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*Dramatic Publishing*



Charles Dickens'

# A Christmas Carol

A Radio Play by Philip Grecian



# A Christmas Carol

A Radio Play

By

PHILIP GRECIAN

Based upon the novel by

CHARLES DICKENS



**Dramatic Publishing Company**

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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## IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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For the Air Command company members,  
who make worlds, stories and people  
out of the air and on the air.

# PRODUCTION NOTES

A staged radio drama is often more economical than full-stage productions, but there are several things to consider before going into rehearsal:

1. Everything depends on sound. Never cast an actor because of his or her physical presence. Cast the actor because of what he or she can do vocally. Many of the actors from the golden age of radio looked not at all the way they sounded.
2. Don't worry about costuming your actors to look like the characters they play. That's not the point. If you must have costuming, concentrate on the fashions of the 1940s, when radio was in its golden age, or costume your cast and musicians in cocktail dresses and tuxedos. Sometimes, perhaps, the addition of a hat may help the actor to get into character. A prop may be necessary or even a cigar or pipe or glasses.
3. Remind your actors that the voice must carry it all. In the final evaluation, everything is in the voice.
4. Try to cast actors who can do multiple voices and accents. Onsite audiences are fascinated to watch a single actor play multiple characters, though it's usually best not to have a single actor's characters in conversations with each other.
5. Music is terrifically important. It sets mood, moves your story from one location or time frame to another and gives your audience clues regarding how they are supposed to relate to a scene. It is like the score in a film. We use a single keyboard in our productions, sometimes with an organ sound, sometimes with a piano sound. We have also used a violin for some scenes and an autoharp for transitions between times and/or space.
6. The real visual drama for the onsite audience is in watching the sound effects crew. Make sure they, and their various apparatuses, are clearly seen.
7. Try never to use prerecorded sound. It robs the audience of the experience of seeing how a sound is produced.
8. A pause in radio drama is eternal. Though you are staging this drama, the audience is "seeing" it in their minds' eyes, and a pause that is too long may throw them out of the story. Always keep energy high. Always.
9. Some actors are more comfortable when they can make eye contact with those with whom they are acting. In staging, whenever possible, keep two characters in a conversation close to each other, without another actor between them.
10. In the commercial breaks written into the script, consider actually selling commercial time to local merchants and dramatizing commercials written specifically for your production. It helps with the production budget, and audiences love it.

*A Christmas Carol* was first produced and broadcast by The Air Command at KTWU-TV, Topeka, Kansas, on Nov. 23, 2012, with multiple rebroadcasts through the month of December. It was directed by Philip Grecian with the following company:

Storyteller / Ebenezer Scrooge.....	Philip Grecian
Male Player 1, Bob Cratchit, Partygoer 2, Passerby.....	Shawn Trimble
Male Player 2, Fred, Jacob Marley, Businessman on the Street, Passing Brother.....	Jay Hurst
Charity Woman, Fiddler, Lady With Packages, Martha, Partygoer 3, Widow Krook.....	Sarah May Shaffer
Female Player 2, Charity Woman, Belle, Belinda Cratchit, Partygoer 1, Mrs. Dilber.....	Chelsey Shirrell
Female Player 3, Ghost of Christmas Past, Fred's Wife.....	Cortni Hurst
Fan, Tiny Tim, Partygoer 6, Boy on the Street.....	Karly Hanna
Male Player 5, Fezziwig, Man With Packages, Topper, Businessman on the Street, Whitlow.....	Les Smith
Male Player 3, Dick Wilkins, Peter Cratchit, Partygoer 4, Passerby 2.....	Dustin Dean
Male Player 4, Ghost of Christmas Present, Businessman on the Street, Old Joe.....	David Tangeman
Female Player 1, Mrs. Cratchit, Partygoer 5.....	Kirsten Goodman
Stage Manager & Booth.....	Denise Butterfield
Assistant Stage Manager & Booth.....	Roger McCauley
Music Director/Keyboard.....	Skip Ellis
Assistant to the Music Director.....	Diane Ellis
Violin and Autoharp.....	Sarah May Shaffer
Sound Effects.....	Steffen Wong, Stacey Smith, Andrew Entsminger, Arlyn Brunken
Costumes.....	Arlyn Brunken
Sound Effects Constructions.....	Larry Grecian
For KTWU	
CEO/General Manager.....	Eugene Williams
Executive Producer.....	Val VanDerSluis
Producers.....	Val VanDerSluis, Jim Kelly
Directors.....	Lloyd Slapar, Jim Kelly
Promotion.....	Kevin Goodman

Recorded in the Olive White Garvey Studio Complex on the campus of Washburn University.



