

# **A Christmas Carol**

by **Charles Dickens**

adapted by **Sheila Laughton**

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# A Christmas Carol

This play was first presented by **The Man In The Moon** on 20 December 2012

## Cast in Order of Appearance

<b>Fred</b> , <i>Scrooge's Nephew</i>	<b>Belle</b> , <i>Scrooge's fiancée</i>
<b>Ebenezer Scrooge</b>	<b>The Ghost of Christmas Present</b>
<b>Bob Cratchit</b>	<b>Emily Cratchit</b> , <i>Bob's Wife</i>
<b>Mr Jones</b>	<b>Peter Cratchit</b>
<b>Mr Smith</b>	<b>Alfred Cratchit</b>
<b>Vendor 1, 2 and 3</b>	<b>Mary Cratchit</b>
<b>Customer 1 and 2</b>	<b>Walter Cratchit</b>
<b>Tiny Tim</b>	<b>Martha Cratchit</b>
<b>The Ghost of Jacob Marley</b>	<b>Lighthouse Keeper 1 and 2</b>
<b>Mother</b>	<b>Sailor 1, 2 and 3</b>
<b>Child</b>	<b>Miner 1 and 2</b>
<b>Ghosts 1, 2, 3 and 4</b>	<b>The Ghost of Christmas Future</b>
<b>The Ghost of Christmas Past</b>	<b>Topper</b>
<b>David</b> , <i>Scrooge's school friend</i>	<b>Janet</b> , <i>Fred's Wife</i>
<b>Edward</b> , <i>Scrooge's school friend</i>	<b>Taylor</b>
<b>Henry</b> , <i>Scrooge's school friend</i>	<b>Maid</b>
<b>George</b> , <i>Scrooge's school friend</i>	<b>Businessman 1, 2 and 3</b>
<b>Scrooge</b> , <i>as a child</i>	<b>Old Joe</b>
<b>Fran</b> , <i>Scrooge's sister</i>	<b>Mr De'ath</b>
<b>Mr Fezziwig</b>	<b>Mrs White</b>
<b>Mrs Fezziwig</b>	<b>Mrs Dilber</b>
<b>Employee 1 and 2</b>	<b>Butcher's Boy</b>
<b>Young Scrooge</b>	<b>Butcher</b>
<b>Young Marley</b>	

## Director's Note

There are sixty named roles in the play. They can be doubled as needed. The Vendor, Customer, Ghost, Lighthouse Keeper, Sailor, Miner and Businessmen lines can also be split, to create more roles if required.

The play runs approximately 50 minutes. If you prefer, you may leave out the interval.

# Being An Actor

You're now an **actor** about to begin rehearsing a **play** of **A Christmas Carol**.

**Rehearsing** or **rehearsals** are the words that actors use when practising for the show. It's an exciting time and is a lot of fun too.

Before you get started, you might like to read this section about putting on a play. It will also help you learn some of the words we use in the theatre. You'll be talking like a real actor in no time at all.

## The Script

This book is your **script**. It tells you what your **character** says and does in the play:

**Cratchit** (*nervously, rubbing his hands together to warm them*) Putting more coal on the fire, sir. They say it's the coldest winter in fifty years.

You can see the character names are in **bold** and **stage directions** (*what you do*) are in *italics*. You don't say the stage directions out loud.

## Who's Who

Different people work very hard to put on a play. The **director** is in charge of the creative parts of the show. The **producer** looks after the **budget** (money), booking the theatre and rehearsal rooms and makes sure that everything's in the right place at the right time.

There will also be **designers** for the **costumes** (what you wear), **lighting** and **scenery**.

The **Stage Manager** makes sure that rehearsals and performances run smoothly.

## The Parts of the Theatre

The **stage** is where you do your acting. The **wings** are the spaces just **off-stage** left and right where actors wait before they make their entrance.

The area behind the stage is called **backstage**. The place where the audience sits is called the **auditorium**.

The place where you get into costume and make-up is called the **dressing room**. You must always be really quiet when you're backstage.

## Stage Directions

When you start rehearsing the play, the director will tell you which side of the stage you need to come on from and where you should stand. Sometimes they will ask you to move to different places whilst you're saying your lines.

Stage right and left are as the actor looks at the audience. **Downstage** is closest to the audience. **Upstage** is furthest away, towards the back of the stage.

	<b>Upstage Right (USR)</b>	<b>Upstage Centre (USC)</b>	<b>Upstage Left (USL)</b>	
<b>The Wings</b>	<b>Stage Right (SR)</b>	<b>Centre Stage (CS)</b>	<b>Stage Left (SL)</b>	<b>The Wings</b>
	<b>Downstage Right (DSR)</b>	<b>Downstage Centre (DSC)</b>	<b>Downstage Left (DSL)</b>	

**The Audience**



## Rehearsals

You'll have a **read-through** at your first rehearsal when everyone sits together and reads the script for the first time.

After this, you'll start **blocking** the play where everyone finds out where they come on from and the different things they'll do. It's a great idea to **write all this down in your script** to help you remember. You should always write in pencil, just in case you need to change it later (sometimes you might find a better way of doing it). Once you've finished blocking, you'll begin **run-throughs**.

After a few rehearsals and once you've learnt your lines, you'll be **off-book**. If you forget a line, the **stage manager** will give you a **prompt** (remind you of your line).

Once you get to the theatre, you'll have a **technical** (or tech) **rehearsal**, where you practise with the lights and sound.

Finally, you'll have a **dress rehearsal**, which you'll do in your full costume and make-up. The last rehearsal before you have an audience. Exciting!

Rehearsals/performances usually start with a warm-up to get your voice and body ready.

During the show, your director might give you notes after the performance about anything that didn't go quite right, or something they might like you to change.

## Learning Your Lines

The hardest part of being in a play is learning your **lines** (the things you say). Sadly, there's no magic way of doing this, you just need to practise – a lot!

Here are some helpful tips. Remember, the sooner you do it, the more fun you'll have at rehearsal:

- \* Read your lines out loud to yourself. Hearing them spoken helps you to remember.
- \* Ask a friend for help. They can read the other characters and correct any mistakes that you make.
- \* Do a little bit at a time. First thing in the morning and bedtime is a great time to practise.
- \* Record your scenes. You can listen to it on your headphones while you're out and about – maybe leave gaps for you to say your own lines.
- \* Learn your **cues**. The line before yours is called the **cue line**. It's important to know this, or you won't know when it's your turn to speak.

