

**TIDIED-UP VERSION 3 Nov**

# A PANTOMIME A CHRISTMAS CAROL

In (your village/town name)

From the book 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens  
Loosley adapted for performing in workhouses and lunatic asylums  
by Alistair Clinton



## SONGS/MUSIC

Songs/Music are suggested only. It is the responsibility of groups performing this script to obtain any necessary licenses for songs/music they intend to use and should contact The Performing Rights Society

<http://www.mcps-prs-alliance.co.uk>

## Characters:

(In order of appearance)

Costumes – General Victorian dress (except Fezziweg party who are 1970's/80's)

### 20 Principals + Carol Singers (Some doubling required)

CAROL SINGERS	Group of carol singers adults/juniors who can double for many of the characters below.
CHARLES DICKENS	The great author as pompous Panto narrator, he loves telling bad jokes
YOUNG CAROL SINGER (with bucket)	Cute youngster who offers bucket for Scrooge to make a donation
MRS SLAPAN & MRS TICKLE	Two comic older W.I. ladies, ideal as dames, they have completed many courses incl. first aid & self defense. Fund raising for the needy at Christmas.
FRED	Scrooge's likeable nephew who insists on asking Scrooge to Christmas dinner every year.
MARLEYS GHOST	Marley is a comic character and not scary at all. In life he was none too bright and death has not changed this as he is still only a trainee ghost. If you have seen the cartoon 'hair bear bunch' Marley is 'Botch'.
THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST	1960's/1970's type 'Groovy' character. A good basis is 'Austin Powers' complete with velvet jacket and shirt with frilly cuffs etc. He shows Scrooge 1970's/80's style Christmas's Past
FEZZIWEG	Comic and fun hippy character, Nicknamed 'Disco Fever' because Fezziweg is a real 1970's disco dancing party animal, dressed in the best the era had to offer. Costume/manner could be based on Gee Bees and/or a ridiculous afro wig.
FEZZIWEG PARTY PEOPLE (Can double)	Comic assorted Christmas party office people dressed in the best (worst) the 1970's had to offer, kipper ties, afros, flairs, loud flower power colours. Although they look ridiculous (by modern standards) the 1970's disco dance routine with Fezziweg MUST be very slick.
YOUNG SCROOGE (Can double)	Scrooge as a young man, very serious and becoming obsessed with money.
BELLE (Can double)	A young woman who loves Scrooge.
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT	A big jolly roly poly character full of the joys of Christmas spirit, dressed as per the book.
MRS CRATCHET (Can double)	Hardworking housewife who hates Scrooge.
EMMA & GEMMA CRATCHET (Can double)	Two squabbling young teenagers
TINY TIM	Comic character, ideal cameo (only has one line to repeat) for a well known local adult playing the sickly child
SANDRA (Can double)	Fred's wife, well meaning dumb blonde/Paris Hilton type character, who can't cook toast.
MR & MRS SMITHERS (Can double)	Rather pompous upper class Victorian couple, Christmas guests of Fred & Sandra.
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME	Non speaking part. Rather spooky totally shrouded figure (the face is never seen) who just points. Can use a fake/joke arm for comedy.
FUNERAL PALL BEARERS (Can double)	Four cheeky 'Victorian cockney' type characters that carry Scrooge's coffin to the cemetery.
BOY IN STREET (Can double)	A passing Victorian street urchin who sounds remarkably like a modern teenager.
MR. DOUGHTY (Can double)	Victorian butcher with prize turkey who is fetched by boy.

## **SCENES**

All the scenes are a generic 'Victorian' building with no requirement for major scene changes; characters bring on/take off appropriate props for scene.

### **Scene 1 The Offices of Scrooge & Marley.**

Introducing Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge.

Carol singers should be located to imply they are singing outside the offices, so if space permits, off stage. Scrooge's entry requires he walks past the carol singers, (for exchange over bucket) so needs to enter so as to walk past them (or at least so the boy or girl with collection bucket can get to him).

On stage right is a desk and chair for Scrooge and a small desk and chair for Cratchet stage left. Cratchet's scarf hung on a wall somewhere to collect later in the scene.

Towards the end of the scene end Scrooge has to 'get into bed'. This can either be Cratchet bringing on a mattress, a fold out bed from the scenery. What has worked well for comedy and space saving, is Scrooge standing against a back wall and Cratchet puts a blanket round him (via hooks on the wall) for 'tucking him into bed. Standing upright makes it easy for Scrooge to speak to audience from 'bed' and the blanket hooks make it easy for him to 'get out of bed' and back again. If space is limited, during making Scrooge ready for 'bed' Cratchet can pass off stage his & Scrooge's desks/chairs.

### **Scene 2 Marley's Ghost**

His ghostly comic former business partner comes to visit, stereotypical Panto ghost with sheet over actor (and some chains/padlocks) but does need to be able to reveal face later on in scene.

### **Scene 3 The Ghost of Christmas Past**

The Ghost of Christmas Past visits for some slapstick with custard pies. The bigger & more spectacular the better (shaving foam works well). For the mess Scrooge can be wearing multiple nightgowns i.e. strips off top one and use as towel with another 'fresh' nightgown worn underneath. For comic effect each one underneath can be more outlandish e.g. final nightgown a fluffy pink one. Otherwise there is time for Scrooge to be thrown a towel for cleaning up.

### **Scene 4 Fezziwigs Party**

A lot depends on space available and cast numbers, this is a big excuse for a 1970-80's style party, complete with the best of the 70's clothes/hair styles (flairs/afros/kipper ties etc). Fezziweg himself should look like one of the Bee Gees or have an 'afro' wig ideally 2 others of the party people will make up 'the Bee Gees' and a comic (but well rehearsed) 70's style disco dance routine with all on stage to e.g. 'Stay'n Alive' complete with disco flashing lights etc.

### **Scene 5 Belle**

Scrooge sees himself as a young man 'well groomed and handsome' and his lost love Belle.

### **Scene 6. The Ghost of Christmas Present.**

Another slapstick pie in the face and a fake snake.

### **Scene 7. The Cratchet's House**

Scrooge sees the full effect of his 'Santa Clause' on the Cratchets.

The Cratchets bring on their table and chairs etc (which after the scene are left on for Fred's House scene).

### **Scene 8 Nephew Fred's House**

Scrooge sees how Fred cope's with Sandra's awful cooking.

### **Scene 9. The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come.**

Comic knees knocking build up for the appearance of the spooky apparition, who shows Scrooge the future.

### **Scene 10 Funeral Procession**

Pall bearers bring on a coffin. But who lies within?

Cockney style dance routine to 'thankyou very much'.

### **Scene 11 Christmas Day**

A passing urchin shows Scrooge how the youth of today think.

### **Scene 12 Donating to the Needy.**

Scrooge makes a donation to the ladies of the WI.

### **Scene 13 Another day at the Office**

Scrooge has learned many things, but patience isn't one of them.

## **Suggested Songs/Music**

**Scene 1** Carol singing e.g. Silent Night and a ballad by Jimmy Dean 'Big Bad John' with adapted lyrics (see back of script) If your not familiar with the song it can probably be heard on the internet. Works well if Dickens's adopts an American accent/line dancing manner. During the song Scrooge is 'controlled' by the song i.e. to make comic actions according to lyrics, e.g stoops for being small, bloats out hands for being 845lbs, hand on hip in camp fashion other arm out like teapot for 'wearing Mother's stuff' etc.

**Scene 2** –Optional song for Scrooge & Marley to sing to 'These are a few of my favourite things' from the film 'The Sound of Music' with adapted lyrics (See back of script).

**Scene 4 – Fezziwigs Party.** Major song and comic 'disco dance' routine. Fezziwigs party is represented as a 1970's/1980's office party singing and dancing a disco hit e.g. Bee Gees 'Stayin Alive' or 'Night Fever'.

**Scene 10 – Funeral Procession.** Short piece of 'The Death March' for entrance of actual procession.

Pall bearers sing tune 'Ding dong the witch is dead' (from Wizard of Oz film) with adapted lyrics e.g. Ding dong the mean old git is dead (or mean old Scrooge is dead).

Excerpt of song from 'Scaffold' 'Thank you very much for the Aintree Iron" adapt lyrics 'Thank you very much for dropping down dead" etc.

**Scene 13. – Another day at the office** – Final song is a good excuse for Fezziweg and the 70's disco people to come on and do a final 70's/80's pop Christmas song. E.g. 'Slade' – 'It's Christmas'.

## Scene 1 – The Offices of Scrooge & Marley

~~CURTAINS CLOSED. CAROL SINGERS ARE OUT FRONT CAROL SINGING UNTIL DICKENS ENTERS~~

### TIDIED-UP VERSION 3 Nov

#### OPENING NUMBER – FULL CAST – PRE-RECORDED & EDITED VIDEO

ENTER Charles Dickens with Story Book

**NEED TO DECIDE WHETHER OTHER CAST MEMBERS CALL OUT AUDIENCE RESPONSES, OR IF HE JUST LEAVES A PAUSE, LOOKS DIRECTLY INTO CAMERA AND CUPS HIS HAND TO HIS EAR, AS IF HEARING THE INVISIBLE AUDIENCE. OR AUDIENCE INTERACTION GETS DROPPED ALTOGETHER:**

**DICKENS** – Hello ladies & gentlemen, boys & girls. Thank you for logging in to this festive social. I promise it won't be all Zoom and Gloom (*chuckles at own joke*), though there will be some scary moments. Mainly when the internet freezes. My name is Charles Dickens, but you can call me Charlie. Whenever I walk on, will you shout Hello Charlie? Shall we try that ? (*get audience to shout 'hello Charlie'*). Do you want to hear some of my jokes? (*Audience response*) What do you call a dinosaur with only one eye? (*Do-you-think-he-saurus*). Here's another one. What do you call a reindeer with no eyes? (*No-eyed-deer*). They don't get any better I'm afraid. I also write stories. Would you like to hear one? (*Audience response*) (*Consults book*) Very well, I shall begin.

Our story happened in the socially distant past, here in the village of Chiswickia. Victoria was Queen of England, so it was called Victorian Times. Whereas at the moment, life is hard, so we could call it Hard Times – hey – that would be a good title for a book! Anyway, it was Christmas Eve and the snow on Dukes Meadows was whitest white, the sky was bluest blue and London Pride was owned by Londoners (**OR you could drive down Turnham Green Terrace**). People were bustling about in the village preparing for Christmas Day. Carol singers were outside the offices of Scrooge & Marley.

PERHAPS PLAY-IN RECORDING OF A COUPLE OF LINES OF CAROL SINGING WHILE WE SEE SCROOGE AND YOUNG CAROL SINGER APPEAR

**DICKENS** - Marley was dead ! Dead as a door nail. Dead as a dodo. Dead as the Brexit deal with the EU (*update at time of performance*). I want it to be very clear that Marley was dead. If he wasn't dead, well he is now..... because they buried him seven years ago this very day. Scrooge never painted out Marley's name on their business sign 'Scrooge & Marley'. Paint cost money and Scrooge was mean and nasty. He only cared about making money.

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** (*Sings last line of carol*).

**SCROOGE** Humbug !

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** Merry Christmas sir (*proffers bucket for Scrooge to make a donation – Scrooge takes bucket & puts it down in his space*)

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** Please sir, please sir, that's the money people have donated for rebuilding the Gunnersbury Park café .

**SCROOGE** (*Angrily*) Do you want to be sued for breach of contract?

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** (*confused*) Pardon sir? Indeed not sir, that's our bucket sir.

**SCROOGE** You offered me this bucket did you not ?

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** Yes sir, to put money in for.....

**SCROOGE** (*Interrupting*) I accepted this bucket as offered, did I not ?

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** Yes sir, but it's our.....