# A Christmas Carol

## CHARACTERS

P.A. VOICE  
ANNOUNCER  
STORYTELLER / EBENEZER SCROOGE  
FEMALE PLAYER 1-4  
MALE PLAYER 1-5  
FRED / MALE PLAYER 2  
BOB CRATCHIT / MALE PLAYER 1  
CHARITY WOMAN 1, 2  
JACOB MARLEY  
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST  
FAN  
FEZZIWIG  
DICK WILKINS  
FIDDLER  
BELLE  
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT  
MAN AND LADY (with packages)  
MRS. CRATCHIT  
PETER CRATCHIT  
BELINDA CRATCHIT  
MARTHA CRATCHIT  
TINY TIM  
TOPPER  
FRED'S WIFE  
PARTYGOER 1-6  
BUSINESSMAN 1, 2, 3 (on the street)  
PASSERBY 1, 2  
MRS. DILBER  
OLD JOE  
WIDOW KROOK  
WHITLOW  
PASSING BROTHER  
BOY (on the street)

# A Christmas Carol

## ACT I

SETTING: *A radio studio. A door upstage with an “On Air” light above. A platform L where the keyboard player sits. R is an array of sound effects machines and tables with sound equipment. There is a couch and a coffee table UC and a counter area UR with water pitchers and cups. Chairs and incidental tables are scattered around the stage. DC are three microphones evenly spaced. The light plot is simple: a general wash for the beginning and end of Act I and the beginning of Act II, the ability to independently dim the lights upstage and downstage, and the ability to spot each of the microphones, the keyboard and the sound effects.*

AT RISE: *The sound effects crew enters and crosses to their equipment. Music director enters. Actors enter one at a time and in groups, some carrying scripts.*

P.A. VOICE. Thirty seconds to air!

ALL (*ad-lib*). Thank you!

*(The actors, ad-libbing, prepare. Some leaf through their scripts. Some pick up scripts from chairs and tables. Others sit or move to microphones.)*

P.A. VOICE. In 10 ...

*(The pace quickens as those actors on microphones find places in their scripts and listen for the P.A. VOICE or watch the “On Air” light on the set.)*

P.A. VOICE (*cont'd*). Five ... four ... three ... two ... one ...

*(The “On Air” light comes on.)*

ANNOUNCER. Broadcasting from the \_\_\_\_\_ radio studios, \_\_\_\_\_ presents theatre of the mind ... Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, a radio dramatization written by Philip Grecian and based on the novella by Charles Dickens. In a moment, our story, but first, these words ...

**(MUSIC: Theme segue to commercial break.**

*Commercials here.*

**MUSIC: Theme up and under.)**

ANNOUNCER (*cont'd*). Now fill your cup with hot buttered rum, call the family together and move in close to the warm glow of your radio dial to hear *A Christmas Carol*—the story of Ebenezer Scrooge.

**(MUSIC: Theme, up, establish and under.**

*A group of actors sing “Deck the Halls” up and under, off mic.)*

STORYTELLER. Ah ... hear that? A kind of music that comes around once a year. Always makes me feel good. A Christmas song. Well ... more than that. A Christmas *carol*. A part of Christmas ... a part of you. For as long as you can remember. Like an old, old friend.

**(MUSIC: Fades.)**

FEMALE PLAYER 1 (*moves to STORYTELLER’s microphone*). Well, that’s one kind of Christmas carol, but we’re here to present another kind; one written by Charles Dickens in 1843. It takes place in London, England, and it’s the story of mean old Ebenezer Scrooge. Shall we tell a story, then?

*(The cast ad-libs agreement.*

**MUSIC: Intro up and under.)**

FEMALE PLAYER 1 (*cont’d, thinks a moment. Inspiration*). All right then, let’s see, how shall we begin? Well ... Marley was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. Old Marley was dead as a doornail.

MALE PLAYER 1. A doornail?

FEMALE PLAYER 1. Yes. Odd, isn’t it? But that’s what Mr. Dickens said, “As dead as a doornail.”

*(STORYTELLER takes FEMALE PLAYER 1’s mic.)*

MALE PLAYER 2. I don’t know what’s particularly dead about a doornail, but that is what Marley was as dead as ... and Marley was dead. Therefore ...

MALE PLAYER 1. ... a doornail.

MALE PLAYER 2. A doornail.

*(FEMALE PLAYER 2 takes MALE PLAYER 2’s mic.)*

MALE PLAYER 1. But a doornail’s not dead in the first place.

STORYTELLER. Neither was Marley ... in the first place.

MALE PLAYER 1. Oh. *(He moves away from the mic, upstage.)*

STORYTELLER. But finally—in the second place—he was.

**(MUSIC: Punch.)**

STORYTELLER (*cont’d*). Now, you must understand that Marley was quite dead, or else nothing wonderful can come from the story we’re about to tell.

