

Call Me Mr. Scrooge: A Musical!



Murray J. Rivette

Inspired by the classic tale by Charles Dickens

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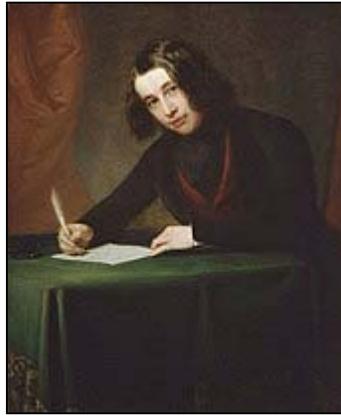
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Call Me Mr. Scrooge: A Musical!

MUSICAL. Inspired by the classic tale by Charles Dickens. Ebenezer Scrooge is visited on Christmas Eve by four ghosts who try to convince him to change his miserly ways by giving his poor clerk, Bob Cratchit, a raise, a light over his desk, and his own key to the men's room. The Ghost of Christmas Past arrives and ends up in therapy after recalling her unhappy Christmas memories. The Ghost of Christmas Present tries to remind Scrooge of the importance of Christmas but has memory issues and can't remember anything in the present. The Ghost of Christmas Future tries to show Scrooge his future with her crystal ball, but it has poor reception and its batteries are running low. Finally convinced he should make nice, Scrooge discovers Bob Cratchit has been embezzling money for years to pay for Tiny Tim's nose job. Includes seven songs with original lyrics sung to Christmas carols. A hysterical holiday musical to remember!

Performance Time: Approximately 60-75 minutes.



Charles Dickens, 1842

About the Story

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) wrote *A Christmas Carol* in just six weeks, and it has remained his most popular work. After suffering from hardship and poverty as a boy, Dickens sympathized with the plight of the poor and felt strongly that social reform was needed to eradicate social inequity. The Cratchit children are thought to correspond to Dickens' own children, and Tiny Tim is believed to be modeled after Dickens's son, Tiny Fred.

Characters

(4 M, 3 F, 4 flexible)

(With doubling: 3 M, 3 F, 1 flexible)

EBENEZER SCROOGE: Miserly widower who thinks Christmas is a bummer; wears a black coattail jacket, an off-white shirt with dark bowtie, black pants, pince-nez glasses, and black shoes and socks; male.

BOB CRATCHIT: Scrooge's nephew and employee; wears a brown coattail jacket, off-white shirt with a dark tie, brown pants, glasses, and brown shoes and socks; male.

STAGE MANAGER: Marks time by banging a gong; wears a black shirt, pants and shoes; flexible.

JACOB MARLEY: Scrooge's former business partner; a ghost who has to carry around a long heavy chain; wears a tattered dark gray or black suit, shirt, and shoes; male.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST: Ghost who ends up in therapy after recalling her unhappy Christmas memories; wears an old granny dress and has her hair in a large bun with a large tortoise-shell comb in it; female.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT: Ghost who tries to remind Scrooge of the importance of Christmas but has memory issues and can't remember anything in the present; wears a dark coat, harlequin glasses with a chain, partially rolled down knee-high stockings, and gold platform shoes; her hair is in rollers and there is a kerchief on her head, female.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE: Ghost who tries to show Scrooge his future with her crystal ball, but it has poor reception and its batteries are running low; wears a sporty sweat suit with sneakers and sunglasses on top of her head; short in stature and can be played by a kid, if desired; female.

TINY TIM: Bob Cratchit's surfing teen son; wears colorful jams, a cutoff sweatshirt, and sunglasses; male.

CAROLER 1: Wears winter attire; sings carols; flexible.

CAROLOER 2, 3: Wear winter attire; nonspeaking but sing carols; flexible.

NOTE: For flexible roles, change the script accordingly.

Options for Doubling

CAROLER 1/GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST (flexible)

CAROLER 2/GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT (flexible)

CAROLER 3/GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE (flexible)

JACOB MARLEY/TINY TIM (male) [*Note: A young actor wearing stage makeup/fat suit to make him look like the much older Marley.*]

Songs

- 1.) "Good Lord, Why Do I Put Up with Him?" (**Cratchit**)
[Sung to "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"]
- 2.) "Oh, Christmas is Nothing, It's Just Humbug to Me"
(**Scrooge**) [Sung to "O Come, All Ye Faithful"]
- 3.) "Ebenezer, You're a Fool and You're Gonna Rue the
Day" (**Jacob Marley**) [Sung to "Angels I have Heard on
High" Note: The verse may be spoken.]
- 4.) "What's She Got That I Ain't Got?" (**Ghost of Christmas
Past**) [Sung to "Good King Wenceslas"]
- 5.) "I'm so confused, I Really Don't Remember a Gosh-Darn
Thing" (**Ghost of Christmas Present**) [Sung to "O Little
Town of Bethlehem"]
- 6.) "You've Got a Nerve, an Awful Nerve, to Treat Your
Help That Way" (**Ghost of Christmas Future**) [Sung in a
cha-cha rhythm to "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen"]
- 7.) "I've always been the heavy. No one liked me...not at
all" (**Scrooge and Cratchit**) [Sung to "Battle Hymn of the
Republic"]

NOTE: If desired, sheet music may be provided upon request.

Setting

Scrooge's office and home, Christmas Eve.

Sets

Scrooge's office. There is a stool at a small table or writing desk with a candle on it. The desk is piled high with papers. There is a hook to hang Bob Cratchit's overcoat, muffler, gloves, and hat on.