## Enjoy The Show!

We hope that you've found this interesting. There are lots of new things to learn, and you'll pick them up easily during rehearsals. Don't forget to ask questions if there's something that you don't understand.

We hope that you have a brilliant time putting on **A Christmas Carol**.

**Break a leg** – that's what people in the theatre say to wish each other good luck!

# Act One

## Part One – Marley

*A busy street scene. It is snowing. People come and go. Carollers sing*

### Deck The Halls

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.  
Troll the ancient Yuletide carol,  
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

*Fred comes through the crowd and speaks directly to us*

**Fred** Marley was dead. There was no doubt about it. The vicar, the undertaker, the clerk and the chief mourner, Scrooge, had signed the register of his burial. Old Marley was as dead as a doornail. This needs to be fully understood or nothing wonderful can come of the story I am about to tell you.

Scrooge, my uncle, was a skinflint. A miser with a heart of stone, or so those he did business with said. Even the sign bearing Marley's name had been left to rot. Not because of their friendship but because as time passed the sign rusted and rust was free.

*We find ourselves in Scrooge's office. Scrooge and Bob Cratchit are working*

It was a cold Christmas Eve. Poor Bob Cratchit, my uncle's long-suffering clerk, had crept over to the fireplace to put some coal on the fire.

**Scrooge** What are you doing, Mr Cratchit?

**Cratchit** (*nervously, rubbing his hands together to warm them*) Putting more coal on the fire, sir. They say it's the coldest winter in fifty years.

**Scrooge** Come here. Do you know what these are? (*Pointing at his clothes*) They are winter clothes, Mr Cratchit, designed to keep out the cold. They last for years keeping us warm, unlike coal which is expensive and lasts a couple of hours. There will be no more coal burnt in this office today! Now, get back to work before I am forced to dismiss you and find someone more appropriately dressed.

**Cratchit** Yes, sir. Sorry, Mr Scrooge.

*Fred, Scrooge's nephew enters*

**Fred** (*merrily*) A Merry Christmas, Uncle, and to you too, Bob.

**Scrooge** Bah, humbug! What right do you have to be merry? You are very poor.

**Fred** Then you should be very merry, as you are very rich.

**Scrooge** Bah, humbug!

**Fred** Now, don't be angry, Uncle.

**Scrooge** What else can I be? I am surrounded by fools. If I had my way, every person who went around saying a Merry Christmas would be boiled with their own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through their heart.

**Fred** Uncle!

**Scrooge** Christmas is a time when people spend the little money that they have, and have even less to show for it.

**Fred** Though Christmas has never brought me any profit, I consider myself rich by it. It's a time we spend with friends and share with those less fortunate.

**Cratchit** Hear, hear, sir.

**Scrooge** (*glaring at Cratchit*) And you can be quiet, unless you want an early Christmas surprise... Unemployment!

**Fred** Please don't take it out on Bob, Uncle. I've only come to ask you to share Christmas dinner with us tomorrow. I have never asked you for anything and want nothing from you. Why can't we be friends?

**Scrooge** (*bluntly*) Goodbye, sir.

**Fred** We dine at three. I'll keep my Christmas humour. Merry Christmas, Uncle.

**Scrooge** (*shouting*) Get out!

**Fred** And a Happy New Year! (*Scrooge throws a ledger at him*)

*Fred leaves and we are in the busy street again. Not looking where he is going, he nearly collides with two gentlemen, Mr Smith and Mr Jones*

**Mr Jones** Good afternoon, sir. I wonder if you could direct us to the offices of Marley and Scrooge.

**Fred** It's two doors down from here but I warn you, it's not a happy place.



**Mr Smith** Well it's the season of goodwill. We are hoping they will give a generous donation to our collection for the poor and needy.

**Fred** You're new around here aren't you? *(They nod)* Good Luck.

*Mr Jones and Mr Smith enter Scrooge's office*

**Cratchit** Good afternoon, gentlemen. How can I help you?

**Mr Jones** I am Mr Jones and this is my associate Mr Smith. Are you Mr Marley or Mr Scrooge?

**Scrooge** Marley's dead. It's me you want to speak with.

**Mr Jones** We are sorry to hear your news. We are here to...

**Scrooge** Well, get on with it. Time is money.

**Mr Smith** As it's the season of goodwill, we feel as good citizens that we should provide some food and drink for the less fortunate.

**Mr Jones** If everyone gave a donation, a small donation, then we could provide a Merry Christmas for all.

**Mr Smith** There are so many homeless and unemployed these days.

**Scrooge** Are there no prisons?

**Mr Smith** There are plenty of prisons.

**Scrooge** And the workhouses. Are they still in operation?

**Mr Jones** Unfortunately they are.

**Scrooge** For a moment I was concerned that the taxes, the hefty taxes that I pay, weren't being used for these excellent institutions. I'm very glad to hear that they are still in use.

**Mr Jones** *(nervously)* How much would you like to give?

**Scrooge** Nothing.

**Mr Smith** You would like to be left anonymous?

**Scrooge** I would like to be left alone. I do not make money at Christmas to squander on lazy good for nothings. If people are poor and homeless, then let them use the institutions that I pay my taxes for.

**Mr Jones** Many would rather die than go to the workhouse.

**Scrooge** If they would rather die, then let them hurry up and do so, to decrease the

surplus population.

**Mr Smith and Mr Jones** But it's Christmas.

**Scrooge** That is not my concern. Goodbye gentlemen!

*As they leave Cratchit gives them a couple of pennies*

*The clock strikes six*

**Scrooge** I suppose you'll want tomorrow off?

**Cratchit** If it's convenient, sir.

**Scrooge** It's not convenient, but if I said no, you would feel hard done by. I suppose you want paying for the day as well.

**Cratchit** It's only once a year.

**Scrooge** Bah, humbug! A poor excuse for making me lose money. Take the whole day off, but be in by seven the next morning.

*Scrooge leaves Cratchit to finish the accounts. The street is less busy than it was. On the corner of the street he sees a young lame boy*

**Scrooge** Be off with you. I won't have beggars on the corner of my street. It's bad for business.

**Tiny Tim** I'm not a beggar, sir. I'm Tiny Tim, Bob Cratchit's son.

*Tiny Tim bows*

**Scrooge** Then you'll have a long wait. He doesn't finish until seven.

**Tiny Tim** Even though it's so cold, I don't mind waiting, sir. It's Christmas Eve.

**Scrooge** Bah, humbug.

*As Scrooge walks home he meets various people who have loans with him. He collects their payments writing them in a little black book. Some can pay, others can't. They all fear him*

**Vendor 1** Good evening Mr Scrooge. Here's your payment. *(As Scrooge moves on to the next vendor)* Old skinflint.

**Vendor 2** Nice to see you, sir. Sorry I can't make my payment, it being Christmas an' all. Please accept this flask of stew with my compliments and one each week until the weather clears up.