FEMALE PLAYER 2. I think we all understand that. But tell us about Scrooge!

STORYTELLER. Shush now, we’re getting to Scrooge. Scrooge and Marley had been partners in business before Marley died, and they called their business establishment ...

FEMALE PLAYER 2. Scrooge and Marley!

STORYTELLER (*mildly annoyed*). Strangely enough, yes. Scrooge never painted out old Marley’s name on the sign. There it stood, for years, “Scrooge and Marley.” Sometimes people called Scrooge “Scrooge,” sometimes “Marley.” He answered to both. It was all the same to him. The only change over the years was that he’d had Marley’s desk moved out because ...

FEMALE PLAYER 2. ... Marley was dead.

***(MUSIC: Punch.)***

STORYTELLER. Quite

FEMALE PLAYER 2. As a doornail.

***(MUSIC: Punch.)***

*FEMALE PLAYER 2 exits, and MALE PLAYER 3 takes her mic.)*

STORYTELLER. Yes. They had been partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was Marley's only friend ...

MALE PLAYER 3. ... and Marley was Scrooge's only friend ...

STORYTELLER. Because no one else could tolerate either of them. Between the two, there wasn't an ounce of heart, not a tuppence of compassion. Why, when Marley died, Scrooge didn't even close the shop. Do you know why?

MALE PLAYER 3. He said it would be bad business.

STORYTELLER. Exactly

MALE PLAYER 3. But tell us about Scrooge!

***(MUSIC: Dark, foreboding, establish and under.)***

STORYTELLER. Oh, he was a tight-fisted old skinflint! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner! Hard and sharp as flint! His heart was colder than a snowman!

MALE PLAYER 3. That is cold!

*(MALE PLAYER 3 steps away from the mic. MALE PLAYER 1 takes his place.)*

STORYTELLER. Yes it is. He carried the cold within him always. It made his hair the color of snow after the wagons had passed. It froze his old features, nipped his nose, shriveled his cheeks, stiffened his gait, made his eyes red, his lips thin and cruel and blue and frostbitten!

*(STORYTELLER's voice changes as he turns into SCROOGE. Raspy and mean, and—if he didn't have one before—he begins to acquire a British accent.)*

STORYTELLER *(cont'd)*. And it spoke out through him in his cold ... icy ... grating ... voice. And he never thawed even one degree. Not. Even. At. Christmas. Christmas! Humbug! Now tell the story and be quick about it.

*(STORYTELLER, now SCROOGE, moves away from the mic.)*

*The cast ad-libs: "Tell the story," "Who's gonna do it," etc. Quickly, FEMALE PLAYER 3 steps up to the mic.)*

FEMALE PLAYER 3. Once upon a time ...

*(The cast ad-libs groans.)*

MALE PLAYER 1. Do they always have to start out, "Once upon a time ... "?

FEMALE PLAYER 3 (*trying to come up with another opening line*). Mmmm. How about, “We were somewhere around Barstow on the edge of the desert ...”

CAST. No!

FEMALE PLAYER 3. “Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again.”

CAST. No!

FEMALE PLAYER 3. “Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life ...”

CAST. No!

FEMALE PLAYER 3. “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ...”

CAST. No!

FEMALE PLAYER 3. Well then, you shall have to be satisfied with, “Once upon a time.” That’s what Mr. Dickens wrote, and I don’t think we should tamper.

*(The cast complains, ad-libbing under their collective breath while acknowledging that it is too late to change it now.)*

FEMALE PLAYER 3 (*cont’d*). So ...

***(MUSIC: Up and under.)***

FEMALE PLAYER 3 (*cont’d*). Once upon a time ... on Christmas Eve—old Scrooge sat busy in his counting house ... It was cold, bleak, biting weather, and he could hear the people in the court outside, go wheezing up and down, beating their hands upon their breasts, and stamping their feet upon the pavement stones to warm them.

MALE PLAYER 1. The old grandfather’s clock in Scrooge’s office struck three ...

***(SFX: Clock chimes three.)***

MALE PLAYER 1 (*cont’d*). ... and, though it was only mid-afternoon, it was dark and foggy outside. It had been that way all day. Scrooge’s clerk, Bob Cratchit, sat at his desk, copying letters. (*Acquires BOB CRATCHIT’s dialect as he speaks.*) He wore a long white scarf to keep out the bitter cold, for Scrooge was too stingy to keep a warm fire blazing at the hearth.

MALE PLAYER 2. And on this particular Christmas Eve, Scrooge had a visitor. It was his nephew, Fred, (*Acquires FRED’s dialect.*) who entered the establishment all in a glow ...

***(SFX: Door opens. The cold wind.)***

MALE PLAYER 2 (*cont’d*). ... his eyes sparkling, and the spirit of Christmas radiating from his wind-burned face.

