

SIDE LIST FOR A *CHRISTMAS CAROL*: A LIVE RADIO PLAY AUDITIONS

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("APPLAUSE" sign flashes.)

(JAKE LAURENTS takes a bow and approaches a microphone.)

JAKE LAURENTS. (To the audience:) Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. (Sees a signal from the STAGE MANAGER:) I am getting a signal from our stage manager that we will be live on the air in less than ten seconds. Please remember that this evening's play is being broadcast live, coast-to-coast, and our audience at home is counting on your reaction to aid in their listening pleasure. So feel free to laugh, cry and applaud mightily as you enjoy the performance!

STAGE MANAGER. We're on the air in five...four...three...two...

(The "ON AIR" sign lights.)

MUSIC CUE #1: WBFR JINGLE

MEN. W

WOMEN. B

MEN. F

WOMEN. R

ALL. IN NEW YORK CITY.

JAKE LAURENTS. This is WBFR Playhouse of the Air!

("APPLAUSE" sign flashes.)

MUSIC CUE #2: WBFR THEME

JAKE LAURENTS. Good evening, everyone, this is Jake Laurents, the host of this program. Each and every week, the WBFR Playhouse of the Air dedicates ourselves to bringing to you, over the air, your favorite stories performed by the brightest stars of Broadway and Hollywood. And tonight is no exception, as we bring you Charles Dickens' famous Yuletide ghost story *A Christmas Carol*, starring Freddie Filmore as Ebenezer Scrooge. We take you now to London, 1843, and raise the curtain on Act One of *A Christmas Carol*...

MUSIC CUE #3: "GOD REST YE"/BLEAK UNDERSCORE

HARRY "JAZZBO" HAYWOOD. Marley was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail. Scrooge knew he was dead, of course. They were partners for many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole friend and sole mourner.

SALLY APPLEWHITE. Scrooge never painted out Old Marley's name; there it stood, years afterwards, above the warehouse door at the firm of Scrooge and Marley.

Side ①

Jack Laurents

Side ②
Fred / Scrooge

10

Joe Landry

JAKE LAURENTS. What a tight-fisted hand at the grind-stone was Scrooge. And the cold within him didn't thaw one degree at Christmas.

LANA SHERWOOD. Once upon a time, on Christmas Eve, Scrooge sat busy in his counting-house. He kept his eye on his clerk, Bob Cratchit, who was in a dismal little cell copying letters. It was just before closing time when, through the door came Scrooge's only nephew, Fred...

Scene 2. Scrooge's Counting-house

(SFX: Door with bell opens/closes.)

(FRED enters.)

FRED. (Cheerful:) Merry Christmas, Bob!

BOB CRATCHIT. And the same to you, Fred

FRED. A Merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!

START ②

SCROOGE. Bah, humbug!

FRED. Christmas a humbug, uncle?! You don't mean that, I am sure.

SCROOGE. I do. "Merry Christmas," indeed! What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

FRED. Come, then. What right have you to be dismal? What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough.

SCROOGE. Bah, humbug.

FRED. Don't be cross, uncle!

SCROOGE. What else can I be when I live in such a world of fools as this? What's Christmas time to you but a time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer. If I could work my will, every imbecile 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!

FRED. Uncle!

SCROOGE. (Sternly:) Nephew! (Quick beat.) You keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.

FRED. Keep it? But you don't keep it, uncle.

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

FRED. There are many things from which I have derived good but not profited, Christmas among them. And I have always thought of Christmas as a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time. The only time I know of in the year when men and women open their hearts freely, and think of people below them as fellow-passengers to the grave. And though it has never put gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good and I say, God bless it!

BOB CRATCHIT. (*Applauding:*) God bless it, indeed!

END

SCROOGE. (*To BOB:*) Let me hear another sound from you, Bob Cratchit, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation! (*To FRED, insulting him:*) And as for you, nephew, you're such a powerful speaker I wonder you don't go into Parliament.

FRED. Don't be angry, uncle. Come dine with us tomorrow.

SCROOGE. No.

FRED. But why?

SCROOGE. Why did you marry against my wishes?

FRED. Because I fell in love.

SCROOGE. (*With a growl, as if that were the only one thing in the world more ridiculous than a "Merry Christmas":*) Because you fell in love! (*Rolling his eyes, pointing FRED to the door:*) Good afternoon!

