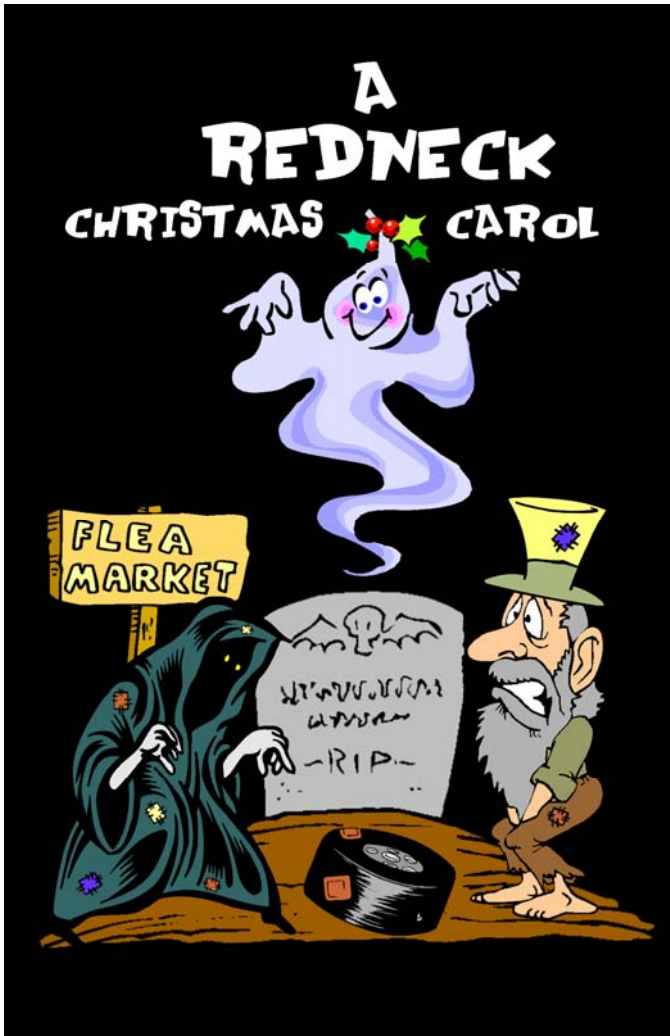


A
REDNECK
CHRISTMAS CAROL



R. Eugene Jackson

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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A REDNECK CHRISTMAS CAROL

HOLIDAY COMEDY WITH MUSIC. This is one Dickens of a tale! This modern-day redneck Scrooge lives in a single-wide trailer where he counts his money from his bizness running some stalls in a Florida flea market. It's the hottest Christmas Eve in the hist'ry o' Florid-ee and Scrooge tells his employees, Bobby "Bowlegs" Cratchit and Honeydew, that they will have to work on Christmas. Later that evening, Scrooge is visited by the Ghost of Christmas Past who looks a lot like a redneck Santa Claus; the Ghost of Christmas Present who resembles a redneck Christmas tree; and the Ghost of Christmas Future...well, he may be the black sheet of the family! Then a group of zombies led by the Ghost of Jacob Marley arrive and Scrooge realizes that the only way to git 'em back to their dingy-dang graves is to give 'em some Christmas presents. Fed up with bein' visited by crazy redneck ghostez and knowin' the Crachits only jist got taters fer Christmas dinner, Scrooge invites his employees and the whole Cratchit family to the flea market to celebrate Christmas with a dinner of seafood gumbo and few redneck Christmas carols!

Performance Time: Approximately 90 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(6 M, 15 F, 8 flexible, choir or soloist, extras)
(With doubling: 4 M, 11 F, 7 flexible, soloist)

EBENEZER SCROOGE: Redneck who lives in a single-wide trailer where he counts his money from his bizness running some stalls in a Florida flea market; wears old clothing with patches, shoes without soles, a tattered black cape with holes in it, and a patched top hat or another unique hat.

JACOB MARLEY: Scrooge's former business partner who died seven years ago and is now a zombie.

GHOST OF LULUBELLE: Jacob Marley's wife who has been dead for seven years and speaks with a spooky voice; wears a dirty, torn, raggedy white sheet with a few patches on it, white gloves, shoes, cap or beret, and a white hood over her head; her face is totally white except for lipstick and mascara.

FUTURE: Ghost of Christmas Future who is an inarticulate karate aficionado and speaks in karate sign language; wears a patched black sheet with a pink sash; flexible.

PRESENT: Ghost of Christmas Present who resembles a redneck Christmas tree; wears white sheet and hood with Christmas lights and ornaments hang from one or more sashes draped from her shoulders to her hips; there is a holly wreath on her head with glittery Christmas tree icicles that hang from it and a star rests on the top of her head; moves and speaks with raw elegance; female. Note: If possible, Christmas lights blink.

PAST: Ghost of Christmas Past who resembles a redneck Santa Claus; wears a white sheet with a white hood, a red Santa hat, a large black belt, and a long white beard; female.

BLUBBER 1-4: Bumbling ghosts who make up a secret paramilitary unit; wear white sheets with belts, military caps or helmets; carry weapons and military backpacks; flexible.

- MAYDEEN:** Flea market customer and marble-shootin' champ o' Osceola County; wears redneck clothing; female.
- JOLENE:** Flea market customer; wears redneck clothing; female.
- HONEYDEW:** One of Scrooge's flea market stall clerks; moves and speaks in virtual slow-motion at all times; female.
- TACKY JACKIE/TACKY JACK:** Sassy janitor who works for Scrooge; flexible.
- EMMYLOU:** One of Scrooge's employees; wears mechanic's overalls and has grease smears on her clothes and face; female.
- MRS. DILBER:** Scrooge's house maid; wears redneck clothing.
- MRS. WATKIN:** Scrooge's laundress; wears redneck clothing.
- BOBBY "BOWLEGS" CRACHIT/ITTY BITTY TIM:** One of Scrooge's flea market stall clerks; speaks for Itty Bitty Tim (a puppet) in ventriloquist style while manipulating the puppet's mouth and one arm; puppet has a small crutch in one hand.
- MRS. CRACHIT:** Bobby's wife; wears an old party dress that is now patched and has ribbons and loose hems hanging from it.
- MARTHA CRACHIT:** Eldest daughter; wears redneck teenage clothing.
- BELINDA CRACHIT:** Teenage daughter; wears redneck teenage clothing.
- FREDDIE:** Scrooge's cheerful nephew; wears ratty redneck clothes and a cap or hat.
- WIFE:** Freddie's wife.
- FANNIE:** Scrooge's sister; wears ratty redneck clothing.
- YOUNG SCROOGE:** Scrooge as he appeared at about 10 years old; wears ratty redneck children's clothes.
- TEEN SCROOGE:** Scrooge as a teenager; wears ratty redneck teenage clothing and shoes without soles. Note: can be played by the same actor as young scrooge.

ALICE: Teen Scrooge's girlfriend; wears ratty redneck teenage clothing and shoes without soles.

OLD JOE/JOLENE: Pawnshop owner; smokes a pipe and wears redneck clothing; flexible.

SOLOIST: Member of the choir; flexible.

GHOST: Ghost who indicates whether Scrooge is lying by ringing a bell or blowing a horn; non-speaking; flexible.

EXTRAS: As Zombies and Choir Members.

OPTIONS FOR DOUBLING

TEEN SCROOGE/YOUNG SCROOGE (male)

BLUBBER 1/ZOMBIE (flexible)

BLUBBER 2/FANNIE (female)

BLUBBER 3/ ZOMBIE (flexible)

BLUBBER 4/ALICE (female)

OLD JOE/JACOB MARLEY (male)

MRS. DILBER/ZOMBIE (female)

MRS. WATKIN/ZOMBIE (female)

SOME PRONUNCIATIONS

That=THA-ut

Cents=SEE-unts

Yes=YEY-us

Yeah=YEY-uh

Ma'am=MAY-um

Swear=SWAY-ur

SETTING

Christmas Eve, a flea market in rural central Florida. The weather is hot and humid.

SET

There are two tables covered with miscellaneous flea market objects for sale. Honeydew's table is SRC. Bobby's table is SLC. Both have several chairs. Among other things on Bobby's table are a marble and an open bag of cornmeal. At UC is a stool and lectern or tall or elevated desk where Scrooge sits to observe and loom over his underlings. A small decorated Christmas tree is visible along with Christmas lights strung from posts or walls.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I: Florida flea market, Christmas Eve.