**SCROOGE** (*Interrupting*) Do you know what that is ?

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** Stealing?

**SCROOGE** No! (*Nasty*) It's a contract, a legally binding contract. Are you trying to break that contract? If so I'll sue you for every penny of your pocket money from now until eternity! Is that what you want? Coz that's what will happen !

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** (*Scared*) No sir, indeed not sir.

**SCROOGE** Good! Have you a licence for carol singing outside your support bubble?

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** (*Alarmed*) A license sir? Do we need a licence for carol singing, sir?

**SCROOGE** If I know the government, you do. I bet you don't have a health & safety policy, a risk assessment, or insurance, do you?

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** (*thoroughly intimidated*) A health & safety policy, sir? A risky-sessment, sir? Insurance, sir? No sir. We didn't know we needed them, sir-

**SCROOGE** Carol singing outside your support bubble without a licence or insurance or a health & safety policy - that's a minimum of twenty years' hard labour. (*Nasty*) Do you want twenty years in prison boy? Is that what you want? Coz that's what will happen !

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** No sir!

**SCROOGE** Well if you're still here in two seconds that's what will happen, so get out of it!

**YOUNG CAROL SINGER** Yes sir! No sir! Thank you sir. (*EXITS HURRIEDLY*)

**DICKENS** As you might have guessed, Scrooge was cruel, miserly and .... well .... a mean old Scrooge.

~~**CAROL SINGERS** (*sing*) 'Mean Scrooge'~~

~~**DICKENS** And Scrooge was bad!~~

~~**CAROL SINGERS** (*sing*) Mean Bad Scrooge~~

~~**DICKENS SONG** — Mean Bad Scrooge (To Jimmy Dean Song — 'Big Bad John' see end of script for adjusted lyrics) Carol singers do chorus. Scrooge can act out descriptions in verses~~

**SCROOGE** (*To Dickens*) Who are you ? And what's your business here?

**DICKENS** (*Surprised*) Why I'm Charles Dickens. (*Pompous*) You know, Dickens the Great Victorian Writer (*as if Scrooge should know!*)

**SCROOGE** This is private property. You're trespassing, get out!

**DICKENS** No you don't understand, I'm the narrator, I explain the story to the audience.

**SCROOGE** If you're not off these premises in five seconds I'll have you arrested for trespass! Is that what you want? Coz that's what will happen! Get out!

**DICKENS** (*to Audience*) I'll be back ! (*EXIT DICKENS*)

**SCROOGE** (*Chuckling gleefully*) Well it's not looking a bad day so far (*shakes carol singer's bucket*)

**SCROOGE** (*To camera/audience*) What are you lot gawping at? What do you think this is, some sort of show? (*Furious shout*) Cratchet! Bob Cratchet, you had better appear if you value your situation!

**CRATCHET** (*Enter, hurrying*) Here, sir!

**SCROOGE** What's all this riff raff doing on my premises? (*gestures towards camera/audience*)

**CRATCHET** They're here to watch a panto on Zoom, sir!

**SCROOGE** Zoom? Zoom! Are there no theatres? Are there no cinemas? Is the St Michael's Centre not in operation?

**CRATCHET** They are in full operation, sir. (*Amend according to lockdown level at the time*)

**SCROOGE** Then remove these participants from the meeting.

**CRATCHET** Indeed sir, many want to go and several children have tried to log out already.

**SCROOGE** Then why are they still connected?

**CRATCHET** Their parents have paid [*WILL PEOPLE BE PAYING?*] and desperately want something to keep them quiet for a while, sir.

**SCROOGE** (*Incredulous to Cratchet*) So this rabble paid money to be here?

**CRATCHET** Indeed sir.

**SCROOGE** How much? (*Cratchet whispers in Scrooge's ear*) As much as that?

**CRATCHET** Yes sir.

**SCROOGE** None too bright are they! That gives me an idea, do we still have those chocolate mice out back?

**CRATCHET** The ones you bought cheap from the chocolate factory, sir?

**SCROOGE** That's right, the ones made from real mice, which fell into the chocolate vats and drowned!

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir.

**SCROOGE** After the show, put them up for sale on Facebook Marketplace, see if you can offload a few.

**CRATCHET** Is that wise, sir? They might make people sick!

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) Oh dear! What a shame! A shilling each. Tell 'em they'll be permanently unfriended unless they buy one!

**CRATCHET** As you wish sir.

**SCROOGE** (*Gleefully*) Yes, it's looking to be a profitable day. Speaking of profit, how's that house I sold you Cratchet? Still falling down?

**CRATCHET** Yes sir, still the same as when you sold it to me. Mould on the walls from rising damp and the leaking roof, which gives Tiny Tim terrible allergies.

**SCROOGE** Yes that was one of my best sales! Tell me, why haven't you repaired it?

**CRATCHET** Must we go through this, sir? You ask the same every year.

**SCROOGE** Yes and I love hearing it every year! Tell me again why you can't repair your house.

**CRATCHET** Because on my salary and the mortgage you sold me I can't afford to.

**SCROOGE** The small print on that mortgage was some of my best work. Tell me when you will have paid it all off.

**CRATCHET** If my wages stay the same, twenty ninety-nine sir.

**SCROOGE** Twenty ninety-nine! Twenty ninety-nine (*evil laugh*). I called that clause in the mortgage the 'Santa Claus'. Do you know why? (*to Audience*) Because it means Christmas is cancelled.

**CRATCHET** About my wages sir, could I have a pay rise? My salary hasn't changed since eighteen sixty-five.

**SCROOGE** (*ANGRY*) Oh that's it, you had to spoil it didn't you. Asking for a pay rise - how can you be so selfish and thoughtless Cratchet?! I was in such a good mood too.

**CRATCHET** I'm sorry sir.

**SCROOGE** Don't forget, Cratchet, I continued to pay you twenty percent all through lockdown.

**CRATCHET** Yes, but I came into work full time and you kept the government grant, sir.

**SCROOGE** So you think I'm made of money?

**CRATCHET** You are the richest man in Chiswickia. Even richer than Colin Firth.\* (*\*any better candidates?*)

**SCROOGE** We'll review the situation in another year.

**CRATCHET** But sir. That's what you say every year !

**SCROOGE** Well then you should be used to it! Or would you rather be ...(*shout*)...unemployed !!!

**CRATCHET** No sir, indeed not sir.

**SCROOGE** So. Have you completed the costings for the new 30-storey towerblock on Elmwood Road?

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir.

**SCROOGE** And where are the eviction notices for today?

**CRATCHET** On your desk, sir.

**SCROOGE** (*Starts stamping E notices*) Get the eviction notices for tomorrow. I'll stamp them as well.

**CRATCHET** But tomorrow is Christmas sir, you can't throw people out of their homes on Christmas day!

**SCROOGE** Oh yes I can. (*Audience response*)

**CRATCHET** The bailiffs will charge four times the normal rate for Christmas, sir.

**SCROOGE** Four times! Four times! Those thieving B.B.B.B.... B.... Bailiffs. All right I'll stamp them for January, get them for me.

**CRATCHET** Yes sir. (*Passes heap of papers to Scrooge – Scrooge sits happily stamping muttering 'Evicted' each time*)

ENTER SLAPAN & TICKLE

**CRATCHET** (*Clocks them*) Good morning ladies, and a Merry Christmas to you.

**SLAPAN** Oh young man!

**TICKLE** Young man !

**SLAPAN** Merry Christmas young man.

**TICKLE** Merry Christmas young man!

**CRATCHET** What can I do for you, ladies?

**TICKLE** I am Mrs. Tina Tickle and this is .....

**SLAPAN** Mrs. Sally Slapan.

**TICKLE** We're from the WI.

**SLAPAN** Women's Institute!

**TICKLE** We are fund raising.

**SLAPAN** For the local food bank at Christmas.

**TICKLE** We're here to see Mr. Scrooge, young man!

**SLAPAN** To see if he would like to make a donation for the food bank, young man!

**CRATCHET** That's Mr. Scrooge over there but I don't think he'll ... *(interrupted by Slapan)*

**SLAPAN** Thank you, young man!

**TICKLE** Merry Christmas Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE** *(Genial)* Hello ladies, what can I sell you? I have some vastly over priced writing tablets, just in from the Far East.

**SLAPAN** China?

**SCROOGE** No, Brick Lane.

**TICKLE** We're not here for fancy devices Mr. Scrooge!

**SCROOGE** Well ladies, I have some of those excellent new wristwatches, studded with simulated 24 carat diamonique diamonds, made from glass and finest gold from old English brass.

**SLAPAN** No Mr. Scrooge, we're not here for jewelry!

**TICKLE** We're here fund raising for the poor and needy at Christmas.

**SLAPAN** For you to donate money!

*(Scrooge Clutches chest and collapses back onto seat. Slapan & Tickle make fanning gestures in his direction)*

**SLAPAN** Mr. Scrooge, Mr. Scrooge, are you all right?

**TICKLE** *(To Slapan)* Shall I give him mouth to mouth resuscitation dear ?

**SLAPAN** I think it's his only hope dear, and you are a trained first aider.

*(Tickle leans over, lips puckered, to give mouth to mouth. Scrooge suddenly recovers and sits up)*

**SCROOGE** No that won't be necessary! I just thought you said you wanted me to give money!

**SLAPAN** We did, Mr. Scrooge.

*(Scrooge collapses again in shock. Slapan & Tickle resume fanning)*

**SLAPAN** You'll have to use the resuscitator dear, have you got it?

**TICKLE** Yes, dear. *(Pulls out plunger and applies plunger to Scrooge's face. Scrooge holds plunger to his own face while the WI ladies pull back and forth as Fred speaks to Cratchet)*

*(If the plunger is too reminiscent of ICU ventilator images, the ladies can instead offer smelling salts, in the form of a jar of Marmite)*

**ENTER FRED**

**FRED** Merry Christmas, Bob Cratchet, to you and your fine family.

**CRATCHET** Merry Christmas, Mr. Fred sir.

**FRED** *(Catching sight of WI ladies)* I say, what's old Uncle Ebenezer up to?

**CRATCHET** Oh it's some Slapan Tickle ladies from the WI.

**FRED** A bit of slap and tickle heh? Didn't know uncle Ebenezer had it in him.

**CRATCHET** No sir, you don't understand, the ladies are fund raising,



**FRED** What - the WI using slap and tickle for fund raising?! How novel! I say, you've got to hand it to the old WI, they'll try anything for a good cause. Next thing will be a cheeky calendar!.Seeing as it's Christmas, I'll make a donation for a bit of slap and tickle, soon as they're finished with Uncle Ebenezer!.... Don't tell my wife, will you Bob?

**CRATCHET** No sir, it's not like that, you see .....(interrupted)

**SCROOGE** Get off me, you do-gooders! Urgh disgusting! Do-gooders! I hate do-gooders!

**SLAPAN** How much money will you donate Mr. Scrooge?

**SCROOGE** What?

**TICKLE** How much shall we put you down for Mr. Scrooge?!

**SCROOGE** Nothing!

**SLAPAN** You wish to remain anonymous?

**SCROOGE** I wish to be left alone!

**TICKLE** But Mr. Scrooge, we are collecting for the poor and needy, surely you'll donate something.

**SCROOGE** Are there no prisons?

**SLAPAN** Plenty of prisons Mr. Scrooge, but they're already overcrowded.

**SCROOGE** Is the workhouse not in operation?

**TICKLE** Unfortunately in full operation Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE** Then let them go to the workhouse.

**SLAPAN** Many would rather die than go to the workhouse, Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE** (*Evil*) Then let them die and decrease the surplus population.

