

Ebenezer

Senior Script

by

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Ebenezer Scrooge
Fred *His Nephew*
Fred's Wife
Bob Cratchit *Scrooge's Clerk*
Mrs Cratchit
Martha Cratchit *The Elder Daughter*
Belinda Cratchit *The Younger Daughter*
Peter Cratchit *The Elder Son*
Tim Cratchit - (Tiny Tim) *Crippled Young Son*
Two Charity Collectors
Prologue and 'Two of a Kind' Soloist
Turkey Urchin
Carol Urchin
Marley's Ghost
Three Angels} *Backing group to Marley's'*
Three Devils} *Ghost*
The Ghost of Christmas Past
Scrooge - (As a child)
Scrooge's Sister - (As a child)
Mr Fezziwig
Mrs Fezziwig
The Three Misses Fezziwig
Three Suitors *Of the Misses Fezziwig*
Young Scrooge *Apprentice to Fezziwig*
Dick Wilkins *His Apprentice Friend*
Belle *Young Scrooge's Girlfriend*
Belle - (As an Elderly Woman)
Belle's Husband
Ghost of Christmas Present *A Dude Rapper*
Posse of Rappers
Ragged Boy
Ragged Girl
Music Hall Chairman
Victorian Carol Concert Party - (Including Musicians)
Ghost of Christmas Future
Four Coffin Carriers
Old Joe *A Merchant*
Mrs Dilber *An Old Bag*
An Old Crone
Two Merchants
Chorus of :Crowd in Street; Fezziwig's Guests; Fred's Guests; Children as Urchins, Schoolchildren, Carollers
Choir
In addition, there are optional musical solos for a Fiddler, Accordionist, Tin Whistler and a Blues Harmonica Player

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ACT ONE
PROLOGUE

(The choir process in through the audience singing "In the Bleak Mid-winter")

SONG ONE - IN THE BLEAK MID-WINTER

Choir: In the bleak mid-winter,
 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 mid-winter,
 Long ago.

(They take their places, seated either side of the action, as the music changes to a pop beat for the soloist to sing "Anyone can dream".)

Soloist: This is a love story,
 Strange as it may seem.
 It could happen to anyone -
 Anyone can dream -
 But it happened to a lonely man
 Who couldn't have foreseen
 That this is a love story
 Anyone can dream.

(The choir now sings "In the Bleak Mid-winter" while the soloist sings "Anyone can Dream" in counterpoint.)

END OF PROLOGUE

SCENE ONE - A LONDON STREET

(The chorus are discovered, hustling and bustling about in typical Victorian pre-Christmas manner. Street vendors, urchins, etc. including specifically:-

- 1) A Chestnut-Seller*
- 2) A Street Trader selling holly and mistletoe*
- 3) A Baker's Man with a tray of mince pies on his head*
- 4) A Turkey Urchin carrying a sandwich board on which is written "Jones For Turkeys" (or any sponsoring firm!)*

As the curtain rises, it is on a busy, jolly street scene, with everyone excited, wishing each other a Merry Christmas etc. Then the Vendors start their cries.)

SONG TWO - ROLL ON, CHRISTMAS!

Chestnut Seller:	Chestnuts! Roast chestnuts!
Street Trader:	Holly and mistletoe! Get your holly and mistletoe!
Baker's Man:	Mince pies! Delicious mince pies!
Turkey Urchin:	Turkeys large, turkeys small, turkeys from Jones are the best of all!

Chorus:	Roll on, Christmas! It's Christmas time again. Roll on, Christmas! It's Christmas time again. Time to shovel snow again... For your nose to glow again... Kiss your Aunty Flo again... Roll on, Christmas!
---------	---

Time for kettles on the hob...
Time for stoppers in the gob...
Butter up your Uncle Bob...
Roll on, Christmas!

