

Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing

"Zooms clear off the joy meter." —*Intelligencer Journal*

"A dazzling adaptation." —*New Era*

A Christmas Carol



Book
by
Barry Kornhauser

Music and lyrics
by
Ron Barnett

“I’ve always wanted to write a review that simply said ‘Wow!’ All I needed was a flawless, well-written production full of humor and poignancy. After seeing the opening performance at the Fulton Opera House, I knew the time had come.” —*Sunday News*

A Christmas Carol

Musical. Book by Barry Kornhauser. Music and lyrics by Ron Barnett. Cast: 8m., 9w., 14 children with doubling. There is no need to recount the story of Ebenezer Scrooge and his redemptive discovery of the true Christmas spirit. It is as familiar to us as Santa Claus himself. Written in 1843, and an immediate success, *A Christmas Carol* has in the years since become what one editor described as “the spirit of Christmas forever!” This musical adaptation honors Dickens’ purpose of creating “a whimsical masque ... to awaken some loving and forbearing thoughts, never out of season.” It is intended as a means of chasing away the “humbugs” and saying, as only theatre can, “God bless us, everyone!” “Scrooge’s redemption is so powerful I am still, several weeks after seeing it, moved by the memory of it ... A fresh, vibrant, funny and moving evening of theatre [filled with] the true meaning of the holiday season and what it means to live with love and joy in your heart.” (*New Era*) *Unit set. Approximate running time: 2 hours, 15 minutes. Promotional CD available. Optional accompaniment CD available. Code: CPI.*

Cover art: John Leech. Cover design: Susan Carle.

ISBN 10: 1-58342-845-3
ISBN 13: 978-1-58342-845-0



www.dramaticpublishing.com



Dramatic Publishing

311 Washington St.
Woodstock, IL 60098
Phone: (800) 448-7469
(815) 338-7170



Printed on recycled paper

© The Dramatic Publishing Company

Charles Dickens'
A Christmas Carol

Adapted by
BARRY KORNHAUSER

Music and lyrics by
RON BARNETT



Dramatic Publishing Company
Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website. www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at. DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

©MMXIII

Book by BARRY KORNHAUSER
Music and lyrics by RON BARNETT

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(A CHRISTMAS CAROL)

For inquiries concerning all other rights, contact.
Robert A. Freedman Dramatic Agency, Inc.
1501 Broadway, Suite 2310
New York, NY 10036 • Phone. (212) 840-5760

ISBN: 978-1-58342-845-0

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the musical *must* give credit to the author and composer of the musical in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the musical and in all instances in which the title of the musical appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the musical and/or a production. The name of the author and composer *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author and composer, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear.*

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois.”

Fulton Theatre
December 6 - 30, 2001

Director..... Eric Johnson
Musical Director.....Ron Barnett
Scenic Designer..... Robert Klingelhoef
Costume Designer.....Beth Dunkelberger
Lighting Designer..... Bill Simmons
Choreographer.....Stephanie A. Sands
Video Artist..... Adam Larsen
Stage Manager.....Alison Traugott

THE CAST

Ghost of Christmas Past, Puppeteer/Debtor 2 John Baker
Charwoman, Mrs. Fred..... Jennifer Ballif
Peter Cratchit, EnsembleMatt Berg
Charitable Man, Lamplighter, Mrs. Fezziwig,
Fred's Dinner Guest, Businessman..... Brian Caccopola
Beggar/Debtor 3, Dick Wilkins,
Fred's Dinner Guest..... Charlie DelMarcelle
Tiny Tim, EnsembleAlex Dorf and Paul Hughes
Young Londoner, Fezziwig Child,
Ensemble Ariel Diehl
Pickpocket, Turkey Boy, Ensemble..... David Diehl
Young Londoner, Fezziwig Child, Ensemble..... Juliana Diehl
Fiddler, Ensemble..... Stephen Diehl
Grocer/Debtor 1, Fezziwig, Old Joe..... Doc Fletcher
Fezziwig Party Guest, Ensemble Shannon Hartman
Londoner, Ghost Trio Member..... Sacha Iskra
Ghost of Christmas Past, Ensemble..... Hannah Jones
Londoner, Ghost Trio Member..... Heather Kaye