*Scrooge takes it begrudgingly*

**Scrooge** Thank you. That will add another two shillings and sixpence to your bill. I

shall not be so generous if you miss another payment.

**Vendor 2** But...

**Vendor 3** It's no good appealing to his softer side. He hasn't got one.

**Customer 1** He's throwing me and the nippers out day after tomorrow. Said it was no excuse using the money to bury my husband, instead of paying him.

**Customer 2** My Nan always said what goes around comes around. He'll get his comeuppance.

*They all disperse. The clock strikes seven and Cratchit finishes up and leaves the office. He is greeted by Tim who runs to him. They embrace*

**Tiny Tim** Father!

*Scrooge goes to open his front door. As he does he sees Marley's face on the door knocker*

**Marley** Scrooooooge...

**Scrooge** Marley? But it can't be. Marley's long dead and there's no such thing as ghosts.

*He looks again at the door, but there is nothing there*

*He enters a dark gloomy house. He warms up his stew and settles down. He hears the long unused servants' bell ringing and hears footsteps*

**Scrooge** I don't believe in ghosts. There are no ringing servants' bells and no footsteps. Bah, humbug!

*In the corner he sees a shape. It is Marley*

**Scrooge** (nervously) What do you want? Who are you?

**Marley** Much. Ask me who I was?

**Scrooge** Who were you then?

**Marley** In life, I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

**Scrooge** Can you... can you sit down?

**Marley** I can.

**Scrooge** Then do so. You're making me nervous.

**Marley** (sitting) You don't seem to believe in me, Ebenezer?

**Scrooge** Why should I? You are the result of an upset tummy caused by a mouldy piece of cheese or an under-cooked potato. You are no more ghost than gravy.

**Marley** (*leaps up and terrifies Scrooge*) You were always a stubborn man but I never thought you a fool. I came for the old friendship we had, to try and save you, not to harm you. That is if it isn't too late.

**Scrooge** Too late? What do you mean too late and why come to me now?

**Marley** You see this chain about me?

**Scrooge** I didn't like to mention it.

**Marley** In life, men are required to use the goodness inside them to help their fellow man. Instead, I used my time to forge this huge chain link by link. For every time I was selfish and thought only of making a profit, another link was added. Your chain is huge now, the longest ever seen. And you have had another seven years to work on it.

**Scrooge** You were a good businessman, Jacob. How can that be held against you?

**Marley** Aren't you listening? We are given freewill and I used mine for gain, not to help others.

**Scrooge** It is unfortunate, but you are only one ghost.

*Marley throws open the window. They spot a mother and child, freezing in the snow*

**Child** I'm so cold.

**Mother** Come closer, my darling. It will soon be morning and somebody may take pity on us.

**Child** Why?

**Mother** Because it's Christmas Day.

*As they continue to shiver, four ghosts appear*

**Ghost 1** Let me keep you warm.

*He goes to comfort the mother and child, but his arms pass right through them*

**Ghost 2** I will keep the snow from covering you.

*He tries, but fails*

**Ghost 3** What use were our riches, when the innocent can't be saved?

**Ghost 4** In life I had everything. Now I can only watch and weep.

**Ghost 1** Woe to us who must ever wander the earth.

**Ghost 2** In life, helping mankind should have been our priority, not making profit.

**Ghost 3** Now we are forced to watch helplessly, tortured by remorse of what might have been.

**Ghost 4** (*echoing as they disappear*) What might have been.

**Scrooge** You were always a good friend to me, Jacob, but didn't you say it was too late?

**Marley** Tonight you will be visited by three spirits. The first at midnight, the second at one o'clock and the last at two.

**Scrooge** Couldn't they all come together and get it over and done with? I have a weak chest. I'm getting old and need my sleep.

**Marley** (*angrily*) Have you heard nothing? (*He begins to fade*) Remember, three spirits. Look for me no more...

*Scrooge is alone. He pulls on his nightshirt and climbs into bed*

*Carollers gather below his window. They sing*

### **In The Bleak Midwinter**

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter, long ago

## Part Two – The Past

*A clock strikes twelve. Scrooge is in bed, still wide awake*

**Scrooge** No Spirit. It must have been the stew then.

*The Ghost of Christmas Past appears. It is in the form of a small child*

**Ghost of Christmas Past** (*eerily*) Hello Scrooge.

**Scrooge** Are you the spirit Jacob told me about?

**Ghost of Christmas Past** (*playfully*) No I'm the... Of course I am. I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

**Scrooge** Long past?

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Your past. Time flies, and so must we. Take my hand, we have much to do.

**Scrooge** I'd rather not, I thought you'd be a fully grown adult, not a small child. You won't have anything sensible to say. Besides, I have a slight chill. Atchoo!

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Child I might be, but one with attitude so take hold of my hand before I show you how bad that attitude can be.

*They are at Scrooge's old school. Children (including David, Edward, Henry and George) are outside playing in the snow, having fun. A sad young Scrooge is alone, watching them*

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Do you recognise this place?

**Scrooge** Recognise it? It's my old school. Why, I could walk around it blindfolded. I know every nook and cranny.

**David** Let's build a snowman.

**Edward** Good idea, but let's have a snowball fight first.

**Henry** Shall we ask Ebenezer? It seems unfair to leave him sitting over there, all on his own.

**George** Don't bother asking him, he's always so rude. The last time I asked if he'd like to play he said he'd rather read his books.

**Henry** I wonder why he never goes home during the holidays. It seems so sad.

**David** Don't be silly, he has his books to keep him company, remember?

*They all laugh*

**George** Come on, by the time you three have stopped talking, the snow will have

melted.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Not very sociable then?

**Scrooge** They all went home for the holidays.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** It's sad to be all alone in the world.

**Scrooge** I wasn't alone, I had my books...

**Ghost of Christmas Past** But never a friend, nor family.

**Scrooge** (*sharply*) That's enough. I don't want to talk about it, especially with a child ... Hold on, the scene's changing, I look older and who is that in the shadows?

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Your sister, Fran. She had a kind heart, I believe. Listen...

**Fran** (*excitedly*) I have come to take you home, my dear brother. Home, home, home!

*She dances around him*

**Young Scrooge** But how? Father blames me for the death of our mother. When he sent me here, he told me he never wanted to see me again.

