

Charles Dickens's A Christmas Carol

Characters

Circle the character you will play.

**Indicates large speaking role*

***Narrator:** our ghostly storyteller

***Ebenezer (EHB-uh-NEE-zer) Scrooge:**
a rich and cranky old banker

Bob Cratchit: Scrooge's hardworking clerk

Fred: Scrooge's cheerful nephew

Marley: The ghost of Scrooge's dead
business partner

Ghost #1: The Ghost of Christmas Past

Ghost #2: The Ghost of Christmas Present

Tiny Tim Cratchit: Bob's son. He is sickly and
walks with a crutch.

Mrs. Cratchit: Bob's wife

Fezziwig: Scrooge's first employer

Passerby #1

Passerby #2

Boy

Ghost Chorus: ghostly sounds made by all the
ghosts in unison

**The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, Belle,
Young Scrooge:** nonspeaking parts

**Adapted for Storyworks by Mack Lewis
Art by Russ Flint**

Scene 1

Christmas Eve, London, 1843

Narrator: One wouldn't think Christmas Eve to be a time for ghost stories, but here, in the offices of Ebenezer Scrooge and his long-dead partner, Jacob Marley, our ghostly tale begins. Let me say again that old Marley was dead. This you must understand.

Cratchit: Mr. Scrooge, sir, might I add some coal to the fire?

Scrooge: Absolutely not. Coal costs money. Doesn't your coat keep you warm?

Cratchit: Not really, sir.

Scrooge: Then I suggest you get a new one.

Cratchit: But, sir . . .

Scrooge: That's enough, Mr. Cratchit. I suppose you'll want the day off tomorrow.

Cratchit: Yes, sir. Christmas is only once a year, sir.

Scrooge: You want me to pay you for a day when you are not working? You'd better be here even earlier the next morning.

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Narrator: Scrooge's nephew arrived in hopes of spreading cheer.

Fred: Merry Christmas, Uncle!

Scrooge: Bah! Humbug!

Fred: Christmas a humbug? You don't mean it!

Scrooge: I do! What reason have you to be merry? You're not wealthy.

Fred: Come, dear Uncle. What reason have you to be so gloomy? You, with all your riches.

Scrooge: Bah! Humbug! What is Christmas but a time of wasting money on things you don't need? If I had my way, every idiot who goes about saying "Merry Christmas" would be boiled in his own pudding.

Fred: Uncle!

Scrooge: Nephew! You celebrate the holiday in your way. Let me celebrate it in mine.

Fred: But you don't celebrate it.

Scrooge: Let me not celebrate it then. But take my advice, celebrating has done you no good.

Fred: There are many things that do us good



Marley's ghost raised a frightful cry and shook its chains with an awful noise.

Scene 2

Late that same evening

Ghost Chorus: Owwooooh!

Narrator: Scrooge sat by the fireplace in his dreary house. He heard the door fly open and the rattling of chains.

Scrooge: What's that noise?

Narrator: Passing through the heavy door to Scrooge's chamber

came a ghost with death-cold eyes. Its head was wrapped in bandages. It had chains locked around its body.

Scrooge: Pooh pooh! I'm not a man to be frightened by shadows.

Marley: You don't believe in me?

Scrooge: I don't.

Narrator: The ghost raised a frightful cry and shook its chains with an awful noise. Scrooge dropped to his knees and covered his face.

Scrooge: Mercy, dreadful spirit. What is it you want with me?

Marley: Much! I am the ghost of your partner, Jacob Marley. I must drag this chain and wander through the world forever! Woe is me.

Scrooge: But why are you chained?

Marley: Each link of this chain is a punishment for some kind deed I failed to do. Oh, why did I not show charity?

Scrooge: But, Jacob, you were always such

without making us rich. Though holidays have never put a scrap of gold in my pocket, I believe I am all the better for having celebrated them.

Cratchit: Yes, yes!

Scrooge: Quiet, Mr. Cratchit, or you'll celebrate Christmas by looking for a new job.

Fred: Don't be angry, Uncle. Have Christmas dinner with us tomorrow.

Scrooge: Humbug.

Fred: But why not?

Scrooge: That's enough. Good day, Nephew.

Fred: So be it. But I shall keep my Christmas spirit 'til the end. Merry Christmas, Uncle! Merry Christmas, Mr. Cratchit!

Cratchit: Happy New Year!

Scrooge: There's a ridiculous notion: My clerk, with barely enough money to feed his family, and a sickly child, too, talking about a happy New Year. I must be mad!

a good businessman. You made so much money!