**TICKLE** You can't mean that Mr. Scrooge?

**SCROOGE** Oh yes I can! (*Audience response*)

**SCROOGE** And furthermore, every idiot with Merry Christmas on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding and used as stuffing for his own turkey.

**SLAPAN** Well really!

**TICKLE** Mr. Scrooge, what a horrible man you are!

**SCROOGE** Thank you! Now ladies, I'm very busy evicting people so I bid you good day!

**TICKLE** Good day. (*The ladies turn to Exit*)

**FRED** Ladies, I'd like some slap and tickle, I'll pay a whole sixpence for a big kissy wissy.

(FRED CLOSSES EYES BENTS FORWARD AND PUCKERS UP LIPS FOR KISS)

**TICKLE** (*Excited*) It's an assault situation dear. You've done the self defence course, use the willow leaf palm, ~~erane~~ dear!

**SLAPAN** (*Does some kung fu moves as per Bruce Lee with appropriate sound effects first then adopts 'willow leaf palm\*' position, holding palm out in front of her before changing arm to 'hit' Fred, who, in slapstick manner jerks backwards*)  
[\*SEE <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5JB5Xve9T4>]

**TICKLE** Good shot dear! That'll teach him to mess with the WI!

(*Both bow in martial arts manner towards Fred*)

**SLAPAN** Aaah so! (*Alarmed reaching about her person*) Oh no!

**TICKLE** What's the matter dear!

**SLAPAN** Think I over extended myself dear, bra elastic has gone. (*Does something comical with bra*)

**TICKLE** Best we retire to the Ladies to repair the damage dear. (EXIT SLAPAN & TICKLE)

**CRATCHET** Mr. Fred! Are you alright sir?

**FRED** (*Recovering from the blow*) Wasn't sixpence enough? Do you think I should have offered them a shilling?

**CRATCHET** I wouldn't like to say, sir!

**SCROOGE** (*Muttering stamping eviction notices*) Do-gooders, bah humbug. If I get one more idiot saying Merry Christmas I'll scream.

**FRED** Merry Christmas Uncle Ebenezer.

**SCROOGE** (*Scream*) Oh no! Another do-gooder! Humbug, humbug, humbug!

**FRED** Oh come come, uncle. Christmas? Humbug? You can't mean that can you?

**SCROOGE** Oh yes I can. (*Audience response*)

**FRED** Oh don't be cross, uncle.

**SCROOGE** If I have to listen to fools like you bleating on about Christmas, no wonder I'm cross. It's a time for finding yourself a year older and not an hour richer. You keep Christmas in your own way and let me keep it in mine.

**FRED** But you don't keep Christmas, uncle.

**SCROOGE** Let me leave it alone then! Merry Christmas? What have you got to be merry about, you're poor enough?

**FRED** What have you got to be nasty about, you're rich enough?

(*Applause from Bob Cratchet*)

**SCROOGE** (*To Cratchet*) Enough from you sir, unless you want to be unemployed! Is that what you want? Coz that's what'll happen. (*To Fred*) I like being nasty, I like being horrible and I like throwing people out of their homes!

**FRED** Oh come uncle, you can't enjoy evicting people from their homes.

**SCROOGE** That's my business. What do you want, I'm busy?

**FRED** Uncle, I've come to invite you to dinner with my wife and me on Christmas day.

**SCROOGE** You nitwit! You invite me every year.

**FRED** And every year you say No because you do not wish to celebrate Christmas.

**SCROOGE** No, you idiot, it's because your wife can't cook toast! I wouldn't turn down a free meal, even if it meant having to listen to a couple of boring twits\* like you and your wife. [*\* what's a more contemporary alternative to 'twit'?*]

**FRED** Oh uncle, that is not true!

**SCROOGE.** What, that you're a couple of twits\*?

**FRED** No uncle, that my dear wife's cooking is that bad! She tries so hard to cook cordon bleu.

**SCROOGE** (*To audience*) Her cooking should be cordoned off. (*To Fred*) You have false teeth don't you?

(*The lines below relating to the omelette need to be rapid*)

**FRED** Well yes.

**SCROOGE** You have had false teeth since your wedding day.

**FRED** Well yes.

**SCROOGE** Because your teeth suddenly fell out after eating an omelette.

**FRED** Well yes.

**SCROOGE** Who cooked the omelette?

**FRED** I can't remember.

**SCROOGE** Who cooked the omelette?

**FRED** It wasn't her fault.

**SCROOGE** Who cooked the omelette?

**FRED** She tries so very hard to cook well.

**SCROOGE** Who cooked the omelette?

**FRED** My wife.

**SCROOGE** It would be easier to eat a slab of tarmac than anything cooked by your wife. Every year you invite me because no one else will risk your wife's concrete turkey, with sage and charcoal stuffing, roast pebbles and burnt granite vegetables. (*To audience*) She baked a cake once and Rentokil bought the recipe.

**FRED** We have never had a quarrel, uncle, to which I have been party.

**SCROOGE** That's because you're too dumb to realize you're being insulted!

**FRED** So I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, (*STARTS TO EXIT*) and Merry Christmas to you, Bob Cratchet.

**CRATCHET** Merry Christmas, sir.

**FRED** Would you like to come to Christmas dinner, Bob?

**CRATCHET** Me! Oh err, thank you sir, I would love to but, err, I have other arrangements and I can't afford new teeth.

**FRED** Well let me know if you change your mind. Good night.

**CRATCHET** Good night sir. EXIT FRED

**SCROOGE** Humbug!

**CRATCHET** Begging your pardon sir, it is closing time.

**SCROOGE** You want all day off tomorrow I suppose?

**CRATCHET** If quite convenient, sir.

**SCROOGE** It is not quite convenient. I have to pay you a day's pay when you're not here - it's not fair!

**CRATCHET** Tis but once a year on Christmas day, sir.

**SCROOGE** Humbug! A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every 25<sup>th</sup> of December. Make sure you are here the earlier the next day.

**CRATCHET** Very good sir, thank you sir. Will you be going to bed now, sir?

**SCROOGE** Yes.

*(Scrooge strips off his jacket revealing a 'loud' night gown and dons sleeping cap. He pulls a bed cover over himself.)*

**SCROOGE** Where's Ted-Ted?

**CRATCHET** Here he is sir. *(Hands Scrooge Teddy bear which Scrooge cuddles)* And here's today's Metro, sir. *(Hands Scrooge newspaper)*

**SCROOGE** You're sure it's still free?

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir. Shall I turn down the lights, sir?

**SCROOGE** Yes.

**CRATCHET.** Good night, sir. *(LIGHTS DOWN to solitary candle with Scrooge in Bed)*

EXIT CRATCHET

*(Scrooge reads paper. Bells begin to sound, heavy footsteps, eerie music to build tension – Scrooge becomes more & more scared )*

ENTER BOB CRATCHET, IN A HURRY. LIGHTS COME ON

**CRATCHET** I'm ever so sorry Mr. Scrooge, I forgot my scarf. I rang the bell but you didn't answer *(grabs scarf and dashes off again).*

LIGHTS GO DOWN TO SCROOGE'S CANDLE

## Scene 2 – Marley's Ghost

**SCROOGE** *(Talking to teddy)* That stupid Cratchet nearly frightened the life out of me Ted-Ted! If he wasn't so cheap I'd sack him.

SOUND OF BELLS / FEET / EERIE MUSIC AS BEFORE

**SCROOGE** *(Annoyed)* That idiot Cratchet, what's he forgotten this time. I'll give him what for! *(Throws off bed cover)*

LIGHTS GO UP - ENTER MARLEY'S GHOST – SCROOGE SEES MARLEY  
*(Marley is totally covered by white sheet/shroud so face obscured)*

**MARLEY** Ghostly wail, wooo, wooo, woo, umm, rattle chains, *(rattles chains)*, ghostly wail, woo woo.

**SCROOGE** *(Not scared at all)* Don't you woo woo like that, or you'll woo woo in a different tone altogether. Is that what you want? Coz that's what'll happen!

**MARLEY** *(Surprised)* Aren't you scared ?

**SCROOGE** Scared? What of? Some great marshmallow dressed as a padlock & chains!

**MARLEY** I'm a ghost - look, woo woo, *(rattles chains)*. I'm a ghostly spectre. I walk through screens and vanish into thin air, um woo woo, rattle chains *(rattles chains)*.

**SCROOGE** Go on then.

**MARLEY** Go on then what?

**SCROOGE** Walk thru that screen. (*Points into camera*)

**MARLEY** (*defensive*) No, I don't have to.

**SCROOGE** (*Sneering*) You can't can you? You can't walk through screens, you're a deepfake video.

**MARLEY** I am too real a ghost. Look - I've got the costume, the chains and everything!

**SCROOGE** You're no more a ghost than I am!

**MARLEY** I am! I am too! I could walk through that screen if I wanted too. (*Uncertain*) I just don't want too.

**SCROOGE** Oh no you can't!

**MARLEY** Oh yes I can. (*Audience response*)

**SCROOGE** See! You're a cheap deepfake, otherwise you'd walk through the screen.

**MARLEY** All right. I will. (*He moves his face closer and closer to his camera till his nose touches it and he bounces back*)  
Ouch, ooh dat ert die doze.

**SCROOGE** Fine ghost you are!

**MARLEY** I'm only an unpaid intern. This is my first assignment. I haven't got my walking thru screens badge yet.

**SCROOGE** (*to audience*) Typical of this panto, getting a learner to save money!

**MARLEY** (*Unhappy*) They said it would be easy and I wouldn't have to do nuffing scary.

**SCROOGE** Who said?

**MARLEY** Them down there (*points to floor*).

**SCROOGE** You're from the Zoom Help Centre?

**MARLEY** No silly! I've come from that place of fire and brimstone where those doomed to an eternity of suffering walk howling in despair.

**SCROOGE** (*Deadpan*) Oh, you're from Acton!

**MARLEY** Have a care Mr. Scrooge this is not a joking mater.

**SCROOGE** Who's joking! How do you know my name? Who are you?

**MARLEY** In life I was your business partner. (*Reveals face*) Coo eee! Look, it's me Mr. Scrooge, Jacob Marley.

**SCROOGE** Marley? Thick as a plank Marley? Is that you? What have you done to yourself? Just a minute! We'll make a fortune! (*Excitedly*) We'll sue the doctor who certified you were dead, the coroner, the undertaker, the embalmer and the vicar who performed the burial service! The grave diggers too! Where there's blame there's a claim!!! We'll make millions!

**MARLEY** I'm sorry Mr. Scrooge, you always said I was brain dead, well I'm all dead now. I am a ghost.

**SCROOGE** Oh let's not quibble over minor things to make a claim. Marley, why are you wearing all those chains? I didn't know you went in for that sort of thing?

**MARLEY** These are the chains I forged in life, Mr. Scrooge. Every time I was nasty or horrible to another person - (*accusing*) which you made me do -- a new link in the chain was made. Your chain was as big and long as this a full seven years ago Mr. Scrooge! You must have worked very hard being nasty since, coz it's massive now!

**SCROOGE** (*looks down looking for chain*) What chains? I don't see any chain?

**MARLEY** Oh it's there Mr. Scrooge an' with your last breath it will drag you down, 'n' down, 'n' down, to that place where those doomed for an eternity of suffering walk, howling in despair.

**SCROOGE** Well as long as it's not Acton I don't mind!

**MARLEY** Have a care Mr. Scrooge, or you will share my fate. As a ghost I can't help people no more. All the bad things I did when I was alive - (*accusing*) which you made me do! - means I'm doomed to walk the earth powerless to help those in need. I am here to give you warning Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE** Warning? Warning of what?

**MARLEY** Stop being nasty or else!

**SCROOGE** Stop being nasty! But I like being nasty. So did you Marley! Don't you remember what we used to get up to first thing every day?