Young Londoner, Fezziwig Party Guest,
 Ensemble Ariel Kornhauser
 Belle, Ensemble Jessica Lavin
 Charwoman, Fruiterer, Fezziwig Party Guest,
 Fred's Dinner Guest..... Yolanda London
 Young Londoner, Child Scrooge,
 Ensemble Michael Long
 Martha Cratchit, Ensemble Sarah Martz
 Belinda Cratchit, Ensemble Laura McClure
 Fezziwig Party Guest, Mrs. Cratchit..... Holly Miller
 Fezziwig Party Guest, Bob Cratchit Mark Light-Orr
 Marley, Poulterer, Businessman Christopher Powell
 Londoner, Ghost Trio Member..... Erin Romero
 Scrooge Stephen Anthony Spiese
 Young Londoner, Fezziwig Child,
 Ensemble Sydney Thro
 Voice of Ghost of Christmas Past,
 Charitable Lady Janeen Theresa Walker
 Fred, Young Man Scrooge,
 Lamplighter Kevin Wanzor
 Fan, Fred's Dinner Guest,
 Ensemble Stephanie Jo Wise
 Young Londoner, Fezziwig Child,
 Ensemble Alex Wood

MUSICAL NUMBERS

1.	Ebenezer Scrooge.....	12
1a.	Fred's Entrance	18
1b.	Fred's Underscore	19
1c.	Fred's Exit.....	21
2.	A Little Pity.....	22
2a.	Don't Be Bleak, House	25
2b.	Transition into Act I, Scene 2.....	26
3.	The Two of Us	27
4.	People Are Disgusting.....	32
4a.	Cheap Darkness.....	34
5.	Welladay	35
5a.	Under Lamplighters	36
5b.	Sitting Room. Lumber Room. Bedroom.	37
5c.	Entrance of Marley.....	38
6.	The Chain I Wear.....	40
7.	Lights of Christmas Past	46
7a.	Joy Is a Fruit.....	49
7b.	Lights of Christmas Past (Reprise).....	51
7c.	Friends, Family	53
8.	Fezziwig.....	54
9.	For the Love of Him (You Once Were)	58
10.	Every Star Shall Sing a Carol.....	62
11.	The Hopeful Promise of the Day.....	66
12.	Coventry Carol.....	77
13.	Every December the 25th.....	80
14.	Joy Is a Fruit (Reprise).....	84
15.	Ignorance and Want	86
16.	I Thought He'd Never Die	89
16a.	Graveyard.....	100
17.	Release the Chain.....	101
18.	Merry Christmas to Everyone	102
18a.	Transition into Act II, Scene 13	110
19.	God Bless Us Everyone	111
20.	Bows	114
21.	We Wish You a Merry Christmas	114

A Christmas Carol

CHARACTERS

(See casting notes at back of book for doubling, tripling, etc. suggestions.)

Ebenezer Scrooge

Child Scrooge

Young Man Scrooge

Ghost of Jacob Marley, Jacob Marley

Ghost Trio, Londoners

Ghost Trio Member 1, Londoner 1

Ghost Trio Member 2, Londoner 2

Ghost Trio Member 3, Londoner 3

Ghost of Christmas Past

Ghost of Christmas Present

Ghost of Christmas Future

Cratchit Family

Bob Cratchit Mrs. Cratchit

Tiny Tim Martha Cratchit

Peter Cratchit Belinda Cratchit

Charitable Couple

Charitable Man

Charitable Lady

Fred

Mrs. Fred

Fred's Dinner Guests

Male Guest 1 Female Guest 2

Male Guest 3 Female Guest 4

Fezziwig Family
 Mr. Fezziwig
 Mrs. Fezziwig
 Fezziwig Children
Fezziwig Party Guests
Belle
Dick Wilkins
Charwomen
 Charwoman 1
 Charwoman 2
Businessmen
 Businessman 1
 Businessman 2
Old Joe
Lamplighters
 Lamplighter 1
 Lamplighter 2
Debtors
 Grocer
 Puppeteer (voices/manipulates Punch and Judy Puppets)
 Beggar
Fruiterer
Poulterer
Pickpocket, Turkey Boy
Child Beggars
 Child Beggar 1, Ignorance
 Child Beggar 2, Want
Fan
Child Scrooge Classmates
Ensemble
 Carolers Chorus Skaters
 Merchants Shoppers Fiddler
 Children (Boys, Girls, Carolers, Snowmen Builders, Sledding Boys)

A FEW NOTES ON CASTING

There are a number of casting combinations that can be devised for *A Christmas Carol*. Here is a scheme based on the second Fulton Theatre production in which 30 actors were engaged (8 males, 8 female, and 14 children, an equal number of girls and boys of varying ages). Clearly the cast can be enlarged with ease, but it can also be reduced somewhat.