Scrooge's bedroom. A sparsely furnished room with a couch, a table, and a chair. There is a blanket at the foot of the couch.

Synopsis of Scenes

Scene 1: Scrooge's office, Christmas Eve.

Scene 2: Street outside Scrooge's office, a short time later.

Scene 3: Scrooge's bedroom, a short time later.

Scene 4: Scrooge's office, Christmas Day.

Props

Large quill pen	Plaid shawl, for Scrooge
Papers	Blanket
Pencils	Music books, for Carolers
Candle	Long chain (able to stretch across the entire stage with an extra four feet)
Overcoat, hat, galoshes, long muffler, and gloves, for Cratchit	Roll of toilet paper
Music stand	Banana
Sheet music	Crystal ball (shake-up the snow variety)
Gong	Tin cup with pencils
Hammer	Shopping bag
Handkerchief	Sheet of paper
Pocket watch, for Scrooge	Small surfboard or boogie board
Oversized book entitled, "Mushrooms for Fun and Profit"	

Special Effects

Green lighting
Chain rattling, opt.
Knock at the door
Fake snow
Christmas carols

**“Why, when I was a kid,
we didn’t have candles.
We had to rub our hands together
until our fingers
burst into flames!”**

—Scrooge

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Scrooge's office, Christmas Eve. Almost bare stage. There are two masking flats. There is a stool at a small table or writing desk with a lit candle on it. Hanging on one flat is a man's overcoat and muffler with his gloves and hat. On the floor is a pair of galoshes. Bob Cratchit is busily working at his desk, which is piled with papers. Stage Manager enters with music stand, sheet music, gong, and hammer. Stage Manager sets down the stand, places sheet music on the stand, and hits the gong five times. Note: During the following, the Stage Manager puts the gong down, turns a page, and picks up the gong again.)

CRATCHIT: (Sadly.) Oh, dear, it's only five o'clock. It's Christmas Eve, and I'll never get out of here tonight. Darn, darn, darn! (Stage Manager hits the gong once and exits with the props.) Oh, goody! It's six o'clock! (Looking to heavens.) Thank you, thank you, thank you! (Arranges his papers neatly in a pile and puts away his pencils. He dusts the table with a handkerchief and starts to put on his coat, galoshes, muffler, hat, gloves. Crossing to the door, calls.) Goodnight, Uncle Ebenezer. It's Christmas Eve, and I'm on my way home. Have a *very* merry Christmas, sir!

(Scrooge enters, hurriedly.)

SCROOGE: What's this? Christmas? Christmas? Bah! Humbug! And what the heck is this Christmas Eve claptrap? Get back to work, Cratchit, you lazy loafer! (Checks his pocket watch.) Hey, hey, hey, look! It's not even nine o'clock yet! You have at least three more hours before you can punch out and go home. And *don't* call me "uncle" here in the office. I don't want anyone to know that we're related. Keep it quiet, you hear? Call me...Mister Scrooge.

CRATCHIT: (Sighs.) Yes, Unc— (Realizes.) Sir! Mister Scrooge, sir! (Starts to remove his coat, gloves, muffler, etc.)

SCROOGE: And just what gave you the idea that you could leave here at six o'clock in the afternoon?

CRATCHIT: *(Still taking off outerwear.)* Well, sir...you see...uh...it's just that...it's...

SCROOGE: Oh, for goodness sake, spit it out, man! Spit it out!

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Well, you see, sir, it's Christmas Eve, sir, and I'd like to spend the evening with my family decorating our tree, sir. Family tradition and all that, you know...Mr. Scrooge, *sir!*

SCROOGE: *(Sarcastically.)* Oh, you would, would you? Decorate your tree, eh? Oh, isn't that just so sweet! *(Nastily.)* Well, you can't leave yet! There's too much work to do! If you want to earn your keep around here, Bobbie-boy, you've got to put in at least 15 hours a day! Those are our *normal* workday hours. Do you realize that your work has been slipping lately?

CRATCHIT: *(Hanging up his coat.)* My work...*slipping*, sir?

SCROOGE: Yes, *slipping!* You're falling behind on all your accounts. You lost 10 minutes work last week when you were late one morning.

CRATCHIT: But, sir, I put in almost two hours of overtime the night before. I was here until nearly 11 o'clock that night.

SCROOGE: Oh, sure, make excuses! Bah! And you've been burning your candle in full daylight, too. See, here... *(Picks up the candle.)* ...you've had this candle for only three weeks, and it's almost half gone already. Why, when I was a kid, we didn't have candles. We had to rub our hands together until our fingers burst into flames! That's the only light we had to work by, Mr. Wax Waster! And we had to work fast, before we got third-degree burns! We were really poor in those days. Trouble is...you kids got things too easy; you're too soft nowadays. You're spoiled and pampered! Candles! Bah! *(Puts the candle back.)*

CRATCHIT: But, Uncle... *(Realizes.)* ...Mr. Scrooge, it's after six o'clock. And Daylight Saving Time is over. It gets pretty dark in here.

SCROOGE: Dark, shmark! What's the big rush to get out of the office? Afraid you might miss a ["Bachelorette"] rerun or something? Quitting time is nine o'clock in the "P" and the "M" around here, mister! *[Or insert another TV show.]*

CRATCHIT: But, sir, my dear wife, Blanche, and I are bringing our beloved son, Tim, home from the hospital tonight. He had an operation, you know. And now that he's all...well, I thought—

SCROOGE: You are not paid to think here! This is not I-B-M! You are paid to work! *Work*, do you understand?! Time flies! We've got to move onward and upward, Bobby-boy!