ACT II: Florida flea market, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

PROPS

- | | |
|---|--|
| Miscellaneous flea market items | Cloths or sheets to cover flea market tables |
| Marble or doll's eye | Raggedy, patched nightshirt and night cap, for Scrooge |
| Open bag of corn meal | Ugly/outrageous sandals or slippers, for Scrooge |
| Sweat rag or handkerchief | Cymbals |
| Broom | Notepad |
| Dust pan | Several books |
| Dirty handkerchief, for Bobby | Comic book |
| Wall thermometer | Tablecloth |
| Large electric fan (similar to a barn fan or ones at Home Depot, if possible) | Plates, bowls, spoons, ladle |
| Child's pinwheel | Itty Bitty Tim puppet (has a cast on his leg and a tiny crutch.) |
| Business papers | Hanky, for Mrs. Crachit |
| Cell phone, for Scrooge | Smoking pipe, for Old Joe |
| Desk clock | Old flat tire |
| Small bell with ringer or mallet | 2 Huge bundles/bags filled with Scrooge's possessions |
| Medium bell, or other noise maker | 2 Spoons bent at a 90-degree angle |
| Large bell, or other noise maker/air horn | Cooking pot (opt.) |
| Purse, for Maydeen | Can of ravioli (opt.) |
| Purse, for Jolene | Bottle of Old Spice aftershave (opt.) |
| 2 Large beat-up totes | Can of roach spray (opt.) |
| Coins | Toothbrush with smashed bristles |
| Large paper sack | 3 Dollar bills |
| \$20 bill | Gravestone marker |
| Sheet of paper | Ratty handkerchief, for Scrooge |
| Bic pen | |
| Duct tape | |
| Weapons (batons, knives, baseball bats, etc. for Blubbers) | |
| 4 Military backpacks, for Blubbers | |
| Watch, for Bobby | |

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Wad of bills
Worn wallet, for Scrooge
Beat-up serving tray
Glasses of lemonade

Big gumbo pot
Potholders
Bowls for gumbo
Spoons

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Live or recorded accompaniment
to "Jingle Bells"

Live or recorded accompaniment
to "Silent Night" or another
Christmas carol

Bell tolling midnight

Thunder

Ghost sounds (loud moans,
chains clanking, mysterious
music, guttural laughter,
etc.)

Sad music

Note: One or more of the following jug band instruments may
be included as accompaniment: washtub bass, jug,
washboard, kazoo, guitar, banjo, harmonica, and spoons.

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DASHIN' O'ER THE BEACH,
IN A OLD RED PICKUP TRUCK.
O'ER THE DUNES WE GO,
LAUGHIN' AT OUR LUCK.
HEAR OUR VOICES RANG,
MAKIN' SPIRITS BRIGHT.
WHAT FUN IT IS TO LAUGH AN' SANG
A CHRISTMAS SONG TONIGHT!

ACT I

(AT RISE: Christmas Eve, a flea market in rural central Florida. There are two tables covered with miscellaneous flea market objects for sale. Honeydew's table is SRC. Bobby's table is SLC. Both have several chairs. Among other things on Bobby's table are a marble and an open bag of cornmeal. At USC is a stool and lectern or tall or elevated desk where Scrooge sits to observe and loom over his underlings. A small decorated Christmas tree is visible, along with Christmas lights strung from posts or walls. Though it is wintertime, the folks wear summer redneck clothes, including hats or baseball caps, and perspire, often wiping their brows and fanning themselves with whatever happens to be available. Present are Honeydew, Bobbie "Bowlegs" Crachit, Tacky Jackie, Maydeen, Jolene, Emmylou, accompaniment for the choir or soloist, and others as desired. The Vocalist or Choir sing the following to the melody of "Jingle Bells" while the others watch.)

CHOIR/VOCALIST: (Sing in a Redneck dialect.)

Dashin' o'er the beach
In a old red pickup truck;
O'er the dunes we go
Laughin' at our luck;
Hear our voices rang [ring]
Makin' spirits bright;
What fun it is to laugh an' sang
A Christmas song tonight.

Spittin' soil, spewin' oil,
Clangin' all the way;
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a Ford from fifty-eight;
Honkin' horn, that's to warn
Anythang in our way;
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a rusty Ford V-Eight.

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(Optional: The accompaniment plays an interlude.)

ALL: Spittin' soil, spewin' oil,
Clangin' all the way;
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a Ford from fifty-eight;
Honkin' horn, that's to warn
Anythang in our way;
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a rusty Ford V-Eight.

(Everyone applauds and cheers.)

MAYDEEN: It shore is hot! *(Wipes away perspiration with a cloth.)*

JOLENE: It's always hot in Florid-ee.

MAYDEEN: On Christmas Eve?

EMMYLOU: *(To Choir or Vocalist.)* That was mighty nice sangin', y'all. How's about doin' us another 'un?

(Others loudly agree. Scrooge enters UC wearing usual redneck clothing and a tattered black cape and a patched top hat or other unique hat.)

SCROOGE: *(Growling.)* Whut's the meanin' of this hyar frivolous dis-play o' idleness an' idiot-ry?! *(In shock, the people stop, gasp aloud, cringe at his voice, and move apart, giving him CS.)* Sounds to me like y'all er havin' some sort o' fun down hyar, an' I don't like it. *(Others ad-lib apologies.)* 'Cause yew ain't s'pposed to be havin' no fun. Fun is fer loafers an' idlers an' good-fer-nuthins. Now skedaddle! Go on. Git gone. Git! Git!

(All but Bobby "Bowlegs" and Honeydew exit, mumbling complaints about Scrooge. Bobby remains SL. Honeydew is SR.)

(Bobby shyly steps forward.)

BOBBY: 'Scuse us, Ebene, uh...Ebene, uh...Ebene, uh...Mr. Scrooge, the nicest ol' boy whut that I know an' the best boss a nobody like me could ever have.

SCROOGE: Bobby Bowlegs! Yew cain't git on my good side by bein' nice to me... 'cause I ain't got no good side.

BOBBY: But, sir, we was jist enjoyin' the Christmas spirit in our souls. An' the name is "Robert," sir. "Robert Crachit."

SCROOGE: Bah! Do I pay yew to enjoy the holiday? Do I, Bobby Bowlegs?

BOBBY: No, sir. Yew don't pay us hardly nuthin'.

SCROOGE: That's right. An' that thar's 'zactly whut yew deserve.

BOBBY: Yes, sir. Yer right, sir. We ain't nuthin', an' we don't deserve nuthin'.

SCROOGE: Well said! *(To Honeydew.)* An' whut chu doin' jist a-standin' thar doin' nuthin'?

HONEYDEW: *(Moves and speaks in virtual slow motion at all times.)* Well, I'm jist a-standin' hyar doin' nuthin'.

SCROOGE: Well, stop jist a-standin' thar doin' nuthin' an' do sumthin'.

HONEYDEW: Yeah, okay. *(Doesn't move.)*

SCROOGE: Well? Why ain't yew a-movin'?

HONEYDEW: Well, yew didn't say *when* to do sumthin'.

SCROOGE: Now! Do it now!

HONEYDEW: Yeah, well, ain't no need to yell.

(Honeydew slowly sashays to her table SRC and sits behind it. Scrooge watches her and imitates her sashaying movements with his hands.)

SCROOGE: Well, Honeydew, yew jist about the slowest movin' person I ever did see.

HONEYDEW: Well, thank yew, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE: (*Raging.*) That ain't no compl-i-ment! (*Controls himself and gestures as before.*) But, honey, yew do move with style.

HONEYDEW: Why, thank yew, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE: Now git to work!

HONEYDEW: Yeah, okay. (*Slowly rises and arranges things on her table.*)

SCROOGE: (*To himself.*) Human bein's wasn't made to move that sloooooow! (*Turns and is startled to find Bobby wiping away perspiration and waiting for him.*) Ah! Bobby Bowlegs! Why ain't yew at yer stall?

BOBBY: (*Nervously.*) Well, Ebene, uh...Ebene, uh...Ebene, uh...Mr. Scrooge, sir, tomorra is Christmas Day an' we was a-wonderin' if'n we maybe could might possibly, you know, have the day off so's we could celebrate the holl-ee-day with our fam'lies.

SCROOGE: Day off?! Yer askin' fer a day off jist cause it's a holl-ee-day? What do yew thank this hyar is...a charity? (*Glares at him and Honeydew. Angrily.*) An' tomorra happens to be the busiest day of the dingy-dang year!