Actor 1 (m): Scrooge

Actor 2 (m): Marley Ghost's, Young Marley, Poulterer,
Businessman 1

Actor 3 (m): Bob Cratchit, Fezziwig's Party Guest

Actor 4 (m): Fezziwig, Old Joe, Grocer/Debtor 1

Actor 5 (m): Charitable Man, Lamplighter 1, Mrs. Fezziwig,
Fred's Dinner Guest, Businessman 2

Actor 6 (m): Fred, Young Man Scrooge, Lamplighter 2

Actor 7 (f): Voice of Ghost of Christmas Past, Mrs. Fred,
Charwoman 1

Actor 8 (f, child): Ghost of Christmas Past, Ensemble

Actor 9 (m): Ghost of Christmas Present, Puppeteer/Debtor 2

Actor 10 (f): Charitable Lady, Belle

Actor 11 (m): Beggar/Debtor 3, Dick Wilkins, Fred's Dinner
Guest

Actor 12 (f): Mrs. Cratchit, Fezziwig's Party Guest

Actor 13 (f): Charwoman 2, Fezziwig's Party Guest, Fruiterer,
Fred's Dinner Guest

Actor 14 (f): Ghost Trio Member 1, Ensemble

Actor 15 (f): Ghost Trio Member 2, Ensemble

Actor 16 (f): Ghost Trio Member 3, Ensemble

Actor 17 (f): Fan, Fred's Dinner Guest, Ensemble

Actor 18 (m, child): Tiny Tim, Ensemble

Actor 19 (f, child): Martha Cratchit, Ensemble

Actor 20 (m, child): Peter Cratchit, Ensemble
Actor 21 (f, child): Belinda Cratchit, Ensemble
Actor 22 (m, child): Child Scrooge, Ensemble
Actor 23 (m, child): Ignorance, Ensemble
Actor 24 (f, child): Want, Ensemble
Actor 25 (m, child): Turkey Boy/Pickpocket, Ensemble
Actor 26 (f, child): Fezziwig's Party Guest, Ensemble
Actor 27 (m, child): Fezziwig Child, Ensemble
Actor 28 (m, child): Fezziwig Child, Ensemble
Actor 29 (f, child): Fezziwig Child, Ensemble
Actor 30 (f, child): Fezziwig Child, Ensemble

The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come was not performed by an actor, but rather a large puppet-figure. In the Fulton Theatre productions, The Ghost of Christmas Past was played by a young girl (Actor 8) who mouthed the dialogue, her spoken words voiced by an offstage adult woman (Actor 7) to heighten the supernatural effect. Adult and child ensemble members played sundry unnamed Londoners throughout, and the children also became Child Scrooge's classmates.

A Christmas Carol

ACT I

A PROLOGUE TO THE PROLOGUE

An alternative version of the “Prologue to the Prologue” can be found at the end of the script, on pages 115 to 117, right after the “Epilogue to the Epilogue.”

(The dramatis personae of A Christmas Carol serve a dual role. They not only people the play, but narrate it as well. Importantly, their narrations are always performed in character and spoken in a variety of British dialects. The play begins with the actors and musicians performing character lazzi in the lobby and auditorium of the theatre, e.g. the merchants can be hawking their wares, the CHARWOMEN cleaning and decorating the theater for the holidays, the CHARITABLE COUPLE doing actual philanthropic work, the BEGGAR begging, the PUPPETEER presenting teasers of his Punch and Judy show, the children passing out period-style playbill inserts, FRED holding mistletoe over the heads of unsuspecting couples, the carolers caroling to the accompaniment of the strolling musicians, etc., and, of course, EBENEZER SCROOGE scrupulously minding the box office. Ultimately, the characters converge toward the stage and the curtain is raised. PETER CRATCHIT produces a soapbox upon which his father BOB CRATCHIT stands to begin his welcome.)

CRATCHIT. Good evening/afternoon/morning. My name is Bob Cratchit and I'm here to welcome you to the _____ Theatre, and, of course, to welcome Christmas.

(Cheers from the other assembled characters.)

CRATCHIT *(cont'd)*. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful sponsors who make all this possible: _____ . Without, their generous—

(TINY TIM enters carrying a scroll which he hands up to his father.)

CRATCHIT *(cont'd)*. Thank you, Tim. What's this? *(Opening it.)* Ah, it appears that my employer—one Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge ...

(Grumbles from the others at the mention of the name.)

CRATCHIT *(cont'd)*. has his own brief addendum to my remarks. *(Clears his throat.)* From Mr. Scrooge, a **few** regulations. *(The scroll rolls open, the FEW regulations stretching all the way into the orchestra pit. CRATCHIT, with some hesitancy, begins to read.)* “Be advised that the use of any type of recording device—photographic, video or audio—is strictly prohibited. All cellular telephones and/or ... crying babies are to be silenced immediately.”

(Negative reaction from the others.)