CRATCHIT: Sir, please don't call me "Bobby-boy."

SCROOGE: Oh, don't be so touchy. You've got to learn to take it. Nobody said that life was going to be easy. And Christmas is a humbug. It is much too commercialized—screaming kids with runny noses and cheap toys made in Korea or Taiwan with nice sharp edges just to cut the little punks. "Deck the Halls" blasting out of every single store in the mall at 2,000 decibels...so loud that your fillings rattle in your teeth. Makes me sick to my stomach!

CRATCHIT: But it's the Christmas spirit, sir.

SCROOGE: Christmas spirit, bah! Nothing but a bunch of freeloaders out to grab everything in sight! Who needs it?!

CRATCHIT: But, sir...please, sir...pretty please, sir?

SCROOGE: Oh, stop your groveling, for Pete's sake! I hate groveling! *(Slight pause.)* Oh, all right, go ahead...get out of here. Go home to your silly old Christmas tree.

CRATCHIT: Oh, thank you, sir. *(Starts to put on his outerwear again.)* And may God bless you, sir. God bless you. God bless you.

SCROOGE: And stop that silly sniveling!

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. No sniveling, no groveling...whatever you say, sir.

SCROOGE: I cannot stand groveling and sniveling! I do not for the life of me understand all this fuss over Christmas! It's a bunch of baloney, if you ask me. It's a humbug. It's a

bummer! If you worked hard, you wouldn't need Christmas...you'd only need yourself! Just look at me. I'm a self-made man. Why, when I was only eight years old, I sold matches to passersby on the street. When I was only 12, I shined shoes on the corner. And if someone didn't have shoes, I shined their feet! When I was 14, I sold newspapers out of doorways. At the age of 16, I worked in a coalmine, digging and scraping for little bits and pieces of black coal with my bare hands. True, I hoped to find diamonds, but no such luck. And when I was 18, I dug ditches. For years and years, I sweated and worked my fingers to the bone, and I clawed my way up the ladder. And then, when I was 21, my father finally dropped dead and left me this business! I thought he'd never go. I even considered stepping on the old man's oxygen hose. But shortly after my father died, I lost my first wife. That was quite a blow.

CRATCHIT: Gee, I didn't know that, sir. Mom never told me about that. I'm so sorry. What happened to your first wife, if I may ask?

SCROOGE: She ate something that didn't agree with her...some bad mushrooms, I think. But months later, I remarried and I was content for over a year. Then, my second wife passed on, too.

CRATCHIT: That's a shame. What happened to her?

SCROOGE: Same thing. It seems that she got hold of some bad mushrooms, too. And then there was my third wife—

CRATCHIT: Oh, I'm so glad for you. Things do have a way of working out.

SCROOGE: But she died, too.

CRATCHIT: Oh, that's terrible! What did *she* die of?

SCROOGE: Fractured skull.

CRATCHIT: How did that happen?

SCROOGE: She wouldn't eat the mushrooms. *(To audience, aside.)* Hey, it's an old joke, but it works here. Look, Cratchit, if you're going, you'd better get out of here right now before I change my mind.

CRATCHIT: Yes, sir. *(Starts to exit.)*

SCROOGE: *(Calls.)* And, Cratchit...

CRATCHIT: *(Annoyed.)* Oh, no! *(Starts to take off his coat again. To himself, mumbling.)* I knew it was too good to be true, I just knew it!

SCROOGE: No, no, no! *(Cratchit stops.)* I just wanted to say that I want you to be here on time tomorrow morning. Six o'clock sharp.

CRATCHIT: But, sir...tomorrow? Tomorrow is Christmas Day. It's a holiday.

SCROOGE: *(Shouts.)* A holiday?! Since when did you become union? You're scab labor, and don't you forget it! Tomorrow! Do you understand, Cratchit? And you'll be here on time! Do you hear me, Mr. Teamster union man? That's hashtag get_here_early_or_else! And I mean on time!

CRATCHIT: *(Completely cowed by the yelling.)* Yes, sir. I understand. Six o'clock. *(Starts to exit, mumbling.)* What a chicken outfit this is!

SCROOGE: *(Shouts.)* Cratchit!

CRATCHIT: *(Shouts.)* What?! *(Normal voice.)* I mean, yes, sir. What is it, sir?

SCROOGE: Blow out your candle, Bobby-boy. *(Exits.)*

CRATCHIT: *(To the tune of "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," sings.)*

"Good Lord, why do I put up with him?
He doesn't care that...I'm alive.
Not a thing I do ever pleases him
I'll do my best to survive.

My fam'ly I must look after,
I love being home with my wife.
But if my uncle has his way,
I'm stuck here the rest of my life.

All my work seems to come out wrong.
I'm frustrated! And I could cry.
I work my fingers to the bone,
He'd just as soon see me die.

Oh, Lord, how much more must I endure?
My uncle does not have a clue
If I could only get through to him
I'm angry! But what can I do?"

(Crosses to his desk. To himself, mumbling.) Why do I put up
with this? He is my uncle, but I shouldn't have to take
treatment like this from anybody. *(Gets an idea.)* I should
un-friend him on Facebook! That's what I should do!
(Mockingly.) "Blow out your candle, Bobby-boy! Blow out
your candle, Bobby-boy!" Ooooooh! I could just scream!
Aaaargh! *(Blows out the candle. Blackout.)*

Scene 2

(AT RISE: Street outside Scrooge's office. Carolers enter, singing.)