FRED. I want nothing from you; why cannot we be friends?

SCROOGE. Good afternoon.

FRED. I am sorry with all my heart to find you so stubborn. But I'll keep my Christmas humor to the last. So a Merry Christmas to you, uncle!

SCROOGE. Good afternoon!

FRED. And a Happy New Year!

SCROOGE. Good afternoon!

FRED. Merry Christmas to you and your family, Bob.

BOB CRATCHIT. The same to you, Fred.

(*SFX: Door with bell opens/closes.*)

(*FRED exits.*)

SCROOGE. (*Muttering:*) There's another fellow, my clerk, with fifteen shillings a week, and a wife and family, talking about a merry Christmas. I'll retire to Bedlam.

(*SFX: Knock on door, door with bell opens/closes.*)

(3) START

(GENTLEWOMAN enters.)

GENTLEWOMAN. (*Referring to a list:*) Scrooge and Marley's, I believe. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge or Mr. Marley?

SCROOGE. Mr. Marley has been dead seven years ago tonight. You have the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge.

GENTLEWOMAN. Well, now, Mr. Scrooge, at this festive season of the year it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at the present time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities; hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts, sir.

SCROOGE. Are there no prisons?

GENTLEWOMAN. Plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE. And the Union workhouses? Are they still in operation?

GENTLEWOMAN. They are. Still, I wish I could say they were not.

SCROOGE. The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigor, then?

GENTLEWOMAN. Both very busy, sir.

SCROOGE. I'm very glad to hear it.

GENTLEWOMAN. As they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body, a few of us are endeavoring to raise a fund to buy the Poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. What shall I put you down for?

SCROOGE. Nothing!

GENTLEWOMAN. Oh, you wish to be anonymous?

SCROOGE. I wish to be left alone. Since you ask me what I wish, that is my answer. I don't make merry myself at Christmas and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the establishments I have mentioned—they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there.

GENTLEWOMAN. Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

SCROOGE. If they would rather die, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. (*Beat.*) It's enough for a man to understand his own business, and not to interfere with other people's. Mine occupies me constantly. Good afternoon!

GENTLEWOMAN. Well!

Finish

SCROOGE. Show this woman the door, Cratchit!

BOB CRATCHIT. Yes, sir. *(To the GENTLEWOMAN:)* This way, please. *(Aside to GENTLEWOMAN:)* It would please me greatly if I might contribute tuppence to your charity.

SCROOGE. Cratchit!

BOB CRATCHIT. Coming, Mr. Scrooge!

GENTLEWOMAN. You are a most generous soul, sir. Which is more than I can say for your employer.

SCROOGE. Cratchit!

BOB CRATCHIT. Coming! *(Aside to GENTLEWOMAN:)* Merry Christmas to you.

GENTLEWOMAN. And to you, sir.

(SFX: Door with bell opens/closes.)

(GENTLEWOMAN exits.)

MUSIC CUE #4: "GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN"
VOCAL

BOY. *(Singing:)*

GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN
LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY...

(SFX: A knock at the door.)

SCROOGE. What in heavens now?!

BOB CRATCHIT. Let me see about it...

(SFX: Door with bell opens.)

(BOB CRATCHIT opens door for BOY.)

BOY. *(Louder, continuing from above:)*

REMEMBER CHRIST OUR SAVIOR
WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY...

SCROOGE. *(Overlapping:)* Humbug! Off with you, boy! Go and haunt someone else!

BOY.

TO SAVE US ALL FROM SATAN'S POWER
WHEN WE WERE GONE ASTRAY...

(SFX: Door with bell slams.)

(SCROOGE shuts door on BOY.)

BOB CRATCHIT. *(Hesitant:)* Mr. Scrooge, sir...

SCROOGE. What is it, Cratchit?!

(4) START

BOB CRATCHIT. It's near closing time, sir, and I wanted to ask—

SCROOGE. You wanted to ask about taking off 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.

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. I will, sir, you can count on me.

SCROOGE. Good day.

BOB CRATCHIT. And to you, sir, a Merry Christmas.

SCROOGE. *(With a growl.)* Humbug!

MUSIC CUE #5: CRATCHIT THEME #1

LANA SHERWOOD. And, with that, the office was closed in a twinkling.