Choir:	Ding, Dong, Ding, The church bells ring, Hear the choir sing - Hosanna in Excelsis.
--------	--

(The choir now sing "Ding, Dong, Merrily on High")

Ding, dong! Merrily on high
In heav'n the bells are ringing.
Ding, dong! Verily the sky
Is riv'n with angels singing
Glo...ria, Hosanna in Excelsis.
Glo...ria, Hosanna in Excelsis.

(As the chorus simultaneously sing "Roll on, Christmas!" in counterpoint. (The Chestnut-Seller, Street Trader, Baker's Man and Turkey Urchin now sing their cries simultaneously, then chorus and choir join together for a big finish:-

All:	Roll on, Christmas! Christmas!
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SONG THREE - EBENEZER SCROOGE

(The sound of a tapping stick is heard. Rock group start a rock beat. Chorus react in consternation.)

Chorus: Who's that tappin' down the street?
Sounds like a rappin' kind of beat!
Who's the guy you least like to meet?
At whose name your heart has a seizure -
What's the name of this awful geezer?

(Scrooge enters, flourishing his stick)

Scrooge: Ebenezer Scrooge!
Chorus & choir: Ebenezer Scrooge!

Scrooge: Stand aside, out of my way!
I'd much rather work than play,
Ain't got time for a holiday.
Chorus & choir: Man, you've got a heart of stone...
Scrooge: I just want to be left alone!
Chorus & choir: Ebenezer Scrooge!
Scrooge: Ebenezer Scrooge!
Choir: Eb-Eb-Eb-Ebenezer, Eb-Eb-Eb-Ebenezer.

Chorus: If your rent is overdue
Scrooge: I can offer terms to you
Chorus: Then just watch him turn the screw!
Scrooge: Pay it back in pennies, one by one,
Countin' money turns me on!
Chorus & choir: Ebenezer Scrooge!
Scrooge: Ebenezer Scrooge!
Choir: Eb-Eb-Eb-Ebenezer, Eb-Eb-Eb-Ebenezer .

Chorus: Got no feelings, got no soul,
Got no heart, just a gaping hole,
In life's football, he's an own goal!
He's the meanest man we've seen -
Scrooge: I'm the original mean machine!
Chorus & choir: Ebenezer Scrooge!
Scrooge: Ebenezer Scrooge!
All: Ebenezer Scrooge!

Scrooge: Bah! Clear off, the lot of you! (***He waves his stick at the crowd, who scream, grumble, etc. and disperse. Scrooge goes into his counting house {with the legend 'Scrooge & Marley' over the door. Inside there are two offices - his own inner office, and the small outer office. He is confronted by his clerk, Bob Cratchit, with a coal-scuttle in his mittened hand.***) Well, Cratchit, what do you want?

Cratchit: Please, sir...I..I wondered if I .. if I might have a lump of coal from your scuttle, Mr Scrooge. My fire is almost out.

Scrooge: A lump of coal? Did I hear aright?

Cratchit: It is very cold, sir - and it is Christmas - just one little lump?

Scrooge: Coal costs money, Cratchit - and as for Christmas! If I hear anymore talk of Christmas I'll..I'll retire to the nearest lunatic asylum! Christmas, Cratchit? Humbug!

(Scrooge retires to his inner office. Enter his nephew Fred, cheerful and vivacious.)

Fred: A Merry Christmas, Bob Cratchit.

Cratchit: And to you Mr Fred.

Fred: Is the old misery in?

Scrooge: ***(From within)*** I heard that!

Fred: He's in! (***He goes into Scrooge's office***) A Merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!

Scrooge: Bah! Humbug!

Fred: Christmas a humbug, uncle! You can't mean that, I'm sure?

Scrooge: Indeed I do. Merry Christmas - bah! What right have you to be merry, young Fred? You're poor enough.

Fred: Come, then, what right have you to be so dismal? You're rich enough.

Scrooge: Nephew! Keep Christmas in your way and let me keep it in mine.

Fred: Keep it! But you don't keep it!

