never part.

 But now you are gone-
 And oh, what might have been!
 My life will go on-
 But what will it mean?

Ebenezer picks up the ring and looks at it sadly. Scrooge looks at the same ring, which he still wears, on a string around his neck

Ebenezer I, who must travel on,
 What hope for me?

Scrooge Dream where my past has gone -
 Live with a memory -

Both You, my only hope -
 You, my only hope -
 You – You -You...

Scrooge Spirit, remove me from this place. I can bear it no more.

Scrooge's bedroom reappears around them

SCENE 10

Christmas Past I have brought you home. I must leave you soon, and return to the other side.

Scrooge No, don't go. There is so much I need to talk about.

Christmas Past Well then, why do you not love your nephew, Harry?

Scrooge looks uncomfortable

Scrooge Harry?

Christmas Past He is my son.

Scrooge, horrified, recognizes the ghost as that of his dead sister

Scrooge Your son? Jenny? ... Jen. Is that you?

Christmas Past Yes, Ebby, my dear, dear brother.

She is called back to the other side

There is so little time ...

Scrooge Come back!

Christmas Past There's no coming back, Ebby ... which is why you must never hide your love from those you cherish.

Scrooge *(lost)* Jenny...

No. 11a: Love While You Can

Christmas Past Love while you can, all your life while you can-
Since the day time began, man's had no greater plan.
Don't be afraid to have love in your heart
Share your love with the world, it will not fall apart.
Use each magic moment well, while you are free to
choose them,
Make each precious friendship tell, only too soon you
lose them.

Scrooge *(speaking)* Jen-I don't want to lose you.

Christmas Past Take my advice let love drift through your life.
Make a gift to your life and befriend every man.
My bequest to you, the best that you can do is to love
while you can
Love while you can.

The Ghost o/ Christmas Past disappears through Scrooges mirror

Scrooge Jenny! Don't leave me again!

Christmas Past Goodbye, Ebby. My dear, dear brother. Don't forget me,
don't forget me, don't forget me ...

*She has gone. Scrooge turns away from the mirror in revulsion and fear.
Heartbroken and dispirited, he is alone once more in his dismal bedroom*

Scrooge Then go ... but haunt me no longer!

SCENE 11

Scrooge's bedroom

No. 12: It's Not My Fault! (Reprise)

Scrooge It's not my fault
If I choose to live alone!
It's not my fault
If I'm happier on my own!

Is it my fault
That I lose the ones I love?
Is it my fault
Or some greater power above
Who enjoys destroying love?

You can't blame me
For the fickle ways of fate
So don't blame me
For the things I've come to hate

(Wistfully) There was a time I might have lived
A different kind of life
Sweet evenings with friends and things
With children ... and a wife!
But now to even think of it
Cuts through me like a knife!

He regains control and feigns anger

I can't just turn life upside-down
With one great somersault-
No ... no ... no
No, it's not my...

*The church bell strikes two o'clock. A strange glow of light pervades the
darkened room. Scrooge mutters to himself*

Two o'clock. "The second comes at two"!

After a few seconds of paralysis and indecision, he swiftly slips out from the bed curtains. He sits waiting. Calling out

I'm ready for you, whatever you are! I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid. I'm not afraid!

The silence is overwhelming

(Trembling; terrified) There's nothing to be afraid of!

The room is still and silent, but the glow of light is stronger. Scrooge walks silently across the room. A deep, disembodied voice booms eerily through the house

Christmas Present *(off)* Ebenezer Scrooge!

Immediately Scrooge is back at the foot of the bed, his hands on his palpitating heart

Come here, Scrooge! I'm waiting for you!

Scrooge obediently leaps away from the bed again. He cowers in a corner

Scrooge *(his eyes shut tight)* Is that-er-you again, Jacob Marley, m-my old friend?

Christmas Present *(off - thundering)* No, it's not!

The glow of light intensifies. Scrooge, still whimpering, shields his face as deep menacing music builds to a climax and then stops. Scrooge opens his eyes-and to what a sight.

His entire bed, canopy and all, rises into the air to reveal a cornucopian feast and a setting of breath-taking opulence and abundance. The light softens. His room has been transformed into the very vision of Christmas. Holly, mistletoe and ivy hang everywhere. Heaped on the floor are turkeys, geese, game and poultry. Great joints of meat, suckling pigs, mince-pies, plum puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chestnuts, immense twelfth-cakes and seething bowls of punch that fill the room with steam

Enthroned amidst this glorious setting sits a superb and jolly Giant, wearing a magnificent deep green velvet robe bordered with ermine, and on his head a holly wreath, set with icicles that sparkle like outsize diamonds

Scrooge Who are you?

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

Scrooge Never.

Christmas Present And yet how many of my brothers have you rejected in your miserable lifetime?

Scrooge I have never met your brothers, sir.

Christmas Present You have never looked for them!

Scrooge How many of them are there?

Christmas Present What year is this?

Scrooge Eighteen hundred and forty-three.

Christmas Present Then I have eighteen hundred and forty-two brothers! This year it is my tum. Each year at this time, one of us visits this puny little planet to spread some happiness, and to remove as many as we can of the causes of human misery! *(He leans closer to Scrooge, his voice a menacing rumble)* Which is why I have come to see you, Ebenezer Scrooge!

Scrooge *(suspiciously)* And what do you want with me?

Christmas Present You're a funny-looking little creature! I must admit I found it hard to believe that you would be as horrible as my brothers said you'd be, but now that I look at you I can see they were understating the truth!

Scrooge *(with dignity)* Let me assure you, sir, that I am a man of the highest principles and the most generous spirit!

Christmas Present Generous spirit! You don't know the meaning of the phrase---but you are about to find out! Drink this!

He pours some white fluid into two huge chalices and hands one to Scrooge

Scrooge What is it?

Christmas Present Taste it!

Cautiously Scrooge sniffs at the drink, then sips it. He pauses, then drains the chalice dry. The Ghost nods and smiles

Christmas Present Do you like it?

Scrooge It's wonderful! I've never tasted anything like it!

Christmas Present Of course you haven't!

Scrooge What is it?

Christmas Present The milk of human kindness. There are more good things in life, Scrooge, than you can possibly imagine!

Scrooge I'm sure there are! Can I have some more?

The Giant sings in a booming bass voice

No. 13: Finale Act I

Christmas Present Ebenezer Scrooge,
The sins of man are huge.
A never-ending symphony
Of villainy and infamy,
Duplicity, deceit and subterfuge.
And no-one's worse than Ebenezer Scrooge!

Though a man's a handy candidate for hell,
I must admit
Life sometimes has
Its brighter side as well!

I like life! Life likes me!
Life and I fairly fully agree
Life is fine! Life is good!
'Specially mine,
Which is just as it should be!

He tops up Scrooges goblet every, time Scrooge takes a drink, which is frequently

I like pouring the wine,
And why not?
Life's a pleasure That I deny not!
I like life! Here and now!

Life and I made a mutual vow.
Till I die, Life and I
We'll both try to be better somehow!
And if life were a woman,
She would be my wife!

Scrooge Why?

Christmas Present Why?
Because I Like life!

Scrooge (speaking) That's all very well for you! I hate life!

The Ghost roars with laughter and pours Scrooge another immense goblet of the milk of human kindness. Scrooge suddenly becomes morose and depressed. He is quite drunk

Christmas Present Nonsense, man. Why?

Scrooge Because life hates me! That's why!

Christmas Present Scrooge, you're an even bigger fool than I took you for!
You've had over sixty years on this earth in your long,
miserable, selfish existence, and you still don't even know
how to live! Now listen to me.

(Singing) I like life ... (speaking) well, go on.

Scrooge (singing reluctantly) I like life ...