SALLY APPLEWHITE. Bob Cratchit went down a slide on Cornhill, twenty times, in honor of its being Christmas Eve, and then ran home to Camden Town as hard as he could pelt, to play with his family at blindman's buff.

JAKE LAURENTS. Scrooge took his melancholy dinner in his usual melancholy tavern; and having read all the newspapers, and beguiled the rest of the evening with his banker's book, went home to bed.

Scene 3. Scrooge's House

HARRY "JAZZBO" HAYWOOD. Scrooge's chambers had once belonged to his deceased partner, Marley. They were a gloomy suite of rooms where nobody lived but Scrooge.

LANA SHERWOOD. There was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door; Scrooge had seen it there each and every day.

SALLY APPLEWHITE. But when Scrooge put his key in the lock of the door, he saw in the knocker Marley's face. Its livid color made it horrible.

(4) end

LANA SHERWOOD. As Scrooge looked at this phenomenon, it became a knocker again. Startled, he walked in and closed the door with a bang.

(SFX: Door slams, echoes.)

SALLY APPLEWHITE. He sat before the fire to take his gruel.

MUSIC CUE #6: MARLEY'S ENTRANCE

(SFX: Under the following builds a great rattling of chains, cash-boxes, padlocks and keys.)

HARRY "JAZZBO" HAYWOOD. Then came a clanking noise from deep down below; as if some person were dragging a heavy chain. And then the noise became louder, as if from the floor below; then coming up the stairs; then straight towards his door.

SCROOGE. It's humbug still! I won't believe it.

HARRY "JAZZBO" HAYWOOD. Then, without pause, through the door came the ghost of a man; covered in long chains wound about him; a chain of cash-boxes, keys, padlocks, ledgers and heavy purses wrought in steel...

MARLEY. Ebenezer Scrooge...

SCROOGE. (*Caustic and cold as ever:*) How now! What do you want with me?

MARLEY. Much!

SCROOGE. Who are you?

MARLEY. Ask me who I was.

SCROOGE. (*Raising his voice:*) Who were you then? You're particular, for a shade.

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

SCROOGE. Humbug.

MARLEY. You don't believe in me.

SCROOGE. I do not.

MARLEY. Why do you doubt your senses?

SCROOGE. Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are!

(SFX/BIZ: MARLEY lets out a frightful cry, shaking his chains with a dismal and appalling noise.)

Side (5)

Marley / Scrooge

Start

SCROOGE. Mercy! Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?

MARLEY. Man of the worldly mind! Do you believe in me or not?

SCROOGE. I do. I must. But why do spirits walk the earth—and why do they come to me?

MARLEY. It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow men, and travel far and wide; 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 and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!

(SFX/BIZ: MARLEY *lets out another frightful cry, shaking his chains with the same dismal and appalling noise.*)

SCROOGE. (*Trembling:*) Why are you fettered with chains, Jacob?

MARLEY. I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard. Would you know the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was as heavy and as long as this seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it since!

SCROOGE. (*Imploringly:*) Speak comfort to me, Jacob!

MARLEY. I have none to give. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. In life, my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!

SCROOGE. (*Business-like:*) You must have been very slow about it, Jacob. Seven years dead, and travelling all the time! You might have got over a great quantity of ground in seven years.

MARLEY. Oh, captive, bound, and double-ironed, not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunity misused!

SCROOGE. (*Faltering, applying this to himself:*) But you were always a good man of business, Jacob.

MARLEY. Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence were all my business. The dealings of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business! At this time of the rolling year I suffer most. Hear me! My time is nearly gone.

SCROOGE. I will. But don't be hard upon me! Don't be flowery, Jacob! Pray!

MARLEY. I am here tonight to warn you. You have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE. You were always a good friend to me. Thank'ee!

MARLEY. You will be haunted by Three Spirits.

stop

Side ⑥
Ghost of Christmas Past / Scrooge
Fan / Young Scrooge

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Joe Landry

(SFX: Chime tree.)

MUSIC CUE #8: SCHOOL AND FAN THEME

Scene 4. Scrooge's Old Boarding School

⑥ ~~START~~

SCROOGE. Where are we, Spirit? Where are you taking me?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Do you recognize this place?

SCROOGE. (*On the verge of tears:*) Good Heaven! I do! I was a boy here. That was my schoolhouse.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Your lip is trembling. And what is that upon your cheek?