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

Fred: There are many things from which I have not profited, Christmas among the rest. ***(During this speech, Bob Cratchit goes and stands in the doorway to listen)*** But I'm sure I've always thought of Christmas, when it comes around, as a good time, when men and women open their hearts, and for once let greed and envy pass them by. And so though it's never put gold in my pocket, it has done me good, and will do me good - and God bless Christmas, say I. ***(Cratchit bursts into hearty applause, which tails off as Scrooge fixes him with a withering stare.)***

Scrooge: ***(To Cratchit)*** Let me hear another sound from you, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation. ***(Cratchit scuttles back to his desk)*** You're quite a powerful speaker, sir. I wonder you don't go into Parliament.

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

Scrooge: I'll see you in Hades first.

Fred: But why? Why?

Scrooge: Why did you get married?

Fred: Because I fell in love!

Scrooge: Because you fell in love! Bah! Humbug!

Fred: I fell in love with a beautiful woman, and she changed my life...

SONG FOUR - BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Fred: *(Verse)* Just when your life seems empty and lonely,
Where once you flew, you're chained to the ground,
Suddenly it happens when you least expect it:
Your whole world is turned around.

(Refrain) Just put it all down to the love of a beautiful woman,
Who comes in and sorts out the mess that you once called your life.
You're flying again, and it's thanks to that beautiful woman -
You can't do without her, that beautiful woman, your wife.

(Music carries on under the dialogue.)

Scrooge: Beautiful woman! Bah! Humbug! Good afternoon, nephew!

Fred: You never came to see me before I was married. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?

Scrooge: Good afternoon!

Fred: I am sorry with all my heart to find you so resolute. We have never had a quarrel to which I have been a party, but I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last.

(He sings the refrain again. This time the choir provide backing.)

Fred: A Merry Christmas, uncle!

Scrooge: Humbug!

Fred: And a Happy New Year!

Scrooge: Clear off! ***(He throws something at Fred, who laughingly ducks, then goes into Cratchit's 'tank')***

Fred: The season's greetings, Bob Cratchit.

Cratchit: Thank you, Mr Fred. A Merry Christmas to you and your good wife.

Fred: And to you and yours, Bob. How is poor Tiny Tim? Any better?

Cratchit: No better, Mr Fred, but by the Lord's mercy, none the worse.

Fred: If there's anything my wife and I can do...

Cratchit: You're very kind, sir, but I'm afraid only a deal of money...

Fred: A commodity we're both short of, eh, Bob? ***(Exits)***

(Music starts. Enter two charity collectors {can be either sex - or one of each}. They have a tin with coins in that can be rattled in time to the {Samba} music. A crowd collects.)

SONG FIVE - CHARITY

Collectors: Charity, cha-cha-rity,
We're collecting for charity.

Crowd: Charity, cha-cha-rity,
They're collecting for charity.

Collectors: Christmas is coming,
The geese are far from thin.
Please put a penny,
Put a penny in the tin.
Any contribution accepted gratefully.
You know it makes sense
To give a few pence
To charity!

Crowd: Charity, cha-cha-rity,
We're all giving to charity.
Charity, cha-cha-rity,
We're all giving to charity.
Let your cash make a big splash,
Then you'll all agree
You'll feel good
When you're giving to charity!

(Dance {Conga or Salsa}. Collectors then sing their verse {reinforced, if necessary, by the choir} at the same time as the crowd sing their verse. Then the finish:-

Collectors: We're collecting for...
Crowd: We are giving to...
Collectors: We're collecting for...
Crowd: We are giving to...
Collectors: We're collecting for...
Crowd: We are giving to...
All: Charity!

(The crowd dance off {to the Conga}, leaving the collectors alone. They look at the 'Scrooge & Marley' sign above Scrooge's office.)

Charity 1: This looks a good place.

(They knock on Scrooge's outer door. He opens it and the collectors enter.)

Charity 1: Scrooge and Marley's, I believe? Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr Scrooge or Mr Marley?