*As he sings. Christmas Present lavishes food and drink on Scrooge. who mellows
visibly and gradually emerges from his gloom*

Christmas Present That's better.

(Singing) Life likes me!

Scrooge Life ... (he gulps) ... likes me ...

Christmas Present (speaking) Good, good.

(Singing) I make life a perpetual spree!

Scrooge (less than coherent) Perpetual spree!

Christmas Present Eating food!

Scrooge Drinking wine!

Christmas Present Thinking who'd
Like the privilege to dine me!

Scrooge I like drinking
The drink I'm drinking!

Christmas Present That's better, Scrooge, and ...
I like thinking
The thoughts I'm thinking!
I like songs!
I like dance!
I hear music and I'm in a trance!

Scrooge Tra-la-la!

Christmas Present Oom-pa-pah!

Both Chances are
I shall get up and prance!

Christmas Present Where there's music and laughter,
Happiness is rife!

Scrooge Why?

Christmas Present Why?
Because I like ...

The music builds as the Giant raises his arms to heaven in a majestic gesture as Scrooges bedroom dissolves

Christmas Present Come on, Scrooge, we're going visiting. You're in for a few surprises!

The music continues

SCENE 12

A London Street-Cheapside. late on Christmas Eve

We see a church choir issuing out of church to collect charity money Jollygoode and Harty are with them. We see Harry and his wife delivering gifts. Street Urchins run about

We see Tom Jenkins, the Dilbers, and the Beggar Woman having drinks outside the pub "The Holly and the Ivy"

We see a troupe of street Entertainers bringing a brave splash of colour and enchantment to the street

We see the Cratchit family staring with amazement at the scene

Children Sing a Christmas carol

Men Sing a Christmas carol

Sop/Alto Sing a Christmas carol

Alto/Bass Like the children do

Sop/Ten Like the children do

Alto/Men Sing a song of gladness and cheer

Sop Sing a song, sing a song

Alto/Men For the time of Christmas is here

Sop Christmas is here

Alto/Men Look around about you and see

Sop See

Alto/Men What a world of

All Wonder this world can be

Women	Men
And enjoy the beauty	Sing a Christmas carol
All the joy and beauty	Sing a Christmas carol

That a merry Christmas	Sing a Christmas carol
------------------------	------------------------

All Can bring to you

The music builds to an irresistible climax

Because I-like-life!

The Ghost fills Scrooge's chalice to overflowing as he and Scrooge laugh and laugh

CURTAIN

ACT II

No. 14: Opening Act II

SCENE I

The same location: Cheapside. London street. 2am on Christmas Morning

As the Choirmaster says good night to Messrs Jollygoode and Harty, a great noise is heard from inside "The Holly and the Ivy ". A very merry Tom Jenkins comes from the pub, with the Dilbers, Lamplighter, Street Entertainers, Beggar Woman and Pub Landlord, Christmas Present observes

No. 15: The Milk of Human Kindness

Tom Jenkins

The milk of human kindness is the loveliest drink in the world,
The loveliest drink in the world, that's what people think In the world!
The other drinks that people drink like rum 'n' scotch 'n' gin,
May be all right upon the night, but sooner or later they do you in!
An' that is a terrible sin! A terrible, terrible sin!

Boozers

But the milk of human kindness is the answer to all the above,
A potion with oceans of love, as cosy an' warm as a glove!
So, when you think you need a drink to help you see the sun,
The milk of human kindness is the only one.
Yes, it's the only one!

Tom Jenkins

Before today,
I have to say,
I had no use for milk,
A drink at which I balk,
Like others of its ilk!
An' human kindness also--
Not at all my cup of tea!
But put the two together, though,
An' sudden! y I see
The perfect drink for me!
As smooth an' soft as silk!

Boozers

The milk of human kindness
Is the nicest libation on earth-

The best celebration on earth-
The greatest sensation on earth!

Landlord

The other drinks that people drink-
Like Armagnac or port-

Tom Jenkins

May be all right upon the night
But sooner or later you've drunk a quart!
Tomorrow you end up in court!

Both

A shockin' an' 'orrible thought!

Even some of the choir are sucked into the celebration

All

But ... The Milk of Human Kindness
Is a source o' salvation for all-
A nectar for Hector or Paul-
It's like bein' wrapped in a shawl!
So any night you choose to booze,
An' not be on the run-
The Milk of Human Kindness
Is the only one,
Yes, it's the only one!
Yes, it's the only one!
Cheers!

*Mr Harty has found a Peeler who manages to clear away all the revellers to their homes,
revealing a very merry Scrooge*

Scrooge

So any night you choose to booze
Before you see the sun
The Milk of Human Kindness
Is the only one
Yes, it's the

The Ghost of Christmas Present snaps his fingers, leaving Scrooge suddenly sober

The set changes to reveal the kitchen parlour of the Cratchits 'house

Scrooge

What am I doing in the middle of the street in me
nightclothes?

Christmas Present

Never mind about your nightclothes. Come. I want you
to see the world as it really is.

Scrooge

Who lives in this miserable hovel?

Christmas Present

Behold the lavish abode of Robert Cratchit, Esquire.

Scrooge

(*lamely*) Looks quite nice, really ... for a wages clerk ...
Can I look through the window?

Christmas Present It will cost you nothing, which I'm sure will be good news for you.

Scrooge Will they be able to see me?

Christmas Present No, which I'm sure will be good news for them!

Scrooge I could do with another one of them drinks.

Christmas Present Later. For the time being it's better that you see things as they really are. Touch my robe.

Scrooge does so. There is a blinding flash of light, and Scrooge and Christmas Present are inside the Cratchit family's kitchen-parlour, unseen by them

SCENE 2

The Cratchits 'house

Mrs Cratchit, Bob's pretty wife, lifts the lid of the copper and fishes out a rather undernourished muslin-wrapped plum pudding with her copper-stick, sniffs it approvingly and lowers it with loving care back into the bubbling cauldron. Bob Cratchit is carefully assembling and mixing the ingredients for his home-made punch. Three more of the Cratchit children, two boys and a girl, chase one another noisily around the kitchen. Bob finally holds up his hands to silence them

Bob Cratchit (*gently*) Now listen, my dears. Your mother and I want you all to have a good time, but you don't have to wreck the house and kill each other to do it, all right?

The children calm down and nod

Nectar! Pure nectar! And at tuppence a pint you can't really complain.

Martha The stuffing's ready, Mother.

Mrs Cratchit That's lovely, Martha ...

Bob promptly sets down his wooden spoon. With immense pride, he carries across to the parlour table a crockery platter on which sits the scrawny, poorly plucked goose. The pile of stuffing is bigger than the goose

Bob Cratchit The marriage of roast goose and sage and onion stuffing a la Cratchit is one of the culinary miracles of our day, a living legend throughout the length and breadth of Camden Town! (*He sets the platter down upon the table*) The only remaining problem, my dears, is whether to put the stuffing inside the goose or the goose inside the stuffing.

This is greeted with renewed gusts of mirth from the family

But since the ultimate intention is to put them both inside ourselves, I don't suppose it much matters!

Kathy and Tiny Tim enter. looking highly delighted with life

Kathy Come along, Tim.

Bob Cratchit And here they are-the one-and-only carol-singing Cratchits, newly returned from their triumphant musical tour of Regent's Park and the Euston Road.

The entire family cheers and applauds itself Bob Cratchit leaves what he is doing, picks up his son and kisses him, and hugs Kathy

Mrs Cratchit How did you do - Tiny Tim?

Tiny Tim Tuppence ha'penny!

Redoubled cheers as he proudly displays his handful of copper coins

Mrs Cratchit Well done! And you too, Kathy!

Bob Cratchit Another fantastic coup by young Timothy Cratchit, the financial wizard! At only seven years of age, the youngest millionaire in the vast Cratchit empire! Let's put the pennies in the jar...