**SONG** – To the tune of ‘What shall we do with the drunken sailor?’. Marley and Scrooge sing alternate lines, a capella, with vicious glee.

**MARLEY** What shall we say to Duncan the bailiff?

**SCROOGE** Tell him he must seize the ramp and stairlift.

**MARLEY** We took everything that they once owned and shared it

**SCROOGE** Early every morning.

**MARLEY** Sky high the interest rises

**SCROOGE** Bye bye to compromises

**MARLEY** Oh my, we sprung surprises

**SCROOGE** Early every morning.

**SCROOGE** What do you mean ‘Stop being nasty – or else?’

**MARLEY** Three spirits will visit you tonight to explain the ‘or else’ Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE** Three spirits? What, brandy, whisky and gin!

**MARLEY** The first will visit as the clock tolls midnight. The second as the clock tolls one. The third is a funny bugger(fellow?) and will come in a time of his own choosing.

**SCROOGE** Do I get a discount if I see all three at once – buy two get one free?

**MARLEY** You always were a clever businessman Mr. Scrooge, but that will be your doom.

**SCROOGE** But Jacob, how can making a profit be bad? I am a good business man. I have a fortune in gold.

**MARLEY** (*Pompous*) There is more to your busy-ness than gold Mr. Scrooge. There are things of far greater value.

**SCROOGE** What can be more valuable than gold?

**MARLEY** (*Pompous*) Compassion, tolerance and love, Mr. Scrooge. Caring about the happiness and welfare of others.

**SCROOGE** Get real! There’s no profit in that!

**MARLEY** (*Pompous*) Kind words when needed most are priceless, Mr. Scrooge. A simple act of kindness to another human being has greater value than any amount of gold. To see beyond the weaknesses and failings, which we all possess - ‘n’ you more than most - are treasures beyond measure. These are the riches of life, gems in our existence that shine brighter than any star.

**SCROOGE** Don’t start talking all mushy Marley, you’ll make me throw up!!

**MARLEY** (*Anxiously jiggling in his seat*) Oooh Oooh Mr. Scrooge, my time has finished and I must go.

**SCROOGE** What, back to that place of fire and brimstone where those doomed to an eternity of suffering walk howling in despair?

**MARLEY** No I need a wee wee. Good bye Mr. Scrooge. Change your ways or you are (*wailing*) doomed, doomed, doooooooooomed (*Tries to exit through screen by moving his face close to camera again, his nostrils filling the screen, but bumps nose again*) Ooh dat ert die nose again.

EXIT MARLEY

LIGHTS GO DOWN TO REPRESENT SCROOGE’S CANDLE.

**SCROOGE** Bah humbug, I’m dreaming! That’s what it is, I’m dreaming! Ghosts and visited by three spirits – humbug, humbug, humbug. I’d better get some sleep so I can wake up. (*To audience*) If you see any ghosts, will you shout and wake up me and Ted-Ted? (*audience response*) **SCROOGE** PULLS HIS BED COVER OVER HIM AGAIN AND BEGINS SNORING.  
CLOCK TOLLS TWELVE

### Scene 3 – The Ghost of Christmas Past

*Ghost of Xmas Past appears, waves arms spookily in Scrooge’s direction and vanishes.*

**IF GETTING OTHER CAST MEMBERS TO DO AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION, SOMEONE SHOUTS**

*“There’s a ghost! On your right/left/above you/below you!”*

Scrooge wakes up and makes comments to audience about “What ghost? Which way did he go?”

(*Moves out of frame R, then L, looks up/down following audience comments as to which way ghost went.*)

**OR, IF NO AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:** *The Ghost comes and goes, accompanied by spooky SOUND FX, and Scrooge simply comments “Did I see/hear another ghost on my left/right/[whatever]”, shakes head, tries to go back to sleep, then rouses himself again to wonder if he’s seen the ghost on his other side, looks, goes back to sleep etc etc*

*Eventually Scrooge wakes and sees ghost.*

**SCROOGE** Are you the spirit whose coming was foretold by that idiot Marley?

**XMAS PAST** Yeah baby! Oh yeah, I'm the mysterious ghostly man of mystery.

**SCROOGE** Who are you or what are you?

**XMAS PAST** I am the groovy Christmasdelic Ghost Of Christmas Past, baby!

**SCROOGE** If you're the Ghost of Christmas Past then I'm Tinkerbell!

**XMAS PAST** Oh wow! Lots of negative vibes! Don't you don't believe in me?

**SCROOGE** Of course not! Humbug! Humbug! Humbug!

**XMAS PAST** But I'm a really groovy pantodelic ghost! Why doubt your senses, baby?

**SCROOGE** (*Talking towards audience – so not watching ghost*) I don't believe my senses. It takes so little to affect them, like a tummy upset. No, there's more of gravy than grave about you, my ghostly friend. You might be some undigested chlorinated chicken, a piece of a Big Mac, a fragment of French fry, a bit of pizza .... (*Ghost is handed 'custard pie' from off stage*)

**XMAS PAST** Or a piece of really groovy custard pie, baby?

**SCROOGE** Or custard pie.

**XMAS PAST** SLAPS CUSTARD PIE INTO SCROOGE'S FACE

**SCROOGE** (*Wipes custard pie away*) What did you do that for?

**XMAS PAST** That was life in your face, baby! You need to chill man. Do you believe in me now or am I another bit of groovy custard pie? Or perhaps some cold spaghetti? How about undigested jellied eels, baby?

**SCROOGE** Yes, yes, yes alright - anything but jellied eels. I believe in you. Are you the Ghost of Christmases long Past?

**XMAS PAST** No just your past. Take my robe baby and we will see the awesome shadows of the Christmases you've had.  
(*Scrooge takes hold of the spirits robe*)

LIGHTS UP – POSSIBLE 70'S DISCO BACKGROUND MUSIC e.g. 'Do the Hustle'.

#### **SCENE 4 – FEZZIWEGS 1970'S DISCO CHRISTMAS PARTY**

ENTER MR. FEZZIWEG AND PARTY PEOPLE

(*They busy themselves adorning the scenery with decorations/tinsel for a party -  
eg one person hands a piece of tinsel or string of fairy lights to the person in the adjacent screen  
and it's stretched out between them. We watch this while party music plays*)

(*OR IF A SONG IS NEEDED WHILE THEY HANG DECORATIONS, GUESTS COULD SING A LINE EACH,  
UNACCOMPANIED, OF "Na na na na" "Do doo dee do-do" (as hilariously led by Chris and the 3 Little Pigs in a St Mike's  
panto some years ago!)*)

**XMAS PAST** Do you remember this man with a really cool taste in threads?

**SCROOGE** (*Surprised*) Why bless my soul, it's old Fezziweg! Fezziweg the Cracker! Remember him! He gave me my first job!

**XMAS PAST** Cool name baby. Why was he called the Cracker?

**SCROOGE** He was a great one for pulling and a bang. His Christmas parties were something to behold indeed. Those were happy days!

**FEZZIWEG** (*Clapping hands*) Come on gang, the quicker we get the decorations up the quicker we can have a groovy time.

WE SEE YOUNG SCROOGE SCRIBBLING IN LEDGER

**XMAS PAST** (*About Fezziweg*) Oh yeah baby, this cat's got a fab way of talking.

**FEZZIWEG** (*Admiring decorations*) Oh yeah! Fab!

**XMAS PAST** Yeah, fab, baby!

**FEZZIWEG** (*Admiring decorations*) That's really cosmic, way out, amazeatronic decor. (*catches sight of young Scrooge*). Ebenezer Scrooge, will you stop working!.It's time to party man. Hey dude, it's Christmas!

**YOUNG SCROOGE** Yes sir, I will only be a minute. I just want to double check outstanding debtors.

**SCROOGE** (*Pointing to young Scrooge*) Look, there's me as a young man! When I was young I was second to none, well groomed and handsome.

**XMAS PAST** Yeah man! Now look at you. You're second hand, none too well, and pretty gruesome, baby!

**FEZZIWEG** (*To party people*) Hurry everyone, let's hustle! Don't forget the Twister mat. It's Christmas and I want this to be our bestest party ever!

**SCROOGE** (*Wistful*) Old Fezziweg's parties were something special!

**XMAS PAST** Pretty amazing huh! When you think the guy only spent a few quid.

**SCROOGE** It wasn't the money, it was.....

**XMAS PAST** Not the money? Wow, but isn't money everything to you?

**SCROOGE** You don't understand. He had the power to make our lives hell if he chose, but he was fair and kind. On Christmas Eve he gave us heaven with his parties. They were famous.

**XMAS PAST** What about Bob Cratchet? Hey baby, you have the power to make his life heaven or hell! Were you firm but fair with your distinctly non groovy 'Santa Claus'? A poor excuse to pick a guy's pocket 365 days of the year, baby!

**SCROOGE** I admit I may have been a little harsh with Cratchet.

**XMAS PAST** Hey baby! I pity you for what you have lost. Look at the riches that generosity of spirit can bring, man. You are the poorest of the poor.

**SCROOGE** Don't pity me, I don't need your pity.

ENTER DICKENS WITH STORY BOOK (Audience Response)

**SCROOGE** Oh no! Not him again!

**DICKENS** (*To audience*) Hello boys and girls KNOCK KNOCK JOKE HERE ?

**SCROOGE** (*To Xmas Past*) What's he doing here? This is my dream!

**XMAS PAST** He's the narrator. He helps the audience understand the story. Shhh - listen and learn, baby.

**DICKENS** So the spirit showed Scrooge a Christmas of his own past to remind him how much fun it could be. That it did not depend on money or the size of presents, but being amongst friends and family with a generous dollop of Christmas spirit. Fezziweg's party was about to begin!

**FEZZIWEG** (*To audience*) Alright! Crackers a-ready? Lets party!

(EVERYONE AT THE PARTY PRODUCES A CRACKER. COMICAL SEQUENCE AS PARTY GUESTS PULL CRACKERS WITH EACH OTHER.)

~~SONG — FEZZIWEG/PARTY PEOPLE/DICKENS/GHOST ALL SING/DANCE TO ANY WELL KNOWN 1970's PARTY SONG e.g. e.g. Night Fever and parody of Gee Bees/70's party dancing — (Not young Scrooge who keeps nose in ledger)~~

**FEZZIWEG** Right, it's time to eat. Ebenezer Scrooge! Hey dude! Stop working man, it's just not cool, you dig? Come and enjoy the party, man!

**YOUNG SCROOGE** I will be along in just a minute, sir, I'm just calculating some compound interest.

EXIT FEZZIWEG & OTHER PARTY GOERS TO 70'S MUSIC (Leaving Young Scrooge with Ledger)

**DICKENS** Scrooge was to see his lost love. A young woman named Belle, to whom he was engaged to be married. But the more money Scrooge made, the less he wanted to spend it on marriage, or anything else that didn't make more money.

## Scene 5 - Belle

*Enter Belle*

**SCROOGE** (*wistful*) Why it's Belle!

**XMAS PAST** (*Admiring of Belle*) Oh ding, dong, she's scrum-diddly-upmtious!

**SCROOGE** (*Wistful*) My old flame Belle. I had forgotten after all these years how lovely she was.

**DICKENS** Scrooge had forgotten how lovely Belle was!

**SCROOGE** (*Irked*) That's what I just said!

**BELLE** Hello Ebenezer! I thought I'd find you here still working.

**YOUNG SCROOGE** (*Doesn't look up from ledger*) Mmmmm.

**BELLE** (*Shyly*) I thought tonight would be a good time to announce a date for our wedding. We have been engaged over two years now, we should set a date for our marriage.