BOBBY: Uh, the busiest day of the year? Sir, we been a-workin' this hyar flea market ferever an' we only had three customers on Christmas Day in all that thar time.

HONEYDEW: That's right. An' they was a-tryin' to sell us the same junk we was a-tryin' to sell them.

BOBBY: Like used Girl Scout cookie boxes.

HONEYDEW: An' bent bus tokens.

BOBBY: An' thar ain't no buses hyar in rural Flori-dee.

HONEYDEW: An' tinfoil hats to per-tect us from [aliases] from outer space. [*"aliens"*]

BOBBY: We didn't make not a single sale.

HONEYDEW: But I did buy some of them thar bus tokens...jist in case they ever git any buses out cheer.

SCROOGE: If'n yew didn't make no sales, it was 'cause yew didn't work hard e-nuff. So y'all'll work tomorra, an' y'all'll make me a hunnert dollars. That's yer goal.

BOBBY: A hunnert dollars? In A-merican money?

HONEYDEW: Why, thar ain't that much money in the whooooole woorld.

SCROOGE: Make it...er yer [fahrd]! [*"Fired"*]

BOBBY: Fahrd? Oh, dear! I cain't lose my job. I'm already practically destitut-ed. I ain't even got enuff money fer a durn flat-screen TV fer Itty Bitty Tim. I have to carry him on my shoulder to the neighbor's house ever' day so's he can watch "Sesame Street."

HONEYDEW: How come he don't jist walk over thar like normal kids?

BOBBY: 'Cause he's lame.

SCROOGE: Lame, eh? Well, yew don't need no TV. They's bad fer yer feet, ya know.

BOBBY: TV is bad fer my feet?

SCROOGE: Yeah. 'Cause yew don't use 'em none while yer sittin' thar a-watchin' the dingy-dang thang. Now, git back to yer table!

BOBBY: Yes, sir. My table. My table. (*Moves to his table at SLC and begins to arrange things.*)

SCROOGE: Good. Workin' is good fer yew. Builds strong character.

HONEYDEW: Want me to work, too?

SCROOGE: I'd like to see that, but I don't believe in miracles.

(Carrying a broom and a dust pan, Tacky Jackie enters USR and approaches Scrooge. She is an older, sassy woman.)

JACKIE: (*To Scrooge.*) Git out the way thar so's I can sweep up that thar candy wrapper yer a-standin' on.

BOBBY: (*Sees the action and tries to correct Tacky Jackie.*) Uh, no, don't...no, no, no.

JACKIE: (*To Bobby.*) Whut?

SCROOGE: Jist who in this hyar dingy-dang world ere yew?

JACKIE: Why, ever'body whut knows anythan' knows who I am.

SCROOGE: Well, I don't.

JACKIE: Well, that jist means yew don't know nuthin'. I'm Tacky Jackie, o'course. (*Imitating Scrooge.*) "An' who in this hyar dingy-dang world ere yew?"

BOBBY: (*Gestures to Jackie to be quiet.*) Shhhh. Tacky Jackie, shhhh.

SCROOGE: (*To Jackie.*) I'm yer boss.

JACKIE: (*Not intimidated.*) Yeah? Then why ere yew a-standin' on that thar candy wrapper I'm s'pposed to be a-sweepin' up?

SCROOGE: (*Looks down.*) I ain't a-standin' on no candy wrapper. I'm a-standin' on the ground.

JACKIE: Candy wrapper.

SCROOGE: Ground.

JACKIE: I'll jist show yew.

(*Jackie grabs Scrooge's leg and lifts it up. Scrooge nearly falls over.*)

SCROOGE: Whut? Whut ere yew doin'?

JACKIE: Showin' yew whut yew got on the sole o' yer shoe.

SCROOGE: Put my leg down! Yew hyar me? Put my leg down!

JACKIE: No candy wrapper hyar.

(*Jackie drops Scrooge's leg.*)

SCROOGE: I told yew.

JACKIE: Maybe yew put it on the other foot. (*Lifts Scrooge's other leg.*) Let me have a look thar.

SCROOGE: (*Leans over so far this time that he has to hang onto one of the tables to prevent falling.*) Yeeoow! Stop that! Put that thar foot down!

JACKIE: See thar? Candy wrapper.

SCROOGE: (*Strains to see it.*) That ain't no candy wrapper.

JACKIE: Looks like a candy wrapper to me.

SCROOGE: That's my sock!

JACKIE: Yer sock is made o' candy wrappers?

(Scrooge yanks his foot away from Jackie and straightens up.)

SCROOGE: I kinda lost the sole to this hyar shoe, an' my sock was wore out, so I pasted them candy wrappers thar to protect my foot.

JACKIE: Ain't yew s'posed to be rich?

SCROOGE: I ain't s'posed to be rich. I *am* rich.

JACKIE: Then how come yew wear pants with patches an' shoes with no soles?

SCROOGE: Well, that's how I got to be rich. I don't spend my money. I save it.

JACKIE: Whut fer?

SCROOGE: So's I can be rich!

JACKIE: Why don't yew spend it?

SCROOGE: Then I wouldn't be rich.

JACKIE: But whut good is money if'n yew don't spend it?

SCROOGE: Whut good 'er yew a-standin' a-round shootin' off yer mouth instead o' doin' yer job?

(Pause.)

JACKIE: I need to sweep up that thar candy wrapper.

(Jackie lifts Scrooge's leg again.)

SCROOGE: Leave that thar foot be!

(Scrooge yanks his foot away and the momentum carries him across Honeydew's table, scattering items everywhere. Pause.)

HONEYDEW: *(To Scrooge.)* Yew wanna buy any o' that thar stuff you jist [ruint]? [*"Ruined"*]

SCROOGE: *(Growls.)* Arrgh! *(Rights himself and faces Jackie.)* Tacky Jackie, eh?

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JACKIE: Nope. Jist plain "Tacky Jackie." No "eh" on the end.

SCROOGE: Go away. Sweep sumwhar's else.

JACKIE: Well, don't expect me to come back hyar later an' sweep up whut I coulda done sweeped up now.

SCROOGE: (*Angrily.*) Git outta my sight! (*Jackie shrugs and takes a few steps toward USR.*) An' by the way, I'm cuttin' yer sal'ry back to minimum wage.

JACKIE: Great. That's a buck fifty more'n I'm a-makin' now.

SCROOGE: Then I'm a-cuttin' yew a buck fifty.

JACKIE: (*Shrugs.*) Great. Then I'm back whar I started from.
(*Exits USR.*)

SCROOGE: (*To himself.*) I hate sassy employees. Honeydew?

HONEYDEW: Yeah?

SCROOGE: Clean up this hyar mess yew done made.

(*Honeydew looks at Scrooge for a moment.*)

HONEYDEW: Well, I should be able to git to it maybe near the end of next week.

SCROOGE: Do it now. Or take a walk. (*Stands and moves a few steps away.*) Whut ere yew doin' now?

HONEYDEW: Yew done tole me to take a walk, so I'm takin' a—

SCROOGE: (*Gestures to the strewn items.*) Pick it up!

HONEYDEW: Yeah, okay. (*Slowly begins to pick up things and put them on her table.*)

LULUBELLE: (*Offstage, moans like a ghost.*) Ooooooooo!
Ooooooooo!

SCROOGE: (*Looks around.*) Whut was that?

HONEYDEW: Whut was whut?

SCROOGE: That "Ooooooooo!" Yew didn't hyar that?

LULUBELLE: (*Offstage, like a ghost.*) Scrooooo! (*Louder.*)
Scrooooo!

SCROOGE: (*To Bobby.*) Thar it is agin... 'ceptin' this time it's a-callin' my name.

BOBBY: I didn't hyar nuthin'.

(Lights dim.)

SCROOGE: It said, "Scrooooo! Scrooooo!"

LULUBELLE: *(Offstage.)* Ooooooooo! Ooooooooo!

SCROOGE: Now it's a-sayin', "Ooooooooo! Ooooooooo!"

LULUBELLE: *(Offstage.)* Scrooooo! Ooooooooo!

SCROOGE: Now it cain't make up its mind whut it's a-sayin'.

(To Ghost, calls.) Stop that thar "Ooooooooo-ing" an' "Scrooooo-ing" an' show yerself, whoever yew might be.

(Scrooge looks off SR. The Ghost of Lulubelle enters USL and rushes up to him. Scrooge turns just as she reaches him.)