Beautiful Day (No. 15a) starts (underscore)

Mrs Cratchit *(to Kathy)* And how did little Tim behave?

Bob Cratchit sets Tiny Tim on a chair at the parlour table and begins to arrange the pouring of punch into tiny glasses and eggcups

Kathy Good as gold, Mother. When we sang outside the church, he let them see he was a cripple, to remind them at Christmas who made lame beggars walk and blind men see.

Mrs Cratchit He gets thoughtful. sitting by himself so much.

Bob Cratchit Ladies and gentlemen, if I may steal a moment of your valuable time, I would like you to drink to the sparkling good health of the two gentlemen whose industry and generosity have made possible our sumptuous Christmas repast-Master Timothy Cratchit -

They all raise their glasses

- and Mr Ebenezer Scrooge.

They all lower their glasses. Scrooge mutters a surprised and pleased reaction to the mention of his name in this context-until he sees the smiles fade from the children's faces, and Mrs Cratchit looking at her husband as though he is mad

Mrs Cratchit Mr Scrooge? What are you trying to do - spoil our Christmas?

Bob Cratchit His money paid for the goose, my dear.

Mrs Cratchit No! Your money paid for the goose, my dear.

Bob Cratchit But he paid me the money!

Mrs Cratchit Because you earned it, my love! Believe me! Fifteen shillings a week at threepence an hour, and not a penny rise in eight years. You earned it!

Bob Cratchit Mr Scrooge assures me that times are hard.

Mrs Cratchit He's right. For you, they are! But not for himself!

Bob Cratchit Nonetheless, he is the founder of our feast, and we shall drink to him!

Scrooge (*nodding in agreement*) Quite right!

Mrs Cratchit The founder of our feast, indeed! I wish I had him here! I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and he'd have indigestion for a month!

Bob Cratchit Ethel, my dear, the children! Christmas!

Mrs Cratchit It needs to be Christmas Day, Bob, to drink to a rotten, stingy old miser like Scrooge!

Scrooge gives the Ghost an embarrassed smile. The Ghost chuckles

Bob Cratchit But, Ethel –

Mrs Cratchit You know he is, Bob. Nobody knows it better than you, my poor love.

The sparkle seems to have left Bob Cratchit. Tiny Tim hobbles over to him and hands him his glass of punch. Bob touches his wife's-hand, smiles at her sadly and raises his glass to her

Bob Cratchit To Christmas, my dear.

Mrs Cratchit Children, we shall drink to your father, for all the love and happiness he gives us, and to Tiny Tim, for the health we wish him ... (*She catches Bob's eye*) And for the sake of your father, I'll even drink to that old miser Mr Scrooge. Long life to him, and to us all!

Bob Cratchit A merry Christmas to us all.

Children Merry Christmas.

Bob Cratchit God Bless us.

Tiny Tim God Bless us, every one.

They drink. Bob Cratchit squeezes Tiny Tim's hand

Christmas Present What an unpleasant child! You know, there are few things more nauseating than a happy family enjoying themselves at Christmas! Do you not agree, Scrooge?

Scrooge I think Bob Cratchit's really rather fond of me!

The Ghost roars with laughter

Christmas Present So's his wife! Couldn't you tell?

Scrooge She doesn't really know me.

Christmas Present That is one of the few things wherein Fate has blessed her.

Bob Cratchit As I said to the Lord Mayor, if Her Most Gracious Majesty is feeling bored, I said, you just wheel her over to Camden Town, I said! We'll have her back on her regal feet in no time, I said, with a glass of Bob Cratchit's hot punch ... and a song from young Tiny Tim.

All heads turn to Tiny Tim. Tim blushes, but finally responds to the vociferous urging of his brothers and sisters. Bob Cratchit lifts him up to stand on the table. The family cheers and applauds. Everyone falls silent.

No. 16: The Beautiful Day

Tiny Tim On a beautiful day
 That I dream about
 In a world I would love to see
 Is a beautiful place
 Where the sun comes out-
 And it shines in the sky for me.

On this beautiful winter's morning,
If my wish could come true somehow,
Then the beautiful day
That I dream about
Would be here
And now.

Tiny Tim continues singing sotto voce under the following scene between Scrooge and Christmas Present who continue their dialogue

On a beautiful day

That I dream about
In a world I would love to see
Is a beautiful place
Where the sun comes out-
And the sun shines in the sky for me.

On this beautiful winter's morning,
If my wish could come true somehow,
Then the beautiful day
That I dream about
Would be here,
And now.

Scrooge wipes a tear from the corner of his eye as they walk away

Scrooge What will become of him ... Tiny Tim?

Christmas Present What's this? Concern over a sick child? Have you taken leave of your senses?

Scrooge Don't mock me, Spirit. Is the child very sick? Not that it's of any great importance to me whether he is or not... but is he?

Christmas Present Well, of course he's sick!

Scrooge You mean he's seriously ill? Will he ... live?

Christmas Present stares caustically down at Scrooge who gets angry

well, will he?

Christmas Present What does it matter to you, Ebenezer Scrooge? If he is going to die, then he had better do it, and decrease ...

Both ... the surplus population!

Scrooge hangs his head to hear his own words quoted. Focus back to the Cratchits for the end of the song

Cratchits Then the beautiful day that I dream about
Would be here and now.

Christmas Present Of course the boy will die! Unless the future changes in an unforeseen fashion. But who are you to decide who is surplus? I suspect there are many of the opinion that it is you who are surplus!

Scrooge I should like to go home now.

Christmas Present No. We have one last call to make. Touch my robe.

As the Cratchits end the refrain The Beautiful Day, Scrooge touches Christmas Present 's robe. There is a blinding flash of light

I like life (No. 16a) starts (underscore)

SCENE 3

Scrooge's Nephew's sitting-room

A warm, cosy Christmas, the room illuminated by firelight and candle-glow

As the lights cross fade, there is a contrasting, uplifting swirl of music, and a tumble of rowdy, happy Children in bright party clothes bounce across the stage to the music of I Like Life. They are playing Blind man 's Buff, laughing, giggling and screaming with delight. The Adults follow, among them Scrooge's nephew, Harry, and his pretty wife, Helen (played by the same actress who was Isabel, whom Scrooge never quite sees). Blindfolded is Harry's best friend, Tapper As he gropes and stumbles about, he always seems to seek out the same attractive and buxom lady, named Mary

Helen I think Topper can see through that blindfold! He keeps chasing Mary!

Nephew Well, you can't blame him, can you?

Helen Oh Harry, you're outrageous!

Topper makes a final lunge for Mary and grabs her in an elaborate embrace. Mary whips off his blindfold

Topper *(in mock surprise)* Good heavens! Mary, it's you!

Helen Right! Mary and Topper, you choose the next game. Harry, you top up everyone's glasses. Grown-ups all stay here! Children follow me! Hot mince pies and milk in the nursery!

The Children cheer and follow Helen like the Pied Piper

Harry refills the drinks. The Ghost o/Christmas Present sits on a large sofa and beckons Scrooge to sit beside him. Scrooge hesitates

Christmas Present Come on, Scrooge! It's all right! I'm the Guest of Honour! *(He points to himself)* Christmas!

Scrooge sits down

Nephew Ladies and gentlemen, will you please honour me with your undivided attention? That famous moment has arrived that I know you all look forward to in this house every Christmas Eve, when I ask you to drink to the good health and long life of my celebrated Uncle Ebenezer!

The Friends respond to the proposal-albeit with no great show of enthusiasm-and toast Scrooge. Scrooge's face lights up. He nudges the Ghost

Scrooge Did you hear that? Maybe I've misjudged the boy.

