

## Side #1 – Cratchit, Fred, Katherine, Scrooge

*Scene one: Interior & Exterior of Scrooge & Marley's, 3:00 pm. Christmas Eve, 1820*

SCROOGE: One pound seven plus three pounds six minus twelve shillings plus interest of... *(He continues working muttering numbers to himself as FRED and his wife, KATHERINE enter the office cold and shivering but full of Christmas cheer. Along with his happy manner FRED brings with him a Christmas wreath.)*

FRED: Seasons Greetings, Mr. Cratchit. *(Scrooge, seeing who it is, groans.)*

CRATCHIT: *(cheerfully)* And to you and yours, sir!

FRED: A Merry Christmas, uncle!

KATHERINE: Merry Christmas, Ebenezer

SCROOGE: Bah! Humbug!

KATHERINE: Oh, Uncle, we know you don't really mean that.

SCROOGE: *(looking up from his work)* I do! *(distastefully)* "Merry Christmas!" What right have you to be merry? What reason have you to be merry? *(Turning his attention again to his work.)* You're poor enough.

FRED: What right have you to be unpleasant? What reason have you to be unhappy? You're rich enough. *(He and KATHERINE laugh good-naturedly at his repartee.)*

SCROOGE: Humbug!

KATHERINE: Please, don't be cross especially on this holy night..

SCROOGE: What else can I be when I live in such a world of fools as this. *(Contemptuously)* "Merry Christmas" be damned! What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money? A time for finding yourself a year older, but not an hour richer! *(SCROOGE moves to put the papers upon which he has been working on CRATCHIT'S desk. Behind his back, FRED fixes the wreath to the front of his desk.)* 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.

KATHERINE: *(Horried)* Uncle!

SCROOGE: You keep Christmas in your own way, *(Turning back he notices the wreath and without reaction or comment he takes it off the desk...)* and let me keep it in mine. *(... and drops it into the wastebasket next to his desk.)*

FRED: But you don't keep it.

SCROOGE: Let me leave it alone, then. Keeping Christmas does not seem to have ever done you two much good!

KATHERINE: There are many things from which we have not profited but from which we have derived much good. Christmas among them. I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time.

FRED: Quite true, my dear. *(To Scrooge)* Christmas is the only time I know of throughout the year when men and women seem to be of one mind in opening their shut-up hearts freely, and in thinking of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not some other 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 Christmas has done me good, and will do me good, and I say, God bless it!

CRATCHIT *(applauding)*: Oh, well said, sir, well said. Never have kinder words been spoken in this off--- *(noticing Scrooge glaring at him )* ---ice. *( He holds the sibilant consonant so that it sounds like air escaping his body.)*

SCROOGE: Let me hear another sound from you, Cratchit, and you'll spend Christmas unemployed.

FRED: Don't be angry, Uncle. Katherine and I have come today to invite you to dine with us tomorrow.

SCROOGE: *(groaning with frustration)* Oh, *why* do you torment me each year at this time with the same annoying invitation?

KATHERINE: Fred and I invite you each year, Uncle, in the hope that one of these years you will accept.

SCROOGE: As usual you are wasting your time!

FRED: Why will you not join us? Why?

SCROOGE: Why? Why did you get married?

FRED: *(Looking lovingly at Katherine)* Because I fell in love.

KATHERINE: Oh, Fred.

SCROOGE: Oh, good Lord! *(Exasperated at what he considers to be the idiocy of his kin.)*  
Good afternoon!

FRED: I am sorry to find you so determined, Uncle. *(He retrieves the wreath from the waste basket.)*  
But we'll keep our Christmas spirit to the last. So ... a Merry Christmas, Uncle!

SCROOGE: Good afternoon!

*(Cratchit dashes to open the door.)*

FRED & KATHERINE: Merry Christmas, Bob!