CAROLER 1, 2, 3: *(Sing.)*

“Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
Fa-la-la-la-la-la la-la-la.
’Tis the season to be jolly,
Fa-la-la-la-la-la la-la-la.
Don we now our gay apparel,
Fa-la-la-la-la-la la-la-la.
As we sing the Yuletide carol,
Fa-la-la-la-la-la la-la-la.”

(Scrooge enters. Caroler 1 crosses to him. Note: For the following, music continues with Carolers humming.)

CAROLER 1: Oh, Mr. Scrooge, sir, I wonder if you might look into your heart and perhaps give us a small contribution on behalf of the Double-A-M-T-D-S-A-T-P?

SCROOGE: What the heck does the “Double-A-M-T-D-S-A-T-P” stand for?

CAROLER 1: I honestly haven’t the foggiest notion, sir, but do you think you could possibly help us?

SCROOGE: My dear man, are you aware that I have an aunt who has been in a nursing home requiring constant around-the-clock care for over 20 years?

CAROLER 1: Oh, no, sir. I’m so sorry. I wasn’t aware of that.

SCROOGE: And did you know that my dear baby sister has been institutionalized with an incurable disease for the last ten years?

CAROLER 1: Oh, dear! No, sir, I’m afraid I didn’t know that, either.

SCROOGE: And did you also know that my dear mother is in a tiny efficiency apartment that doesn't even have running water or heat?

CAROLER 1: Oh, my! No, sir. I wasn't aware of that, either.

SCROOGE: Well, if I don't give *them* anything, why would I give *you* anything? Good day, sir.

(Scrooge exits. Music swells as Carolers exit. Blackout.)

Scene 3

(AT RISE: Scrooge's bedroom. A sparsely furnished room with a couch, a table, and a chair. Scrooge is sitting on the couch reading a very oversized book entitled, "Mushrooms for Fun and Profit." There is a blanket at the foot of the couch. Stage Manager enters and bangs his gong 11 times.)

SCROOGE: (To himself.) Good heavens, where has the time gone? It's 11 o'clock already. (Stage Manager hits the gong once again and exits with his props.) Correction: 12 o'clock. (Puts down his book, face up. Sarcastically.) Oh, goodness me, it's Christmas! Bah! Humbug!

(To the tune of "O Come, All Ye Faithful," sings.)

"Oh, Christmas is nothing, it's just a humbug to me,
It's really one pain, right in the you...know...where,
Parents rush like crazy, buying presents for their kids,
They're broken in a minute, they're broken in a minute
Kids break them in a minute, a total waste, I swear!

Christmas drives me crazy, parents buying out the store,
They throw away good money, on things they can't afford,
To keep their children happy, they keep their children
happy,
To keep their children happy, they're buying out the whole
store,
The little brats don't care one bit, 'cause all they want is
more!

Please, won't you tell me, why you need a Christmas?
Tell me who started this? I'd like to know!
Did it start lately? Or was it many years ago?
I do not remember, I simply can't remember,

Yes, Christmas is a humbug, and...I...don't...care!"

(Spoken.) So who needs it? Not me! (Takes the blanket and lies down on couch. He covers himself as the lights dim.) Christmas! Bah, humbug! It's just another day! Even Walmart is open. No big deal. No big deal at all! (Turns over and starts to go to sleep, mumbling the whole time.)

MARLEY: (Offstage, ghostly voice, calls.) Eben-eezer! (Green lights come up slowly. Calls.) Eben-eeeezer! Eben-eezer Scrooooooge!

(Scrooge rises.)

SCROOGE: (Frightened.) What?! What is it?! Who's there?!

(Marley enters, carrying a long chain that stretches across the stage.)

MARLEY: Ebenezer Scrooge, it is I, Marley, your former friend and partner.

SCROOGE: Marley? Bob or Ziggy?

MARLEY: (To audience, normal voice, aside.) Oh, how soon they forget. (To Scrooge.) Not Bob Marley, dummy, Jacob Marley!

SCROOGE: Oh, that Marley.

MARLEY: Of course, *that* Marley. Sheeesh! Stick a Q-tip in your ear once in awhile and give it a twirl. Get the wax out, Scroogie.

SCROOGE: (Sarcastic.) Well, I am *sooo* sorry! So, ah, Jared, how have you been?

MARLEY: (Correcting.) "Jacob."

SCROOGE: Whatever.

MARLEY: How have I been, you ask? I've been *dead*, that's how I've been! What a dumb question! Look at me, Ebenezer, I've been dead for over 20 years. I'm a lousy ghost, for crying out loud! I am *dead*! Sheeesh! Did you get a good whiff of me? I'm... (Spells.) ...D-E-A-D, *dead*!

SCROOGE: Oh...*oh*! I'm sorry! I wasn't thinking. I just thought maybe you hadn't gotten in the shower yet. Ha! Dead, huh?

MARLEY: Yes, dead. And all because I got a hold of some bad mushrooms. Even Pepto-Bismol didn't help. I was in and out of the john for a week. Talk about your Maalox moments!

SCROOGE: Bad mushrooms, you say? *(Turns his book face down.)* You can't be too careful these days, Jacob. All those pesticides and stuff...yuck! Maybe you should have gone organic.

MARLEY: You're telling me! The Big Mac and fries were no help either, believe me. *(Ghostly voice.)* But enough of this small talk, Ebenezer...enough of the niceties. We must get to the reason for my visit because I don't have much time to spend here on earth. I have to go back very, very soon.