Topper Harry, I've visited you every Christmas for the past five years, and to this day I can never understand this extraordinary ritual of drinking to the health of your Uncle Ebenezer! Everybody knows he's the most miserable old skinflint that ever-walked God's earth!

Guests Hear, hear ...

Scrooge Who's he?

Christmas Present Oh, just a friend.

Nephew My dear Topper, it's very simple. He is indeed the most despicable old miser -- worse than you could ever possibly imagine ---

The Ghost chuckles

Scrooge You find this amusing?

Christmas Present Believe it or not, he likes you!

Nephew But I look at it this way—if I can wish a merry Christmas to him, who is beyond dispute the most obnoxious and parsimonious of all living creatures --

Guests Hear, hear!

Christmas Present is helpless with laughter

Nephew ... then I know in my heart I am truly a man of goodwill!

Scrooge The scoundrel!

Topper Now that I'll drink to!

Scrooge, beside himself goes over to Topper and glares at him

Scrooge I don't like you at all!

Christmas Present Wait, there is more to come!

Nephew Besides, I like old Scrooge.

Scrooge perks up

Christmas Present What did I tell you?

Guests Nonsense! ... Oh no! ...

Nephew I truly do! God knows, I have little enough reason to do so after the way he treated our family, but I can't help feeling that hidden somewhere inside that loathsome old

carcass of his ... there is a different man fighting to get out!

Topper Careful, Harry - he may be even worse than the one you know!

Laughter from everyone except Scrooge

Nephew God forbid! Anyway, that's why I invite him to come here every Christmas, in the forlorn hope that one day he might just drop by and pick up enough goodwill to raise his clerk's wages by five shillings a week! God knows, it's high time he did!

Guests Hear, hear! Bravo!

Scrooge You're very free with other people's money.

Mary All right, Harry, now that's enough! I refuse to have my Christmas haunted by your silly old Uncle Ebenezer!

Scrooge finds this amusing

Scrooge If only you knew, my dear!

He walks over to her, shrieks a mock ghostly shriek and pulls a face at her. Christmas Present roars with laughter

Mary All right, what shall we play'!

Lizzi Charades ...

Lucy Secrets ...

Stuart Sardines ...

Charles Murder ...

Sarah Hunt the Thimble .. .

Topper Postman's Knock .. .

Mary I know-we'll all sing The Minister's Cat.

Approval from the Guests

No. 17: The Minister's Cat

Scrooge As for you, Nephew, if you were in my will, which you're not, I'd disinherit you. Raise my clerk's wages! Humbug!

Christmas Present Scrooge, come over here. You need some more of this.

(He produces a silver goblet out of nowhere and pours a drink)

Scrooge brightens up immediately and sits on the sofa next to Christmas Present. The music begins

Scrooge I know that tune! I used to sing it when I was at old Fezziwig's! Ti-tum, ti-tum, ti-tum, ti-tum ...

Christmas Present nods approvingly and munches an oversized leg of turkey waving it like a conductor's baton as he watches Scrooge

Mary All right. I'll conduct Now remember, one line each. Let's see if we can get through the whole alphabet without a mistake. Ready, steady, A!

Mary calls out at the start of each line "A ... B ... C .. "etc, and points to a Guest who has to sing in turn, one line each

Guests (singing) The minister's cat is an Affable cat.
The minister's cat is a Boring cat.
The minister's cat is a Charming cat.
At one o'clock on a Monday.

The minister's cat is a Darling cat.
The minister's cat is an Evil cat.
The minister's cat is a Frightful cat.
At two o'clock on a Tuesday.

The minister's cat is a Grumpy cat.
The minister's cat is a Hungry cat.
The minister's cat is an Idiot cat.
At three o'clock on a Wednesday.

The minister's cat is a Jealous cat.
The minister's cat is a Kindly cat.
The minister's cat is a Lonely cat.
At four o'clock on a Thursday.

Nephew (speaking) The minister's cat is a mmmm ... er ... M ... M ... Oh gosh!

Scrooge (yelling) Merry! Say merry!

The music keeps the tempo going while the Guests hold their breath or giggle in delight

Mary You've got three seconds ... three ... two ... one ...

Nephew (floundering) Mi ... ma ... mem ... (Furious with himself) Aaaaagh!

Mary You're out! Right-keep it going! N!

Guests (continuing in turn)

The minister's cat is a Naughty cat.
The minister's cat is an Oval cat.
At five o'clock on a Friday.

Harry, laughing, steps out of the circle, and pours himself a glass of port. Scrooge, deeply caught up in the game, follows him. The song continues under the following

Scrooge (furiously) I told you to say "merry"! What's the matter with you? Why are you so stupid!? *(To Christmas Present)* He's always been stupid. *(To Harry)* You could have said merry, or monstrous, or miserable. monastic, maniacal, moronic ... That's what you are-moronic!

Nephew Moronic!

Guests The minister's cat is a Perfect cat.
The minister's cat is a Quirky cat.
The minister's cat is a Reverent cat.
At six o'clock on a Saturday.

The minister's cat is a Silky cat.
The minister's cat is a Tiresome cat.
The minister's cat is a Useless cat.
At seven o'clock on a Sunday.

Scrooge Useless, that's what you are, useless ...

*Scrooge joins in as the song builds to a climax, singing just the adjective for each letter
He is the centre-piece of the song's finish*

The minister's cat is a Vicious cat.
The minister's cat is a Worldly cat.
The minister's cat is an X-traordinary cat.
A Yellow-eyed cat.
A Zippy Zany Zanzibar cat.

Mary And what do you make of all that?

All We'll tell you what we make of that!
The minister truly, truly has
An absolutely most remarkable cat!

The company bursts into a roar of self-congratulatory applause and delight at their achievement. Scrooge joins in.

December the Twenty-Fifth (No. 17a) continues (underscore)

Scrooge Wonderful! Absolutely marvellous! My word, that was lots of fun. We used to sing that at old Fezziwig's parties ... *(To Harry)* I can't believe how stupid you are!

Topper Harry, lovely evening. It's late. We must go. Christmas in the morning.

Scrooge No, no, no! Don't go! Must you really? Oh, dear ...

The Guests take their leave. Scrooge lines up with the hosts, chatting amiably as he bids the Guests farewell during the following

Helen reappears with the by-now sleepy Children, a large basket of presents draped over her arm. She hands a gift-wrapped little package to each Guest as they leave

Harry, unaware of Scrooge, continues to chat to his Guests during Scrooge's speech. The furniture is cleared away.

Going already? What a pity! But it was a wonderful evening! And I loved that Minister's Cat thing- I thought I was rather good at it! Good-night... Good-night ... Thank you for coming ... I can honestly say I haven't enjoyed a Christmas as much as this since I was a young apprentice at old Fezziwig's-oh, so many years ago, ... What Christmasses we used to have in those days! Fantastic, they were ... He had this daughter ...

Nephew ... Good-night, Mary.

Mary Good-night.

Nephew Merry Christmas, Topper-I'll try to get Uncle Ebenezer here for you next year!

Topper Don't bother!

Scrooge *(as Topper passes)* I really don't like you at all!

Nephew *(waving)* Merry Christmas, everybody.

Guests Merry Christmas!

The Guests leave

Happiness (Reprise) (No. 18) starts (underscore)

Christmas Present gently leads Scrooge away from the party. The Guests fade from view the sound of their laughter drifting off into the darkness.

Harry and Helen waltz off together to the music of "Happiness"

The Lights cross fade to:

SCENE 4

Scrooge's bedroom

Scrooge continues talking, moved by his memories. He does not realize where he is. His thoughts are far away from this time and place. His eyes fill with tears as he speaks

For a few moments, we see Isabel and Ebenezer together, young again, like Scrooge's voice, as he remembers this happy time gone by.