**Fran** Father is much kinder now. When he asked me what I'd like for Christmas, I told him that I wanted you to come home from this awful place. Instead of shouting, he agreed and said that he would arrange an apprenticeship for you with his good friend, Mr Fezziwig.

**Young Scrooge** I can really come home?

**Fran** Yes, dearest brother. He agreed the past should be left in the past and that he has neglected you. He said that our mother had loved you, which is why she nursed you, and caught the flu which caused her untimely death.

**Young Scrooge** You are so kind, Fran.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Such a loving and loyal soul. She died a mother I believe.

**Scrooge** Yes. She died too young. One son.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Fred?

*Scrooge nods*

*The spirit waves his arm and we are in Fezziwig's warehouse. It is busy and full of activity. Mrs Fezziwig is impatiently waiting in the corner*

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Do you know it here?

**Scrooge** Know it? I was apprenticed here. They were the happiest years of my life. It's

where I met Jacob Marley.

*A clock strikes six*

**Mr Fezziwig** Pens and ledgers away, boys. Stop everything. It's Christmas Eve. Besides, I can feel Mrs Fezziwig glaring at me... She obviously wants all the mince pies for herself. (*He winks*)

*The scene is transformed into a Christmas party as the women join them with plates of food*

**Mrs Fezziwig** (*storms across*) How dare you? Everyone here should be having fun, it's Christmas after all. You all work so hard. I've a good mind to go home and take the mince pies with me.

**Mr Fezziwig** Hush, hush my dear. I was only teasing. If you want to go home do, but please, leave the mince pies.

*She takes a playful swipe at him. Seeing the guests she goes to greet them*

**All Guests** Speech, speech.

**Mr Fezziwig** Well if I must... Thank you all for coming. Merry Christmas.

**Employee 1** Is that it?

**Employee 2** Can't be.

**Employee 1** It was pointless.

**Employee 2** It was obvious.

**Employee 1** It was short.

**Employee 2** I loved it.

**Mr Fezziwig** I feel like dancing. Fiddler, play a jig, we need to work up an appetite for that magnificent feast.

*They dance. Scrooge, tapping his foot, is enjoying the scene*

**Ghost of Christmas Past** A few pounds spent with no thought of profit, other than happy faces.

**Young Marley** Ebenezer, are you going to ask for Belle's hand in marriage tonight?

**Young Scrooge** Perhaps I should wait until you and I have made our fortune.

**Young Marley** If she loves you, she'll be happy with a long engagement. It won't have to be too long with two brilliant business minds like ours.

**Young Scrooge** You have always been a good friend to me, Jacob.



**Young Marley** Well, I have known you since we were small.

**Mr Fezziwig** (*out of breath*) Enough, my love, I can't dance anymore.

**Mrs Fezziwig** Shall I fetch you some punch and another mince pie?

**Mr Fezziwig** I've eaten far too many mince pies and danced far too much. I am ready to go home. Let's leave it to the youngsters to see in Christmas Day.

**Mrs Fezziwig** Look at our daughter, Belle and young Ebenezer. (*They glance over at the couple*) Do you think he has asked her to marry him at last?

**Mr Fezziwig** Well, he needs to ask me first and I shall be stern...

**Mrs Fezziwig** Stern? You? Why you are the kindest, most generous man I know.

**Mr Fezziwig** Thank you, my dear.

**Young Scrooge** (*to Belle*) You have made me the happiest man alive, agreeing to become my wife. I promise that you will never want for anything. I intend to become a very wealthy man.

**Belle** Money isn't everything, Ebenezer. Besides, you must ask Father first. I know he likes you and Mother will stop him making any fuss. They married for love, not for money.

**Young Scrooge** I think they may have guessed. They're coming over.

**Scrooge** Please, Spirit, show me no more. Have mercy.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Mercy? When have you ever shown anyone mercy?

*The scene changes. A sign flies in, 'Scrooge & Marley'. It is many years later. Mrs Fezziwig is seen, quietly weeping in the corner, grieving for her late husband. Belle, who has been comforting her, gets up and walks over to Marley and Scrooge's new office*

**Young Marley** There's someone to see you, Scrooge.

**Belle** Ebenezer, may I speak with you?

**Young Scrooge** Can it not wait until after work? Time is money.

**Belle** (*firmly*) No, I must speak with you now.

**Young Scrooge** If it's about your father's death, I'm sorry. How was I to know that he would have a heart attack when Marley and I refused him that loan?

**Young Marley** His business was a shambles.

**Young Scrooge** I tried to warn him six years ago when I explained I wouldn't marry you until I had made my fortune. He was far too generous.

**Belle** You have changed, Ebenezer. Money is now your mistress and you have no time for anything else, including me. I am releasing you from our engagement.

**Young Scrooge** Belle! Poverty awaits any man who doesn't save for his future. Look at your father, he died penniless, leaving you without an inheritance. Did I ever say that I wouldn't marry you, now you are poor?

**Belle** Poor?

**Young Scrooge** What I meant was...

**Belle** If we had just met and you knew I was penniless, would you still ask me to marry you?

*Scrooge is silent and looks uncomfortable*

**Belle** I thought not. I set you free. Goodbye, Ebenezer.

**Scrooge** (*shouting at Young Scrooge*) Go after her you fool, don't let her go.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Would you like to know what happened to her?

**Scrooge** No.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** (*ignoring Scrooge*) She married a gentleman who saw beyond her lack of money. They have six children and Mrs Fezziwig lived happily with them, spoiling her grandchildren. Belle's husband saw you the other day and when he told her how alone you were, all Belle could say was, 'Poor man, how I pity him'.

**Scrooge** I don't need her pity or your meddling. I've had enough.

**Ghost of Christmas Past** Don't blame me. This is *your* past, *your* errors, *your* creation.

**Scrooge** I said, I've had enough!

*There is an enormous clap of thunder as Scrooge snuffs out the past*

## Interval

## Act Two

### Part Three – The Present

*A clock strikes one*

**Scrooge** (*wakes himself up snoring*) No sign of any ghost. I knew it was all a bad dream.

*Sound of laughter and merriment*

What's that devilish noise? It sounds like laughter.

*He goes to investigate, throws open the door and is greeted by a room full of Christmas cheer and a large jovial Spirit, holding a large horn*

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Come in, man, and get to know me better.

**Scrooge** How dare you disturb the sleep of a Christian man!

**Ghost of Christmas Present** (*laughing*) They said you were a hard-hearted foolish man.

**Scrooge** (*angrily*) Who said?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Why, my brothers of course.

**Scrooge** Do you have many brothers, Spirit? How do they know me?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Mine is a large family. More than eighteen hundred brothers have come before me. And yes, they know you well, by your bah humbug.