SCROOGE/LULUBELLE: *(Scream.)* Yeeiiii!

(Lulubelle quickly turns and exits USL screaming. Scrooge slips under Honeydew's table to hide. The lights fade up to full. Honeydew crosses to the front of her table and stares down at Scrooge. Pause.)

HONEYDEW: Yew all comfy under thar?

(Bobby rushes to help Scrooge.)

BOBBY: Mr. Scrooge, ere yew all right?

(Bobby helps Scrooge out from under the table.)

SCROOGE: Git yer hands off-a me, Bobby Bowlegs. Of course, I'm all right. *(Stands.)*

BOBBY: Sir, yer white as a sheet. Yew look like yew seen a ghost.

SCROOGE: That's 'cause I did seen a ghost. It attacked me...right hyar. Didn't yew see it?

BOBBY: No, sir. I guess I was too busy wipin' the sweat off-a my face to see much of anythang. *(Wipes his face with a dirty*

handkerchief.) Mercy me! It shore is hot today. Must be near 'bout a hunnert degrees in the shade.

SCROOGE: Stop talkin' 'bout the heat when I'm a-talkin' 'bout a dingy-dang ghost.

HONEYDEW: *(As she moves back behind her table.)* I didn't see no ghost. All I seen was yew a-slidin' under my table. Why was yew a-slidin' under my table?

SCROOGE: *(Looks about for the Ghost.)* I give up. Jist...jist do yer job...an' I'll do mine. *(Pause.)* An' keep a lookout fer the ghost. It might decide to come back. *(Moves to his stool but continues to look around for the Ghost.)*

HONEYDEW: *(Skeptical.)* Yeah, shore.

BOBBY: It's just too plain hot to work today. It ain't never this hot on Christmas Eve even hyar in Florid-ee. Whew!

SCROOGE: It ain't all that hot. *(Checks a thermometer that is nailed to a wall or hanging from something.)* Hmmm. A hunnert an' ten. A little warmer than usual, I guess. *(Calls off USR.)* Emmylou? Emmylou, look in the back o' my pickup an' brang me that thar fan I done brought fer to cool off with.

BOBBY: A fan? Well, that oughta hep a little. Why, thank yew, Ebene, uh...Ebene, uh...Ebene, uh...Mr. Scrooge. That thar's very thoughtful o'yew.

HONEYDEW: Yeah, I could use some coolin' myself.

(Emmylou enters USR, carrying or rolling on the largest fan possible.)

EMMYLOU: Hyar yew ere, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE: Well, don't jist stand thar. Plug that thar dang thang in.

EMMYLOU: Shore thang.

SCROOGE: It don't work too well when it ain't plugged in.

EMMYLOU: I hear-ed yew.

SCROOGE: And turn it on afore I roast like a pig in this hyar heat.

(Emmylou plugs the fan in. Note: Emmylou and Scrooge will have to speak louder to overcome the noise of the fan.)

EMMYLOU: Thar yew go. How's that? A nice breeze?

SCROOGE: Well, tilt it jist a little ways more toward me.

(Emmylou tilts the fan toward Scrooge.)

EMMYLOU: Like [kiss]? [*"this"*]

SCROOGE: *(Shrugs.)* It'll do, I guess. *(Emmylou approaches Honeydew and engages her in a mimed conversation. Bobby approaches Scrooge and, without saying anything, tries to catch some of the breeze. Unsatisfied, Bobby moves to a better place. Still unsatisfied, Bobby moves between the fan and Scrooge.)*
Bobby Bowlegs! Whut ere yew a-doin' standin' be-twixt me an' my fan?

BOBBY: Tryin' to git cool, sir.

SCROOGE: Well, yer cuttin' off all my coolin'.

BOBBY: Oh. Sorry, sir. But it's sultry hot, and yew have the only-ist fan.

SCROOGE: *(Smiles.)* Don't be silly, Bowlegs. I brought sumthin' fer yew, too.

BOBBY: Yew did?

SCROOGE: I did.

(Scrooge pulls from his desk a small child's pinwheel and hands it to Bobby. Bobby takes the pinwheel and looks several times between it and Scrooge. He is disappointed but afraid to show it.)

BOBBY: *(Finally.)* Uh...fer me?

SCROOGE: That should keep yew cool.

BOBBY: Uh, how does it work? I don't see no e-lectric cord attached.

SCROOGE: Thar ain't no cord.

BOBBY: Ain't no cord? Then how do I plug the dad burn thang in?

SCROOGE: Yew don't plug it in. Yew thank I want to waste e-lectricity on yew? It costs money, yew know.

BOBBY: Then how does it operate?

SCROOGE: Like kiss. *(Blows on pinwheel and it spins.)*

BOBBY: Oh.

SCROOGE: Yew see?

BOBBY: Oh.

SCROOGE: Breath power.

BOBBY: Breath power?

SCROOGE: Now that yew have cooled off, git back to work.

(Bobby steps away and turns back.)

BOBBY: Breath power. *(Blows on pinwheel.)* I see.

(Dejected, Bobby sits at his table. Emmylou starts to exit.)

SCROOGE: Emmylou?! Whar yew a-goin'?

EMMYLOU: Back to yer pickup. I done got the engine block out, an' now I'm a-tryin' to figure out how to put it back in.

SCROOGE: Well, yew can do that after yew take my wrap.

EMMYLOU: Yer whut?

SCROOGE: My wrap!

EMMYLOU: *(Looks at his cape.)* Yew want me to take that thar thang with all them holes in it an' fleas on it?

SCROOGE: *(Growls.)* Grrrrr!

EMMYLOU: I guess yew do. *(Gingerly takes the cape in her hands and pulls. He groans when the ties around his neck are pulled. She pulls harder. He groans louder, grabs the ties at his neck, and tries to speak. Failing to understand that the cape is tied around his neck, she yanks it, pulling Scrooge off his stool and into a stooping position.)* I'll git it. I'll git it. *(Pulls harder while Scrooge gurgles and tries to break loose. Shouts.)* Let go, will yew?!

(Emmylou pulls Scrooge to the ground. Bobby has been watching the action.)

BOBBY: Oh, dear! Oh, dear, dear, dear!

(Bobby rushes to Scrooge and stoops to help Scrooge as Emmylou is finally able to get the cape loose. Scrooge gasps for breath.)

EMMYLOU: *(To Scrooge, proudly.)* Thar! I told yew I'd git it!

BOBBY: *(To Scrooge.)* Jist breathe normal-like, sir. Breathe, breathe...

SCROOGE: Whut do yew thank I'm a-tryin' to do, Bobby Bowlegs! *(Coughs.)*

EMMYLOU: Want me to git that thar hat, too?

(Emmylou reaches for Scrooge's hat. Scrooge quickly moves away from her.)

SCROOGE: Don't yew touch my hat! An' don't yew lay another hand on me, woman!

EMMYLOU: Jist askin'. *(Holds the cape at arm's length.)* Oh, yucky-yuck! This thang's so nasty even the fleas ere tryin' to escape from it. *(Exits USR.)*

SCROOGE: *(Still on the ground, to Emmylou.)* This hyar hat is my crown—like a king's crown—like I'm the king o' this hyar dingy-dang flea market.

BOBBY: She cain't hyar yew, sir. She's done gone off and left yew.

SCROOGE: Whut?

BOBBY: Hyar, let me hep yew up. *(Tries to lift Scrooge but can't.)* Uh, let me hep yew up. *(Tries again but can't.)* Uh, let me... *(With Scrooge's help, Bobby clumsily lifts him to a standing position.)* ...hep...yew...up! *(Gasps.)* Thar. Yer up.

SCROOGE: Take yer filthy hands off me, Bobby Bowlegs!

BOBBY: *(Jerks his hands away.)* Uh, yes, sir...sir. But, see, I couldn't hep yew up without usin' my hands.

SCROOGE: Touch me agin, an' I'll be forced to dock yer pay.

BOBBY: Dock my pay? How much of it?

SCROOGE: A hunnert percent!

BOBBY: A hunnert percent? Uh, how much is that?

SCROOGE: That thar's all of it.

BOBBY: But, sir...my family. My wife, my children...Itty Bitty Tim. (*Scrooge glares at him.*) I...I thank I should git back to work now. (*Takes a step backward.*)

SCROOGE: Then we agree on sumthin'.

BOBBY: Yeah. Yeah, sir. (*Jumps back to his position behind his table and quickly arranges and then rearranges his items.*) How'm I doin'?