SCROOGE: Aw, why don't you stick around for a little while? We can schmooze a bit, put on a couple of CDs, and listen to some nice, enjoyable music, or maybe watch a couple of neat videos...

MARLEY: No, I'm afraid I really can't stay at all.

SCROOGE: Oh, come on, Jacob. Stay a while. Don't rush off. You used to be such a fun guy.

MARLEY: Please! Don't say, "fun guy"! It reminds me of mushrooms!

SCROOGE: Sorry! No more fun, never mind. Come on, Jake... *(With southern accent.)* ...y'all come in and set a spell, y'hear?

MARLEY: *(Normal voice.)* No, Ebenezer, I really can't. Ever since I ate those lousy mushrooms, I've been constantly on the go! I mean, constantly! Want a hot stock tip? *(Takes a roll of toilet paper from his pocket.)* Buy [Scott Tissue]! Now where was I? *(Thinks.)* Oh, yeah. *(Ghostly voice.)* Ebenezer Scrooge, you have forgotten the true meaning of Christmas. I am here to show you the error of your ways. *[Or insert another toilet paper brand.]*

SCROOGE: What do you mean, Jacob?

MARLEY: What did I just say? Are you paying any attention to what I'm saying? Read my lips: I have come here to

show you the error of your ways. Is that plain enough? And I am really gonna lay it on you. (*Clears throat. Ghostly voice.*) You will be visited by three, count 'em, three spirits. The Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future. They will refresh your memory as to the true meaning of Christmas, and I hope that you learn your lesson or you will lead a life of misery for the rest of your days on earth and beyond. Look at me. Look at the chain I am forced to carry. (*Rattles his chain.*) This is the chain I forged by my deeds throughout my miserable life!

SCROOGE: The chain's pretty heavy, huh?

MARLEY: You wouldn't believe the pain I get from straining with this chain.

SCROOGE: You what?

MARLEY: (*Louder.*) I get such pain from straining with this chain.

SCROOGE: What was that again?

MARLEY: (*Louder.*) I said...I get such pain from straining with this chain!

SCROOGE: (*To audience.*) By George, I think he's got it!

MARLEY: (*Normal voice.*) Ebenezer! Knock it off! Professor Henry Higgins you ain't. And I'm sure as heck not Liza Doolittle!

SCROOGE: Sorry, Jacob. I couldn't resist. The chain really bothers you that much?

MARLEY: Like, it's a real drag, man!

SCROOGE: (*To audience.*) I knew that. (*To Marley.*) All right then, tell me, Jacob, please tell me what I must do.

MARLEY: (*Ghostly voice.*) Ask the spirits. There will be three. Count 'em, three. They will set you straight.

SCROOGE: Spirits? Oh, boy!

MARLEY: Hey, you want Bob Marley, Scroogie? Okay, you got him! (*Note: On the "oh's" of the first two verses, Marley circles Scrooge, tangling him in the chain on verse 1, then reversing direction on verse 2 to untangle him. On the third*

verse's "ooh's," Marley waggles his fingers in Scrooge's face, scaring him. Verse 1. Spoken.)

"Ebenezer, you're a fool and you're gonna rue the day.
You forgot the golden rule, Spirit 1 is warning you.
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
You will pay, hate to burst your bubble.
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
You will pay. You are in big trouble...now.

(Verse 2)

Spirit 2 will warn you, too, and she's from the present day.
Maybe she will get to you, hoping that you'll change your
way.
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
You will pay, hate to burst your bubble.
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
You will pay. You are in big trouble...now.

(Verse 3)

Spirit 3 knows you're a jerk. You are married to your work.
Stop your narcissistic ways, and you will see happier days.
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
Change your ways. Try to be a good guy.
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.
Change your ways. Scrooge please heed my warning...
now!"

(To audience.) Spooky, ain't I? *(To Scrooge.)* Oh, boy!
Nature's calling again loudly! I really gotta run now.
Arriverderci! Ta-ta! Cheerio! Auf Wiedersehen! Buenos
noches! Bon soir! And ciao!

(Marley exits quickly, dragging his chain. One end of the chain is still offstage, held by a stage hand. The chain is visible across the stage. Scrooge jumps off couch and crosses to where Marley exited. Both ends of the chain are offstage.)

SCROOGE: (*Shouts.*) Hey, wait! Don't go, Jacob! Don't leave me here alone! I'm frightened! Yep, that's what I'm feeling...fright! Jacob, I'm afraid! Jacob! Bob! Ziggy! Whoever you are! Come back! I'm scared! Ma! (*Crosses away. To audience.*) How do you like that guy? We were friends for so many years and he didn't even say goodbye!

(*Marley has gone around backstage, enters opposite, and is being pulled by the chain.*)

MARLEY: (*Calls.*) And goodbye, Ebenezer! (*Exits.*)

SCROOGE: (*Calls.*) Goodbye, Jacob! (*Crosses back to the couch. Shaken.*) Oh, my! What's going to happen to me? Was he telling me the truth about three...count 'em...three ghosts coming here? Will the spirits be here tonight?

GHOST 1: (*Big entrance.*) Hello, dere!

SCROOGE: (*Scared to death, jumps and screams.*) Oh, no!

GHOST 1: (*Taken aback, equally scared.*) What?! What?! (*Looks around the room and checks the bottom of her shoe for something.*)

SCROOGE: Who the heck are you? You scared the living daylight out of me! Coming into a room like that! Are you crazy or something?

GHOST 1: Oh, I am so sorry! Won't happen again, I promise. Eben-oo-zer Screege...

SCROOGE: (*Correcting.*) That's Eben-EE-zer Scrooge.