**Scrooge** A huge family to provide for.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Take the sleeve of my gown so that you may learn the true meaning of Christmas.

**Scrooge** Where are you taking me?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** You'll see. Keep your eyes open and listen. You need to learn.

*We are in a bustling street somewhere else in town. People come and go, including Emily Cratchit who has just bought the last minute Christmas goose. It is pitifully small*

**Scrooge** What's that awful smell? (*Opens his eyes*) Why it's the market. A bit late for them to be open. That's two of my debtors over there. Hey you...

**Ghost of Christmas Present** They cannot see or hear you.

**Scrooge** But they should be saving their money, not drinking it away.

*Ghost of Christmas Present sprinkles them with dust. The group cheer up*

**Scrooge** What did you do? Why are they cheerful? They owe me...

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Peace, Scrooge. Peace. It's Christmas. I sprinkle them with the Milk of Human Kindness. For once they can enjoy themselves and forget their troubles... You.

**Scrooge** (*dismissively*) Who needs the Milk of Human Kindness? If it's that wonderful, maybe I could market it. I'd make a huge profit.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Are you learning nothing? You see that woman over there (*indicating Emily Cratchit*), the one who has just bought that tiny goose? Mark her well, as you'll be seeing her again. That woman has six children; she should be at home in the warm. But no, because of the pittance her husband earns, she has to be out on a cold night like this buying the cheapest food she can find.

**Scrooge** I'm sorry, old habits die hard.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Die being the operative word.

**Scrooge** Oh.

*The Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge to a house. It is Bob Cratchit's home. Inside Emily and four of her children, Peter, Alfred, Mary and Walter are preparing Christmas dinner. They are putting up paper chains*

**Scrooge** Not a very big house for all these people. They seem very poor.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** What do you expect them to afford on fifteen shillings a week? A palace?

**Scrooge** There's no need to be sarcastic, Spirit, I only meant...

**Ghost of Christmas Present** No Cratchit would ever admit to being poor. Now listen and learn.

**Peter** When's Martha coming, Mother?

**Alfred** I hope she'll be back before Father and Tim get back from church.

**Mary** I hope she'll like the decorations we've made. I miss her.

*There's a knock on the door*

**Walter** (*looking*) It's Martha. (*Before Martha can take off her coat and bonnet*) You should see the goose Mother's got. It's big enough to feed a hundred people.

**Emily** (*laughing*) Not quite, but larger than last year. I thought you were coming earlier?

**Martha** I wanted to, but you know what the Master's Christmas Eve Ball is like. There was so much cleaning up to be done afterwards, I couldn't get away.

**Scrooge** (*to the Ghost of Christmas Present*) I like her, she's a hard working child.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** They all work, even the smallest child and proud to do so.

**Peter** Father's coming, mother I can see him carrying Tim.

**Emily** Quick hide, Martha.

*Martha hides. Bob and Tim enter*

**Cratchit** Hello, my dears. Where's Martha? (*Looking around*)

**Emily** (*unconvincingly*) Not coming, Bob. She can't get away from work.

**Cratchit** Not coming. Not coming on Christmas Day?

*He is clearly very upset. Martha takes pity and comes out of hiding. She surprises Bob, hugging him from behind*

**Martha** It was only a joke, Father. How could I miss our family Christmas?

**Cratchit** Now I am a happy man. All the family is together. Who made these wonderful decorations? (*He hugs them all*)

**Everyone** We did!

**Emily** Hurry along everyone and wash your hands. The goose is almost ready. Martha, can you help Tim? (*They go off*) How was he at church?

**Cratchit** As good as gold and better, but he said the strangest thing. He told me he was glad that folk could see he was a cripple, as it might help them to remember the man born on this day who healed the lame and blind. I believe he is getting stronger every day.

**Emily** Maybe, my dear, maybe.

*The children return and lay the table, bring in the vegetables etc. Last of all Emily brings in the goose. Squeals of delight*

**Scrooge** Such a small goose for so many.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** But a feast to them.

*They begin to eat the dinner eagerly. The Ghost of Christmas Present waves his hand and*

*time has passed. They have finished eating their goose*

**Cratchit** Such a feast, my dear, and only one you could have done. Such a succulent bird.

**Emily** I waited until the last minute to buy it.

**Cratchit** So that's why you were up so early.

*They finish off their dinner*

**Cratchit** Now what about the pudding?

**Mary** I hope it's all right.

**Alfred** Mother has been so worried.

**Walter** She thought the fruit might be off.

**Tiny Tim** Well, I'm sure it will be perfect.

*Emily comes in with a flaming pudding. They all watch nervously while Bob Cratchit takes a bite*

**Emily** Well?

**Cratchit** A triumph, my dear. The best pudding you've ever made.

**Scrooge** That will please her. Tricky things, puddings. Tell me, Spirit, will Tiny Tim live?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** I see an empty chair by the fireplace and a crutch lovingly preserved. If things do not change, he will die.

**Scrooge** Can he not be spared? Please, Spirit, say he can be saved.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** (*losing patience*) What's that? If he is going to die then let him do it quickly and decrease the surplus population.

**Scrooge** But I didn't realise.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** No, you didn't think.

**Cratchit** A toast, my dears. A toast to the founder of this feast... Mr Scrooge.

*Everyone puts down their glasses*

**Emily** No. I will not toast that odious skinflint. You know better than anyone, Robert, just how...

**Cratchit** Not in front of the children. Please, my dear, for us...

**Emily** Very well, I will toast him. Not for his sake but yours and for the day. A Merry Christmas to Mr Scrooge.

**Everyone** Merry Christmas.

**Emily** Though I think he's as merry as a graveyard on a wet Sunday.

*Everyone laughs*

**Tiny Tim** And God bless us, everyone.

**Cratchit** Sing a carol for us, Tim.

*Tiny Tim begins to sing. As he sings, the rest of the Cratchit family join him*

### **The First Noel**

The First Noel, the Angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

*As they sing, the Ghost of Christmas Present takes Scrooge on a tour of people spending Christmas in other ways. We find ourselves in a lighthouse*

**Lighthouse Keeper 1** It's a bad storm out there tonight. Makes me wish I was at home with my family.

**Lighthouse Keeper 2** Me too. Sipping mulled wine and eating the Mrs' mince pies. But someone has to keep this lighthouse lamp alight, even on Christmas Day.