(*Scrooge dusts himself off.*)

SCROOGE: Incompetents! (*Turns to Honeydew.*) Whut ere yew doin'?

HONEYDEW: Watchin' yew a-jumpin' up an' down an' such. Yer a riot. Did yew know that? Yer funny.

SCROOGE: Whut? I cain't hyer yew.

HONEYDEW: It's the fan. It's loud.

SCROOGE: I still cain't hyer yew.

HONEYDEW: (*Louder.*) It's the fan!

SCROOGE: I thank it's the fan! Turn it off!

HONEYDEW: (*Louder.*) Whut?!

SCROOGE: (*Shouts.*) Turn off the fan!

(*Honeydew turns off the fan.*)

HONEYDEW: It's hot. Can I have one of them fans like whut yew give to Bobby Bowlegs?

SCROOGE: I ain't got no more fans.

HONEYDEW: Bobby?

BOBBY: Yew cain't have mine. (*Holds up his pinwheel and blows on it.*) Breath power.

SCROOGE: Now, I'm gonna sit on my throne—er, I mean, my pedestal hyar—an' keep tabs on y'all. Any mis-doin's er undoin's an yer farhd! (*Honeydew and Bobby tend to their tables.*) An' no more interruptions. Not from nobody. I got these hyar a-ccounts to a-ttend to, an' I need absolute silence.

HONEYDEW: Yew mean no talkin'?

SCROOGE: Whut did I jist say?

HONEYDEW: Yew said, "absolute silence." I jist wanna know if that includes a-talkin'.

SCROOGE: (*Angrily.*) O' course it in-cludes a-talkin'. Talkin' is noise, ain't it?

HONEYDEW: Not if'n I talk sweet.

SCROOGE: No talkin'!

HONEYDEW: Yeah, okay.

(*Lights dim. Note: Only Scrooge hears and sees the following action.*)

LULUBELLE: (*Offstage, makes ghostly sound.*) Oooooooooo!
Oooooooooo!

SCROOGE: (*Nervously, looks around.*) Uh-oh. Thar it is agin!

LULUBELLE: (*Offstage, louder.*) Oooooooooo! Scrooooge!

SCROOGE: (*Frightened.*) Whut's this hyar all a-bout? Why ere yew a-hauntin' me like kiss? (*Pause.*) Ghost? Ere yew thar?

(*Ghost of Lulubelle swoops in ghostlike USL. Scrooge gasps.*)

LULUBELLE: (*In a spooky voice, which she uses with every line.*)
What does it look like, lunkhead? O' course, I'm hyar.
Whar else would I be?

SCROOGE: Yer...yer a...a ghost.

LULUBELLE: Well, how did yew guess?

SCROOGE: No. That cain't be.

LULUBELLE: Why not?

SCROOGE: 'Cause I don't believe in no ghostez. Hyar, I'll prove it. (*Yanks the hood from her head.*) Ah-ha! (*She faces the audience and makes a grotesque face. Her face is totally white except for lipstick and mascara, and a white cap or beret covers her hair.*) Uh-oh!

LULUBELLE: Peek-a-boooo! (*Grabs the hood and puts it over her head.*)

SCROOGE: Yew ere a ghost!

LULUBELLE: Sadly, yes, I am.

SCROOGE: That thar's a mighty raggedy-lookin' sheet.

LULUBELLE: A hand-me-down. The Chief Ghost is tryin' to save money...like some other stingy-like feller I know. (*Indicates Scrooge.*)

SCROOGE: Well, whut er yew doin' hyar a-talkin' to me when yew should be a-spookin' somebody's else?

LULUBELLE: Why, old Scrooge, don't yew recognize me?

SCROOGE: No. I... (*Recognizes.*) Oh, it cain't be. Lulubelle? Is that yew?

LULUBELLE: See? I knowed yew'd know me. Only I ain't exactly Lulubelle like yew used to know me. (*Waves her arms.*) Ooooooooo! Ooooooooo!

SCROOGE: The *ghost* o' Lulubelle!

LULUBELLE: Thar yew go.

SCROOGE: Jacob Marley's wife! Well, whar's Jacob, my old partner whut's been dead these hyar past seven years?

LULUBELLE: Well, they wouldn't 'zactly let him outta the graveyard today. He's been, yew know, a naughty boy. He's purty upset a-bout it, too. I thank he may be a-rousin' up all them other dead folks a-bout now. Could cause a riot, yew know.

SCROOGE: I didn't know that dead people could riot.

LULUBELLE: When they get upset, they can do jist a-bout anythang. Anyways, they sent me in his place.

SCROOGE: Who sent yew?

LULUBELLE: Yew know...them cemetery folks. An', speakin' o' bein' naughty, yew ain't been so good yerself.

SCROOGE: Who seys I ain't? I'm a purty good ol' boy. (*A Ghost with a small bell appears USL. He strikes the bell with a small mallet and exits. Note: Or Lulubelle can find the bell and mallet on one of the tables and strike the bell herself as well as for the following exchanges.*) Whut's that thar fer?

LULUBELLE: It means yew done tole a little white lie.

SCROOGE: No, I ain't! I don't lie. I ain't never tole no lie.

(Ghost reappears USL with a bigger bell or other noisemaker. Ghost strikes the bell with a mallet and exits.)

LULUBELLE: That thar's a-nuther un.

SCROOGE: I'm a good man—a poh-lite, friendly, an' generous man!

(Ghost appears USL with an air horn or noisemaker, sounds it, and exits.)

LULUBELLE: Eeeewww! That thar's the biggest durn lie I ever heard tell of!

SCROOGE: I'm a-tellin' yew I don't never ever— (*Ghost enters USL and prepares to make the loud noise again. Seeing this, Scrooge quickly changes his mind.*) Well, maybe on some special occasion, I might-a tole a big un. (*Pause.*) Er two.

LULUBELLE: Er three er four.

SCROOGE: Maybe...

(Ghost exits USL.)

LULUBELLE: So I was sent cheer to warn yew, Ebenezer Scrooge.

SCROOGE: Warn me 'bout whut, Ghost o' Lulubelle?

LULUBELLE: Warn yew that—

(Maydeen and Jolene enter SR and cross to Bobby's table. Each carries a purse and a large beat-up tote.)

SCROOGE: Wait! Stop right thar, Ghost o' Lulubelle. Looks like we got ourselves a victim — er, I mean, a customer.

LULUBELLE: But...

SCROOGE: I ain't got time fer no ghost-ez jist now. Go away! Shoo! Shoo!

LULUBELLE: *(As he pushes her offstage USL.)* Yew cain't do this to me. I'm a self-respectin' ghost, I am. I'll be back. I'll be back very soooooooon! *(Voice fades into the distance.)*

SCROOGE: No rush. Good riddance.

(Scrooge eyes the new Customers. As the lights fade up, Honeydew sits at her table watching as Maydeen and Jolene handle several items from Bobby's table. Maydeen and Jolene should be highly exaggerated in appearance and voice.)

MAYDEEN: *(Examines a marble.)* Now, ain't this hyar cute!

JOLENE: Whut is it?

MAYDEEN: I don't know, but it's cute.

BOBBY: It's a eye-ball.

MAYDEEN: A eyeball? Eeeew! *(Tosses it back onto the table.)*

BOBBY: From my oldest daughter's first doll. I had to take it when she wasn't a-lookin'. I don't know why she's complainin'. I left her one eye. It ain't much, but I'll sell it to yew real cheap.

SCROOGE: *(To himself.)* Cheap? *(Agitated.)* We don't say thangs like [cat]. Cheap! ["that"]

MAYDEEN: *(To Bobby.)* I don't thank I need no eyeball today. Mine's a-workin' purty good jist now.

(Maydeen and Jolene laugh. Jolene picks up a small opened bag of cornmeal.)

JOLENE: Whut's this hyar?

BOBBY: Uh, cornmeal, I thank.

JOLENE: (*Peeks inside the bag.*) But it's got bugs in thar...lots and lots of bugs.

BOBBY: No extry charge.

JOLENE: Eeew! (*Shoves the bag into Bobby's chest.*) I thank I'll take my bizness elsewhars.

(*Seeing that he might lose two customers, Scrooge steps in.*)

SCROOGE: (*To Jolene, Maydeen. Smiles broadly.*) Why, ladies, thar ain't no reason to go elsewhars when we got anythang yew could possibly want right cheer.

BOBBY: But...Ebene...uh, Ebene...uh....