Scrooge: Mr Marley died seven years ago this very night.

(The collectors offer expressions of sympathy, the Man {Men} take{s} off his {their} hats.)

Charity 2: We have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner.

Scrooge: Liberality???

Charity 2: We are collecting for the poor and destitute who suffer greatly at the present time.

Scrooge: Are there no prisons?

(The collectors glance at each other, amazed)

Charity 1: Plenty of prisons.

Scrooge: And the workhouses? Are they still in operation?

Charity 2: They are still. I wish I could say they were not.

Scrooge: I'm very glad to hear it.

Charity 1: Under the impression that they scarcely furnish Christian cheer, a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink and means of warmth.

Charity 2: What shall we put you down for?

Scrooge: Nothing!

Charity 1: You wish to remain anonymous?

Scrooge: I wish to be left alone. I don't make merry myself at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I help to support the prisons and workhouses - they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there.

Charity 2: 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. ***(The collectors gasp)*** Good afternoon!

Charity 1: But, my dear Mr Scrooge...

Scrooge: I am not your dear Mr Scrooge. And I am heartily weary of all this humbug about Christmas. In fact, I hate it. I hate everything about it; and I hate everyone who blabbers on about it.

SONG SIX - I HATE EVERYBODY

Scrooge: (Refrain) I hate everybody, everything about everybody.
I hate everybody through and through.

Lots of ugly people with an ugly face,
Everyone a blot on the human race,
(Verse) I hate everybody, and especially I hate you!
I don't believe in a Merry Christmas,
What's it ever done for me?
Every fool who believes in it
Should be strung up from a Christmas tree,
Or steamed with their pudding,
Or stuffed with their goose,
Or play blind man's buff, but with a noose!
So don't you try that game -
I'll tell you once again:

I hate everybody, everything about everybody.
I hate everybody through and through.
Lots of ugly people with an ugly face,
Everyone a blot on the human race,
I hate everybody, and especially I hate you!

So clear away from my door!
You've made me doubly sure
I hate everybody, and especially I hate you!

(Scrooge waves his stick furiously. The collectors exit. Enter the Carol Urchin.)

Urchin: God rest you Merry Gentlemen..***(holds out his hand for money)***
Let nothing you dismay...Ow! ***(Scrooge brings his stick down on the Urchin's outstretched palm. Urchin runs off wailing. Scrooge returns inside and confronts Bob Cratchit.)***

Scrooge: You'll want all day off tomorrow, I suppose?

Cratchit: If quite convenient, sir.

Scrooge: It's not convenient, and it's not fair. If I was to stop you half-a-crown for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound; and yet you don't think me ill used when I pay a day's wages for no work.

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!

Cratchit: Yes, sir. ***(Exits)***

REPRISE SONG SIX - I HATE EVERYBODY!

(Scrooge sings as he locks and leaves his office:-)

I hate everybody!
Everything about everybody!
I hate everybody through and through!
(Spoken) Christmas...**(With venom)** Christmas...**(More venom)**
Christmas...humbug! **(Even more venom)**

BLACKOUT

END OF SCENE ONE

INTERLUDE

(While Scrooge is getting changed into his night-clothes {off - stage}, the choir sings. {Also, if possible, with an accompanying Country'n' Western banjo-picker} This can also be a production number for the chorus.)

SONG SEVEN - TWO OF A KIND

Choir: Marley and Scrooge, Marley and Scrooge,
They were famous all over town;
Lend you money, then screw you down!
Oh, what a firm! Debtors would squirm
At the name of Marley and Scrooge.

For they were
Two of a kind. Two of a kind.
Each of them as bad as the other,
Partners in crime - Oh brother!
Profits to find, people to grind -
Each of them was two of a kind.

Solo: Jacob Marley never had a single scruple;
All his life his greed and his avarice grew.
And in Ebenezer Scrooge he had a willing pupil.
He taught him everything he knew.