**YOUNG SCROOGE** (*Nose still in ledger*) I can't afford a wedding yet, especially after the money you spent at Westfield yesterday. [*if open – otherwise "on Amazon" and she bought some Nespresso capsules*]

**BELLE** But I only had a coffee!

**YOUNG SCROOGE** But I had to pay for it!

**XMAS PAST** (*To audience*) Yeah those large latte's can be really pricey!

**YOUNG SCROOGE** We were only there for me to do business selling a consignment of genuine cubic zirconium rings to the shops.

**DICKENS** As always Scrooge could only see business and making a profit.

**BELLE** Oh Ebenezer! I don't care about business. I love you!

**XMAS PAST** (*Directed at Belle*) Yeah baby! Go for it girl!

**BELLE** Can't we just set a wedding date and make the best of it? Money isn't everything.

**YOUNG SCROOGE** No it isn't everything, but it is most things, and marriage is a very expensive undertaking.

**BELLE** But Ebenezer, money can't buy love and we have love, don't we?

**YOUNG SCROOGE** (*Curt, Nose in ledger*) I do not have the finances to justify our marriage as yet.

**XMAS PAST** (*To Scrooge*) Oh wow! That was so unromantic, baby. Were you really so strapped for cash?

**SCROOGE** (*To Ghost*) Actually by then I had already accumulated forty thousand pounds. I kept it stuffed under my mattress!

**DICKENS** (*To audience*) Scrooge had forty thousand pounds in cash stuffed under his mattress.

**SCROOGE** (*Irked*) I just said that!

**BELLE** (*Indignant*) Have you Ebenezer? Have you got forty thousand pounds in cash under your mattress?

**YOUNG SCROOGE** (*Surprised looks up from ledger*) What! How did you know about that?

**BELLE** (*Getting angry*) Never mind how I knew! Have you got forty grand stuffed under your mattress?

**XMAS PAST** (*To audience*) Oh wowser! Hell hath no fury like a girl prevented from shopping!

**YOUNG SCROOGE** Well yes dear, but that's my investment capital.

**BELLE** (*Indignant*) You tightwad! You moaned at me for buying a cup of coffee!

**YOUNG SCROOGE** Yes dear, but Westfield prices aren't cheap.

**DICKENS** (*To audience*) But even Westfield doesn't charge forty thousand pounds for a cup of coffee!

**SCROOGE** (*To Dickens*) Why don't you mind your own business?

**BELLE** You're telling me we can't set a wedding date because we're too poor? When you have forty thousand pounds!

**YOUNG SCROOGE** No dear, it's because you are too poor. Try to understand, it is my investment capital. I have begun to make my way successfully in the world of business and it is necessary for that purpose, and not to fritter away on a wedding. Because you can bring no cash into our marriage, I have to work harder to allow for the burden you represent. (*Nose back into ledger*)

**DICKENS** (*To audience*) Isn't he horrible, boys and girls? Poor Belle. (*Get aaahs from audience*)

**XMAS PAST** (*To audience*) Hey guys, this is a really heart breaking moment, yeah! We need some serious aaahs! (*Audience response*)

**BELLE** (*Hurt*) I am a burden to you Ebenezer? Is that all I am, a burden to you?

**SCROOGE** (*Sadly looking at Belle*) She loved me and I loved her, dearest Belle.

**XMAS PAST** You should have splashed a bit of cash then.

**YOUNG SCROOGE** I'm sorry Belle, but as you ask, yes, you are a burden to me.

**XMAS PAST** (*To Scrooge*) I think you need some work on your people skills, baby!

**SCROOGE** (*Urgently towards Belle*) He doesn't mean it Belle! He doesn't mean it, he's a young fool.

**BELLE** (*almost crying*) Well Ebenezer, I will not be a burden to you any more. I release you from our engagement to marry. Here is your ring back. I hope you can get a refund on it. (*She passes/throws ring from her screen to his. Pauses for a reaction from Young Scrooge, however he just takes the ring*)

**SCROOGE** (*Con conversationally to ghost*) Indeed I did. It was from a Debenhams closing down sale and I was able to resell it at a very tidy profit!

**XMAS PAST** I don't think you've grasped the message I'm trying to show you. Watch and learn, babe!



**BELLE** (*Tearful*) Good bye Ebenezer, I'm sorry my love was so, so, 'unprofitable' for you.

EXIT BELLE TEARFULLY

**YOUNG SCROOGE** (*looks towards where Belle exits*) Belle! Belle!

**SCROOGE** (*Very agitated*) Go after her you fool! Go after her!

**XMAS PAST** Because you loved her?

**DICKENS** (*To audience*) No, she wins the lottery next week, double roll over, sixteen million pound jackpot!

**SCROOGE** (*To young Scrooge*) Go after her you fool, she'll be rich and can pay for the wedding herself!

YOUNG SCROOGE EXITS THOUGHTFULLY, LOOKING BACK AT WHERE BELLE EXITED

**DICKENS** (*To audience*) It was typical of Scrooge to lose the girl he loved and who loved him over the price of a cup of coffee. Scrooge could have had everything, but he threw it all away because ... (*interrupted by Scrooge*)

**SCROOGE** (*Threatening*) Some idiot told her I had forty thousand pounds under the bed!

**DICKENS** (*Intimidated*) Err, well it's in the story.

**XMAS PAST** (*To Dickens*) And a really groovy story it is!

**DICKENS** Thankyou!

**SCROOGE** (*Rolling up sleeves looking very threateningly at Dickens*) Well I've had enough of this nightmare. That's what it is, a bad dream.

**DICKENS** (*Nervous*) It is only a story.

**SCROOGE** (*Picks up Dickens by scruff of neck*) Well here's a new ending. Pick your screen, you're leaving.

**DICKENS** (*As being thrown off*) Bye boys and girls, must fly!

SCROOGE THROWS DICKENS OFF (SOUND FX OF POTS AND PANS CRASHING)

**XMAS PAST** Do you not see, baby? It was your own greed, man! Your non groovy concern with money above people, that's what lost you love and happiness, baby.

**SCROOGE** I see nothing, nothing! I'm asleep, that's what it is! I'm having a nightmare and I want it to end. I want it to end now.

**XMAS PAST** Oh chill out, man! Don't stress, baby. I'll leave you in peace until the next groovy cool dude like me appears. Ciao baby!

EXIT XMAS PAST- LIGHTS DO DOWN

**INTERVAL**

## Scene 6 – The Ghost of Christmas Present

(*Scrooge is asleep in bed, cuddling teddy, sucking thumb, talks in sleep 'I want to ride the pony'*)

ENTER GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT

(*Audience will probably shout for Scrooge to wake up, however Scrooge remains asleep*)

**XMAS PRESENT** (*Jolly*) Come on Ebenezer Scrooge. Wakey wakey!

**SCROOGE** (*Still asleep sucking thumb*) I don't want to go to school today mumsy, can I have a sicky?

**XMAS PRESENT** (*To audience*) I don't think he wants to wake up, boys and girls. I wonder what I can do to wake him up. I know - shall I put a nice clammy slippery, slimy snake in his bed? (*Produces fake snake - Audience response*) Shall I boys & girls?

GHOST EVENTUALLY DROPS SNAKE ONTO SCROOGE.

(*Suddenly Scrooge sits bolt upright in bed, wide awake and lifts up blanket to peer under then leaps out of bed*)

**SCROOGE** (*Panic*) Aaaah! There's a snake in my bed! There's a snake in my bed!

**XMAS PRESENT** That's nothing. I once woke up and found a horse in my bed.

**SCROOGE** A horse?

**XMAS PRESENT** Yes it was a nightmare. (*Wait for audience groans!*)

**SCROOGE** Are you another of the spirits whose coming was foretold by that idiot Marley?

**XMAS PRESENT** I am the ghost of Christmas Present!

**SCROOGE** How nice! Where is it?

**XMAS PRESENT** Where's what?

**SCROOGE** My present!

**XMAS PRESENT** (*Patently*) No, I'm the ghost of Christmas Present, as in the present - you know, Christmas now!

**SCROOGE** Well you should be called the ghost of 'Christmas Now' then. As it is, you offered me a present and I accepted your offer. Do you know what that is?

**XMAS PRESENT** Oh let me guess - a contract?

**SCROOGE** A contract! (*Put out ghost knows*) Yes, a contract! A um, legally binding contract.

**XMAS PRESENT** And if I don't supply a present you will sue me from now until eternity? (*parody Scrooge*) Is that what I want? Coz that's what will happen!

**SCROOGE** (*Put out that Ghost knows*) Yes, that's right! If you don't give me a present then I'll err, sue you from here until eternity. Is that what you want? Err, coz that's what will happen!

**XMAS PRESENT** (*To audience*) Shall I give Scrooge a present he'll never forget boys & girls? (*Audience response*). Very well, Scrooge, I will give you a present. Close your eyes!

SCROOGE CLOSES EYES THEN REOPENS THEM

**SCROOGE** (*Suspicious*) Why do I have to close my eyes?

**XMAS PRESENT** You want it to be a surprise, don't you?

**SCROOGE** Oh yes! I like surprises. (CLOSES EYES & HOLDS OUT HANDS AS IF TO RECEIVE A PRESENT)

GHOST PULLS OUT A CUSTARD PIE & SHOWS IT TO AUDIENCE

**XMAS PRESENT** (*To audience*) Do you think Scrooge has earned this present boys & girls? (*Audience response*)

**SCROOGE** I can't wait! Give it to me! Give it to me! Is it a nice present boys & girls? (*audience response*) Will I like it? (*Audience response*) Has it got a red ribbon on it?

**XMAS PRESENT** No, there isn't a red ribbon.

**SCROOGE** I don't want a present unless it's got a red ribbon on it!

**XMAS PRESENT** Then a red ribbon you shall have. Just putting it on now! (*Pulls out ketchup bottle and squirts 'red ribbon' on custard pie*) A beautiful ribbon in tomato ketchup red!

**SCROOGE** Well give it to me then! Give it! Give it!

**XMAS PRESENT** (*TO AUDIENCE*) Shall I give it to him boys & girls? (*Audience response*) On the count of three. Will you count for me boys & girls. (*Audience counts 1, 2, 3 – Ghost slaps custard pie in Scrooges face*)

**XMAS PRESENT** A very Merry Christmas, in your face, Ebenezer Scrooge!

ENTER DICKENS (*Scrooge cleans up*)

**DICKENS** Hello boys & girls. (*audience response*) The spirit of Christmas Present bade Scrooge to take hold of the spirits robe. Suddenly Scrooge found himself at Bob Cratchet's poor house.

LIGHTS UP

## Scene 7 The Cratchet's House

ENTER Mrs Cratchet & two daughters Emma & Gemma.

**MRS C.** Hurry up children, your father will be home soon. Get the table ready for Christmas dinner. Hurry up Tiny Tim.!

ENTER TINY TIM, SUCKING HARD ON AN INHALER

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**EMMA** Is the turkey bigger than last year's mummy?

**MRS C.** Oh yes, much bigger. This is the biggest turkey we've ever had!

**GEMMA** Of course it's bigger than last year. What are you, stupid?

**EMMA** Don't call me stupid! Mum! Gemma just called me stupid!

**MRS C.** (*Flustered laying table*) Gemma! Apologize to Emma at once!

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**GEMMA** Shuddup Tim (*To Emma Sarcastic*) I'm so sorry for calling you stupid, Emma! It's an insult to stupid people to call you stupid.

**EMMA** Don't pick on Tim! Just coz you're the new abnormal!

**GEMMA** Yeah, and you're the new abominable!

**EMMA** You mean 'abominable'.

**GEMMA** You said it, stupid!

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**EMMA** Shuddup Tim.