SCROOGE: Step aside, Bobby Bowlegs... (*Shoves Bobby aside.*) ...an' let a expert show yew how it's done. (*Picks up the doll's eye/marble. To Jolene, Maydeen.*) This hyar jist might look like the eyeball of a doll, but it's a lot more'n that.

MAYDEEN: Yeah? An' whut more might that be?

SCROOGE: Well, it's a...uh.... (*Turns to Bobby.*) Well, Bobby Bowlegs can 'splain it to yew. (*Shoves the marble into Bobby's hand.*)

BOBBY: Who? Me?

(*Honeydew stands.*)

HONEYDEW: (*To Maydeen.*) It can be yer lucky marble, yew know.

MAYDEEN: Well, how did yew know I was the marble-shootin' champ o' Osceola County?

HONEYDEW: I could tell by the turn o' yer shootin' [fangers]. [*"fingers"*] I mean, they're posed jist right fer flittin' that thar marble a-cross that thar big ring an' hittin everthang in sight. Why, them fangers is born winners.

MAYDEEN: (*Exercises her fingers.*) Oh, well, maybe I could use a new shootin' taw.

(Maydeen snatches the eye from Bobby and crosses to Honeydew. Speechless, Bobby and Scrooge watch.)

HONEYDEW: That'll be 15 dollars, ma'am.

MAYDEEN: Fifteen dollars? Ain't that a little steep?

HONEYDEW: Okay. Make it 14 dollars an' 99 cents.

MAYDEEN: Well, that thar's more like it.

HONEYDEW: Plus tax.

MAYDEEN: O' course.

(Maydeen puts some bills and change on the table. Honeydew puts the marble into a huge paper sack, folds the top, and hands it to Maydeen.)

HONEYDEW: Thank yew, ma'am.

MAYDEEN: Yer welcome. *(To Scrooge and Bobby.)* No thanks to yew boys.

(Surprised, Scrooge shakes his head and picks up the bag of cornmeal.)

SCROOGE: *(To Jolene.)* An', ma'am, I noticed that yew re-jected the cornmeal simply a-cause it had a few little bugs in it. Is that thar right?

JOLENE: Well, shore.

SCROOGE: Well, my colleague, hyar, Mr. Bobby Bowlegs, will tell yew why it's still the best buy in the county. *(Shoves the bag into Bobby's hands.)*

BOBBY: Who? Me? But I...I mean, yew...I mean, she...I mean—

HONEYDEW: *(To Jolene.)* He means that that thar cornmeal is a new concoction de-veloped an' sold only by the Ebenezer Scrooge Food Service Delivery System. *(Pause.)* In-corpse-er-ated.

JOLENE: But it's got bugs in it.

(Scrooge and Bobby listen to the following with their mouths agape.)

HONEYDEW: O' course, it does. *(Stage whisper.)* Don't tell nobody, now, but that thar's the secret ingred-ee-ment.

JOLENE: Really? How does it work?

HONEYDEW: Well, them little buggers in thar is full o' that...whatcha call it...that thar stuff whut's good fer yew...pro...pro-lickin'...pro-tickin'?

MAYDEEN: Pro-tein?

HONEYDEW: Sumthin' like [cat]. ["that"]

JOLENE: Ere yew kiddin' me?

HONEYDEW: I [sway-er]. [*"swear"*]

JOLENE: Well, I thank I'll jist take me a bag of it then.

(Jolene snatches it away from Bobby.)

HONEYDEW: It's on sale today fer a mere hunnert dollars.

JOLENE: I don't have a hunnert dollars on me.

HONEYDEW: Well, yew got ten dollars?

JOLENE: *(Checks her purse.)* I don't have nuthin' but a twenty.

HONEYDEW: That'll do. *(Grabs the \$20 and hands it and the other money to Scrooge.)* Hyar yew ere, Mr. Scrooge.

(Scrooge takes the money.)

MAYDEEN: Mr. Scrooge? *(Looks at a sheet of paper she has pulled from her purse. To Jolene.)* Well, my, oh, my, if that ain't the strangest co-inci-dent. Not only did we git us some good goodies, but we also found number five on our list o' folks to visit.

JOLENE: Number five? Who's that?

MAYDEEN: *(Reads.)* "Mr. Scrooge."

JOLENE: Oh, yew are so well known in these hyar parts, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE: *(Proudly.)* Well, o'course. I'm Ebenezer Scrooge, proud owner of these hyar stalls, which I own owin' to the

death o' Mr. Fezziwig, an' which have been makin' me rich fer over 20 years.

MAYDEEN: Rich? Yer rich?

SCROOGE: Naw, I ain't rich. I'm *filthy* rich.

MAYDEEN: Yew don't say?

HONEYDEW: That's whut he always says.

SCROOGE: I do say. Why, I'm so rich, when I put in a birdbath, I added a salad bar!

MAYDEEN: Oh, my!

SCROOGE: (*Getting carried away.*) I'm so rich, I had to git pockets fer my pockets!

MAYDEEN: Impressive.

SCROOGE: I'm so rich, banks come to *me* fer loans.

MAYDEEN: Well, well!

SCROOGE: I don't like to brag, but I'm the richest man whut's a-standin' in this hyar spot that I'm a-standin' in right now!

MAYDEEN: Jolene, I thank we come to the right man.

JOLENE: I thank so, too, Maydeen. Have yew got yer collection pot?

MAYDEEN: Do I ever! Have you got yers?

JOLENE: I never leave home without it.

(*Simultaneously, they open their totes and hold them out toward Scrooge.*)

MAYDEEN: Yew can jist pile a hunk of it right in thar, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE: Pile whut in thar?

JOLENE: Why, money, o'course. We're collectin' fer the little children whut's poor an' won't git no Christmas less we hep 'em out.

MAYDEEN: (*To Scrooge.*) With money. (*Shakes her tote as if asking him to fill it.*) Lots of money from *filthy* rich folks like yerself.

SCROOGE: Whut?

JOLENE: Jist thank of all them poor kids in orphanages...without a ma er a pa.

MAYDEEN: (*To Scrooge.*) An' all them ma's an' pa's whut don't have a few dollars fer to buy a nice hol-ee-day turkey er nuthin'.

JOLENE: (*To Scrooge.*) Cain't yew jist see the children's innocent little faces all scrunched up an' cryin' 'cause they don't know the joys o' Christmas?

MAYDEEN: Open up yer heart, Mr. Scrooge.

JOLENE: Better yet, open up yer wallet, Mr. Scrooge.

MAYDEEN: (*To Scrooge.*) An' hep the hepless, the hopeless, the dis-ad-vantaged.

SCROOGE: (*Gruffly.*) I cain't do that.

MAYDEEN: Why not?

SCROOGE: 'Cause I'm [pore]. ("*poor*")

JOLENE: Pore? I thought yew said yew was rich.

SCROOGE: Why, I'm so pore, my will is made out to the loan comp'ny.

MAYDEEN: Oh, my.

SCROOGE: I'm so pore, the roaches in my pantry packed up an' moved to Miami.

JOLENE: Eeew!

SCROOGE: I'm so pore, beggars give *me* donations.

MAYDEEN: How sad.

SCROOGE: I'm so pore, my wallet sings the blues.

JOLENE: But whut a-bout the pore children in orphanages?

SCROOGE: Well, they can sang the blues too, if'n they want to.

JOLENE: What?

SCROOGE: They shouldn't allow kids in orphanages. They should open the doors an' kick 'em out on the street whar they can beg fer their food like any self-respectin' orphan.

MAYDEEN: (*In shock.*) Ahhh!

SCROOGE: If a bunch of 'em keeled over, it would jist hep us to git rid o' the surplus population.

MAYDEEN: (*Offended.*) Mr. Scrooge!

SCROOGE: If'n they don't have the money fer a turkey, let 'em eat dog food. It's nutritious. And delicious.

JOLENE: How do yew know? Have yew tried it?

SCROOGE: No, I ain't. But the dogs seem to like it.

MAYDEEN: Surely, yew can afford a small donation.

SCROOGE: How small?

MAYDEEN: Teeny.

SCROOGE: That's too much. *(Turns away from Jolene and Maydeen and works on his papers.)*

JOLENE: *(To Honeydew.)* Is he always like kiss?

HONEYDEW: Nope. Most o' the time he's worse.

MAYDEEN: Well, come on, Jolene. Tomorra's Christmas Day, an' we got a lot of work to do.