All: And they were
Two of a kind. Two of a kind.
Each of them as bad as the other,
Partners in crime - Oh brother!
Profits to find, people to grind -
Each of them was two of a kind.

Solo: Seven years ago poor Jacob lay a-dyin'
Choir: Ah-ah.
Solo: Clutching at his cash-box whilst on his death bed.
Choir: Oo-ooh!
Solo: Ebenezer sat there but he wasn't crying'
Choir: Boo-hoo!
Solo: For Jacob turned to him and said...

All: You see, we're
Two of a kind. Two of a kind.
Each of them as bad as the other,
Willingly sell our mother!
Deeds to be signed, contracts that bind -
Both of us are two of a kind!

All: Two of a kind. Two of a kind.

Each of them as bad as the other.
Don't take their word - take cover!
Profits to find, people to grind -
Each of them was two of a -
No-one ever knew of a
Pair that were more two of a kind!

END OF INTERLUDE

SCENE TWO - SCROOGE'S BEDROOM

(Scrooge's bed has a bed-sheet wired with a fishing line, so that it can fly upwards. The {upstage} door has a bolt on the inside that appears to be practical, but is actually sawn off, and the door so wired that it can open and close itself even when apparently bolted. There is a bedside table on which is a bowl of gruel and a spoon. There is a window, with the curtain drawn. Scrooge enters, holding a candle {electric} in a holder. He closes the door behind him.)

Scrooge: Most peculiar. I could have sworn my front-door knocker turned into the head of Jacob Marley. Must be tired from a long day...***(There is a tap at the window)*** What's that? ***(Another couple of taps)*** That's the way Jacob himself used to knock at the door. ***(He goes up-stage of the window and draws the curtain. The pallid face of Jacob Marley is seen outside, in a green/blue light. Scrooge yells and turns away in fright. The face vanishes and the light on it. Scrooge turns back, sees nothing)*** Humbug! A trick of the light! Jacob Marley's dead! ***(He draws the curtains)*** All the same...better bolt the door...just in case.

(He bolts the door, then goes to his bedside table, takes the gruel and spoon and sits on the end of the bed. He is just about to dip the spoon into the gruel when the bolted door slowly creaks open. He stares at it, aghast, then rushes over to it, slams it shut and re-bolts it. He goes back to his gruel and stirs it.)

Scrooge: Humbug! Get on with my gruel!

(He is just about to put the first spoonful of gruel to his mouth when there is an eerie howl. Scrooge yells and jerks the spoonful of gruel onto his nose. He wipes it off and gets into bed. He is just about to eat again, when there comes the sound effect of clanking chains, distant, getting nearer. Scrooge, thoroughly alarmed, puts the gruel back on his bedside table. There is another eerie howl and Scrooge dives under his bed sheets, which can be seen to be quivering violently. The door creaks open and Marley's ghost enters chained and fettered with ledgers, deeds and cash boxes. He approaches Scrooge's bed.)

Marley: Scrooge! Ebenezer Scrooge!

Scrooge: ***(Peering out from his sheet)*** Oh, Marley, it's you - I thought for a moment...Marley! ***(Does a double-take and dives back under his sheet)*** It's humbug! I won't believe it.

(Marley raises his arm dramatically and Scrooge's bed sheet flies into the air. {If the effect can't be achieved, Marley simply removes Scrooge's bed sheet}.)

Marley: Do you believe in me or not?

Scrooge: I do. I must. But, Jacob, you've been dead these seven years. Why do you walk the earth still, and why do you come to me?

Marley: My spirit never walked among my fellow men in life; now it is condemned to wander through the world and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth and turned to happiness.

Scrooge: You are fettered. Why?

Marley: I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it, link by link and yard by yard. Is its pattern strange to you?

Scrooge: **(Examining the chain)** Ledgers! Deeds! Cash-boxes!

Marley: Or would you like to know the length of the chain that waits for you? It was as heavy and as long as this seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it since. It is a ponderous chain!