Narrator: Again the ghost raised a cry and shook his chains.

Marley: I should have been kinder! Ebenezer, do you know the weight of the chain you're making? It was as long as mine seven Christmas Eves ago. Imagine how long it is now.

Scrooge: Jacob, what can I do about it?

Marley: Hear me, Scrooge! You will be haunted by three spirits. Listen to what each tells you! Expect the first when the clock strikes one.

Ghost Chorus: Owwoooooh!

Scene 3

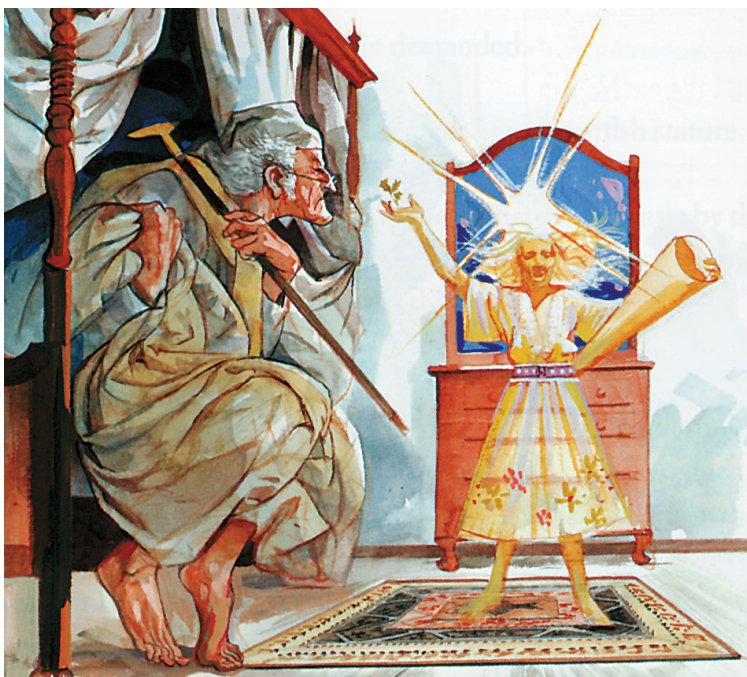
1:00 A.M.

Narrator: Scrooge awoke to find the first ghost, a gentle spirit in a long white gown.

Ghost #1: I am the Ghost of Christmas Past. I will show you your life as it used to be. Rise and walk with me.

Narrator: They passed magically into Scrooge's past. The ghost and Scrooge were suddenly standing inside an old warehouse.

"I am the Ghost of Christmas Past."



Ghost #1: Do you know this place?

Scrooge: Know it? I held my first job here.

Why, it's old Mr. Fezziwig. He was a decent man!

Narrator: Next to Mr. Fezziwig, Scrooge saw himself, as a cheerful young man.

Fezziwig: It's Christmas Eve! Yo ho, everyone! No more work tonight. Clear the floor for dancing and fiddling and celebrating!

Narrator: Food was brought in. The music began. Everyone started dancing—including young Scrooge.

Ghost #1: Such a waste of money.

Scrooge: A waste of money? Look how happy everyone is. Fezziwig was always making people happy. Little things mostly. The way he looked at you, or a pat on the back.

Ghost #1: With whom do you dance? You look so happy.

Scrooge: Ah, Belle. It's young Belle.

Ghost #1: You loved her, but didn't marry her.

Scrooge: I first needed to seek my fortune.

Ghost #1: You mean, you could earn no money by simply loving her. You chose wealth instead.

Scrooge: Spirit, why do you torture me? Show me no more. I don't wish to see it!

Narrator: The spirit disappeared. Scrooge found himself back in his bedroom.

Scene 4

2:00 A.M.

Ghost Chorus: Owwoooooh!

Ghost #2: I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. You've never seen the likes of me before!

Narrator: The second spirit was gigantic, and as grand and joyful as the season. Its eyes were clear and kind, yet they frightened Scrooge.

Scrooge: Spirit, take me where you will. Let me learn from it.

Ghost #2: Look upon me! You and I will go and see things as they are now. Off with us, then!

Narrator: The ghost and Scrooge appeared in

the doorway of a small house.

Scrooge: Where are we?

Ghost #2: You don't know the house of your own clerk—Bob Cratchit? Come inside. The family is sitting down for Christmas dinner.

Narrator: Tiny Tim hobbled to the table, using an old wooden crutch.

Tiny Tim: Mother, there never was such a grand goose as this!