GHOST 1: Whatever. I am your friendly spirit. I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE: But you're female!

(*Scrooge crosses to Ghost 1.*)

GHOST 1: (*Sarcastic. Shouts.*) Nooooooo! You're kidding? A female? Me? How about that! Is that right, Sparky? You are amazing, oh, Great Carnak. What gave you the first clue, Dick Tracy? And don't try to get too friendly, buster. I would like to remind you that I am here on official ghost

business. It is my job to take you back into your past and show you all of your rotten childhood Christmases.

SCROOGE: Rotten childhood Christmases? Oh, no, that's not so. Why, when I was young, all my Christmases were happy.

GHOST 1: *(Sadly.)* They were? Darn, I was afraid of that. Mine weren't.

SCROOGE: They weren't? *(Ghost 1 sadly shakes her head no.)* I'm truly sorry to hear that. Didn't you ever get any presents, or have a tree, or anything like that? *(Ghost 1 shakes her head no.)* Come...sit down and tell me all about it.

(Ghost 1 sits on the couch.)

GHOST 1: Presents? Oh, yeah, I got a present once...a doll. A lousy, full-sized Barbie doll that walked and talked.

SCROOGE: Well, a doll is a nice present. Why do you call her "lousy"?

GHOST 1: How would you feel about your doll if she ran away?

SCROOGE: She ran away?

GHOST 1: All right, so she walked away. What's the difference? I should never have put in those Energizer batteries. They just kept going and going and...anyway, that was the only present I ever got. And I never even got anything for my birthdays.

SCROOGE: Well, it certainly sounds like you didn't have a very happy childhood. Tell me all about it, you poor thing.

(Scrooge sits on the chair next to the couch. Ghost 1 lies down on the couch as if in a therapist's office.)

GHOST 1: Well, it all started when I was eight years old, and I met the boy of my dreams. His name was Kenny, and he lived right next door...and it was love at first sight...

(Pause.) ...for both of us. He was a real hunk, if you know what I mean.

SCROOGE: Yes. Yes, I do. Go on...

GHOST 1: Well, we kind of had this thing going all through school. We'd do our homework together or share an Orange Julius at the mall, and we were planning on getting married and having a family...

(Pause.)

SCROOGE: Yes, yes? Go on...

GHOST 1: The doll that walked away came back. Don't ask me how or why, but she just decided to come back. She never even called. But the minute Kenny spotted her—curly blonde hair, big blue eyes—it was curtains for me. He had a Barbie fixation, and I never had one lousy clue! *(To the music of "Good King Wenceslas, angrily sings.)*

"What's she got that I ain't got? Absolutely nothing
Pamp'ring him and coddling him like he was a King
When he first laid eyes on her, I could see that look
I knew what was happening... *(Taps head.)* ...read him like
a book.

He was smitten I could tell
Never left her side. In an instant it was done
She became his bride. I was just beside myself
I thought Ken was mine.
She lured him away from me,
That was out of li-i-ine!"

(Spoken, very agitated.) And if I ever get my hands on that miserable, man-stealing, overpriced bleached blonde, I'll tear out her rotten batteries with my bare hands!

SCROOGE: Calm down, calm down. Kenny? Ken and Barbie, huh? Somehow I'm not that surprised. Anyway, nobody's perfect.

GHOST 1: Yeah, well...hey, look, it's been fun and all, but I really got to go now. *(Rises.)* It was good talking to you. I mean, getting things off my chest and all that. I really appreciate it. *(Punches his arm.)* What a pal!

SCROOGE: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That will be \$10 for tonight's session.

GHOST 1: Do you take MasterCard? Or would you mind billing me?

SCROOGE: Oh, sure, I'll be happy to bill you. Don't worry.

GHOST 1: Can we try for the same time next week?

SCROOGE: Well, why don't we try for an earlier appointment, shall we? We got lots to talk about. Say about nine-ish?

GHOST 1: Sounds fine to me. See you then. Yeah, I do have so much to tell you. Goodnight, and thanks again. You're okay, pal. *(Punches his arm again. Exits.)*

SCROOGE: *(Calls.)* Goodnight. *(Pause. To himself.)* Huh! Well, if that's the way things are going to be, it can't be too bad. At least, this first visit wasn't bad at all. Ten bucks, huh? Profitable, too! Ah, poor kid. I wonder what the other two spirits will be like? Oh, well, patience, Ebenezer, my boy, you'll see soon enough, I'm sure. *(Knock on door. Calls.)* Come on in, it's open.

(Ghost 2 enters.)

GHOST 2: *(Speaks with a thick accent.)* Hello, sveet-hot. Excuse me, please, but am I in the right building? Did you know that your elevator ain't voiking? Four flights of stairs I had to walk up. I thought I was in "The Big Bang Theory" for a minute. Here's what you'll do: you'll call the super, and he'll have it fixed in a jiffy, okay? Sure, okay. So, how do you do, sir? *(Goes to shake hands but has paper in her right hand. She pulls her hand back as Scrooge extends his hand. She transfers the paper to her left hand. Scrooge pulls back his hand as she extends her hand. They don't shake hands.)* Sorry. Say, listen, I'm looking for a... *(Checks the paper.)* ...Mr. Eben-oo-zer

