

Start fog, house light's out (slowly). Sound wind and Chimes Music for Prologue begins. CHIMES AND CHORUS offstage.

CHIMES
Ding, dong, din, dong...

CHORUS (ECHOES)
Ding, dong, din, dong...

CHIMES
Ding, dong, din, dong...

CHORUS
Ding, dong, din, dong...

CHIMES
Ding, dong, din, dong...DONG!
(Note C natural)

Sinister laughter from CHORUS

Lights up. MARLEY appears on his death bed.

SCROOGE is discovered at desk counting money.

CHIMES fade into "PROLOGUE THEME."

MARLEY (SINGS LONGINGLY)
EBENEEZER...

SCROOGE (MEANWHILE)
Tuppence, thruppence, sixpence,
eight pence, ten pence, twelve
pence make a shilling...

MARLEY (MORE FORCEFULLY)
Ebeneezer...I am near the end,

SCROOGE
...four shillings, eight shillings,
ten shillings, twelve shillings,
sixteen shillings, twenty shillings
make a pound...

MARLEY
Ebeneezer... Come sit by your
friend...

SCROOGE
What is twice as sweet as honey?
What can turn a gray day sunny?
What is fun but isn't funny?

MARLEY
Ebeneezer...

SCROOGE
Can you guess? It's counting
money!

MARLEY
Ebeneezer! I am your friend!

SCROOGE
Tuppence, thruppence... makes a
shilling...

MARLEY (MORE FORCEFULLY)
EBENEEZER SCROOGE!!!!

SCROOGE
Don't bother me now, Jacob! All
this needless agitation interrupts
my concentration!

MARLEY
I AM YOUR ONLY FRIEND!
(SCROOGE continues
counting.)

MARLEY
EBENEEZER! EBENEEZER! I AM NEAR
BREATH'S END... EBENEEZER! MY LIFE
IS SPENT!

*MARLEY falls dead. Disappears. SCROOGE continue counting.
Music reaches an angelic high then fades into next scene*

BLACK OUT

Lights FADE up Music fades out - start fog for fred's
entrance

*SCROOGES OFFICE, SCROOGE AND CRATCHIT AT THEIR DESKS
CRATCHIT TRIES TO WARM HIS HANDS IN THE FAME OF HIS CANDLE.
FLAME OF CANDLE GOES OUT*

CRATCHIT GOES TO COAL SCUTTLE AND REACHES FOR A LUMP OF COAL

SCROOGE

Cratchit! You put that coal on the fire and I'll dock you three times your name. You get my meaning, sir?

CRATCHIT

Yes, sir. My name is Bob, sir. You'll dock me three bob for the coal, sir.

SCROOGE

Very sharp, Mr. Cratchit, I hope you're also smart enough to know that I mean it. D'you hear me?

CRATCHIT

Yes, sir.

FOG

FRED, SCROOGE'S NEPHEW, ENTERS THE OFFICE

FRED

A Merry Christmas, Uncle! God save you.

SCROOGE

Bah. Humbug.

FRED

You don't mean that, I am sure?

SCROOGE

I do. Merry Christmas! What right have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

FRED

Come, then. What right have you to be dismal? 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? Merry Christmas! What's Christmas to you but a time for paying bills without money?

(MORE)

SCROOGE(cont'd)

A time for finding yourself a year older and not an hour richer.

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. Much good it has ever done you.

FRED

There are many things from which I have derived good, by which I have not profited, it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket. I believe it has done me good, and that it will do me good: and I say, God bless it!

CRATCHIT APPLAUDS

SCROOGE

(*TO CRATCHIT*) Let me hear another sound from you and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your position.
(*TO FRED*) 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. You have not met Lucy.

SCROOGE

I'd rather see myself dead than see myself with your family!

FRED

But, why? Why?

SCROOGE

Why did you get married?

FRED
Because I fell in Love.

SCROOGE
That sir is the only thing that you
have said to me in your entire
lifetime which is even more
ridiculous than "Merry Christmas"!
Good afternoon!

FRED
Merry Christmas!

SCROOGE
Good afternoon!

FRED
(to CRATCHIT) And a Merry
Christmas to you and your family,
Bob Cratchit.

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

FOG

CRATCHIT TAKES FRED TO THE DOOR AND LADIES ENTER

LADY 1 (CARRIES PAPERS & TALLY SHEETS)
SCROOGE & 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.