SCROOGE. It is but a pimple. (*Beat.*) Lead me where you will.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Do you recollect your way to school?

SCROOGE. (*With fervor:*) Remember it? I could walk it blindfolded!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Strange to have forgotten it for so many years. Let us go on. (*Beat.*) The school is not quite deserted. A solitary child, neglected by his friends, is left there still.

SCROOGE. (*Muttering, tearful:*) Yes, I know that poor boy. I was so lonely. (*Sniffles, after a beat:*) I wish... Oh, but it's too late now...

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. What is the matter?

SCROOGE. Nothing. (*Beat.*) There was a boy singing a Christmas carol at my door last night. I should like to have given him something: that's all.

FAN. (*Approaching:*) Ebenezer!

SCROOGE. It's my sister, Fan! Dear Fan...

FAN. I have come to bring you home, dear brother!

YOUNG SCROOGE. Home, little Fan?

FAN. (*Full of glee:*) Yes! Home, for good and forever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be, that home's like Heaven! He spoke so gently to me one night when I was going to bed, that I was not afraid to ask him once more if you might come home; and he said yes, you should; and sent me in a coach to bring you. And we're to be all together and have the merriest Christmas in all the world!

YOUNG SCROOGE. You are quite a woman, little Fan!

FAN. Come with me, dear brother...

(BIZ: FAN and YOUNG SCROOGE laugh as they go.)

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Always a delicate creature, whom a breath might have withered. But she had a large heart!

SCROOGE. So she had. You're right. I'll not gainsay it, Spirit. God forbid!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. She died a woman, and had, as I think, children.

SCROOGE. One child.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. True. Your nephew!

SCROOGE. (Uneasy:) Yes. Fred...

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Come, let us see another Christmas!

(SFX: Chime tree.)

MUSIC CUE #9: THE FEZZIWIG PARTY

STOP

Scene 5. Fezziwig's Warehouse

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Do you know this warehouse, Ebenezer?

SCROOGE. Know it? I apprenticed here! (Beat. Then, with great excitement:) And look, it's my old master, Fezziwig! Bless his heart. And hosting one of his Christmas parties!

(Laughs.)

FEZZIWIG. (In a rich, jovial voice:) Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!

(BIZ: Background noise from crowd at party underscores scene.)

SCROOGE. (To the GHOST:) Dick Wilkins, bless me, there he is! Dear, dear.

FEZZIWIG. Yo ho, my boys! No more work tonight. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer. Let's have the shutters up before a man can say Jack Robinson. (A sharp clap of his hands:) Hilli-ho! Clear away, my lads, and let's have lots of room here.

MRS. FEZZIWIG. Hilli-ho, Dick! Chirrup, Ebenezer. Merry Christmas, one and all! Dance and be lively, now!

SCROOGE. And Mrs. Fezziwig herself! Never will I forget her smile.

Side ⑦ Ghost of Christmas Past / Scrooge
Young Scrooge / Belle / Mrs. Fezziwig

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Joe Landry

FEZZIWIG. Oh, my dear, you have outdone yourself with a spread fit for the King himself! May I have this dance, my pet?

MRS. FEZZIWIG. (*With a smile:*) Why, you may have each and every dance, my dear!

(*BIZ: ALL dance, ad-libbing, etc.*)

SCROOGE. Look, there! It's Belle... Sweet Belle...so beautiful...

BELLE. Ebenezer, dance with me!

SCROOGE. And how we could dance!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Was she your love?

SCROOGE. My one, my only.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. When was the last time you danced, Ebenezer?

SCROOGE. It has been years in the least, so long ago I can hardly remember. What I wouldn't give to join them right now...

(*BIZ: Cheers and applause from ALL.*)

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. A small matter, to make these silly folks so full of gratitude.

SCROOGE. Small?!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Why! Is it not?! He has spent but a few pounds. Is that enough to deserve such praise?

SCROOGE. (*Speaking unconsciously like his former self:*) It isn't that, Spirit. The happiness he gives is quite as great as if it cost a fortune.

⑦ START

(*Feels the SPIRIT's glance, stops.*)

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. What is the matter?

SCROOGE. Nothing in particular.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Something, I think...

SCROOGE. No. I should like to be able to say a word or two to my clerk just now! That's all...

BELLE. (*Bringing SCROOGE back to the moment:*) Ebenezer, dance with me!

YOUNG SCROOGE. Can't you see I'm busy?