Cratchit: Splendid, my dear. A triumph!

Scrooge: So excited over a small goose! You'd think it was a prize turkey.

Ghost #2: It's all they can afford! Not a very well-off family.

Scrooge: True, but a happy one. Look how pleased they are—especially that Tim.

Cratchit: A toast! To Mr. Scrooge, the founder of our feast!

Mrs. Cratchit: The founder of our feast indeed! I wish he were here now. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon!

Cratchit: My dear! Let's not be bitter.

Mrs. Cratchit: I'll toast his health because it's Christmas, but that's all. Long life to him! Merry Christmas to the stingy, unfeeling, unkind founder of the feast: Mr. Scrooge.

All: Merry Christmas!

Tiny Tim: And God bless us, every one!

Scrooge: Tell me, Spirit. Will Tiny Tim live?

Ghost #2: I see an empty seat. I see a tiny crutch with no owner.

Scrooge: Oh, no! Say he will be all right!

Ghost #2: If there is no change in his surroundings, the child will die.

Ghost Chorus: Owwoooooh!

Narrator: Scrooge looked sad as the ghost vanishes. Suddenly, another ghost appeared.

Scene 5

3:00 A.M.

Narrator: The third phantom was cloaked in a black robe. Nothing could be seen of him except one outstretched hand.

Scrooge: You are the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come?

Narrator: The ghost didn't answer. It pointed



its long, bony finger into the night.

Scrooge: Ghost of the Future, I fear you more than the others.

Narrator: The Spirit took Scrooge to a lonely cemetery that was covered in weeds. A coffin was being lowered into the ground.

Scrooge: Whose funeral is this? Why is no one here to mourn? Tell me, Spirit, is there anyone in this town who cared for this man?

Passerby #1: When did he die?

Passerby #2: Last week.

Passerby #1: What was the matter with him?

Passerby #2: An empty heart, I suppose.

Passerby #1: Little good his money did him.

Passerby #2: Not a single person to mourn him!

Passerby #1: But think of all the money he saved with such a cheap funeral!

Passerby #2: Ha ha ha!

Narrator: The phantom pointed toward the gravestone.

Scrooge: Before I look, Spirit, tell me one thing. Can this future be changed?

Narrator: The Spirit gave no reply. Scrooge trembled. He looked upon the gravestone and read the words EBENEZER SCROOGE.

The phantom pointed toward the gravestone.

Ghost Chorus: Owwooooh!

Scrooge: No, Spirit. Hear me! Can I still erase the name upon this stone? I am not the person I was! From this night on, I will be a kind and generous man. I will honor Christmas in my heart.

Scene 6

Christmas morning

Narrator: When Scrooge awoke, he was so happy to see daylight that he laughed out loud. For a man that had been out of practice for so long, it was a splendid laugh. He opened his window and called to a boy.

Scrooge: What's today, my fine fellow?

Boy: Today? Why, it's Christmas Day.

Scrooge: I haven't missed it! Do you know the prize turkey hanging in the butcher's window?

Boy: The one that's as big as I am?

Scrooge: Yes, that one. I'll pay you to go buy it and have it brought here.

Boy: Yes, sir! Merry Christmas, sir!

Scrooge: I'll have it delivered to Bob Cratchit's. They won't know who sent it! And then I must join my nephew for dinner. Oh joy, I haven't missed Christmas!

Narrator: Scrooge spent the rest of the day spreading Christmas cheer and joyfully sharing his wealth.

Scene 7

The next day

Narrator: Scrooge arrived at the office early. Cratchit entered, shivering from the cold.

Scrooge: Mr. Cratchit, you're eighteen and a half minutes late!

Cratchit: It's only once a year, sir. We were making merry rather long last night. It won't happen again.

Scrooge: I'll tell you what, my friend. I'm not going to stand for this any longer.

Narrator: Poor Bob Cratchit. He was certain he was about to be fired.

Scrooge: And therefore, Mr. Cratchit . . . I'm doubling your salary!

Narrator: Cratchit was stunned!

Scrooge: Merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas than I've ever given before. And your salary is just a start. I'll assist your struggling family any way I can. And Tim, whatever he needs, he'll have it. Now, let's warm up this place. Put some more coal on the fire, Bob Cratchit. Before you dot another i, let's have more coal!

Narrator: Scrooge was better than his word. He became as good a man and as good a friend as the city knew. It was always said, if any man knew how to celebrate Christmas, it was Ebenezer Scrooge. May that be said of all of us.

Tiny Tim: And God bless us, every one! ■