**GEMMA** Yeah - shuddup.

**MRS C.** (*Flustered laying table*) Emma! Gemma! Stop picking on Tim!

**EMMA** Whatever!

**GEMMA** Get a life!

*IF DO-ABLE: MRS C. Comes over and grabs hold of one each of Emma & Gemma's ears*

**EMMA then GEMMA** (*Whine*) Mum!

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**MRS C.** Thank you, Tim. (*To girls [still holding ears]*) Now, it's Christmas. This is when we are all nice to each other, aren't we?

**EMMA** Yes, Mum.

**GEMMA** Yes, Mum.

**MRS C.** Good ! [*Releases ears, girls rub ear*] Now get this table laid, your father will be home any minute.

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**MRS C.** Thankyou Tim!

*ENTER Bob Cratchet holding tiny Christmas tree*

**CRATCHET** Hello the Cratchet family. Merry Christmas!

**ALL** Merry Christmas father!

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**MRS C.** Don't keep saying that Tim.

**CRATCHET** I got our Christmas tree. Isn't it a beauty!

**GEMMA** Oh yes, father, it's magnificent.

**SCROOGE** It's pathetic. That's not a tree, it's a twig!

**XMAS PRESENT** On what you pay Bob Cratchet, it's all they can afford.

**MRS C.** Right, the turkey is ready. (*Everyone looks eagerly down [at table]*).

**CRATCHET** Are you ready everyone? Ttatata tata taaaa (*trumpet imitation, family drum knife and fork handles on table*)

*MRS.C. Lifts up a dish and shows everyone a pathetically small turkey*

**CRATCHET** Wow, it's huge!

**EMMA** It's gi-normous!

**GEMMA** It's wickedly\* big! [*\*what's a more contemporary alternative to 'wickedly'?*]

(*Mrs C. puts the turkey down*)

**SCROOGE** It's a sparrow! Are they blind? It's pathetic!

**XMAS PRESENT** None of them will say so, for each other's sake. It's all they can afford on your wages, with your 'Santa Clause'. Yet despite this, the Cratchets won't let Christmas be cancelled!

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**MRS C.** (*Annoyed*) Tim, will you please stop saying that!

**CRATCHET** Every one - a toast!

*(The rest of the family raise their glasses)*

**CRATCHET** To Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge, the founder of our feast. (*Raises his glass. Rest of family put theirs down*)

**SCROOGE** You see, I am held in respect by this family, despite what you say.

**XMAS PRESENT** Watch and listen and learn how much they respect you!

**MRS C.** That skinflint!

**EMMA** The meanest man in Chiswickia.

**GEMMA** The meanest man in the world!

**DICKENS** The meanest man in the universe!

**MRS C.** What's the difference between Mr. Scrooge and a mean, nasty, evil old man?

ALL SHAKE HEADS

**MRS C.** Nothing. He is a mean, nasty, evil old man. Honestly, Robert, he treats you like a door mat, pays you pennies and tricks you into buying this damp, falling down house on a mortgage we can never repay. The mould is giving Tiny Tim terrible allergies, isn't it Tim? (*Nods at Tim to sneeze – who does so repeatedly. Perhaps he can do some itchy scratching as well*)

**CRATCHET**. What you say is true, my dear. But let us wish him good health this Christmas, for the days sake!

**MRS C.** Christmas! What does that man know of Christmas? All he knows is money. Well, I'd like to have him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind.

**EMMA** Are you sure you can spare any, mummy?

**MRS C.** Don't be cheeky. Alright Robert, I will drink his health, but for your sake and the day's sake. (*Raises glass*) To Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge. May he have good health, not that he deserves it!

**ALL** (*Raising Glasses*) Mr. Scrooge! Good health, not that he deserves it!

**TIM** God bless us everyone.

**MRS C.** Shuddup!

**CRATCHET** The damp is worsening Tim's allergies. Listen to him sneeze.

ALL LOOK AT TIM - WHO BEGINS SNEEZING AND SCRATCHING

**CRATCHET** Let's all go into the other room and sit close to the fire. Come on Tim, I'll give you a lift up on my shoulders.

WHILE CRATCHET VAINLY TRIES TO LIFT TIM ONTO HIS SHOULDERS

ALL EXIT

**SCROOGE** Tell me, spirit, will Tiny Tim get better?

**XMAS PRESENT** I see an EpiPen and inhaler carefully preserved hanging on the wall, in a house where a child's voice no longer says 'God bless us everyone'.

**SCROOGE** Tiny Tim will die? Can nothing be done?

**XMAS PRESENT** Are there no prisons, are there no workhouses? Then let them die and decrease the surplus population!

**SCROOGE** Oh spirit, you use my words against me. I meant no harm to Tiny Tim!

**XMAS PRESENT** Then before you judge and condemn others, take the trouble to find out who they are, where they are, and how they got there! For which you share some of the blame.

**SCROOGE** Blame? Me? I only took those school meal vouchers for safe-keeping. I never meant Tiny Tim any harm!

**XMAS PRESENT** But you never meant him any good either.

**SCROOGE** That's not fair. I didn't even know him.

**XMAS PRESENT** Human affairs are like casting a pebble into a pond. Your words and actions send ripples affecting others. You have much to answer for. "Where there's blame there's a claim". There's a lot for which you are to blame, Ebenezer

Scrooge! Someone who comes from a much worse place than Acton has a very, very big claim on you. Your soul for an eternity of suffering – (*parody Scrooge*) is that what you want? Coz that's what's gonna happen!

**SCROOGE** No, no I don't want that to happen. Please, spirit, I admit I have been thoughtless, for which I am truly sorry. There must be someone who speaks well of me?

**DICKENS** The lights dimmed as the Cratchet's house faded. (LIGHTS GO DIM)

**DICKENS** The spirit whisked Scrooge through the cold night air across Chiswickia to his nephew Fred's house.

LIGHTS GO UP

### Scene 8 Nephew Fred's House

ENTER FRED, HIS WIFE SANDRA AND MR. & MRS SMITHERS.

FRED AND MR & MRS SMITHERS ARE SEATED FOR A MEAL  
(PERHAPS MR. SMITHERS HAS A NAPKIN TUCKED INTO HIS COLLAR).

FRED'S WIFE SANDRA COMES INTO VIEW, CARRYING A LIDDED TUREEN AND A BOWL OF BAKED POTATOES, BOTH OF WHICH SHE PUTS DOWN BELOW FRAME, AS IF ON THE DINING TABLE (so we can't see it).  
GHOST & SCROOGE OBSERVE

**FRED** Well, time for another scrummy Christmas dinner cooked by my adorable wife Sandra.

**SCROOGE** Scrummy if you like concrete!

**SANDRA** I think my cooking is getting better!

**SCROOGE** Well it couldn't get worse!

**MR. SMITHERS** I say Fred, did you invite your uncle? You know, what's his face, for Christmas dinner again this year?

**FRED** Uncle Ebenezer? Indeed I did and I always shall.

**MRS SMITHERS** But why Fred? I hear he is a miserable, utterly horrible creature who never uses deodrant.

SCROOGE SMELLS UNDER ARMPITS

**SANDRA** He says Christmas is humbug, doesn't he Fred?

**MR. SMITHERS** I understand he's never donated a penny to any good cause, not a brass farthing.

**FRED** No that's not true!

**MRS SMITHERS** Really! Have we done your uncle an injustice Fred?

**MR. SMITHERS** What did he make a donation towards?

**FRED** The school were collecting to build a new swimming pool.

**SANDRA** How much did he donate?

**FRED** A glass of water.

**ALL** A glass of water!

**FRED** Yes, and he demanded the glass back or he would sue them (*Imitation of Scrooge*) "from here until eternity"!

**MR.S SMITHERS** Oh you're joking Fred, you're not serious!

**FRED** No, that is the complete truth.

**SCROOGE** (*To spirit*) I never did get the glass back! I'll invoice the school for it. I must remember to tell Cratchet.

**SANDRA** Oh Fred, why do you invite him to dinner? He is such a mean and horrible man.

**FRED** Indeed that is why I invite him. He moans and curses at others making merry and does not realize he deprives himself of the warmth of human company. He must be very lonely and sad and I feel sorry for him. My dear mother was very fond of him, so I shall invite him every year, no matter how horrid he is.

**XMAS PRESENT** (*To Scrooge*) He has a good heart. He was the only child of your sister Fanny?

**SCROOGE** Yes, my dear sister Fanny! When I was young, I was very fond of Fanny. (*Straight faced*). She was a gentle kindly soul. He does indeed have her kindly nature.

**SANDRA** You have a good heart, Fred! That is why I love you so much!

**MR. SMITHERS** Hear hear! You're a good chap Fred.

**MRS SMITHERS** A toast to Fred's good heart, more valuable than all Scrooge's gold!

*ALL DRINK TOAST, WHICH IS COMICALLY COMPLICATED, WITH  
EVERYONE BEING SURE TO CLINK GLASSES WITH EVERYONE ELSE*

**FRED** Thank you, my dearest friends. This is what my uncle deprives himself of in not coming to dinner. Good company, good friends!

**SCROOGE** Hrrump! But not good food!

**SANDRA** Let's serve dinner. Hopefully it will be better than last year. Poor Mr. Jones, I feel so guilty!

**FRED** Don't blame yourself, my dear.

**MRS SMITHERS** Yes, it was his own fault. The man rushed at the food like a starved animal.

**MR. SMITHERS** I heard his dentist managed to save his lower jaw.

**FRED** See my dear, there is some good news!

**MR. SMITHERS** Of course his upper jaw was beyond recovery.

**MRS SMITHERS** I don't think Sandra wanted to hear that dear!

**FRED** Shall we get started? I'm starving

**SANDRA** Ready everyone? Voilà!

*(SANDRA REACHES TO WHERE SHE PUT DOWN THE TUREEN. SHE TAKES OFF THE LID WITH A FLOURISH,  
THEN LIFTS THE TUREEN SO WE CAN SEE THE 'BURNT THING' WITHIN)*

**SANDRA** I think I may have overcooked it a little. *(She puts the tureen down again)*

**FRED** Not at all dear, it looks jolly good! Ooh - and baked potatoes – my favourite.

*(FRED EAGERLY PICKS UP A BAKED POTATO [FROM BELOW FRAME] WITH HIS FINGERS.  
IT IS SCALDING HOT. HE TOSSES IT BRIEFLY FROM HAND TO HAND, WHIMPERING, BEFORE THROWING IT  
TO THE NEXT CHARACTER. THEY CATCH IT, WHIMPER AND THROW IT TO ANOTHER CHARACTER, AND SO  
ON, ENDING WITH THE FINAL PERSON THROWING IT OFF-CAMERA. SOUND FX OF SMASHING GLASS).*

*EVERYONE PRETENDS IT HASN'T HAPPENED.)*

**FRED** Everything's lovely and hot.

**MR. SMITHERS** Yes, makes my mouth water with anticipation.

**MRS SMITHERS** See, you are getting the hang of cooking Sandra!

**SANDRA** Oh thank you, thank you so much. I have tried so very hard.

**SCROOGE** Well keep trying!. What's the matter with them? It's a pile of burnt concrete!

**XMAS PRESENT** It's called 'caring for others feelings'. She has tried her best and they will not say anything against her.

**SCROOGE** What about the hurt it's going to do to their teeth? It should have a government health warning on it!

**XMAS PRESENT** Watch and learn.

*Fred & Mr. Smithers make urgent nod to Mrs. Smithers (not seen by Sandra)*

**MRS SMITHERS** Fred here says you've taken up bird watching Sandra. Is that true?

**SANDRA** Oh yes, I'm a big fan of 'Springwatch'.

**MR. SMITHERS** God bless my soul! Look, Fred - there's a lesser-breasted errr Horn. *(forgets name)* Oh err Horn....?

**FRED** Hornswoggler

**MR. SMITHERS** That's right – look, a lesser-breasted Hornswoggler, perched on top of this curious little gas light here *(points directly into his camera)*

**FRED** No, that's not a gas light, it's a lens. But you're right, it's a very rare lesser-breasted Hornswoggler. Sandra can you see my dear?