SCROOGE. No, Spirit, spare me this!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. There are tears in her eyes...

BELLE. (*Softly*;) I matter little to you, very little. Another idol has replaced me.

YOUNG SCROOGE. What idol has replaced you?

BELLE. A golden one. (*Gently*;) There is nothing which gives you such passion as money.

YOUNG SCROOGE. Dear Belle, that's not fair.

BELLE. I'm afraid it is. When we were engaged, we were both poor.

YOUNG SCROOGE. Was it better then? Better to be poor?

BELLE. Better, at least, to be happy. You are changed. You were another man then.

YOUNG SCROOGE. (*Impatiently*;) I was a boy! You blame me because I've grown wiser? Have I ever tried to break our engagement?

BELLE. In words? No. Never.

YOUNG SCROOGE. In what, then?

BELLE. In a changed nature; in an altered spirit. In everything that made my love of any value in your sight. So I release you from your promise.

YOUNG SCROOGE. Belle!

BELLE. Oh, at first, it may cause you pain to lose me—a very brief pain. But soon it will be dim, like a half-remembered dream—an unprofitable dream. And you will be glad to be awake from such a dream. May you be happy in the life you have chosen, Ebenezer...

(*BIZ/SFX: BELLE exits.*)

YOUNG SCROOGE. Belle! Don't go...

MRS. FEZZIWIG. Ebenezer, where is your Belle going?

YOUNG SCROOGE. Oh, Mrs. Fezziwig, I fear she's fallen out of love with me.

MRS. FEZZIWIG. Why not go to her?

YOUNG SCROOGE. I am unsure I have the power to change; to be the man she wants me to be.

MRS. FEZZIWIG. Time flies, my boy. And we must hold on to those we love.

YOUNG SCROOGE. I fear it may be too late for that...

MRS. FEZZIWIG. My dear, it is never too late. Perhaps she's returned to the party, let us go see!

YOUNG SCROOGE. No, but thank you. I have my accounts to return to.

MRS. FEZZIWIG. Suit yourself, dear. I wish you nothing but happiness.

MUSIC CUE #10: BELLE'S HOUSE TRANSITION

SCROOGE. Spirit, why do you delight to torture me?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. I show you only the shadows you must see.

SCROOGE. Tell me, Spirit, whatever became of my fair Belle?

(SFX: Chime tree.)

END

Scene 6. Belle's Home

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Years have passed. Belle has married. The man she has married is by her side now.

SCROOGE. That might have been me. She might have called me husband... Spirit, please, show me no more.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. Listen to them, Ebenezer...

BELLE'S HUSBAND. (To BELLE, with a smile:) Belle, I saw an old friend of yours this afternoon.

BELLE. Who was it?

BELLE'S HUSBAND. Guess!

BELLE. How can I?

BELLE'S HUSBAND. Try!

BELLE. I don't know...Mr. Scrooge?

BELLE'S HUSBAND. Mr. Scrooge it was. I passed his office window—it wasn't shuttered, and there was a candle inside so I could scarcely help seeing him. His partner lies upon the point of death, I hear; and there he sat alone. Quite alone in the world, I do believe.

SCROOGE. (In a broken voice:) Spirit! Remove me from this place.

MUSIC CUE #11: END OF BELLE SCENE

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST. I told you these were shadows of the things that have been. That they are what they are, do not blame me!

Side 8: Mrs. Cratchit, Peter, Martha, Bob Cratchit
Tiny Tim, Ghost of Christmas Present,
Scrooge

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Joe Landry

SCROOGE. Oh, I see.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. I take it you have never before laid eyes on them.

SCROOGE. I have not.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. Listen to what they say, Ebenezer...

MRS. CRATCHIT. What has ever got your precious father then? And your brother, Tiny Tim; and Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half an hour.

MARTHA. Here's Martha, mother!

SL PETER. Hurrah! There's such a goose, Martha!

SD MRS. CRATCHIT. Why, bless your heart alive, my dear Martha, how late you are!

LS MARTHA. We'd a deal of work to finish up last night and had to clear away this morning, mother.

MRS. CRATCHIT. Well. Never mind so long as you are here. Sit down before the fire, my dear.

MARTHA. Where's father?

SL PETER. Father's to church with Tiny Tim!

MRS. CRATCHIT. They'll be along.

