

SIDE #1 - Scrooge

7.

BOB CRATCHIT

Oh! But I couldn't...

SCROOGE

You're right. What was I thinking? Throw them in the fire. It will richen the value of today's coal. (Beat. He ignores Bob's moral struggle.) This holiday gets worse each year, Cratchit.

BOB CRATCHIT

Regarding Christmas, sir...

SCROOGE

You'll want all day tomorrow, I suppose?

BOB CRATCHIT

If quite convenient, sir.

SCROOGE

It's not convenient! And it's not fair.

BOB CRATCHIT

It *is* only once a year, sir.

SCROOGE

A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December! But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning.

BOB CRATCHIT

Yes, sir! Of course, sir! Thank you, sir!

Start

*There is a knock on the door,
(which was truly only a courtesy
because) immediately enters
Scrooge's cheerful nephew, FRED.*

FRED

A merry Christmas, Uncle! God save you! Merry Christmas, Bob.

*Fred gives Bob a warm handshake,
who then proceeds to hide the
decorations.*

SCROOGE

Bah! Humbug!

FRED

Christmas a humbug, Uncle! You don't mean that, I am sure.

SCROOGE

I do. Merry Christmas! What reason have you to be merry?
You're poor enough.

FRED

What reason have you to be dismal? You're rich enough.

*Scrooge is caught off-guard and
can only respond with...*

SCROOGE

Bah! Humbug!

FRED

Don't be cross, Uncle.

SCROOGE

Out! There is work to be done!

FRED

Work? On Christmas Eve night?

SCROOGE

Christmas! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer. If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart.

*Bob's head drops lower into his
books.*

FRED

Uncle!

SCROOGE

Nephew! Keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.

FRED

Keep it? But you don't keep it. Which is why...

Fred reveals an invitation.

SCROOGE

Let me leave it alone, then. Much good may it do you! Much good it has ever done you!

End

FRED

(Softly, understanding)

There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, I dare say. Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time in the long calendar year when men and women seem to open their hearts freely, and to think of people above and below them as if they were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good, and *will* do me good; and I say, God bless it!

The spirit moves involuntarily through Bob as he stands and begins to clap before he can stop himself.

BOB CRATCHIT

Well said, Master Fred!

SCROOGE

How would you like to spend Christmas in the unemployment line?

Bob drops back into his chair and works feverishly.

FRED

Don't be angry, Uncle. I'm not trying to upset you. In fact, I come with an invitation. Clara's family is celebrating Christmas and they've asked for you to come dine with us.

SCROOGE

Why ever are you *choosing* to get married?

FRED

Why? Because I am in love!

SCENE 12: RECONCILE

Scrooge is alone in the GRAVEYARD again with the spirit.

But it is no longer BELLE or JACOB. This spirit is in the form of FAN.

Start

SCROOGE

How do we change these heartless visions of the future?

FAN

Do you wish to change, Ebenezer?

SCROOGE

Hear me! I am not the man I was. I will not be the man I must have been but for these precious lessons. Why show me this, if I am past all hope?

The chains have gone. Ebenezer stands alone with sister.

FAN

What a sad place this would be if we were past all hope.

CHILD EBENEZER enters playing with a toy parrot.

SCROOGE

What have I done to this boy?

FAN

Your best. (Beat) How would you describe him?

SCROOGE

Poor. Scared. Unwanted.

FAN

Is that how you would really describe yourself?

SCROOGE

Misunderstood. Lonely.

FAN

What does he deserve?

SCROOGE

Kindness. Support. He deserves to feel loved. O Fan, what I have done to him?

FAN

Does the man standing before me not deserve the same? Kindness? Love? You don't have to go through this world alone.

Scrooge sinks to his knees.

SCROOGE

This is too much.

Scrooge watches as CHILD EBENEZER vanishes into the shadows.

FAN

Is it so hard for you to believe that you should feel loved? You have people in your life who care for you, Ebenezer. Deeply.

SCROOGE

But they all get taken away.

FAN

Reopen your heart, Ebenezer, and see what the world has for you.

The tune of the music box. She sings softly to him.

FAN

It is time for me to go, my dear, sweet Brother. Promise me you will not let the dark shadows of your past rob you of the golden riches of your future.

SCROOGE

Please, Fan. Don't go!

Fan kisses his forehead as the fog rolls in once again.

There is quiet. Stillness. The haze is thick.

He is once again alone.

*The music turns sour. The large
silent Spirit has returned.*

SCROOGE

Something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I
know it, but I know now how.

He confronts the open grave.

SCROOGE

Before I draw nearer to that stone to which you point answer
me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that
will be, or are they shadows of things that May be, only?

*Scrooge approaches the grave and
reveals his own name.*

SCROOGE

No, Spirit! OH OH NO!

*Chains come out of the grave and
cover Scrooge. He struggles, but
their weight is too much.*

SCROOGE

I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all
the year. I will love in the Past, the Present, and the
Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I
will not shut out the lessons that they teach. I promise not
to live in the dark shadows of myself! Oh, tell me I may
sponge away the writing on this stone!

End

*He embraces his sister. The stage
is full of light until...*

Start

SCENE 13: CHRISTMAS MORNING

Scrooge is once again alone in his room. He is hit with a rush of excitement.

SCROOGE

This is my bed. I AM HOME! Thank you, Fan. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future! Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees!

He grabs a hold of his bed curtains.

SCROOGE

They are not torn down! They are not torn down, rings and all. They are here - I am here- the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be. I know they will!

He claws at his clothes and begins to pace.

SCROOGE

I don't know what to do! I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world. Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!

He stands winded.

SCROOGE

There's the saucepan that the gruel was in! There's the door, by which the Ghost of Jacob Marley entered! There's the corner where the Ghost of Christmas Present sat! It's all right, it's all true, it all happened. Ha ha ha!

Our narrators return.

BELLE

Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh.

SCROOGE

I don't know what day of the month it is I don't know how long I've been among the Spirits. I don't know anything. I'm quite a baby. Never mind. I don't care. I'd rather be a baby!

FEZZIWIG

Running to the window, he opened it, and put his head out. Golden sunlight; heavenly sky; merry bells!

Below, BOY (WIDOW's son) is walking home. He stops, fearful of Scrooge's threat from the night before.

End

SCROOGE

You, boy! What's today!

BOY

Eh?

SCROOGE

What's today, my fine fellow?

BOY

Today! Why, Christmas Day!

SCROOGE

It's Christmas Day! I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything. Of course they can. Of course they can. Hallo, my fine fellow!

BOY

Hallo!

SCROOGE

Do you know the Poulterer's, in the next street at the corner?

BOY

I should hope I did. It was my father's shop.

SCROOGE

A remarkable boy! Do you know whether the prize turkey that was hanging up there has sold?