The music of "Happiness" continues to play gently under. Scrooge looks around him vaguely, as the bedroom returns around him.

Scrooge (singing) Happiness was standing beside me ...
I could see her ...
She could see me ...
Happiness can be something you're too blind to see
...
(Speaking) Oh, Isabel...!

Music 18a: Happiness (Underscore)

Ebenezer and Isabel fade from view. Scrooge's voice trails away as he sees Christmas Present beside him, hark in the bedroom

Christmas Present Scrooge, my time upon this little planet is very brief. I must leave you now.

Scrooge But we still have so much to talk about! Haven't we?

Christmas Present There is never enough time to say or do all the things we would wish. The thing is to try to do as much as you can with the time that you have.

A Better Life (No. 19) continues (underscore)

Scrooge Oh, just one more drink. ..

As Christmas Present speaks, his voice and his/arm vanish simultaneously

Christmas Present (walking away) Remember, Scrooge, time is short, and suddenly you're not there anymore ...

Scrooge shivers, and looks about him in the gloom

Scrooge No, wait! Don't go ... Don't leave me ... Where are you?
Why is it so dark? I can't see ... I can't see ...

(Singing)

Do my eyes deceive me?
Can my reason lie?
Am I living here and now?
Or in some life-gone-by?
Is this world I'm seeing
The world I saw before?
Could there be another life?
That might have taught me more?
Am I merely dreaming?
Or am I awake?
Is my mind just playing games? Or showing me
A pathway I should take?
Do I just ignore it?
Do I break the spell?
Or do I take another look?
Open up a brand-new look?

Try to find a better life?
A bigger, brighter, better life?
And could I somehow learn
To live it well?
Only time ... only time ... will tell!
Can I find a better life-
And learn to live it well?

The church clock starts to chime three o'clock in the distance. Macabre and ghostly sounds fill the night. Scrooge buries his face in his hands, a man totally in the grip of terror

(Speaking) Three o'clock ... "The third at three". (He looks up. startled)

Looming over him is a shapeless black Phantom-a fearsome sight

Scrooge gulps and closes his eyes. The Phantom is immobile

Am I in the presence of The Ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come? And are you to show me shadows of the things that will happen in the time before us?

The Phantom nods. Scrooge closes his eyes, summoning up his final reserves of inner strength.

Ghost of the Future! I fear you more than any apparition I have ever seen. But as I know your purpose is to do me good, and as I hope to live to be another man from what I was, I am prepared to bear you company. Will you speak to me?

Still the Phantom gives no reply, but lifts one of its shrouded arms and points towards the window out into the night. Scrooge nods timidly and scrambles after him, nightcap askew.

The Lights cross-fade to:

Scene 5

The street outside Scrooge's office

Scrooge stands beside the Phantom, slightly removed from a crowd of people gathered outside his office. Tom Jenkins polishes the gleaming brass "Scrooge & Marley" nameplate with his shirt-sleeve

Tom Jenkins There it is, friends, shinin' as bright as the 'appy thoughts the mere mention of the name Scrooge brings to our minds! (Addressing the Crowd) Ladies and gentlemen. We are gathered 'ere today because we are united by a common bond –

The Crowd raises a cheer

namely our feelings of gratitude to Mr Ebenezer Scrooge.

The Crowd roars its raucous agreement

I don't think any one of us could ever' ope to find the words to describe the true depth of our feelings towards 'im!

Scrooge (to the Phantom) Is this the future'?

The Phantom nods. It is clear that Scrooge, already in a highly emotional condition, is deeply touched. He starts to move among the crowd.

Tom Jenkins (quietening the mob) All right, now, my friends, settle down, if you please.

Scrooge That's Tom Jenkins ... the hot soup man. Owes me six pounds. I must say he looks uncommonly happy for a man so deep in debt.

Tom Jenkins I completely understand 'ow emotional you all feel about this most important celebration ...

Another rousing cheer from the Crowd. Scrooge observes in the Crowd the smiling faces of the Punch and Judy Man, and the Dithers, who run the knitwear stall, and others

Scrooge All these people owe me money. They love me, and I never knew.

Tom Jenkins But, may I ask you to kindly 'old yer emotions in check. We're all deeply moved, and those of us what have been in debt to Mr S over the years will never forget the rare and beautiful thing 'E's just done for all of us, right?

Crowd Right!

The Crowd cheers. Scrooge is delighted at the Crowd's reaction. and questions them forgetting they can neither see nor hear him

Scrooge What did I do? What did I do? Whatever it was, it has made them truly happy. And I am the cause!

Tom Jenkins puts up his hands for silence as he enters the office

Scrooge steps up on to the mounting block in front of his office to address the Crowd

No. 20: Thank You Very Much

Scrooge Ladies and gentlemen ... I thank you from the bottom of my heart! I shall remember this moment until my dying day!

(Singing) May I say to all my friends
Who have assembled here,

That I'd merely like to mention, if I may,
My sincere and humble attitude
Is one of lasting gratitude
For what your words
Have done for me today!
And therefore, I would simply like to say

Tom Jenkins comes out of the office and produces Scrooges black note-book from which he proceeds to tear the pages, tossing them into the air

Thank you very much!
Thank you very much!
That's the nicest thing
That anyone's ever done for me!
I may sound double-dutch,
But my delight is such
I feel as if a losing war's
Been won for me!
And if I had a flag
I'd hang me flag out-
To add a sort of final victory touch!
But since I left me flag at home
I'll simply have to say
Thank you very, very, very much!

At a gesture from Tom Jenkins, four Men emerge from Scrooge's office carrying a coffin which they dump heavily and unceremoniously next to the unseen Scrooge

All Thank you very much!
 Thank you very much!
 That's the nicest thing
 That anyone's ever done for me!

It sounds a bit bizarre,
But things the way they are
I feel as if another life's
Begun for me!

And if I had a cannon
I would fire it-
To add a sort of celebration touch!
But since I left me cannon at home
I'll simply have to say
Thank you very, very, very much!
Thank you very, very, very much!

From the upper window of Scrooges lodgings, the Dilbers happily throw Scrooges possessions down into the street for everyone to help themselves

Mrs Dilber Oi!

Scrooge & company Thank you very much!
Thank you very much!
That's the nicest thing
That anyone's ever done for me!
It isn't every day
Good fortune comes me way!
I never thought the future would be fun for me.

A Woman shouts down from an upper window

Woman (speaking) Will you be quiet?! My baby's tryin' ter sleep!

Scrooge (speaking) I'm terribly sorry, Madam ...

Company For 'e's a jolly good fellow!
For 'e's a jolly good fellow!

Scrooge For I'm a jolly good fellow!

Company And so say all of us!

Scrooge	Tom Jenkins & Company
Thank you very much!	Thank you very much!
Thank you very much!	Thank you very much!
That's the nicest thing	Thank you very, very much!
That anyone's ever done for me	Thank you very much!
The future looks all right	Thank you very much!
In fact it looks so bright	Thank you very much!
I feel as if they're	Thank you very much!
Polishing the sun for me!	Vey, very much!

Scrooge & Company And if I 'ad a drum
I'd 'ave to bang it!

Company To add a sort of rumpty-tumpty touch!
But since I left me drummer at 'ome-
I'll simply 'ave ter say
Thank you very, very, very much
Thank you very, very, very:
He's a jolly good fellow:
Thank you very much!

Willing hands heave Scrooge 's coffin merrily up onto to a handcart. The Crowd moves off pulling the handcart, cheering, with Tom Jenkins dancing round it

Scrooge, in a very good mood, hums Thank You Very Much to himself

Scrooge Spirit, I shall not forget this lesson, trust me. May I go home now?