Scrooge. My GPS told me that I've reached my destination.
Is he about?
SCROOGE: (*Correcting.*) That's Eben-EE-zer.
GHOST 2: Whatever. Is Mr. Scrooge about?
SCROOGE: Is he about what?
GHOST 2: I beg your pardon, sir?
SCROOGE: Is he about what? About six feet tall? About 40
years old? About *what*?
GHOST 2: What I meant was...is he in the building? Is he *here*?
SCROOGE: Who?
GHOST 2: Mister... (*Checks paper again.*) ...Eben-oo-zer—
(*Stops.*) No, no, wait. (*Tries again.*) Eben-EE-zer Scrooge.
SCROOGE: Oh. (*Nodding.*) Yes, he is.
GHOST 2: Oh. (*Nodding. Long pause.*) Well, may I *spea*k to
him?
SCROOGE: Speak to whom?
GHOST 2: To him. I mean, he. No, I mean *him*!
SCROOGE: To Scrooge?
GHOST 2: Right!
SCROOGE: That's me!
GHOST 2: That's *who*?
SCROOGE: Me!
GHOST 2: You?
SCROOGE: Yes!
GHOST 2: Oh! (*Pause.*) Now vere ver vee? Oh, yes! You're
Scrooge.
SCROOGE: Right. Now, who are *you*?
GHOST 2: Who, me? Why, I'm the...I'm the...uh, wait. Give
me a second.
SCROOGE: (*Slowly, prompting.*) You're the Ghost...
GHOST 2: I'm the ghost...ghost? (*Screams.*) Oy, vey! Dere's a
ghost? Vere?
SCROOGE: *You're* the ghost!
GHOST 2: (*Realizes.*) Oh! Oh, yeah! I'm the ghost!
SCROOGE: (*Slowly, prompting.*) You're...the Ghost of...
GHOST 2: I'm...the Ghost of...

SCROOGE: *(Slowly, prompting.)* The Ghost of...

GHOST 2: Wait! Wait! Don't tell me! Let me guess. I love guessing games. I'll get it. Let's see now... *(Thinks.)* The Ghost of... *(Thinks.)* Uh, doggone it! It's right on the tip of my tongue! I know my own name as well as...I...know...my...own...name.

SCROOGE: Shall I give you another hint?

GHOST 2: Yeah, yeah, keep the clues coming, bubbala. This is more fun than Trivial Pursuit! It's just that I've been having trouble with remembering little things lately. I can't remember from vun minute to the next. Little things just keep slipping my mind.

SCROOGE: When did you first notice this?

GHOST 2: Ven did I foist notice vot?

SCROOGE: Forgetting things.

GHOST 2: Oh, that! How did *you* know about dot? Oh, anyway, I don't remember. Look, I still can't remember who I am. Now don't distoib mine train of thought. I think I'm on a roll.

SCROOGE: Sweetheart, you're not even on a bagel.

GHOST 2: What?

SCROOGE: Sorry. Never mind. *(Slowly.)* Now, listen. You...

GHOST 2: ...I... *(Nods head in agreement with each word.)*

SCROOGE: ...are...

GHOST 2: ...are...*am*...

SCROOGE: ...the...

GHOST 2: ...the...

SCROOGE: ...Ghost...

GHOST 2: ...Ghost...

SCROOGE: ...of Christmas...

GHOST 2: ...of Christmas...

SCROOGE: ...Present.

GHOST 2: ...Present.

SCROOGE: That's right!

GHOST 2: That's right!

SCROOGE: Now, say it all together.

GHOST 2: Say vot all together?

SCROOGE: (*Angrily.*) "I am the Ghost of Christmas Present!"

GHOST 2: Oh, that's just terrific! So now ve know who *you* are, but ve still don't know who I am! Geez!

SCROOGE: (*Frustrated.*) *You* are the Ghost of Christmas Present!

GHOST 2: I *am*?

SCROOGE: (*Shouts.*) Yes, you am...are!

GHOST 2: Den vye did you just tell me that *you* ver da ghost? You are getting me so farklemp!

SCROOGE: I didn't tell you that I was the ghost. Oh, never mind. *You* are the Ghost of Christmas Present. Trust me on this one.

GHOST 2: Boy, I thought you'd *never* get it! (*Pause.*) So then, who are you?

SCROOGE: (*Shouts.*) Scrooge! Scrooge!

GHOST 2: Oh, yes. You're Scrooge-Scrooge!

SCROOGE: No. No, just Mr. Scrooge, dummy!

GHOST 2: Okay, Mr. Scrooge-dummy.

SCROOGE: (*Shouts.*) No!

GHOST 2: No?

SCROOGE: (*Shouts.*) No! No! No! (*Calming down.*) Forget it. And I'm sure that you will. Look, *you're* supposed to tell *me* all about the present Christmas...all the nice things happening today...the Christmas spirit and all that great holiday stuff.

GHOST 2: *I'm* supposed to do dat?

SCROOGE: Yes, you are! You're supposed to tell me all about goodwill to men, love and brotherhood, peace on earth, joy to the world...all that good stuff. Positive thoughts!

GHOST 2: But if you already know all dot, den vye do I have to tell you?

SCROOGE: Because I'm rotten, that's why! I haven't given my lazy assistant, Bob Cratchit, a raise in years. I don't celebrate Christmas. I don't believe in it. It's a bah! It's a humbug!

GHOST 2: Right! Boy, you sure got me convinced! Christmas is really a bummer!

SCROOGE: What do you mean, *you're* convinced? Christmas is not supposed to be a bummer. *You're* supposed to tell *me* that I'm wrong about Christmas!

GHOST 2: I am?

SCROOGE: Yes, of course, you are. You have to convince me that Christmas is good if you want this story to have a happy ending.