**Lighthouse Keeper 1** I suppose so, but it certainly is rough out there.

**Lighthouse Keeper 2** I'll stoke up the fire and brew another pot of tea. Merry Christmas, Bill.

*The scene moves to a ship at sea. Three sailors are eating Christmas pudding*

**Sailor 1** If this storm abates, we could be back in port and on dry land by Boxing Day.

**Sailor 2** The sea certainly is rough. The waves are twenty feet high.

**Sailor 3** Are you going to eat that Christmas pudding?

**Sailor 2** (*feeling a little seasick*) Doesn't anything put you off your food? Here, have it.

**Sailor 3** No, the rougher the sea, the better I like it.

**Sailor 1** (*laughing*) Well, it is Christmas.

*The scene moves to a mine. Two miners, hard at work*

**Miner 1** Merry Christmas Dai. How's the family?

**Miner 2** Merry Christmas Bryn. They're getting ready for Christmas Dinner at home, told them to save me some.

**Miner 1** (*laughing*) We should be with our families instead of working down here in the mines.

**Miner 2** But the rich need their coal, especially at Christmas.

**Miner 1** Maybe we'll get next Christmas off.

**Miner 2** Maybe...

*They laugh*

**Scrooge** Why show me these things, Spirit?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** (*imitating Scrooge*) Who needs the Milk of Human Kindness? These men are away from their loved ones at a time when families should be together. They are in need of it more than anyone.

*The scene changes to Fred's parlour. It is Christmas Day. Scrooge and the Ghost of Christmas Present stand in a corner*

*Everyone laughs*

**Topper** And he really said that?

**Fred** Yes, he actually said that Christmas is humbug. And worse still, he believes it.

**Janet** Shame on him for being such a horrid old man.

**Topper** Well, I've heard even worse things about him. My servant told me that he'd told his cousin, who'd just lost her husband, that she was wrong to pay for his burial, as she owed Scrooge money.

**Taylor** Well, I heard that he had...

**Fred** Enough. I won't have another thing said against my Uncle. He may have done these things, and worse, but I feel sorry for him. His actions carry their own punishment.

**Janet** You have a soft heart, my love, and always see the good in everyone.

**Fred** My mother loved him dearly; he can't always have been such a miser. For her sake I shall always invite him to share Christmas with us.

**Scrooge** He has a loving heart, just like his mother, Fran.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Is that a tear, Scrooge?



**Taylor** Enough of Scrooge. Let's play a game

**Topper** I know, we'll play The Minister's Cat. Any pauses or hesitations and you're out. Janet, you go first, I'll go second and we'll take it in turns.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Janet** An *adorable* cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Topper** A *beautiful* cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Taylor** A *crafty* cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Fred** A *dainty* cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Maid** An *elegant* cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Janet** A... a... (*struggling*) f...

**Scrooge** Fat! A fat cat!

**Fred** You mustn't pause, or hesitate, Janet.

**Janet** Oh, oh... (*just in time*) a fat cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Topper** A *glamorous* cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Taylor** A *hungry* cat.

**Everyone** The Minister's Cat is...

**Fred** Is a... a... (*really struggling*)

**Everyone** Five, four, three, two, one. Fred, you're out!

**Scrooge** Ignorant.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Don't be so rude, Scrooge.

**Scrooge** No, daft Spirit, the next word begins with an 'I'. Ignorant, intelligent,

inspirational!

**Ghost of Christmas Present** Yes, I am indeed inspirational.

**Scrooge** Not you! The cat.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** What cat?

**Scrooge** Are you all right? You seem a little distant.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** My time is growing short. We still have one thing to do. Come.

**Scrooge** Your time is limited?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** I have just three hundred and sixty-five days on this earth and then my time is done... Err... What was I just saying?

**Scrooge** You're a little absent-minded, Spirit.

**Ghost of Christmas Present** No I'm a very large absent-minded Spirit.

**Scrooge** What's that moving in the shadows behind you, Spirit?

*The Ghost of Christmas Present steps aside, two skeleton-like children appear*

**Scrooge** Are they yours?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** No, they are Man's and they cling to me in the hope that Man will understand. The boy is Ignorance. The girl is Hope. Beware the boy for written on his head is Doom.

**Scrooge** Can nothing be done?

**Ghost of Christmas Present** (*imitating Scrooge*) Are there no prisons? Are there no workhouses?

*The clock strikes two. The Ghost of Christmas Present disappears as Scrooge calls after him*

**Scrooge** Wait! Spirit! You can't just leave me here, you need to show me more. You have to tell me more...

## Part Four – The Future

*A huge phantom appears. It is dark and terrifying*

**Scrooge** Am I in the presence of the Spirit of yet to come?

*The Ghost of Christmas Future nods and beckons Scrooge to follow him*

**Scrooge** It is you I fear the most, for I do not know if what you show me has already happened or is yet to happen.

*Scrooge cowers. The spirit beckons again*

**Scrooge** I know your purpose is to teach me and help me change. But can you not speak to me? Your silence is terrifying.

*The Ghost of Christmas Future guides Scrooge forward. They stand behind three Businessmen*

**Businessman 1** Have you heard the news? I can hardly believe it.

**Businessman 2** They say he died alone.

**Businessman 3** I wonder who will inherit his fortune. It must be a tidy sum. He never spent anything.

**Businessman 1** His nephew, probably. Decent sort of chap, complete opposite of the old skinflint.

**Businessman 2** Are you going to his funeral?

**Businessman 3** I hardly knew him.

**Businessman 1** I'll go if they serve a decent luncheon afterwards.

**Businessman 2** I never liked the man. Besides it's going to snow.

**Businessman 3** So it's a maybe then?

*They all nod. Scrooge peering closer recognises them*

**Scrooge** I know these men. They trade in the same stock exchange. I've known them for years.

*The Ghost of Christmas Future walks off, Scrooge follows. They are in a dingy room. As Scrooge's eyes become accustomed to the light he notices an old man sitting in the corner smoking a clay pipe*

**Old Joe** Come in, don't be shy.

*An Undertaker, Mr De'ath; a Laundress, Mrs White and cleaning lady, Mrs Dilber approach*

**Old Joe** Come in and close the door; you're letting the cold in. Now, who wants to

go first?

**Mr De'ath** I will as I haven't time to waste, this being the busiest time of year for me.

*He hands Old Joe a small bag*

**Old Joe** Now what do we have here? A silver pocket watch. Broken. Nice gold cufflinks. Pair of silver sugar tongs and a very nice silver pen. Seventeen and sixpence the lot. Stay and have a mulled wine, it's bitter out there.