**SANDRA** *(Looking intently into her camera)* Where? Where is it?

*(MRS. SMITHERS PRODUCES A HOUNSLOW COUNCIL KITCHEN CADDY, AND PROFFERS IT TO FRED. FRED LIFTS  
UP THE BOWL OF BAKED POTATOES [AS IF FROM TABLE BELOW FRAME] AND QUICKLY TIPS THE CONTENTS  
INTO THE CADDY. MRS SMITHERS PROFFERS THE CADDY TO MR. SMITHERS. HE LIFTS THE TUREEN [AS IF FROM  
TABLE BELOW FRAME] AND TIPS OUT THE 'BURNT THING'. MRS SMITHERS HURRIEDLY PUTS THE CADDY OUT OF  
SIGHT)*

**FRED** Look just there (*points directly into his camera*).

**SANDRA** I can't see it!

**MR. SMITHERS** Bad luck, it's flown off.

**FRED** Well I'm absolutely stuffed (*pats belly in bloated manner*).

**MRS SMITHERS** I couldn't eat another thing. That was delicious Sandra.

**MR. SMITHERS** Hear hear! Absolutely splendid Christmas dinner!

**SCROOGE** Why, who'd have thought my nephew Fred would have the brains to pull a trick like that?!

**XMAS PRESENT** You, if you had ever bothered to get to know him. He is a very clever and pleasant young man.

**SANDRA** (*Really pleased!*) You liked it? Why I have more in the kitchen! Would anyone like seconds?

**MR. SMITHERS** No!

**MRS SMITHERS** No thankyou, dear.

**FRED** I think it's time for some party games. Shall we retire to the parlour?

**SANDRA** Oh yes, let's play charades!

**MR. SMITHERS** Can I dress up in a frock?

**MRS SMITHERS** Oh Henry, stop trying to be 'woke'.

*ALL STAND UP TO GO EXIT GHOST OF XMAS PRESENT Lights go down*

**DICKENS** Suddenly Scrooge found himself back in his bedroom all alone.

**SCROOGE** Why, I'm back in my bedroom all alone! Apart from a complete stranger reading from a book!

**DICKENS** Scrooge felt a cold dread.

**SCROOGE** I've got a cold what?

**DICKENS** Dread! It means you're very scared.

**SCROOGE** No I'm not.

**DICKENS** Wait until you see the third spirit, then you will be!

## Scene 9. Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come

**DICKENS** With apprehension Scrooge awaited the coming of the third and final spirit.

*Creepy build up – low lights, howling wind? Bell tolling? Smoke? Scrooge shows fear!*

**SCROOGE** (*Con conversationally to audience*) Actually, I am a little apprehensive now.

*ENTER GHOST*

**DICKENS** As the ghostly apparition appeared, Scrooge was so scared his knees knocked.

*Scrooge does knocking knees*

**DICKENS** His teeth chattered.

*Scrooge does teeth chattering*

**DICKENS** His hands trembled.

*Scrooge does trembling hands*

**DICKENS** And a very unpleasant smell came from the general direction of Ebenezer Scrooge.

*Scrooge does bad smell (holds nose/makes face/looks round him for cause)*

**SCROOGE** Are you the last of the spirits whose coming was foretold by Marley?

**DICKENS** Scrooge asked the ghost if he was the last of the spirits foretold by Jacob Marley.

**SCROOGE** (*Irritated*) I just said that!

*GHOST NODS*

**DICKENS** The spirit nodded and Scrooge was filled with fear again. His knees began to knock.

*Scrooge does knocking knees*

**DICKENS** His teeth chattered.

*Scrooge does teeth chattering*

**DICKENS** His hands trembled.

*Scrooge does trembling hands*

**DICKENS** And an even more unpleasant smell came from the general direction of Ebenezer Scrooge.

*Scrooge does bad smell (holds nose/makes face)*

**DICKENS** Scrooge realised he had trodden in dog poo. Someone had been walking their dog on Sutton Court Road and not cleared up its mess. Please clear up after your dog if it fouls the pavement!

*Scrooge takes something off foot and throws it off-camera. 'SPLAT' SOUND FX.*

**SCROOGE** Tell me spirit, are you the ghost of Christmas Yet To Come?

**DICKENS** Scrooge asked the spirit if he was the ghost of Christmas Yet To Come.

**SCROOGE** (*Irritated*) I just said that you idiot. What are you, a parrot!

**DICKENS** The spirit nodded. (*Spirit nods*)

**SCROOGE** You want me to take hold of your robe so you will show me the shadows of Christmas yet to come?

**DICKENS** Scrooge asked the spirit .... (*Interrupted by Scrooge*)

**SCROOGE** Don't even think about it!

**DICKENS** Eerr, the Ghost nodded. (*Spirit nods*). Scrooge took hold of the ghost's robe and found himself flying through the night.

*Scrooge & Ghost just stand there*

**DICKENS** (*Insistent to Scrooge & Ghost*) Scrooge took hold of the ghost's robe and found himself flying through the night.

*Both do flying actions*

## Scene 10 Funeral Procession

**DICKENS** Suddenly Scrooge could hear the tolling of a bell (*bell tolls*) and he found himself watching a funeral.

LIGHTS UP – **MOURNER 1** is with a coffin standing on its end, sideways to audience so lid can open but contents not seen by audience. **MOURNERS 2 & 3** stand looking towards the coffin.

**DICKENS** The spirit pointed a bony withered arm towards the funeral.

*SPIRIT POINTS ARM (Possible use for fake arm for gag 'bony & withered')*

**SCROOGE** Someone has died, spirit? Someone I know?

GHOST POINTS AT COFFIN

**MOURNER 1** He's dead

**MOURNER 2** He's dead

**MOURNER 3** He's dead

~~**MOURNERS' SONG:** mourners do 'The mean old git is dead' or 'mean old scrooge is dead' to tune from Wiz of Oz 'Ding dong the witch is dead'.~~

**SCROOGE** Spirit, who has died? Why do they get such pleasure from his death?

**DICKENS** Asked Scrooge.

*Ghost just points bony withered arm at coffin*

**MOURNER 1** You know, we ought to thank him!

**MOURNER 2** That's right, we ought to thank him for doing the decent thing at last.

**MOURNER 3** Breathing his last was the best thing he ever did!



(*MOURNER 1 OPENS COFFIN LID [‘RIP E. Scrooge’ inscribed] and shakes hand of fake arm coming from within coffin*)  
**MOURNER 1** Thankyou very much to Mr.Scrooge (*Shakes hand of arm from within coffin – etc with others*)

**PERHAPS DO THIS A CAPELLA, instead of Mourners’ Song above?**  
SHORT SONG BY PALL BEARERS – “Thank you very much for the Aintree Iron”  
(by Group ‘Scaffold’) Adapt lyrics ‘Thank you very much for dropping down dead’ etc

*Arm comes off in Mourner1’s hand. Mourner1 shows audience arm (which is obviously fake), looks aghast!*

**MOURNER 2** (*To audience*) It’s alright folks! Stay calm, don’t panic! He’s ..... armless!

**MOURNER 3** (*Takes arm*) I’ll have that, (*To audience*) it might come in handy! (*waves arm/hand at audience - then drops it*)

**MOURNER 1** Anyway, let’s get him down the cemetery, then we can get down the pub / **order up a keg of ale** and celebrate!

ALL EXIT + COFFIN

**SCROOGE** (*Shocked*) Please spirit, tell me this is not so. Please spirit, I beg of you. People will celebrate my death? Mr. Dickens, tell me I am not so disliked by people.

**DICKENS** (*Friendly*) No, you’re right Mr. Scrooge! They don’t dislike you!

**SCROOGE** (*Hopeful*) They don’t?

**DICKENS** No, they hate your guts! And I don’t blame them! You have never thought of anyone else but yourself. Even worse, to make your precious money you have caused untold suffering to others. Congratulations. You’re going to be the richest man in the cemetery!

**SCROOGE** Even richer than Colin Firth\*? [*\*to match Sc.1*]

**DICKENS** Yes!

**SCROOGE** But, but, but, I can change. You can write the story so I change. I have learned my lesson. Spirit! I have learned that tolerance, compassion, and love are priceless above all else. Please, spirit I will change.

BLACK OUT, EXIT GHOST

**SCROOGE** (*imploring in darkness*) I can’t alter the past, but the present and the future I will change. I will! I know now the warmth of human affections is much, much better than the icy cold unfeeling hardness of gold. I will think of others, I will, I will!

## Scene 11 Christmas Day

LIGHTS UP

*Scrooge finds he’s cuddling the arm from the coffin – throws away in fright*

**SCROOGE** (*Looks around, realises it’s daylight*) Why, it’s morning! But which morning?

ENTER BOY

**SCROOGE** You, boy!

**BOY** (*Surly*) What do you want?

**SCROOGE** What day is it, me fine lad?

**BOY** Do I look like a blooming calendar? It’s Christmas Day of course!

**SCROOGE** What a charming boy. Charming, the youth of today. Hey boy!

**BOY** (*surly*) What now?

**SCROOGE** Do you know Macken’s the butcher?

**BOY** Duh! Of course. Everyone knows Macken Brothers, the Chiswickian Purveyors of Fine Quality Meats.

**SCROOGE** What a clever boy! Do you know the prize winning organic turkey in the window?

**BOY** The one nearly as big as me?

**SCROOGE** That’s the one. Go and get one of the Mr. Mackens and bring him here with the turkey, and I’ll give you a penny. No! No! I’ll give you a whole shilling!

**BOY** Get stuffed!

**SCROOGE** What?

**BOY** It'll cost you a fiver or I ain't bovvered.

**SCROOGE** A fiver! A fiver! It's only over the road! A few yards!

**BOY** Look at my face? Do I look bovvered? No! I ain't bovvered unless it's a fiver, so get it yourself (*makes to walk on*).

**SCROOGE** (*To audience*) Isn't being nice expensive? (*To Boy*) Alright! Alright, a fiver it is. But you have to be back here with Mr. Macken in less than two minutes.

EXIT BOY

**SCROOGE** (*Getting dressed*) It's Christmas Day! Of course! The spirits did it all in one night! I have much to do. Wait till I see that Cratchet!

ENTER BOY & ENTER MR. MACKEN WITH TURKEY

**MR. MACKEN** This had better not be a joke boy!

**BOY** No, this is the gent, this old geezer here.

**MR. MACKEN** Why Mr. Scrooge! He never buys anything except the cheapest gruel.

**SCROOGE** No, the boy is quite right. Splendid my boy! Splendid. Here you are, Mr. Macken, payment for the prize turkey (*gives money*) and there's a little bit extra seeing as it's Christmas.

**MR. MACKEN** (*Looks at cash amazed*) Good heavens! Are you feeling all right Mr. Scrooge?

**SCROOGE** I've never felt better in my entire life! Merry Christmas!

**MR. MACKEN** Merry Christmas, sir, have a nice day. EXIT MR. MACKEN

**SCROOGE** Now boy, do you know the Cratchet's house?

**BOY** What, at the Hounslow end of the village. Yes I know it.

**SCROOGE** What a clever lad. Take this turkey to Bob Cratchet and I'll give you another fiver.

**BOY** You haven't paid the first fiver yet!

**SCROOGE** Of course - how remiss of me. Here you are (*hands over fiver*). Here's another to take the turkey to Bob Cratchet.