JOLENE: Guess we ain't gettin' nowhars jist a-standin' a-round hyar.

(Maydeen and Jolene start to exit DSL.)

BOBBY: *(To Maydeen and Jolene.)* Jist a minute, y'all. *(Fumbles through his pockets as he approaches them. He pulls out a small coin.)* It ain't much, but I hope it heps them young-uns. *(Drops it into Maydeen's tote.)*

MAYDEEN: Bless yew, sir.

HONEYDEW: Hold on a minute, thar.

(Maydeen, Jolene, and Bobby turn to Honeydew and watch as she starts her slow-motion walk around her table and approaches them. Pause.)

BOBBY: *(To Jolene and Maydeen.)* Hope y'all ain't late fer nuthin'. When Honeydew says, "a minute," she means a-bout a day an' a half.

HONEYDEW: *(To Jolene and Maydeen.)* This hyar is all I got. *(Kisses her hand and tosses the kiss into Jolene's tote.)* My love to them kids.

(All freeze except Scrooge when the Ghost of Lulubelle is heard in the distance.)

LULUBELLE: *(Ghost voice.)* Oooooooooo! Scrooooooooooge!

SCROOGE: *(Looks up, unsure of what he is hearing.)* Whut?

(Lulubelle enters USL and approaches Scrooge.)

LULUBELLE: Scrooooooge!

SCROOGE: *(To Lulubelle, growls.)* Yew again? Git out o' my sight! *(Shouts.)* Nooow!

LULUBELLE: *(Frightened, screams and exits.)* Eeeeeiiii!

(Others continue as before.)

JOLENE: *(To Honeydew.)* Love is whut makes this hyar old world spin. *(Hugs Honeydew.)* Thank yew.

(Scrooge's nephew, Freddie, enters SR. He wipes sweat from his face.)

FREDDIE: *(Cheerfully.)* Merry Christmas, y'all! Merry, merry Christmas!

(Scrooge looks up, ignores him, and dials his cell phone.)

SCROOGE: *(Into phone.)* Hello? Hello! I need some more junk to put in my stalls. Got anythang good?

MAYDEEN: *(To Freddie.)* Why, thank yew, young man. An' the same to yew. *(Smiles at Freddie.)* I'm Maydeen.

FREDDIE: Yes, ma'am. An' I'm Freddie.

JOLENE: Come a-long, Maydeen. If'n yew can take yer eyes off-a that handsome feller. *(Pause.)* Maydeen! *(Grabs her arm and pulls her away.)* Time to go an' find us some folks whut'll donate to a good cause.

(Maydeen stops.)

MAYDEEN: I'd like *him*... (*Indicates Freddie.*) ...to donate to my cause!

JOLENE: Let's go!

(*Jolene pulls Maydeen.*)

MAYDEEN: "And to all...a good night."

(*Jolene and Maydeen exit SL.*)

FREDDIE: Mr. Crachit, Ms. Honeydew, happy holidays to y'all.

BOBBY: I'm afraid it ain't gonna be so happy fer us since we gonna be a-workin' on Christmas Day...all day long.

HONEYDEW: (*To Freddie.*) An' we won't have not a single customer, neither.

SCROOGE: (*Looks up from is cell phone.*) Whut's all this hyar complainin' I'm a-hearin'? Yew should be happy yew got a job to be workin' at.

FREDDIE: (*Cheerfully.*) Unca' Scrooge, Merry Christmas, sir.

SCROOGE: Bah, humbug! (*Continues to listen to his phone.*)

FREDDIE: This hyar has gotta be the hottest Christmas Eve in the hist'ry o' Florid-ee.

SCROOGE: It's jist a-nother hot day like the last hot day.

FREDDIE: (*Looks around.*) Not a lot o' customers today, I see.

SCROOGE: They'll be a-comin'. (*Into phone, angrily.*) Whut? I ain't a-payin' that much fer yer junk! (*Hangs up.*)

FREDDIE: At least yew put up some decorations this year.

SCROOGE: I didn't put up nuthin'. Them employees o' mine whut never do no work fer me put 'em up. An' on comp'ny time, I'd guess. I'd take 'em all down if'n I didn't have so much paperwork to work on.

FREDDIE: Oh, that's no way to be, Uncle. Let 'em have thar cel-ee-bration.

SCROOGE: They can cel-ee-brate when thar done sellin' thangs an' makin' me a hunnert dollars...each. Now, go away. I'm busy.

FREDDIE: Well, I didn't mean to do no interruptin'. I jist stopped by to in-vite yew to Christmas dinner at our place tomorra.

SCROOGE: I ain't got time fer no Christmas dinner. Thar's too much to do hyar.

FREDDIE: Like whut?

SCROOGE: (*Indicates Honeydew and Bobby.*) Like makin' shore them two's busy! Why ain't yew busy?

FREDDIE: We was let off at noon today.

HONEYDEW: Must be nice.

FREDDIE: An' we'll be off all day tomorra.

SCROOGE: All day? Whut a waste!

FREDDIE: Gives me time to pre-prepare fer the big day: buyin' gifts fer ever'body, decoratin' the Christmas tree, an' findin' the biggest turkey at the [Winn Dixie]. [*Or insert the name of another grocery store.*]

SCROOGE: Why do yew need to buy a big turkey at the [Winn Dixie] when yew can eat jist as good at the [Waffle House], an' yew don't have to do no pre-prepare-in'. [*Or insert the name of another suitable restaurant.*]

FREDDIE: Unca' Scrooge, why ere yew such a big ol' sourpuss?

SCROOGE: Sourpuss?

FREDDIE: Party pooper.

SCROOGE: Party pooper?

FREDDIE: Cranky old man.

SCROOGE: Cranky old man?! (*Stands. Insulted.*) I ain't no...old man!

FREDDIE: Cranky?

SCROOGE: (*Considers it.*) A little. Maybe...

FREDDIE: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to say them thangs. Yer my uncle an' I love yew.

SCROOGE: Love! Bah! (*Goes back to work.*)

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FREDDIE: Come to dinner with us tomorra. Yer always welcome.

SCROOGE: Humbug!

FREDDIE: We cain't afford that big ol' turkey I was talkin' about, but we'll put sumthin' together. (*Scrooge ignores him. Indicating Bobby and Honeydew.*) An' give them the day off. They deserve it.

SCROOGE: Freddie, I don't need yer ad-vice.

(Freddie starts to exit.)

FREDDIE: Merry Christmas, Mr. Crachit.

BOBBY: Merry Christmas.

FREDDIE: And Honeydew.

HONEYDEW: It'd be a lot merrier if'n it weren't so durn hot. (*Freddie exits SR. To Bobby.*) I'm sweatin' like a hotdog on the Fourth of July. (*Wipes her face with a sweat rag.*)

BOBBY: Dogs don't sweat.

HONEYDEW: Honey, today even a fencepost sweats!

(Bobby and Honeydew sit at their respective tables and freeze as the lights dim.)

LULUBELLE: (*Offstage, in the distance.*) Oooooooo! Bad boy Scrooooooge!

SCROOGE: (*Looks up, annoyed.*) Not agin!

LULUBELLE: I'm a-comin' to git yew, bad boy Scrooooooge!

SCROOGE: Oh, no, yew ain't. I'll poke yer eyes out with my Bic pen. (*Holds pen up as if it were a knife.*)

LULUBELLE: (*Offstage, ghostly voice.*) Blubber Team, that is yer signal to git tough!

(Blubbers 1-4 make up a secret paramilitary unit of ghosts. They are dressed in white sheets except for their weapons, belts, backpacks, and helmets or military uniform caps.)

(Blubber 1 sneaks on from DSL and stoops behind that table.)

BLUBBER 1: *(Speaking into shirt cuff.)* Blubber Team, this hyar is Blubber Team leader. On yer mark.

(Blubber 2 peeks in from USR.)

BLUBBER 2: *(Speaking into shirt cuff.)* Blubber Team leader, this hyar is Blubber Two. In place.

(Blubber 3 peeks in from DSR.)

BLUBBER 3: *(Speaking into shirt cuff.)* This hyar is Blubber Three. Got 'im in sight.

(Blubber 4 enters DSL and stoops beside Blubber 1. Pause.)

BLUBBER 1: *(Speaking into shirt cuff.)* Blubber Four, whar ere yew? Blubber Four? Blubber Four, come in. Report yer position. *(Shouts.)* Blubber Four!