GHOST 2: I didn't know dot! (*To "O Little Town of Bethlehem," sings.*)

"I'm so confused, I really don't remember a gosh-darn thing. So who's to say what's good or bad about Christmas songs we sing.

I somehow can't remember, does Santa have a sleigh?

So why am I the one to tell what's going on today?

Christmas can be wonderful, I haven't heard it's not,

Or could it be a bummer, who knows, and I forgot!

Who was the one who really came...upon a midnight clear?

How can I tell you anything when I forgot last year?"

(*Spoken.*) So knowing dat I really don't know a darn thing about Christmas, I'm still supposed to tell you dot it's a great idea?

SCROOGE: Yes, that's the way it's supposed to be. You have to tell me.

GHOST 2: Well, how do you like them apples! (*Angry.*) Boy, nobody ever tells me anything! Look, buddy, dis is only a part-time job, and there ain't a heckuva lot of money in it. And the hours are rotten! And the constant schlepping back and forth—economy class yet—and the aggravation I gotta take. You, schnook that you are, you shouldn't even have to worry about the lousy aggravation! It ain't voith it! No lousy job is voith da blood, da sweat, and da tears dot I got to put into it! No, sir! Just to convince you dot Christmas is good 'cause I've had it! I was at the mall, minding mine

own business, like I always do, and mine beeper goes off—beep, beep, beep—and it's dot Jake Marley calling. He's a nice boy, but his wardrobe...needs a lotta woik. I have a cousin, woiks in the garment district, who could do vunders for him, maybe something in a nice gabardine, but I digress. So, any vay, you can end this story any vay you vant 'cause I'm leaving. Goodnight! So long! Farewell! Auf Wiedersehen, goodbye! (*Exits. Offstage, shouts.*) I'm giving up dis crazy job! I can't take da pressure anymore! Oy, I've had it! Dot's it! No more! I'm resigning and dot's de end of it! (*Enters.*) Hey! You know something? I just remembered! I'm not even de *real* Ghost of Christmas Present. I'm a stunt double! I'm just filling in for her vile she's on vacation at Sandals in da Bahamas! How do you like dot? I'm such a meshuga. (*Exits. Pokes her head back in.*) And for your information, Mr. Smart-Guy-Know-It-All, my name is Shoiley! (*Exits.*)

SCROOGE: (*To audience.*) Boy, did you ever see such a grouch! I have heard about a lot of strange things in my lifetime, but a Christmas ghost with high blood pressure? And not even the real ghost at that! Anyway, I hope she comes back. She could really use some help. I can probably fit her in on Tuesdays from 2 to 4 p.m. I don't see how anything can possibly top those two weirdoes! I can hardly wait to see what my good old friend... (*Thinks.*) What's his name? (*Remembers.*) Marley! Sends me for Christmas future! (*Eating a banana, Ghost 3 enters behind Scrooge and follows in his footsteps as Scrooge continues.*) Geez, it must be awfully late by now. I wish that last ghost would hurry up and get here so we can get this nonsense over with and I can— (*Turns around and bumps into Ghost 3. Screams.*) Aaaaaaagh!

GHOST 3: (*Screams.*) Aaaaaaagh! Geez! Don't do that! Hey, there, Scroogie-baby! I am what's gonna be happening.

SCROOGE: Go away, kid. Can't you see I'm busy? And, please, don't go around scaring people like that, either. Who

let you in here, anyway? Isn't it past your bedtime, shorty? Or are you here to rip off my stereo and my DVR? What?

GHOST 3: Now just a chicken-pluckin' minute, pal! I am not here to rip off anything! Who the heck do you think you're talking to? Do you have any idea at all who I am?

SCROOGE: Look, squirt, I bought the cookies you little brats push. *Seven* bucks I spent on your lousy cookies. And if you want to look it up in your records, I get the chocolate-mint Floozies or something like that. Now, beat it, kid. I'm expecting the Ghost of Christmas Future.

GHOST 3: That's me! I'm the Ghost of Christmas Future.

SCROOGE: (*Unconvinced.*) Right! And I'm a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle! Please, buzz off, kid, you bother me.

GHOST 3: Look, don't be a nerd, you nerd! I really am the Ghost of Christmas Future. And I'm not a kid! I'm a full-grown woman!

SCROOGE: You? A full-grown woman? You're putting me on! You're an elf...a leprechaun, maybe. But you a full-grown woman? I don't think so.

GHOST 3: (*Stamping foot, shouts.*) I am, too!

SCROOGE: Well, by golly, what the heck happened? A nuclear war? A plague? Multiple mutations! Leaping lizards! Look, if *you* are a full-grown woman, then I am the Jolly Green Giant! Jolly, I ain't, but green I am fast becoming!

GHOST 3: And how would you enjoy having a swift kick right in the butt, Scroogie? Didn't Jake Marley tell you that I had the power to end your miserable life?

SCROOGE: Yeah, he did. But he also told me that the second ghost would be sharp as a knife, but, oh, boy, was he wrong! Oh, wait, she was just a stand-in.

GHOST 3: Well, he's not wrong about me! Listen, buster, I was sent to you from the future to show you what lies ahead for you if you continue to be the mean, rotten, obnoxious, disgusting person you are today...and those are your *good* points! So pay attention, dum-dum, and you just might learn something. Now shaddup while I check my crystal

ball to see if our show is on yet. (*Takes a small ball from her pocket, looks at it, and gives it a few shakes.*) Doggone it! These transistorized, portable crystal balls are great for schlepping, but the batteries run down fast and the reception stinks!

[END OF FREEVIEW]