LADY 2
We Have no doubt his generosity is
well represented by his surviving
partner.

LADY 1
At this festive season of the year,
Mr. Scrooge, it is desirable that
we should make some slight
provisions for the poor and
destitute who suffer greatly at the
present time. Many thousands are
in want of common necessities.
(MORE)

LADY 1(cont'd)

Hundreds of thousands are in want
of common comforts, sir.

SCROOGE

Are there no prisons?

LADY 2

Plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE

And the workhouses? Are they still
in operation?

LADY 1

They are. I wish I could say that
they were not, but...

SCROOGE

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

LADY 1 & 2

Both very busy, sir. Very busy,
sir. Oh, very busy, sir.

SCROOGE

Oh...I am very glad to hear it. I
was afraid, from what you said at
first, that something had occurred
to stop them in their useful
course.

LADY 2

Since they scarcely furnish
Christian cheer of mind or body to
the multitude, a few of us are
endeavoring to raise a fund to buy
the poor some meat and drink and
means of warmth. We Choose this
time because it is a time when want
is keenly felt. What shall we put
you down for?

SCROOGE

Nothing.

LADY 1

You wish to be anonymous?

SCROOGE

I wish to be left alone. Since you
ask me what I wish, ladies, this is
my answer.

(MORE)

SCROOGE(cont'd)

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.

LADY 2

Many can't go there...

LADY 1

And many would rather die than go there...

SCROOGE

If they would rather die, they had better do it and decrease the surplus population.

CRATCHIT *helps the ladies out and gives them some money*
Shhhh...

LADY 1 & 2

Thank you sir, thank you.

SCROOGE

You'll want all day tomorrow, I suppose?

BOB CRATCHIT

If quite convenient, Sir.

SCROOGE

It's not convenient, and it's not fair. If I was to dock you half-a-crown for it, you'd think yourself ill-used, I'll be bound?

Bob Cratchit smiles faintly.

SCROOGE

And yet, you don't think me ill-used, when I pay a day's wages for no work.

BOB CRATCHIT

It's only once a year, Mr Scrooge.

SCROOGE

A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December.

Scrooge buttons his great-coat to the chin.

SCROOGE

But I suppose you must have the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning!

BOB CRATCHIT

I will sir. I promise.

Scrooge walks out into the street with a growl. Bob Cratchit closes the office in a twinkling.

EXT. LONDON STREET

A coatless, shivering Bob Cratchit locks the front door and rushes off with the long ends of his white comforter dangling below his waist.

SCROOGE'S BED-ROOM

As SCROOGE settle into bed he hears a noise. The room begins to fill with fog.

SCROOGE

Marley?...Marley Is that you?

chimes sound 6 times. Out of the fog steps MARLEY draped in chains.

SCROOGE

How now! What do you want with me?

MARLEY

Much!

SCROOGE

Who are you?

MARLEY

Ask me who I was.

SCROOGE

You are very particular for a ghost. Who were you then?

MARLEY

In life I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

SCROOGE

(doubtfully)

Can you -- can you sit down?

MARLEY

I can.

SCROOGE

Do it, then.

As MARLEY sits a chair slides to meet him.

MARLEY

You don't believe in me.

SCROOGE

I don't.

MARLEY

What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your senses?

SCROOGE

I don't know.

MARLEY

Why do you doubt your senses?

SCROOGE

Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheat. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than of grave about you, whatever you are! Humbug, I tell you--humbug.

Marley Lets out a frightful cry, shaking his chain. Scrooge falls to his knees, clasping his hands.

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

In his lifetime, it is required of every mortal that he walk abroad and help his fellow-man. And if he goes not go forth in life, his spirit is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world -- oh, woe is me! -- and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!

Again Marley raises a cry, and shakes his chain.

SCROOGE

You are fettered. Tell me why?

MARLEY

I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard; and of my own free will I wore it. Yours is a ponderous chain, Ebenezer. It was as heavy as long as this seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it since.

Scrooge trembles more and more.

SCROOGE

Jacob. Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob.

MARLEY

I have none to give. I cannot rest. I cannot stay. My spirit never walked beyond our counting-house -- mark me! -- in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!

ETHEREAL VOICES

Oooooohhh...

SCROOGE

You must have been very slow about it, Jacob.

MARLEY

Slow!