The Phantom shakes his head and then points upstage. Scrooge turns

The Lights cross-fade to:

SCENE 6

The Cratchits' house

No. 21: The Beautiful Day (Reprise) starts underscore

Scrooge Bob Cratchit's house. Why have we come here again?

Mrs Cratchit and the Children are seated around the kitchen table. The parlour is half-heartedly prepared for Christmas, and the sadness in the faces of the Cratchits is in depressing contrast to Scrooge's previous visit.

Mrs Cratchit and her daughters are sewing. while Peter is reading a book. Mrs Cratchit lays her work on the table, and puts her hand up to her face

Kathy Mother?

Mrs Cratchit The colour hurts my eyes, and I mustn't show weak eyes to your father when he gets home. It must be near his time.

Kathy Past it. But I think he has walked a little slower these past few evenings.

They are all very quiet again. At last Mrs Cratchit speaks in a steady, cheerful voice, that only falters once

Mrs Cratchit I have known him to walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder very fast indeed.

Kathy So have I. Often.

Mrs Cratchit But he was light to carry, and his father loved him. So it was no trouble ... no trouble.

Scrooge looks at the empty chair which Tiny Tim previously occupied

Scrooge There is Tiny Tim's chair. But there is no Tiny Tim. (He stares coldly at the Phantom) Where is he?

The Phantom leads Scrooge off

The Lights cross-fade to:

Scene 7

The churchyard

The Phantom leads Scrooge to a simple graveyard, a bleak aspect of cold grey and black stone against a sombre slate sky.

Bob Cratchit is kneeling in front of a simple white wooden cross. The only splash of colour in the graveyard is the bunch of violets in his hands. He is infinitely sad, but he keeps a

brave face in front of Tiny Tim. He places the bunch of violets at the foot of the white cross, which is simply inscribed "Timothy Cratchit, 1837-1844-Aged 7 years"

We faintly hear a voice-over of Tiny Tim singing the song he sang for his family the previous Christmas.

No. 21: The Beautiful Day (Reprise)

Tiny Tim (voice-over) On a beautiful day

Bob Cratchit (*speaking*) I must go now, my little fellow. I promised your mother I'd help her with the Christmas dinner, but I'll come and see you again tomorrow ... same time, all right?

(*Singing*) On this beautiful winter's morning.
If my wish could come true
Somehow
Then the beautiful day
That I dream about
Would be here
And ...

(*Speaking*) Oh. Tim!

His voice breaks, and for a moment he bows his head, too heartbroken to move. Then he pulls himself together attempts his usual cheery smile and clambers to his feet. With a last sad look at the pathetic little grave, Bob Cratchit hurries away.

Scrooge (*watching him go*) Poor Tiny Tim! Spirit, you have shown me a Christmas yet to come that mingles great happiness with great sadness. Answer me one question. Are these the shadows of things that will be, or are they shadows of things that may be, only?

For answer, the Phantom points up to a large, grey flat slab or stone near Tiny Tim's grave, previously obscured in the gloom. Now clearly visible on it are the words EBENEZER SCROOGE. Scrooge utters a strangled cry. His face fills with terror as he hears a familiar voice calling him

Scrooge Ahhhhhh!

He turns back in horror to the Phantom, who points from Scrooge to the grave and then advances slowly towards him. Scrooge backs away, mesmerized with fear, his voice a hoarse whisper

Spirit! If you are indeed here to show me the errors of my past ways, tell me, so that I may, by my good deeds, sponge away the writing on this dreaded stone!

Marley appears to greet him, his hand extended. a thin welcoming smile on his gaunt face, his fearful chain clanking behind him

Marley Ebenezer Scrooge! We've been expecting you! You're early! Not that it matters in eternity. They apologize that your chain wasn't ready for your arrival, but it's so big they had to take on extra little devils at the foundry to finish it!

Four shambling figures approach them, bent double and groaning beneath the mighty weight of Scrooge's gigantic chain.

Ah, here it is now! It's even bigger than I thought it would be! My word, makes mine look like a watch chain!

Scrooge Oh, Sweet Spirit! Hear me, I pray you! I am not the man I was! I vow I will honour Christmas in my heart, and keep it every day of the year! I swear it! Only spare me, that I may live to prove it!

Marley Bah! Humbug! Merry Christmas, Ebenezer Scrooge!

Marley laughs as the Phantoms and the huge chain bear down on Scrooge

Scrooge Spirit, help me! (He clutches desperately at the black shrouded figure of the Ghost, pulling the winding-sheet from him)

The Ghost emits a spine-chilling banshee wail as he spins away from Scrooge, melts through the floor and vanishes

The Lights darken on the flailing figure of Scrooge. He continues to cry for help. His voice echoes and re-echoes away into the darkness as Hell disintegrates around him.

The Lights crossfade to:

SCENE 8

Scrooge's bedroom

His bed magically returns to him as the Lights come up. Scrooge, heavily entangled in sheets and blankets, is fighting to free himself

Scrooge Where am I? I'm in my own room I'm not dead! (He throws off the sheets.

No. 22: I'll Begin Again

Perhaps it didn't happen after all... perhaps it did ... But I'm alive! I've got a chance to change, and I will not be the man I was!

(Singing)

I'll begin again
I will build my life.
I will live to know
That I've fulfilled my life.

I'll begin today-
Throw away the past-
And the future I build
Will be something that will last.

I will take the time
I have left to live,
And I'll give it all
That I have left to give.

I will live my days
For my fellow men,
And I'll live in praise
Of that moment when
I was able to begin again!

I don't know what to do. I'm as light as a feather. I'm as happy as an angel. I'm as giddy as a drunken man. Oh, Jacob Marley, wherever you are, you shall see a change in me, I swear! A merry Christmas everybody! Merry Christmas!

He throws back the curtains and looks out at the world, a new man. Daylight floods into the room. He puts on his dressing-gown and bedroom slippers, and moves downstage. The bedroom dissolves behind him and he steps into the blinding light of a dazzling new day. He drinks in the glorious morning.

I'll begin again
I will change my fate!
I will show the world
That it is not too late!
I will never stop-
While I still have time-
Till I stand at the top
Of that mountain I must climb!

The Ghosts of Marley, Christmas Past and Present are seen through Scrooge's mirror, nodding approval

I will start anew,
I will make amends,
And I'll make quite certain
That the story ends
On a note of hope-
On a strong amen-
And I'll thank the world
And remember when

I was able to begin again!
I'll begin again!

Scrooge, still in his nightclothes, stands in the middle of the street, laughing and crying with joy, The church bells merrily chime nine o'clock.

The Lights cross-fade to:

SCENE 9

A London street-Cheapside

A small boy trudges through the snow along the street. He stops and stares in amazement at Scrooge in his nightclothes

Scrooge Boy,., Boy! What day is it?

Boy Today? Why, Christmas Day, o' course!

Scrooge *(letting out a bellow of triumph and clapping his hands)*
It's Christmas Day! I haven't missed it!

Christmas Children (No, 22a) starts (underscore)

(He turns back to the boy) Do you know the butcher's shop in the next street but one?

Boy I should 'ope so!

Scrooge What an intelligent boy! A remarkable boy! Do you happen to know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging up in the window? Not the big one-the enormous one!

Boy You mean the one as big as me?

Scrooge What a delightful boy! So witty! It's a pleasure to talk to him! That's the one!

Boy It's still there.

Scrooge It is? Go and buy it.

Boy Wassat?

Scrooge Here's two sovereigns. Go and wake up the butcher and have him open up his shop. Meet me there in five minutes. Be holding that turkey, and I'll give you tuppence - sixpence - a shilling ... I'll give you half a crown! Go on, run - run -- run!

The Boy disappears like a shot Scrooge chuckles

Oh, what a lovely boy! I think I'm going to like children.