MARTHA. How is dear Tim, mother? Is he any better?

MRS. CRATCHIT. Some days I think he is, but others I am not all too sure.

MARTHA. You mustn't think but the best, dear mother.

MRS. CRATCHIT. We do what we must to keep our spirits high.

PETER and MARTHA. (*Ad-libs, a la:*) Father's home! / And Tiny Tim, too! / Here they are!

(SFX: Door opens/closes.)

(BOB and TINY TIM enter.)

HH BOB CRATCHIT. Merry Christmas, everyone! Martha, dear, we are so glad to have you!

(BIZ: FAMILY *ad-libs a la* "Merry Christmas," etc.)

MRS. CRATCHIT. And how did little Tim behave in church, Bob?

BOB CRATCHIT. As good as gold and better.

START ⑧

TINY TIM. I hope that people saw me there.

MRS. CRATCHIT. Why do you say that, Tim?

TINY TIM. Because I'm a cripple, and if they saw my crutch it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see.

BOB CRATCHIT. Bless you, my son...

CHILDREN. (*Ad-libs, a la:*) Is it time for Christmas dinner, mother? Let us eat!

MRS. CRATCHIT. All right now, everyone to the table...

(*BIZ: FAMILY moving to table for dinner, ad-libs, a la "I mashed the potatoes!" / "I sweetened the applesauce!" / etc. under.*)

(*SFX: Chairs pulled out and in, silverware and such underneath as FAMILY dines.*)

BOB CRATCHIT. And such a goose! I do not believe there has ever been such a tender and flavorful goose cooked in all the days of the world!

TINY TIM. And oh, what a wonderful pudding!

MRS. CRATCHIT. Bob, will you say the grace?

BOB CRATCHIT. Yes, of course, dear...

(*BIZ: BOB says grace in the background, as the scene continues.*)

SCROOGE. Spirit, tell me if Tiny Tim will live.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. I see a vacant seat in the corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved.

SCROOGE. Oh, no, kind Spirit. Say he will be spared.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die.

BOB CRATCHIT. (*Finishing grace:*) ...Amen.

(*BIZ: Rest of the FAMILY says, "Amen."*)

BOB CRATCHIT. A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us.

(*BIZ: FAMILY ad-libs a la "Merry Christmas," etc.*)

TINY TIM. God bless us every one!

BOB CRATCHIT. And now, dear family, a toast to Mr. Scrooge, the founder of the feast!

MRS. CRATCHIT. The founder of the feast indeed! I wish I had him here. I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it.

BOB CRATCHIT. My dear, the children. Christmas Day.

MRS. CRATCHIT. It should be Christmas Day, I am sure, on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge. You know he is, Robert. Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow.

BOB CRATCHIT. *(Mildly insisting:)* My dear, Christmas Day.

MRS. CRATCHIT. I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's, not for his. Long life to him. A merry Christmas and a happy new year!— He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt!

TINY TIM. God bless him, mother. And everyone.

(BIZ: The FAMILY toasts, ad-libs a la "Merry Christmas," etc.)

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. We have but one more stop, Ebenezer. We fly...

(SFX: Chime tree.)

END

MUSIC CUE #15: FRED'S HOUSE TRANSITION

Scene 10. Fred's House

(BIZ: FRED and others laugh in the background.)

SCROOGE. This is the house of my nephew, Fred!

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. Your dear sister's only son, she died while giving him birth.

SCROOGE. He took her from me, Spirit.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. And you have always held that against him, have you not?

SCROOGE. *(Choked, slightly:)* Well, Spirit... It is not so simple as... *(Changing the subject:)* Why have you brought me here?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT. Listen and see, Ebenezer...

FRED. *(Laughs:)* He said that Christmas was a humbug! He believed it too.

FRED'S WIFE. *(Indignantly:)* More shame for him, Fred.

SCROOGE. They talk of me...

Side 9: Charwoman, Landress,
Undertaker's Man, Old Joe

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Joe Landry

UNDERTAKER'S MAN. ...and an undertaker's man...

(BIZ: Laughing and ad-libbing.)

LAUNDRESS. Let the charwoman be the first!

CHARWOMAN. Let the landress be the second!

UNDERTAKER'S MAN. And let the undertaker's man be the third!

LAUNDRESS. Look here, old Joe, here's a chance. If we haven't all three met here without meaning it!