**Mr De'ath** Don't mind if I do. It's always a pleasure doing business with you, Joe.

*He helps himself to a tankard of mulled wine*

**Old Joe** Now ladies, who's next? Come on don't be shy. We're all friends here.

**Mrs White** (*throws open her bundle*) I've nothing to hide. Everyone's got the right to take care of themselves. He always did. Besides he doesn't need them now.

**Mrs Dilber** Never a truer word said, Mrs White.

**Scrooge** Whose belongings are they selling? They are very disrespectful.

**Mrs White** If he hadn't been so mean and miserable in life, he wouldn't have gasped his last breath alone.

**Mrs Dilber** Very true, my dear. It's a judgement on him.

**Mrs White** Now Joe, how much will you give me? Speak plain. I'm not afraid to show what I took from the old skinflint. It's no sin.

**Old Joe** Sheets, worn but good quality. Towels, hardly used. Waistcoats, old fashioned, but fine silk. Boots, worn. Nice set of silver buttons. Twenty-one shillings.

**Mrs White** I was hoping for more.

**Old Joe** I always give too much to the ladies. It's a weakness of mine. If you ask another penny I'll knock off seven and sixpence. Now, Mrs Dilber, what do you have? What are these?

**Mrs Dilber** Bed curtains.

**Scrooge** Those look like my bed curtains.

**Old Joe** You took them down, rings and all, with him lying there?

**Mrs Dilber** And why not? What use are they to him? I also took his blankets. Well, he won't catch a cold without them now, will he?

*They all laugh*

**Scrooge** I don't like this place, Spirit. Whoever they're speaking about deserves more than this.

*Old Joe holds up a new white nightshirt and looks questioningly at Mrs Dilber*

**Mrs Dilber** Some fool put it on his dead body, but I soon took it off. Such a waste.

**Scrooge** That looks like my nightshirt.

**Old Joe** You were born to make your fortune. What's that in your hand?

**Scrooge** (*recoils*) That's Marley's gold watch. I took it as keepsake. How did she get it?  
(*Realisation of who they are talking about*)

*The Ghost of Christmas Future takes him to a street he knows well. There are vendors and customers. Everyone is very happy*

**Vendor 1** I wish to propose a toast to the newly departed. (*He raises his tankard and everyone joins him in his toast*) Thank you very much, it's the nicest thing anyone's ever done for us.

**Vendor 2** They say his nephew's a decent chap.

**Customer 1** He is. He came round to tell me personally that although we were well behind with our rent, he wouldn't be turning us out on to the streets.

**Customer 2** In fact, his wife sent some lovely things for the nippers.

**Customer 1** And he said he was writing off our arrears and would renegotiate all our loans at a fairer rate.

**Vendor 1** He's even torn up that awful black book.

**Vendor 2** I still shiver when I think of that book.

**Vendor 3** Never to hear that awful voice again.

**Vendor 1** Mind you, dying alone is very sad.

**Vendor 2** I think we should attend his funeral.

**Vendor 3** Out of respect?

**Vendor 2** No... To make sure he's dead.

*They all laugh and raise their glasses once again*

**Scrooge** (*realising it's him*) Show me no more Spirit. It hurts too much.

*The Ghost of Christmas Future takes him to Bob Cratchit's house. The Cratchit's are in mourning. Emily is sewing. She wipes away a tear*

**Martha** Are you all right, Mother?

**Emily** It's the bad light that makes my eyes water. I wouldn't show weak eyes to your father. He'll be home soon.

**Peter** He's late. I think he walks a little slower since Tim...

**Emily** I remember when he used to stride along with Tim on his shoulder, laughing and singing silly songs.

**Martha** And Tim smiling and saying, 'God bless us, everyone,' to everyone that they met.

**Emily** Your father loved him so much.

**Peter** Hush, I think I can hear Father at the door.

**Cratchit** Sorry I'm late, my dear, but I visited our Tim's grave. Well, I promised him I would.

**Martha** It's a lovely spot, Father. Tim would have loved the view over the city.

**Cratchit** (*sitting in his armchair and crying*) My poor child. I miss him so much.

*They all comfort him and Emily gives him a cup of tea*

**Emily** Don't upset yourself so, Bob. We have so many happy memories.

**Cratchit** You are right, my dear. We have much to be thankful for. That reminds me, Peter. Mr Scrooge's nephew came into the office today. He said if there was anything that he could do to help they would. He told me my job was safe as he is going to take over his uncle's business. He also said he was looking for an apprentice and had a mind to hire you, if you wanted to work with us. Your wage would be five shillings and sixpence per week.

**Peter** Five shillings and sixpence, Father? That means I could help with our bills. When do I start?

**Scrooge** Five shillings and sixpence. I'd have paid half that. He'll be bankrupt in a year. All my hard work...

*The Ghost of Christmas Future prods him*

**Scrooge** I mean, what a lovely gesture.

*The Ghost of Christmas Future takes Scrooge to an overgrown grave*

**Scrooge** This can't be Tiny Tim's grave. It's so overgrown.

*Spirit points to the grave. Scrooge brushes the overgrowth away and screams. The headstone*

reads, "Ebenezer Scrooge"

**Scrooge** No, Spirit, no. I am not the man I was. I have changed. Why show me this, if there is no hope? I promise I will keep Christmas in my heart all year. I will remember the things you have shown me. Please Spirit, I can change. Just give me a chance.

*The grave opens and Scrooge falls through screaming*

*Scrooge wakes up wrestling with his bed curtains*

**Scrooge** My bed curtains are still here. I'm still here. I don't know what to do. I'm as light as a feather. Merry as a schoolboy. *(He laughs. A funny sound comes out as he is not used to laughing)* I wonder what day it is? *(He throws open the window and shouts to a small boy passing by)* Hey you, boy.

**Butcher's Boy** Me, sir?

**Scrooge** What a polite boy. What day is it?

**Butcher's Boy** Christmas Day, sir.

**Scrooge** *(muttering to himself)* I haven't missed it, the spirits did it all in one night, well they can do anything I suppose. Delightful boy. Do you know the Butcher's on the corner?

**Butcher's Boy** I should hope I do. I live there.

**Scrooge** Do they still have that prize goose in the window?

**Butcher's Boy** The one as big as me? Yes.

**Scrooge** *(imitating the boy)* The one as big as me? *(He laughs)* Yes! Go and ask your father to bring the goose here and I'll give you a shilling.