He hurries next door to the toy shop and bangs on the door

The toy shop owner, Mr Pringle, his face covered in shaving cream, emerges and stares at Scrooge in a state of shock. His wife follows, equally dumbfounded

Pringle Mr Scrooge?

Scrooge Good-morning, Pringle. A merry Christmas to you. I want some toys-lots of toys-for all my young friends on this joyous day.

Pringle T-t-toys?! You, Mr Scrooge?

Scrooge Yes. Well, don't stand there gaping, man-make a list.

Pringle A list. Yes. Of course, Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge *(pointing at the carousel)* I want that and that and that. And two of those and the hobby horse and some flutes-some trumpets, oh, and that doll in the corner, and some bows and arrows!

Pringle *(dumbfounded)* Bows and arrows ...

Scrooge Oh yes, I must have a cricket bat, and these, and that horse and this piano ... I like that, oh, and this beautiful coach and several kites and these boats and some of these and I'll have that...

The traumatized Pringle scribbles at great speed, trying to keep up with Scrooge: dizzying selections. His small Boy Assistant is wide-eyed with wonder at the miracle he is witnessing. Mrs Pringle watches in amazement

Pringle Y-yes, Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge And how much is all that?

Pringle I-I-I... how much? Er ...

Scrooge Never mind. Here are some sovereigns. You can keep the change.

Mr Pringle clutches the door and Mrs Pringle for support

Pringle I... er ... Th-thank you, Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge And I shall require the services of several small boys-to help carry it all! Each boy will receive half a crown!

Mrs Pringle Half a-yes, Mr Scrooge!

A radiant Scrooge emerges from the toy shop to be met by Bissett, the Butcher, and the Boy, who is almost totally obscured by the gigantic turkey he is carrying.

Scrooge That's what I call a turkey! It's twice the size of Tiny Tim!
Come along, dear boy-thank you. Merry Christmas!

Bissett But Mr Scrooge-what's happened?

Scrooge What's happened? It's perfectly simple, Bissett. I've
discovered that ... I ... like ... life!

An ever-strengthening musical undercurrent-No. 23a. the prelude to the extended musical finale that is to come-begins to build from this point. The dumbfounded Bissett, still half asleep, turns to Mr Pringle in wonderment

Bissett That was old Scrooge, wasn't it?

They follow Scrooge in disbelief at what they are witnessing. Scrooge begins an eccentric, Pied-Piper-like procession through the streets of Cheapside

No. 23: Finale Act II

As Scrooge sings, Mr Pringle and his Assistants bring out a succession of gift-wrapped packages, while the Boy organizes the open-mouthed Urchins to provide handcarts to transport the mountain of purchases. Passers-by stop to stare in amazement at the scene.

Scrooge I like Life!
Life likes me!
Life and I very fully agree
Life is fine!
Life is good!
'Specially mine,
Which is just as it should be!

Scrooge shops as he sings. He chooses several cases of wine from the astonished Wine Merchant

I like pouring the wine-(he does so)
And why not? (He tastes and approves it)
Life's a pleasure
That I deny not!

He hands bottles of wine at random to various Onlookers. The spirit of Christmas builds around him as the song progresses

Two portly Gentlemen, Jollygoode and Harty, approach

Scrooge Ah, Mrs Harty! And Mrs Jollygoode! Good-day, ladies.
Merry Christmas!

Jollygoode/Harty (caught off guard) Er ... Merry Christmas, Mr Scrooge.

Scrooge Come to my office on Monday morning and I will give you
one hundred guineas for your most worthy cause! And
the same every Christmas!

The Crowd cheers as the two ladies look appropriately staggered

Jollygoode B-b-but, Mr Scrooge ... Why?

Scrooge For a jolly good reason, Mrs Jollygoode! (*He points to the Crowd*)

They will tell you why. Excuse me!

Scrooge giggles and dances away into a Christmas gift store as the happy Crowd sings to Harty and Jollygoode

Butcher, Pringle I like life! Here and now!
Life and I made a mutual vow
Till I die,
Life and I
We'll both try
To be better somehow!

Company Where there's music and laughter,
Happiness is rife!

Jollygoode Why?
Because I like life!

A roar goes up as Scrooge emerges from the clothing shop, resplendent in a Santa Claus outfit. He hands his sack to the Urchins

Jollygoode/Harty (*in total shock*) I don't believe it!

Scrooge, Urchins, Scrooge & Ladies
Farver Chris'mas!
Farver Chris'mas!
Puts a great big sack
On 'is dear old back
'Cos 'e loves us all
An' 'e shows it!

They push Scrooge on to a sled and pull him around the stage

Company An' 'e goes
For a sleigh-ride
If it snows
Then 'e may ride all night!
But that's all right!

In the mornin'
Christmas mornin' -
If yer lift yer eyes,
There's a big surprise!
On yer bed you'll see

There's a gift from Farver Chris'mas
From Farver Chris'mas-
That's 'ow Chris'mas oughta be!

SCENE 10

The Cratchits' house

The procession swirls around Scrooge

Scrooge (unseen) Ho ho ho!

The procession suddenly parts to reveal the assembled Cratchit family. The Cratchit Children are a-tremble with excitement at the sight of Santa Claus. Cratchit's jaw drops open when he sees Scrooge and his followers. But there is no glimmer of recognition of his employer.

Scrooge Robert Cratchit, Esquire'?

Bob Cratchit nods dumbly

A merry Christmas to you, sir, from Santa Claus himself!

Bob Cratchit Forgive me, sir, but I think you've got the wrong people.

Scrooge Nonsense! I haven't gone to the wrong people in eighteen hundred and forty-three years! *(He grabs the huge turkey from the Boy and turns to Mrs Cratchit. briskly)* Don't worry about that scrawny little goose of yours, Mrs Cratchit! You can use it as stuffing for this! *(He dumps the giant turkey in her arms, nearly knocking her off her feet).*

Mrs Cratchit (amazed) Thank you, sir! But how did you know about...?

Scrooge *(ignoring her)* Now, where are the other presents-the ones for the children?

Several Children in his retinue promptly step forward and Scrooge showers several gifts on four of the Cratchit children. chattering away all the time

This is for you, my dear ... and this one is for you. *(To Kathy)* And this pretty doll is for you.

Kathy It's the dolly in the comer!

Scrooge And those are for you, my boy.

Peter Thank you, sir.

Scrooge And these, Bob Cratchit, are for yourself and your good lady wife.

He presents the catatonic Cratchits with two leather purses, each jingling with gold sovereigns. The whole family is struck dumb by the onslaught. Scrooge chuckles and rubs his hands gleefully

Well, I must leave you now. As you may imagine, this is an extremely busy day for me, and I have many other calls to make! *(He turns to go)*

Tiny Tim, the only one of the family who hasn't received a present, is too disappointed to utter. Then Scrooge turns back. He kneels down in front of the gift less Tiny Tim and looks at him tenderly

Oh, I almost forgot. This is for you!

At the snap of the fingers from Scrooge, two Children place the last and the largest of the packages on the floor in front of Tiny Tim. Scrooge lifts off the wrapping that covers it, revealing the carousel that was the centrepiece of the toyshop window. It is a hundred gifts in one, comprising animals and toys and sweets of every kind. Tiny Tim is awestruck but practical

Tiny Tim You didn't steal it, did you?

Scrooge *(chuckling)* A merry Christmas, Tiny Tim!

Tiny Tim puts his arms around Scrooge's neck and hugs him. Scrooge, deeply moved, kisses the child on the cheek then bounces back to his feet, smiling from ear to ear

You still don't recognize me, do you, Bob Cratchit?

Bob Cratchit *(nodding and shaking his head in total confusion)* Yes, no - I mean - you're Father Christmas!