CRATCHIT *(cont'd)*. Uh, perhaps, I best skip to the end. *(Pulls the unraveled scroll up, reads from near its bottom.)*

“There is to be no leaving of seats, no whispered critiques, no eating, no drinking, no ‘heavy’ breathing and none of those annoying little coughs that spread through an audience like holiday cheer.”

(Another negative reaction.)

CRATCHIT *(cont’d)*. “And on the subject of ‘cheer,’ we will allow no smiles,”

(Negative reaction.)

CRATCHIT *(cont’d)*. “no laughter,”

(Negative reaction.)

CRATCHIT *(cont’d)*. “nor any such repugnant expressions of mirth, merriment and good will.”

(Strong negative reaction.)

CRATCHIT *(cont’d)*. “Violators will be asked to ... vacate ... the ... premi ... ” *(Begins rolling up the scroll.)* Perhaps, we’ll just save the rest for a later visit. What say you instead that we join together in singing a delightful Christmas carol. *(Music begins. “We Wish You a Merry Christmas.”)* Everybody!

(Before we get very far into it, a loud ruckus begins in the orchestra, stopping the music. A broken violin is tossed out of the pit, followed immediately by an angry SCROOGE. He turns his unpleasant attentions first to the audience, then to the characters, both of whom he

stops from singing, and finally toward the stage where a final withering “Bah!” triggers some surprising effect. [In the original production, there was a large central up-stage rear projection screen that featured a Victorian styled banner with the words “Welcome Christmas” and an image of Father Christmas. The old humbug’s “Bah!” frightened the video image of the latter right off the screen and caused the banner to fall.] A pleasantly surprised SCROOGE responds to this turn of events by turning back to the audience.)

SCROOGE. What the ... Dickens!

PROLOGUE

AT RISE: *The street in front of SCROOGE’s counting house in 1843 London.*

(SCROOGE continues on his way to work. The passersby now do sing, but not the announced carol—far from it.)

(#1: “Ebenezer Scrooge”)

CHORUS.

NO WARMTH CAN EVER WARM, NO WINTER CHILL
HIM
NO BLOWING WIND IS BITT’RER THAN HE

CHARWOMAN 1.

TO SMILE AND SAY HELLO WOULD PROBABLY
KILL HIM

GROCER & FRUITERER.

NO GREAT LOSS, IF YOU ASK ME—

(SCROOGE, who is checking his pocket watch, is approached by BEGGAR holding up a small basket.)

BEGGAR. Please, Guv'nor, can you spare a farthing?

SCROOGE. Bah! I'll keep my farthings. You keep your distance.

CHARITABLE COUPLE.

NO COIN IS TOSSED INTO THE BEGGAR'S BASKET

BEGGAR.

THERE'S NOT AN OUNCE OF SYMPATHY

FRED.

IF HE OWNED THE AIR HE'D LIKELY TAX IT
CLAIMING NO ONE GETS TO BREATHE FOR FREE

GROUP 1.

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

HOW DID YOU GET
WHERE YOU ARE?

WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO
GO THROUGH?

GROUP 2.

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER

ALL.

HOW DID YOU COME TO BECOME SUCH A
SCROOGE?

LONDONERS (*later the GHOST TRIO, each taking one of the words individually*).

SECRET, SELF-CONTAINED, AND SOLITARY

(*MRS. CRATCHIT, watching a Punch and Judy show with her daughter BELINDA CRATCHIT, pulls the girl out of SCROOGE's path just in the nick of time.*)

MRS. CRATCHIT.

DON'T CROSS HIS PATH—

PUNCH PUPPET (*voiced and manipulated by PUPPET-EER as will be the JUDY PUPPET*).

YOU'D BEST BEWARE!

BELINDA.

I THINK MISTER SCROOGE IS VERY SCARY

SCROOGE.

BUT WHY ON EARTH WOULD I CARE? BOO!

BELINDA.

AHH!

(*The cast begins bringing on SCROOGE and CRATCHIT's desks and the other accessories of Scrooge & Marley's Counting House, including its rolling door unit.*)

GROUP 1.

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

HOW DID YOU GET

GROUP 2.

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

WHERE YOU ARE?

EBENEZER SCROOGE

WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO
GO THROUGH?

EBENEZER

ALL.

HOW DID YOU COME TO BECOME SUCH A SCROOGE?

SCROOGE. Once upon a time—of all *good* days in the
year, on Christmas Eve,

CHARITABLE COUPLE (*appearing*). Scrooge sat busy in
his counting house ...

(SCROOGE grumbles them off.)