Scrooge: Jacob! Old Jacob Marley! Speak some comfort to me.

Marley: Comfort! I have none to give. I cannot rest. I cannot stay. I cannot linger anywhere. No rest. No peace. Incessant torture of remorse. My time already grows short. I must travel on - so pay attention Ebenezer.

SONG EIGHT - TOO LATE NOW

Marley: It's too late now, I guess you knew it.
You had your chance; you went and blew it.
You're in a stew, a stew that thickens...
You should have read your Dickens!

But it's too late now, it's too late now.
(Three angels {girls} in white enter)
You could have been on the side of the angels -

Angels: Ah...

Marley: Floating

Angels: Ah...

Marley: In a silk night-gown!

(Three devils {boys} in red enter with pitch forks)

Marley: But you will be poked and prodded by devils -

Devils: Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha!

Marley: You're not going up -

Angels: Up! Up!

Marley: You're going down!

Devils: Down, come on down!

Marley: There's one small chance, a chance of my making,
A tiny chance that's there for the taking.
Don't raise your hopes, don't count your chickens -
Just go and read your Dickens!

Devils: It's nearly too late now -
Boy!
Marley: It's nearly too late now.
Angels: Hallelujah!
Marley: I'll tell you one more time -
Devils: Baby!
Marley: It's nearly
All: Too late now! Yeah!

Marley: I am here tonight to warn you, that you have a chance and hope of
escaping my fate. You will be haunted by three spirits. Expect the first
when the clock strikes one.

Scrooge: Is that the chance and hope you mentioned? **(Marley, the Angels and
Devils nod)** I think I'd rather not. **(He buries his head in the bed, his
bottom stuck in the air. One of the Devils prods his bottom with a
pitchfork)** Ow! **(Faces Marley again).**

Marley: Expect the second on the next night at the same hour, one o'clock, and
the third the next night at midnight. Make the most of it, Ebenezer
Scrooge, because...

REPRISE SONG EIGHT - TOO LATE NOW

Marley: It's nearly too late now -
Devils: Boy!
Marley: It's nearly too late now.
Angels: Hallelujah!
Marley: I'll tell you one more time -
Devils: Baby!
Marley: It's nearly
All: **(Making a 'Big Exit')**
Too late now! Yeah!

**(They exit. The bed sheet descends on Scrooge who cautiously peeps out and looks
around.)**

Scrooge: Nothing there. Imagination. **(Growing bolder)** Must have been
dreaming. Haunted by three spirits, indeed. Humbug! Hum...**(A
hideous howl off stage)** ...bug? **(He settles down to wait. A clock
strikes the quarter)** Quarter past! **(The clock strikes the half)** Half
past! **(The clock strikes three quarters)**. A quarter to! **(The clock
strikes one)**. The hour itself - and nothing else!
(Enter the Ghost of Christmas Past, unseen by Scrooge)

Scrooge: Nay, there's no such thing as spirits - I'll not believe it. ***(The spirit taps Scrooge on the shoulder. Scrooge does a take - or double take! - yells, then pulls himself together.)*** Are you the spirit whose coming was foretold to me?

Spirit: I am.

Scrooge: Who and what are you?

Spirit: I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

Scrooge: Long past?

Spirit: No. Your past.

Scrooge: What business brings you here?

Spirit: Your welfare.

Scrooge: Much obliged, I'm sure, but a night's unbroken rest would do me more good.

Spirit: Your reclamation, then. Take heed! Rise and walk with me!

(The spirit raises his arm. Scrooge gets out of bed, as if mesmerised, and follows the spirit.)

(Blackout.)

SONG NINE - SCROOGE AND THE SPIRIT

Choir & Soloist: Scrooge and the spirit
They're on a magical mystery tour.
Half remembered places,
And many faces familiar once more.
What kind of trip is he on?
How far gone is he gone?
Scrooge and the spirit
Make the first stop on their
Magical Mystery Tour

END OF SCENE TWO