Scrooge throws back his head and roars with laughter, utterly delighted. With a flourish he pulls his beard and whiskers off. Mrs Cratchit and her three daughters scream in unison

Mrs Cratchit It's Mr Scrooge! He's gone mad!

Bob Cratchit It's all right, dear-there's nothing to be afraid of!

Scrooge No, I haven't gone mad! And on Monday, when your salary will be doubled -

Bob Cratchit He has gone mad!

Scrooge e'll sit together and discuss what I can do to help your family. To start with, we'll find the right doctors to get young Tiny Tim well. And we will make him well, you believe me, don't you, Bob?

Bob Cratchit *(nodding feebly)* Yes ... I believe you ... I believe anything. Scrooge And may this be the merriest Christmas of all our lives!

And he is gone, covered in Children

Tiny Tim is the first to recover

Tiny Tim God bless us, every one!

Bob Cratchit opens wide his arms to embrace his wife, and with cries of infinite delight the Cratchit family joins the ever-growing, swirling Crowd and accompany Father Christmas on his merry Christmas way Bell-ringers join in the mounting Chorus

SCENE 11

A London street—Cheapside

Company In the momin'
 Christmas morning
 If yer lift yer eyes,
 There's a big surprise!
 On yer bed you'll see
 There's a gift from Farver Chris'mas
 From Farver Chris'mas
 Thats 'ow Chris'mas oughta be!

Scrooge and his entourage approach Tom Jenkins

Scrooge Tom Jenkins, about the six pounds you owe me!

Tom Jenkins You agreed to a few more days, Mr Scrooge-I just need -

Scrooge You can keep it! It's my Christmas present to you!

Tom Jenkins' legs give way under him

Tom Jenkins Oh! God bless you this Christmas Day, Mr Scrooge!

The music joins in as he starts to sing

Thank you very much!
 That's the nicest thing
 That anyone's ever done for me!

Scrooge It sounds a bit bizarre,
 But things the way they are,
 I feel as if another life's
 Begun for me!

And that goes for anybody else who owes me money!
 (He shows them all his little black book from which he tears out all the pages and throws them away) You can keep it... as of this day, all my debts are forgiven!

The Crowd goes mad with delight and gives a great cheer

Tom Jenkins An' if I 'ad a drum
 I'd 'ave to bang it
 To add a sort of rumpty-tumpty touch!

Scrooge But since I left me drummer at 'ome,
 I'll simply 'ave ter say

Company Thank you very, very, very much!

Scrooge ducks into the Punch and Judy tent as the music continues. Scrooge and the Punch and Judy man duet amicably, their two smiling faces filling the tiny Punch and Judy stage. The watching audience of Children cheer and applaud.

P & J Man Thank you very much!
 Thank you very much!

P & J Man, Scrooge That's the nicest thing
 That anyone's ever done for me!

The Dilbers It isn't every day
 Good fortune comes our way!

Scrooge I never thought
 The future would be fun for me!

Harry and his wife enter and stare at the singing, dancing, cavorting Scrooge in total disbelief

Nephew Uncle Ebenezer? Is that you?

Scrooge Merry Christmas to you, me dear boy, and to your
 enchanted bride! We were just on our way to your
 house ... with some presents. Here! these are from an old
 fool who deeply regrets all the Christmases gone by that
 he might have shared with you! *(To Helen)* And this is for
 you, my dear! A sort of belated wedding gift! *(He hands*
 the last and most elaborate package to Helen. He finds
 himself looking into a face hauntingly like Isabel's).

Helen Oh, Uncle Ebenezer, thank you! Christmas lunch is sharp
 at three. May we expect you?

Scrooge You may! I'll be there! My word, you are a pretty girl! You
 remind me of... someone I used to know! *(He wipes a*
 tear from his eye, kisses her again and smiles at his
 Nephew) Now, come with us, why don't you? We're
 giving people presents! It's a very ... nice thing to do.

(Singing) Happiness is a new friend
 One I truly recommend.

Nephew Happiness you will soon see

Helen and Nephew Makes us all a family

Scrooge (*nodding*) Now I see ...

Helen, Nephew and Scrooge

That Happiness
Is wherever love wants it to be.

The church choir, led by a Choirmaster, enters nearby, singing A Christmas Carol

Choir Sing a song of gladness and cheer
For the time of Christmas is here ...

The two groups overflow into one another and the two songs they are singing overlap in violent cacophony. Despite this, both keep going at full strength. so that the unlikely duet becomes almost a competition between Scrooge and his group and the Choirmaster and his Choirboys.

Scrooge & Parade	Choir
An' if I 'ad a cannon I would fire it To add a sort of Celebration touch	
But since I left me Cannon at 'ome	And enjoy the beauty All the joy and beauty That a merry Christmas Can bring To you! Goodness and joy
I'll simply 'ave to say- Thank you Very, very Very Much!	Sing a Ch1istmas carol Christmas is Here!

The Choirboys are quick to see that Scrooge 's group are having much more fun than they are. They surge forward, practically trampling the Choirmaster underfoot in their eagerness to join Scrooges Christmas Parade. Suddenly the two groups become one, both imbued with the gaiety of the Christmas spirit that is personified in Scrooge who, skipping and dancing merrily at the head of the mob, is having more fun than he has ever had in his life before.

All Thank you very much!
Thank you very much!
That's the nicest thing
That anyone's ever done for me!
I may sound double-dutch,
But my delight is such
I feel as if
A losing war's been won for me!

An' if I 'ad a flag I'd 'ang me flag out
To add a sort of
Final victory touch!

But since I left me flag at 'ome

Since I left me flag at' ome

I'll simply 'ave ter say
Thank you very much!
Thank you very much!
Thank you very much!

The Crowd throw their hats in the air Church bells ring

Scrooge Merry Christmas, everyone! Merry Christmas! I have to go now and get ready ... *(He starts to move off, then turns to face the audience)* I'm spending Christmas *(his voice falters for a second, but he completes the sentence proudly)* ... with my family.

No. 23a: I'll Begin Again (Reprise)

I will start anew
I will make amends
And I'll make quite certain
That the story ends
On a note of hope
On a strong amen
And I'll thank the world
And remember when
I was able to begin again!
I'll begin again!

CURTAIN

CURTAIN calls:

The Company is revealed up stage

No. 24: Curtain Calls

Company Sing a song of gladness and cheer
For the time of Christmas is here!
Look around about you and see
What a world of wonder
This world can be!

The Children and Ensemble bow

Sing a Christmas carol!
Sing a Christmas carol!
Sing a Christmas carol!
Like the children do!

And enjoy the beauty
All the joy and beauty
That a merry Christmas
Can bring to you!

Mr and Mrs Fezziwig; young Ebenezer and Isabel; Tom Jenkins; Marley, the Ghost of Christmas Past, and the Ghost of Christmas Present; Bob and Mrs Cratchit and Tiny Tim; and Scrooge enter and bow to:

I like life!
Life likes me!
I make life a perpetual spree!
Eating food! Drinking wine!
Thinking who'd like the privilege to dine me!
I like living The life of pleasure
Pausing only
To take my leisure!

I like songs! I like dance!
I hear music and I'm in a trance.
Tra-la-la! Oom-pa-pah!
Chances are
I shall get up and prance.
Where there's music and laughter,
Happiness is rife!

Scrooge Why?

Company Because I like life!

The Company bow

They present the orchestra

The Company bow

Scrooge, Ghosts of Christmas Past and Present, and Marley step forward

Scrooge steps forward

The Company all join hands and sing:

No. 24a: Thank You Very Much (Reprise)

Company Thank you very, very, very much!
Thank you very, very, very much!

The Company exit to the wings

Scrooge, The Ghost of Christmas Present and Marley link arms and exit upstage, dancing

No. 25: Payout

THE END