*The boy rushes off, Scrooge pulls on his dressing gown, singing to himself. The boy, the Butcher and the goose return*

**Scrooge** *(giving them a hastily written note)* This is the address I want it delivered to and on the way can you purchase these things to go with it?

**Butcher** That's a long way and this bird is blooming heavy.

**Scrooge** Of course it is, silly me. Here's two guineas for a cab there and back. Keep the change. Don't tell Cratchit who the bird is from. Here's the shilling I promised you, boy.

*As Scrooge exits*

Now, I have a luncheon appointment to keep.

*On the way, he meets vendors who all still owe him money. To their surprise and confusion, he eagerly shakes their hands and writes off the outstanding debt. Mr Jones and Mr Smith enter*

**Scrooge** Ah, gentlemen, I was hoping to see you. (*Mr Jones and Mr Smith look afraid*)

I'm afraid I may have been rude to you last time we met and I'm truly sorry. I have something for you.

*He hands over a large bag of money*

**Mr Smith** Are you sure, sir. There's a lot of money here?

**Scrooge** It represents many years of neglect for my fellow man. Come and see me in the New Year and we'll set up a fund for the needy.

**Mr Jones** (*shaking Scrooge's hand vigorously*) Thank you, sir.

*They wander off, planning all the extras that they can buy for the poor*

*Scrooge arrives at his nephew's house. He knocks. A maid answers the door*

**Scrooge** Is your master at home?

**Maid** Yes, sir, and he will be very happy to see you, Mr Scrooge.

**Scrooge** You know me?

**Maid** Everybody knows you, Mr Scrooge!

*They enter the parlour*

**Scrooge** (*nervously*) I have come for lunch, if you will have me.

**Fred** Come in, Uncle. Come in. This is my wife, Janet.

**Scrooge** She's very pretty, Fred. I fell in love once, you know. (*He takes her hand*) Can you forgive a foolish old man?

**Janet** Of course I can, Uncle. Come and join us, we were about to play The Minister's Cat.

*The scene changes. Carollers sing*

### **The Holly and The Ivy**

The holly and the ivy,  
When they are both full grown  
Of all the trees that are in the wood  
The holly bears the crown  
O the rising of the sun  
And the running of the deer  
The playing of the merry organ



Sweet singing of the choir.

*It is the next day and we are in Scrooge's office again. Scrooge is hard at work but with a renewed enthusiasm. Bob is late and tries to sneak in without being noticed*

**Scrooge** (*sharply*) Bob Cratchit, what time do you call this?

**Cratchit** I'm so sorry. I know I'm five minutes late but yesterday someone sent us a huge goose and I'm afraid I...

**Scrooge** SILENCE! You leave me only one course of action. I will...

**Cratchit** Please sir, I was only...

**Scrooge** ... Have to double your wages. (*He laughs*)

**Cratchit** Are you feeling all right, sir?

**Scrooge** Never better and before we begin work, make up the fire, Bob. It's much too cold in here. Later over a steaming bowl of stew, we'll discuss how I can help your family, especially Tiny Tim. I promise we will find a way to make him well.

**Fred** (*directly to the audience*) And my Uncle was as good as his word. He did all that he said and much more. Tiny Tim didn't die, but grew in strength and it was said that Scrooge was like a second father to him. Scrooge became a good friend and benefactor to the poor. And although some laughed and said it wouldn't last, he carried on helping all who came to him. It was said that he knew how to keep Christmas better than anyone. As Tiny Tim would say...

**Tiny Tim** (*running on*) God bless us, everyone.

### **We Wish You A Merry Christmas**

We wish you a Merry Christmas  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a happy New Year.

Good tidings we bring  
To you and your kin;  
We wish you a Merry Christmas  
And a happy New Year.

### **Curtain**

# Useful Theatre Words

## Speak Like An Actor

**Act:** A group of scenes.

**Aside:** When an actor says their lines to the audience, not to another actor.

**Audition:** A bit like a team try out, to see which role would best suit you.

**Auditorium:** The part of the building that is used for performances. Sometimes called the House.

**Applause:** When the audience claps the actors.

**Backdrop:** A big curtain, painted as scenery, hung at the back of the stage.

**Backstage:** The wings, dressing rooms and other parts of the theatre out of the audience's view.

**Black Out:** When all the lights on the stage are turned off.

**Blocking:** An early rehearsal where the Director decides how everyone is going to move around the stage.

**Book:** Another word for the script.

**Cameo:** A small but important role, sometimes played by a famous actor.

**Cast:** The actors in a play.

**Character:** The part an actor takes in the play.

**Costume:** What an actor wears.

**Corpsing:** When an actor laughs on stage but isn't supposed to.

**Cue:** The words or action signalling something to happen on stage.

**Curtain Call:** When all the actors come on stage for a bow.

**Debut:** An actor's first-ever performance.

**Director:** The person in charge of everything that happens on stage.

**Down-Stage:** Moving towards the audience.

**Dressing Room:** Where an actor gets ready for the performance.

**Dress Rehearsal:** The final rehearsal that the actors do in costume before an audience comes to watch.

**Ensemble:** A group of actors performing together, sometimes playing smaller roles.

**Finale:** The final scene of a play.

**Front of House:** The area outside the auditorium, that the audience use before the show and during the interval.

**Fourth Wall:** An imaginary wall between the actors and the audience.

**Improvisation:** An unrehearsed performance.

**Intermission or Interval:** The break between acts (time for ice cream!).

**Monologue:** A long speech spoken by one actor.

**Off-Stage:** The area that the audience can't see.

**Performance:** When you do the play in front of an audience.

**Plot:** The story of a play.

**Premiere:** The first performance of a play.

**Props:** The things an actor uses in the play.

**Projecting:** Making sure that you are loud enough to be heard.

**Prompt:** To help an actor with a forgotten line.

**Rehearsal:** When you practise for the performance.

**Rostra:** A raised platform or piece of scenery.

**Scene:** Uninterrupted action within a play.

**Script:** The words an actor says in the play.

**Sight Line:** The different view that the audience has of the stage.

**Soliloquy:** When a character says their thoughts out loud.

**Spotlight:** A special light to shine on a particular actor.

**Stage Manager:** The person who makes sure that the performance runs smoothly.

**Tab:** The word that is used for the theatre curtains.

**Technical Rehearsal:** The rehearsal in the theatre when you make sure that the sound, lights and special effects all work.

**Thespian:** An old fashioned word for an actor.

**Understudy:** An actor ready to step in if needed e.g. If an actor's sick.

**Up-Stage:** Moving away from the audience.

**Wings:** The spaces off-stage, at the side.



# My Notes

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