OLD JOE. You couldn't have met in a better place. You were made free of it long ago, you know; and the other two ain't strangers. And I'm sure there's no such old bones here as mine.

(Laughs, coughs.)

⑨ START

CHARWOMAN. Every person has a right to take care of themselves. He always did.

LAUNDRESS. Who's the worse for the loss of a few things like these? Not a dead man, I suppose.

UNDERTAKER'S MAN. (Laughing:) No, indeed.

CHARWOMAN. If he wanted to keep them after he was dead, a wicked old screw, why wasn't he natural in his lifetime? If he had been, he'd have had somebody to look after him when he was struck with death, instead of lying gasping out his last there, alone by himself.

LAUNDRESS. It's the truest word that ever was spoke.

UNDERTAKER'S MAN. Open that bundle, Old Joe, and let me know the value of it. Speak out plain. I'm not afraid to be the first, nor afraid for them to see it.

(SFX: Bundle being opened, contents removed.)

OLD JOE. Let's see your plunder, man... It is not extensive, I must say. A seal or two, a pencil-case, a pair of sleeve-buttons, and a brooch of no great value. Is that all?

UNDERTAKER'S MAN. It's a lot worth closer inspection, certainly!

OLD JOE. Certainly not! I'll give you half a crown.

UNDERTAKER'S MAN. Are you bloody serious?!

OLD JOE. I wouldn't give another sixpence, if I was to be boiled for not doing it. Who's next?

LAUNDRESS. Feast your eyes on my booty, Old Joe...

OLD JOE. Make with it...

(SFX: Bundle being opened, contents removed.)

LAUNDRESS. Sheets and towels, a little wearing apparel, two old-fashioned silver teaspoons, a pair of sugar tongs and a few boots.

OLD JOE. I always give too much to ladies. It's a weakness of mine, and that's the way I ruin myself. I'll give you three crown.

CHARWOMAN. And now undo my bundle, Joe.

(SFX: Bundle being opened, contents removed.)

OLD JOE. What do you call this? Bed curtains?

CHARWOMAN. (With an odd laugh:) Ah, yes! Bed curtains!

OLD JOE. You don't mean to say you took them down, rings and all, with him lying there?

CHARWOMAN. Yes I do. Why not?

OLD JOE. His blankets?

CHARWOMAN. Whose else's do you think? (With an odd laugh:) He isn't likely to take cold without them, I dare say.

OLD JOE. I hope he didn't die of anything catching. Eh?

CHARWOMAN. Don't you be afraid of that. And you may look through that shirt till your eyes ache; but you won't find a hole in it. It's the best he had, and a fine one too. They'd have wasted it putting it on him to be buried in, to be sure, if it hadn't been for me. Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again!

(Gives an odd laugh.)

OLD JOE. (Laughs, coughs:) Here's your money, the lot of you...

(SFX/BIZ: Money changing hands, ad-libs, laughing, coughing.)

CHARWOMAN. This is the end of it, you see. He frightened every one away from him when he was alive, to profit us when he was dead.

(BIZ: They all laugh and cough, moving off.)

SCROOGE. (Shuddering from head to foot:) Spirit. I see, I see. The case of this unhappy man might be my own. My life tends that way, now... Merciful Heaven, what is this? (Beat.) Spirit, this is a fearful place. In leaving it, I shall not leave its lesson, trust me. Let us go. (Beat.) I understand you, and I would do it, if I could. But I have not the power, Spirit. I have not the power. (Quite agonized:) If there is any person in the town, who feels emotion caused by this man's death, show that person to me, Spirit, I beseech you.

MUSIC CUE #22: CRATCHIT THEME #3

Stop

Side 10 : Martha, Mrs. Cratchit, Bob Cratchit,
Scrooge

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Joe Landry

Scene 15. The Cratchit Home

(BIZ: MRS. CRATCHIT weeps quietly under following.)

SCROOGE. Spirit! Why am I brought here again to the house of my clerk?

(SFX: GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME sound.)

SCROOGE. I see now it is not the same... Why is it so very quiet here?

(SFX: GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET TO COME sound.)

MARTHA. Mother... Mother, please.

MRS. CRATCHIT. (Weeping:) Oh, my son. My little son. Tiny Tim. I loved him so.

MARTHA. Oh, Mother dear, you mustn't. It's almost time for Father to be home. Don't let him see you crying.