BLUBBER 4: I'm right [cheer] behind yew. ["here"]

BLUBBER 1: Whut? *(Turns and is shocked to see Blubber 4.)*
Yeeei!!! *(Regains composure.)* Blubber Four, yer s'pposed to be over thar. *(Points to USL.)*

BLUBBER 4: Oh, okay.

(Blubber 4 rises to cross to USL, but Blubber 1 yanks him back down.)

BLUBBER 1: Whut ere yew a-doin'?

BLUBBER 4: Goin' to my place.

(Blubber 4 rises again. Blubber 1 pulls him back down.)

BLUBBER 1: Not now! Not in full view of our ob-jective!

BLUBBER 4: Okay. I'll sneak.

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(Blubber 4 rises again. Blubber 1 pulls him back down.)

BLUBBER 1: Yew call that a-sneakin'?

BLUBBER 4: Oh, maybe yew meant *sneaky* a-sneakin'.

BLUBBER 1: Yes. O' course that's whut I meant.

BLUBBER 4: Right. *(Jumps up, rolls sideways over to DSR, crawls under the table, stands, and looks about.)*

BLUBBER 1: That thar's better. *(Blubber 4 tiptoes from RSC to LSC right in front of Scrooge. Scrooge sees him and, not understanding, watches his moves. In a stage whisper, waves to Blubber 4)* No, not thar! He can see yew.

BLUBBER 4: Okay. I'll go back. *(Tiptoes backward from LSC to RSC right in front of Scrooge.)*

BLUBBER 1: *(Frustrated.)* No! Not that-a way! Stop!

BLUBBER 4: This a-way? *(Stands almost in front of Scrooge and points LSC.)*

BLUBBER 1: No, no, no!

BLUBBER 4: Well, which a-way then?

BLUBBER 1: Down! Stoop down!

BLUBBER 4: Why don't I jist go ahead an' capture 'im?

SCROOGE: *(To Blubber 4.)* Whut in tarnation ere yew a-doin'?

(Blubber 4 grabs Scrooge and pulls his hands behind his back.)

BLUBBER 4: *(To Blubbers, shouts)* Duct tape! Duct tape!
Who's got the duct tape?

SCROOGE: Whut is the meanin' o'this?

BLUBBER 2: Hyar it is!

(Blubber 2 tosses the duct tape to Blubber 4. Blubber 4 wraps the duct tape around Scrooge's chest and arms as Blubber 1, 2, and 3 point their weapons at Scrooge.)

BLUBBER 4: *(To Blubber 1.)* How's that, Blubber Leader One?

BLUBBER 1: Uh, I guess that thar's okay.

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BLUBBER 3: (*Disappointed.*) I thought we's all four s'pposed to capture the ob-jective.

BLUBBER 2: (*Disappointed.*) Yeah. I didn't even git a chance to use my weapon.

BLUBBER 1: Ob-jective ob-tained. Weapons down.

(*Blubbers lower their weapons.*)

BLUBBER 2: Durn it.

SCROOGE: Jist whut the dingy-dangy thangy is this?

BLUBBER 1: Yew'll see. (*Calls off USL.*) All clear, Ghost o' Lulubelle. He won't be givin' yew no more trouble.

LULUBELLE: (*Off USL.*) Goooooooood! Thaaaaaaaank yewwwwwwww!

SCROOGE: The ghost o' Lulubelle? Ain't she given up yet?

(*Lulubelle enters USL. Pause.*)

LULUBELLE: (*Ghostly.*) Ooooooooo! Oooo.... (*Stops in mid-sentence when a few ghostly sounds are heard offstage. These could be loud moans, chains clanking, mysterious music, guttural laughter, etc.*) Uh-oh! (*Frightened, she looks up and around. More ghostly sounds are heard and they get louder.*) Do...do yew hyar them thar...sounds?

BLUBBER 4: I d-d-d-do...I d-d-d-d...I d-d-d-d. Yeah!

LULUBELLE: Do yew know whut they are?

BLUBBER 4: They's scary sounds.

LULUBELLE: Besides that?

SCROOGE: Them's prob'bly some o' yer ghostez friends, Ghost o' Lulubelle, tryin' to scare me.

LULUBELLE: Well, I don't know a-bout yew, but thar durn-tootin' a-scarin' me!

BLUBBER 1: Don't worry, Ghost o' Lulubelle. The ghosts o' the Blubber Team'll pro-tect yew.

LULUBELLE: The dead are a-stirrin'!

BLUBBER 4: The d-d-d-d...The d-d-d-d...The dead??

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LULUBELLE: An' yew cain't pro-tect me from the dead.

BLUBBER 1: *(To Blubbers.)* Weapons up!

LULUBELLE: Weapons ain't gonna hep yew against them.
Bullets'll go right through 'em.

BLUBBER 1: Oh, yeah. I fergot. *(To Blubbers.)* Weapons down!

LULUBELLE: An' they're led by my husband.

SCROOGE: Old Jacob Marley?

LULUBELLE: Old, *dead* Jacob Marley.

SCROOGE: Now, tell me— *(Ghostly sounds grow louder, interrupting Scrooge, and then subside.)* Now, tell me— *(Ghostly sounds grow louder, interrupting Scrooge, and then subside. Angry.)* Now, tell me— *(Ghostly sounds grow louder, interrupting Scrooge, and then subside. Bellows.)* Yew dead folks...*hesh up!* *(Sounds disappear suddenly and completely. Blubber 1 motions to other Blubbers. Blubbers move away and stand guard. To Lulubelle.)* Whut's this hyar all a-bout? Why am I duct taped up, who're these hyar ghostez, an' whut ere yew a-doin' away from yer watery grave?

(Pause.)

LULUBELLE: Would yew repeat the question?

SCROOGE: I said—

LULUBELLE: Okay, okay. Yer duct-taped up 'cause yew wasn't co-operatin' when I needed yew to be co-operatin'. These hyar is the ghosts o' the Blubber Team, a private secur'ty unit whut got careless an' blowed theirselves up in the other life. Now they work fer them graveyard people whut sent me hyar to try to talk some sense into yew. Does that answer all yer questions?

SCROOGE: I got one more.

LULUBELLE: Well, whut is it?

SCROOGE: Would yew git me a [Dr. Pepper] 'cause my throat is all dried up. *[Or insert another type of soda or drink.]*

BLUBBER 4: I'll git it. *(Starts to exit.)*

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LULUBELLE: No, yew won't. (*Blubber 4 halts. To Scrooge.*)

An', no, I won't! We got serious bizness to dis-cuss.

SCROOGE: An' I got serious paperwork to finish, so git on with it, if yew absolutely have to.

LULUBELLE: My husband was yer partner in this hyar flea market bizness fer many yers.

SCROOGE: I know that. But he died seven years ago, an' it all come to me.

LULUBELLE: Yeah, it all come to yew. An' that's the problem. Do yew want to know why I'm hyar instead o' him?

SCROOGE: No, I don't.

LULUBELLE: Well, I'll tell yew. He's now chained to his grave jist like he was chained to this hyar place.

SCROOGE: Well, ghostez ain't s'pposed to be up an' a-round roamin' the earth no-ways. They's s'pposed to stay in thar graves a-molderin' a-way.

LULUBELLE: But they cain't molder till they done a-toned fer thar wrongful ways. That's why there are ghosts in this hyar world...to a-tone or to hep others a-tone afore it's too late fer them to.

SCROOGE: Jist whut are yew gettin' at?

LULUBELLE: When my husband was a-live, he never ventured fer from this hyar bizness. It was work, work, work—sweat an' toil in this hyar durn flea market—makin' money, yeah, but never livin' his life to the fullest. An' never havin' enuff time fer me an' the kids. Or fer mankind. Or even fer hissself. He was jist too busy to see all the beautiful thangs a-round him, too busy for charity an' kindness an' love. No. 'Cause he was chained to that desk right thar. (*Points to Scrooge's desk.*) An' now you're chained to it.

SCROOGE: I ain't chained. I'm duct-taped.

LULUBELLE: Same thang, Ebenezer. Same ol' thang. So I'm hyar to warn yew...don't do whut he did. Open yer life. Don't wait. Begin now, this Christmas season.

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SCROOGE: Don't wait? If'n yer in such a dingy-dang hurry, why did yew wait seven years to tell me this hyar stuff? In fact, yew ain't really tole me nuthin' yet.

LULUBELLE: That thar's not fer me to say. Three other ghosts ere gonna visit yew tonight.

[END OF FREEVIEW]