**BOY** It'll cost you twenty quid.

**SCROOGE** What?

**BOY** You heard. Twenty quid or I ain't bovvered.

**SCROOGE** But it's only up the road!

**BOY** Look at my face! Look at my face, do I look bovvered? I ain't bovvered.

**SCROOGE** (*To audience*) What a charming boy, teenagers! All right, twenty pounds it is (*hands over more money*)

**BOY** Who shall I say sent it?

**SCROOGE** Just say 'a friend'. I want it to be anonymous. Now off with you me lad, step lively!

EXIT BOY WITH TURKEY

## Scene 12 Donating to the Needy.

ENTER SLAPAN & TICKLE.

**SCROOGE** My dear ladies, a Merry Christmas to you!

**TICKLE** Ignore him Tina! Don't speak to that mean horrible creature!

**SLAPAN** Oh don't worry, I wouldn't speak to him for ten thousand pounds.

**TICKLE** Neither would I!

**SCROOGE** Ladies, I want to donate ten thousand pounds for the food bank!

**SLAPAN** (*Instantly friendly*) Oh, thankyou, Mr Scrooge!

**TICKLE** Merry Christmas, Mr. Scrooge!

**SCROOGE** I must beg your pardon for the way I spoke to you yesterday. I was not myself!

**TICKLE** Oh don't worry Mr. Scrooge, we all have our off days, as you can tell by Sally here's complexion!

**SLAPAN** What do you mean?! I'll have you know I've got the complexion of a sixteen year old school girl.

**TICKLE** Well give it back, you're wrinkling it!

**SLAPAN** Well at least I'm not decked out like a greengrocer!

**TICKLE** What do you mean, decked out like a greengrocer?

**SLAPAN** Displaying your rotten melons!

**TICKLE** Well at least I haven't got a Bakeoff figure!

**SLAPAN** What do you mean, a Bakeoff figure?

**TICKLE** A soggy bottom!

**SCROOGE** (*Gentle*) Ladies, ladies it is Christmas Day! You both look gorgeous to me!

**SLAPAN** (*Flattered*) Ooooooh!

**TICKLE** Young man!

**SCROOGE** Here is a cheque for ten thousand pounds. (*Hands over cheque*)

**SLAPAN** It is a very large amount.

**TICKLES** A very very large amount.

**SLAPAN** A very very very large amount.

**TICKLE** Are you sure, Mr. Scrooge?

**SCROOGE** Quite sure Madam, I assure you. There are many back payments included.

**TICKLE** Thank you, Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE** Good day ladies, and Merry Christmas.

**SLAPAN** Merry Christmas, young man.

**TICKLE** Young man!

SLAPAN & TICKLE START TO EXIT

ENTER FRED

**?CONSIDER CUTTING THE REST OF SLAPAN & TICKLE SCENE?:**

**FRED** Ladies, I realize that I did not offer enough for a kiss. I am now prepared to offer a whole shilling to your fund raising for a big kissy wissy. Quick now, before I change my mind (*Puckers up lips and closes eyes as before*).

**TICKLE** Outrageous!

**SLAPAN** Well, it is Christmas. It wouldn't hurt, and every penny helps the needy.

**TICKLE** Well hurry up dear, or you'll be late for our meeting.

**SLAPAN** Do you think I should take my teeth out or leave them in?

**TICKLE** Oh leave them in dear, they cover that abscess.

**SLAPAN** Here we go then (*Goes for kiss. Fred suddenly moves just before kiss, Slapan misses and staggers forward*)

**FRED** Second thoughts, that won't be necessary. Here's the shilling and err, Merry Christmas ladies! (*Hands over shilling and hurriedly walks past*)

EXIT SLAPAN & TICKLE (*Disappointed*)

**SCROOGE** Fred! Fred, Merry Christmas!

**FRED** God bless my soul! Why Uncle Ebenezer, Merry Christmas, sir.

**SCROOGE** My boy, I called Christmas 'humbug'. It is I who was humbug, for which I can only beg your pardon. If your invitation is still open, I would like to come to Christmas dinner with you, your dear wife and nice friends.

**FRED** Yes, yes of course uncle, it's at seven o'clock. That is splendid, absolutely splendid. I look forward to it! I must tell my wife. (*Goes to exit*)

**SCROOGE** And Fred!

**FRED** Yes, uncle?

**SCROOGE** Tell your wife I hear the lesser-breasted Hornswoggler has been sighted nesting in the area! (*winks*)

**FRED** Indeed I shall Uncle, see you at seven. (EXIT)

ENTER DICKENS

### Scene 13. Another day at the Office

**DICKENS** So Scrooge spent Christmas day re-learning that giving is infinitely more profitable to the human spirit than any amount of gold. The next day he could not wait for Bob Cratchet to arrive for work, so he could show him how he'd changed.

**SCROOGE** (*Irritated, looking at watch*) He's late! Cratchet's late.

**DICKENS** He'll be along in a minute.

**SCROOGE** He'd better be!

**DICKENS** Scrooge waited and an hour went by.

**SCROOGE** He's an hour late. If he's not here in the next sixty seconds he's fired!

**DICKENS** But you've changed for the better?

**SCROOGE** Not that much! If he's not here this minute, he's fired and I'll employ someone else to be nice to!

**DICKENS** Will you help me boys and girls and shout for Cratchet? (*Audience response – get Audience to shout for Cratchet*)

ENTER CRATCHET (*breathless*)

**SCROOGE** You're late, sir!

**CRATCHET** I beg your pardon, sir, I am behind my time! We were finishing off a huge turkey we had for Christmas dinner.

**SCROOGE** (*Makes facial reactions*) Was the turkey a gift from some anonymous friend, by any chance?

**CRATCHET** No sir. I bought it!

**SCROOGE** (*Very friendly turning round to Cratchet*) It was me, Bob, who sent the tur ... (*stops short realizing what Cratchet has said*) What? What did you say?

**CRATCHET** I bought the turkey sir, from a boy, sir. He wanted ten pounds for it.

**SCROOGE** (*Aghast*) You blithering idiot. You paid ten pounds for that turkey?

**CRATCHET** Oh no sir! I knocked him down to a fiver. You're always telling me I should haggle, sir! It was a bargain!

**DICKENS** Scrooge found being nice wasn't as easy as it looked.

**SCROOGE** (*To Dickens, nasty*) Shut up! As for you Cratchet!

**CRATCHET** (*Bemused*) Yes, sir?

**SCROOGE** You're a complete idiot!

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) You're also one hour, twelve minutes and thirty-two seconds late for your employment.

**CRATCHET** Yes sir, I'm sorry sir! It won't happen again sir.

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) I know it won't happen again because you're fired!

**CRATCHET** Pardon, sir?

**SCROOGE** You heard! You're fired, sacked, dismissed, and unemployed – get out!

CRATCHET – GOES FOR 'aaaahs' from audience HELPED BY DICKENS

**DICKENS** No, you're not supposed to do that. You're supposed to change, be nice. You're supposed to help Cratchet now, not sack him!

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) Humbug to being nice and humbug to you, sir! You keep interfering in my business and I have had enough. If you don't keep your nose out of my affairs you'll be sorry (*Dickens is intimidated*). Is that what you want? Coz that's what's gonna happen!

**SCROOGE** Cratchet?

**CRATCHET** (*Hopeful*) Yes, sir ?

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) Why are you still here? If you're not off my premises immediately I'll have you arrested for trespassing. Is that what you want? Coz that's what's gonna happen!

CRATCHET, TOTALLY FORLORN STARTS TO LEAVE – More 'aaaahs' from audience HELPED BY DICKENS

**SCROOGE** And Cratchet!

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir?

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) I want you and your family out of your home in twenty-four hours. You're evicted! Understood?

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir

**SCROOGE** And Cratchet!

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir?

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) Make sure you leave my property clean and tidy. Not like when I sold it to you!

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir!

**SCROOGE** (*Nasty*) And Cratchet.

**CRATCHET** Yes, sir?

**SCROOGE** You know the new house I've just had built by the river? [*any actual new developments? Strand on the Green?*]

**CRATCHET** (~~Village/town name~~) ~~Manor~~ sir?

**SCROOGE** That's right. You and your family are to move into that. You can rent it from me.

**CRATCHET** (*Totally bemused*) But sir! I can't afford that, especially now I'm unemployed.

**SCROOGE** I'll do you one of my special clauses. It's called the 'Santa Clause Mark 2'. Do you know why it's called that?

**CRATCHET** No sir.

**SCROOGE** Because Christmas is reinstated!

**CRATCHET** But sir, my job?

**SCROOGE** You're sacked as my clerk and that's that! I'll employ someone else as clerk. You start tomorrow 8.30am sharp.

**CRATCHET** Start at 8.30am sir? I don't understand?

**SCROOGE** (*Gleeful*) I'm making you a partner Cratchet! Tomorrow get that old sign changed to Scrooge & Cratchet!

**DICKENS** (*To audience*) Bob Cratchet felt as though he could have been knocked down by a feather!

**CRATCHET** (*To audience*) It's true! I feel as though you could knock me down with a feather!

**SCROOGE** (*Laughing*) Now admit it you two. I had you both going didn't I? You thought I was still nasty, didn't you? Had you both fooled didn't I?

**DICKENS** We were both fooled Mr. Scrooge.

**SCROOGE** Now let's all go down the Copper Cow [*if open*] for a drink. Bob, we're going to discuss how else I can help you and your fine family.

**DICKENS** That's jolly nice of you!

**SCROOGE** No, its jolly nice of you! You're paying. (*To audience*) I haven't changed that much!

**DICKENS** Scrooge became as good a man as the old village of Chiswickia had ever known. It was said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well. If you have the ability to keep the true spirit of Christmases past, present and future in your heart, then happiness will find you. And as Tiny Tim was often heard to say 'God bless us everyone'. The end. (*Closes book*) But don't log out – here comes the closing number!

## CLOSING NUMBER – FULL CAST – PRE-RECORDED & EDITED VIDEO

*CURTAINS CLOSE*

~~FINAL SONG – FEZZIWEG & PARTY PEOPLE COME ON FOR FINAL 1970/80'S CHRISTMAS POP SONG~~

**THE END**

**Suggested adapted lyrics Mean Bad Scrooge Taken from 'Big Bad John' by Jimmy Dean**

Dickens sings the verses as per Jimmy Dean (so affect an American accent) and carol singers the 'Mean Scrooge' chorus and Dickens 'Mean bad scrooge' line. If your not familiar with the song a search on the internet e.g. Youtube.com should reveal how it sounds.

~~Scrooge should try and act out according to what is being said about him during the song.~~

~~Mean Scrooge  
Mean Scrooge~~

~~Every morning at nine, you could see him arrive.  
He stood 5 foot 5, weighed 845.  
Crooked at the shoulders, he had a bad hip.  
And everybody knew you didn't give no lip to Mean Scrooge.~~

~~Mean Scrooge  
Mean Scrooge  
Mean Bad Scrooge  
Mean Scrooge~~

~~Nobody seemed to know why Scrooge was so bad  
He just wanted folks money, wanted all that they had  
If you borrowed from Scrooge, then things might get tough  
Someone said he liked wearing his mothers stuff~~

~~Mean Scrooge  
Mean Scrooge  
Mean Bad Scrooge  
Mean Scrooge~~

~~When he spoke it was nasty, he had a bit of a lisp  
Demanding his money, threat'ning the bay liffes  
When folks didn't pay they got thrown into the street  
Keep watching our panto, your in for a treat.~~

~~Mean Scrooge  
Mean Scrooge  
Mean Bad Scrooge  
Mean Scrooge~~

~~'Favourite Things' — Adapted Lyrics  
From 'The Sound of Music' film~~

~~TO BE ADDED~~