MRS. CRATCHIT. Yes. Yes, Martha.

MARTHA. He's late tonight.

MRS. CRATCHIT. He walks slower than he used to. And yet I've known him to walk very fast indeed with Tiny Tim on his shoulder.

MARTHA. So have I, Mother.

MRS. CRATCHIT. But he was light to carry. And his father loved him so that it was no trouble at all...

(SFX: Door opens/closes.)

(BOB CRATCHIT enters.)

MARTHA. Father!

MRS. CRATCHIT. Bob!

BOB CRATCHIT. Good evening, my dear. I'm sorry to be late, I hope you didn't worry.

MRS. CRATCHIT. You're here, Bob. We're fine.

BOB CRATCHIT. I went to the church yard today. I wish you could have gone with me. It would have done your heart good to see how sweet and green a place it is. But you'll see it often, I promised him. Yes, I promised Tiny Tim we'd walk there on a Sunday.

MARTHA. Father, dear.

MRS. CRATCHIT. It's God's will, Bob.

BOB CRATCHIT. I'm trying to understand it, my dear. (To himself:) My son. My little son, Tiny Tim. And I loved him so...

@START

STOP

⑪ Boy / Snoose

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Joe Landry

Scene 17. Scrooge's Bedroom

MUSIC CUE #24: "GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN REPRISE"

(ALL but SCROOGE sing in the background as scene continues.)

ALL. (Sing:)

GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN
LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY.
REMEMBER, CHRIST, OUR SAVIOUR
WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY.
TO SAVE US ALL FROM SATAN'S POWER
WHEN WE WERE GONE ASTRAY.

SCROOGE. (Weeping, in a whisper:) I promise you, Spirit... I have learned... I beg you... (Beat. Opening his eyes, seeing where he is:) What...? Where...? Can it be? Is this not my bedpost? Am I in my own bed? I am! My bed curtains are not torn down, here they are, rings and all! (Laughing and crying in the same breath:) 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. Heaven and Christmas be praised!

(SFX: Church bells ring.)

(BIZ: Carolers, louder, then under.)

ALL. (Continuing from above:)

OH TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY,
COMFORT AND JOY
OH TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY.

SCROOGE. Clash, clang, hammer; ding, dong! The lustiest peals ever I have heard! Heavenly sky; sweet fresh air; merry bells. Oh, glorious. Glorious! (To a BOY:) You there! Boy! What's today?

⑪ START

BOY. (From below, confused:) What, sir?

SCROOGE. What day is it today, my fine fellow?

BOY. Today? Why it's Christmas Day.

SCROOGE. (To himself:) It's Christmas Day! I haven't missed it. The Spirits have done it all in one night. They can do anything they like. Of course they can. (To the BOY:) 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.

SCROOGE. An intelligent boy! A remarkable boy! Do you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was hanging up there—Not the little prize turkey...

BOY. The big prize one?

SCROOGE. What a delightful boy! It's a pleasure to talk to him. Yes, my buck.

BOY. It's hanging there now.

SCROOGE. Is it? Go and buy it, will you? And tell them to send it to Bob Cratchit and his family in Camden Town. And, mind you, they're not to know who paid for it. Go along, hurry, my lad. And here! Here's half-a-crown for your trouble!

BOY. Yes, sir! (*While running off:*) 'Deed I will, sir! Straight away! Merry Christmas to you!

MUSIC CUE #25: STREET SCENE

SCROOGE. Merry Christmas to you, too, my lad! (*Laughs:*) Never have I felt this way—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!

STOP

Scene 18. The Street

(*BIZ: Men and women in the street.*)

(*SFX: Street noises [carriages, etc.]*)

FIRST MAN. Merry Christmas.

SECOND MAN. Merry Christmas to you.

SCROOGE. Merry Christmas to you both!

FIRST MAN. You, too, sir.

SCROOGE. (*To the GENTLEWOMAN:*) My dear woman, how do you do?! Didn't you call on my office just last evening in regard to that charity?

GENTLEWOMAN. (*Not believing her eyes:*) Why, Mr. Scrooge, is that you?!

SCROOGE. Yes! That is my name, and I fear it may not be pleasant to you. I hope you succeeded yesterday. It was very kind of you. Allow me to ask your pardon. And will you have the goodness to accept the sum of—I prefer to whisper this...