

Side #1 - Marley

18.

ALL

(In a ghostly whisper) Ebenezer...

*Scrooge is terrified and hides
behind his chair.*

Nothing happens.

SCROOGE

Humbug.

*The bell by his bedroom door
begins to swing. And softly
rings...*

*... Again... but this time it
rings loudly.*

*... Again... but this time it
sounds like every bells in all of
London has begun to ring!*

*The lights fade to blues and
greens. The unnatural is upon us.*

*The bells cease and are replaced
by a clanking noise; as if a
person were dragging heavy
chains.*

*The door flies open with a
booming sound and the deceased
JACOB MARLEY lurches forward,
wearing his usual waistcoat,
tights, boots, coat-skirts, and
spectacles. However, he is being
weighed down by chains made of
cash boxes, keys, padlocks,
ledgers, and steel.*

MARLEY

Start

Ebenezer Scrooge!

SCROOGE

How now! What do you want with me?

MARLEY

Much!

SCROOGE

Who are you?

MARLEY

Ask me who I was.

SCROOGE

Who were you then?

MARLEY

In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley. (Beat) Sit.

*Scrooge drops into his chair.
Shocked.*

SCROOGE

I don't believe you.

MARLEY

Why do you doubt your senses?

SCROOGE

Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheat. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese. There's more of gravy than of grave about you!

*Marley lets out a dreadful howl.
(Each time Marley howls, it is
echoed by our "unseen" creatures)*

SCROOGE

Mercy! Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?

MARLEY

Man of the worldly mind! Do you believe in me OR NOT?

*All around the room "eyes" from
UNSEEN CREATURES glow from the
darkness.*

SCROOGE

I do! I must! But why do you come to me, Spirit?

MARLEY

It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk among his fellowmen; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world - oh woe is me! - and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!

Marley begins to cry and shakes his chains that weigh so heavily.

SCROOGE

You are fettered. Tell me why?

MARLEY

I wear the chains I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard of my own free will. Is its pattern strange to you? For yours will be as full and as long as this. It is a heavy chain we bear!

SCROOGE

Speak comfort to me, Jacob!

MARLEY

I have none to give you, Ebenezer. Only this.

The chains vanish and only Marley's voice remains. It feels like his voice is bouncing around the room, everywhere.

MARLEY

(Distorted Voice Over)

I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. In life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our offices; and weary journeys lie before me! Incessant torture of remorse.

Marley lets out another cry. This time, we realize the creatures have spread throughout the audience.

SCROOGE

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

MARLEY

Business! Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, patience, compassion, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!

*Marley lifts his chains and
flings them heavily upon the
floor. He stalks toward Scrooge.*

MARLEY

Oh! Captive, bound, and double-ironed. Mortal life is too short for its vast meaning. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunity misused! Yet such was I! Such was I!

*Marley grabs Scrooge. Both men
are terrified.*

SCROOGE

Marley, I beg of you! Let me GO!

MARLEY

Hear me! My time is nearly gone.

SCROOGE

I will. But don't be hard upon me! Pray!

MARLEY

How it is that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day. I am here tonight to warn you, that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate.

SCROOGE

You were always good to me. Thank'ee.

MARLEY

You will be haunted by Three Spirits.

SCROOGE

I think I'd rather not.

MARLEY

Without their visits, you cannot hope to shun the path I tread. Expect the first tomorrow, when the bell tolls One.

End

Fan motions toward Belle as if to say, "your turn."

ELIZABETH CRATCHIT

Free of the loneliness he has grown so accustomed to.

The set revolves again. Ernie and Fan disappear.

Young Ebenezer opens a present from Belle. It is his iconic red scarf.

Young Ebenezer and Belle find themselves under the mistletoe. He gets on one knee.

YOUNG EBENEZER

Will you marry me?

BELLE

I can't wait.

He stands and they kiss under the mistletoe.

The lights and mood shift. Belle disappears and we are in Marley's office.

Marley sits at his desk. This is very reminiscent of our opening scene between Scrooge and Fred.

Scrooge enters.

MARLEY

What is it? Can you not see I am busy?

YOUNG EBENEZER

It is about your daughter, sir.

MARLEY

What has she done now?

Start

YOUNG EBENEZER

Nothing. It is... I...

MARLEY

Speak, boy!

YOUNG EBENEZER

I am here to ask for your blessing to marry Belle, sir.

MARLEY

Why?

YOUNG EBENEZER

Why? I love her, sir.

MARLEY

Ridiculous. My answer is no.

YOUNG EBENEZER

No?

MARLEY

No. You are in no position to ask for my daughter's hand - barely a step out of the workhouses. You haven't the means to provide. I will not "bless" my daughter into a life of poverty. Good day.

End

He returns to work as if nothing of importance has happened.

A dejected Young Ebenezer begins to exit, but finds the will to turn back.

YOUNG EBENEZER

Let me work for you. I am skilled with numbers and meticulous keeping the books. You are a renown man of business. I shall learn much and more and earn your blessing for Belle's hand, in time.

Marley gives a curious look.

TRICKSTER

But there is more of this matter...

We leave the office to find...