CRATCHIT (*speaks as he reaches for the coal scuttle*). It
was cold, bleak, biting weather

*(SCROOGE deftly removes the coal scuttle to his own
station.)*

OTHERS. and he could hear the people in the court outside
go wheezing up and down,

STILL OTHERS. beating their hands upon their breasts,

THE REST. and stamping their feet upon the pavement
stones to warm them.

*(All, except CRATCHIT and SCROOGE, exit as de-
scribed, shooed off by SCROOGE as they speak. Three
distant chimes ring out.)*

SCROOGE (*checking his watch again*). The city clocks had
only just gone three, but it was quite dark already.

(The stage dims; only the counting house remains lit.)

SCROOGE (*cont'd*). It had not been light all day ...

(CRATCHIT lights a candle as much to warm his hands as to see by and also illuminating the return of the ensemble.)

GROUP 1.

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

HOW DID YOU GET
WHERE YOU ARE?

WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO
GO THROUGH?

GROUP 2.

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

EBENEZER SCROOGE

ENSEMBLE WOMEN.

WEREN'T YOU CUDDLED AS A BABY?

ENSEMBLE MEN.

WERE YOU DROPPED UPON YOUR HEAD?

ENSEMBLE WOMEN.

DID YOUR MOTHER FAIL TO LOVE YOU?

ENSEMBLE MEN.

OR WAS YOUR SOUL ALREADY DEAD?

(Hanging up his own hat and comforter, and the much more substantial outer garb of SCROOGE, CRATCHIT takes his place at his desk and begins work, as does his employer.)

ENSEMBLE.

HOW DID YOU COME TO BECOME SUCH A—
RASPING
SQUEEZING
GRASPING
WHEEZING
CLUTCHING
COVETOUS
EBENEZER SCROOGE
FA, LA, LA, LA, LA

SCROOGE.

BAH!

ENSEMBLE.

FA, LA, LA, LA, LA

SCROOGE.

BAH!

ENSEMBLE.

FA, LA, LA, LA, LA

SCROOGE.

BAH!

ENSEMBLE.

FA, LA, LA, LA, LA

SCROOGE.

BAH!

(SCROOGE is now hard at work; CHILD CAROLERS enter caroling on the street, disturbing his concentration.)

CHILD CAROLERS.

DECK THE HALLS WITH BOUGHS OF HOLLY
FA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA—

SCROOGE (*to the CHILD CAROLERS*).

BAH!

(This brings an abrupt end to the music, and frightening all but FRED and CRATCHIT away, the CHILD CAROLERS with a unanimous scream of terror.)

(#1a: “Fred’s Entrance”)

SCENE 1

(FRED enters the counting house all aglow.)

FRED. A merry Christmas, Uncle! God save you!

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. Come then. What right have you to be dismal? You’re rich enough.

SCROOGE (*having no better answer at the ready*). 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? Merry Christmas! Out upon Merry Christmas! What’s Christmastime to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and 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. He should!

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.

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

(#1b: “Fred’s Underscore”)

FRED. There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited, Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmastime, when it has come ’round as a good time, the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really 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!

(CRATCHIT involuntarily applauds, becoming immediately sensible of the impropriety.)

SCROOGE. Let me hear another sound from you, *Cratchit*, and you’ll keep your Christmas by losing your situation.

FRED (*intervening*). Don’t be angry, Uncle. Come see us. Dine with us tomorrow.

SCROOGE. I'd sooner dine with the devil.

FRED. But why? Why?

SCROOGE. *Why* did you get married?

FRED. Because I fell in love.

SCROOGE. Because you fell in love! That's the only thing in the world more ridiculous than "Merry Christmas."

FRED. Nay, Uncle, but you never came to see me before I married. Why give it a reason for not coming now?
(Takes out a small gift for his uncle from his coat pocket, unnoticed.)

SCROOGE *(back to work in his ledger, counting with his fingers)*. Good afternoon.

FRED *(almost giving up, beginning to exit)*. I am sorry, with all my heart, to find you so resolute. *(Stops.)* We have never had any quarrel, to which I have been a party. *(With renewed fortitude, returning to his uncle.)* But I have made the trial in homage to Christmas, and I'll keep my Christmas humour to the last. So a merry Christmas, Uncle! *(Places the gift into the open counting hand of SCROOGE.)*

SCROOGE. Good afternoon!

FRED. And a happy New Year!

SCROOGE *(tossing the gift into the coal scuttle)*. Good afternoon!

FRED *(making certain that SCROOGE notices a second gift, for CRATCHIT)*. And Season's Greetings to you and yours, Bob Cratchit.

CRATCHIT. And you, sir.

SCROOGE *(taking door to FRED)*. Gooooood Afternoooooon!