*(Now in character as FRED.)*

FRED. A merry Christmas, Uncle!

***(SFX: Door closes. Wind stops.)***

SCROOGE. Bah! Humbug!

FRED. Christmas a humbug, Uncle! You don’t mean that!

SCROOGE. I do mean it! What reason have you to be so merry? You’re poor enough!

FRED. What reason have you to be so angry? You’re rich enough!

SCROOGE. Bah! Humbug!

FRED. Don't be cross, Uncle!

SCROOGE. What else can I be in such a world of fools! Merry Christmas indeed! What is Christmas but a time for paying bills without money, for finding yourself a year older and not an hour richer? Every idiot who goes about with "Merry Christmas" on his lips should be boiled in his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart! Oh, that's good! "Stake of holly!" (*Laughs.*)

FRED (*mock surprise and shock*). Uncle!

SCROOGE. Nephew! Keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine!

FRED. But you don't keep Christmas in any way.

SCROOGE. Let me leave it alone then! It is best left alone!

FRED. On the contrary, Christmas is a good time. A time when men and women open their hearts freely! A time of love and the spirit of giving! And though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it *has* done me good ...

SCROOGE. Humbug!

FRED. ... and will do me good ...

SCROOGE. Humbug!!

FRED. ... and I say God bless it!

CRATCHIT. God bless it!

SCROOGE. Another sound from you, Cratchit, and you'll spend your Christmas looking for another position!

CRATCHIT. Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.

FRED. Come, don't be angry, Uncle. Dine with us tomorrow!

SCROOGE. No.

FRED. My wife is preparing a Christmas dinner that a king would envy.

SCROOGE. I am not a king.

FRED. Mother thought you were.

SCROOGE. My sister is dead! And it ... it is a charity that she is ... so that she cannot see what a worthless rogue her son has become.

FRED. You know better than that.

SCROOGE. I tell you, Fan is dead! Every year you come storming into my office, trailing in bushels of snow ... disrupt my day and babble about Christmas and how wonderful it is ... and every year you invite me to Christmas dinner!

FRED. And every year you turn me down.

SCROOGE. Exactly!

FRED. And every year you say, (*Imitating SCROOGE.*) Humbug!

SCROOGE. And I say it again: Humbug! If you know what I will say before I say it, why do you bother to come here every year to hear me say it?

FRED. Because, Uncle, one of these times ... one of these Christmases ... you will accept my invitation.

SCROOGE. Humbug! Get out! Good afternoon!

FRED. Uncle, it's Christmas!

SCROOGE. Good afternoon!

FRED. I'm sorry for you. But, Merry Christmas all the same, Uncle!

SCROOGE. Good afternoon!

FRED. And a happy New Year!

SCROOGE. I said good af-ter-noon!

FRED. Good afternoon.

**(SFX: Door opens. Wind sound up.)**

FRED. Merry Christmas, Bob!

CRATCHIT. Merry Christmas, sir.

**(SFX: Door closes. Wind stops.)**

SCROOGE. Cratchit!

CRATCHIT. Oh! Yes, sir. Sorry, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE *(to himself)*. Merry Christmas, indeed ... and there's Cratchit wishing him the same, and he hasn't but 15 shillings a week to his name. Mad as hatters! Every one of 'em. Mad as hatters.

**(SFX: Door opens. Wind.)**

SCROOGE *(cont'd)*. Hm. Who's this now? More fools. Whole world of fools. Well ... I'll confuse 'em. *(Laughs dryly.)*

**(SFX: Door closes. Wind stops.)**

CHARITY WOMAN 1. This is Scrooge and Marley's establishment, I believe?

SCROOGE. It is.

CHARITY WOMAN 2. Have we the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge or Mr. Marley?

SCROOGE. If I were Mr. Marley, I would not have answered when you spoke just now.

CHARITY WOMAN 2. He is deaf?

SCROOGE. He is dead. He died seven years ago this very night ... and he is still dead.

CHARITY WOMAN 1. Then you would be Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE. How proud your mother must be of your discerning nature. Now, out with it! What is it you want?

CHARITY WOMAN 2. It is Christmas, Mr. Scrooge ...

SCROOGE. I am aware of it, thank you. No one will let me forget it!

CHARITY WOMAN 2. ... and during Christmas, our organization ...

CHARITY WOMAN 1. ... a charitable one ...

CHARITY WOMAN 2. ... sees to it, through donations from men such as yourself, that the poor are not forgotten.

SCROOGE. Forgotten! How could I ever forget them! I pay taxes to support the workhouses for them ... they pass me on the streets every day! Every other fool seems to be concerned with their well-being and talks incessantly about their plight! How could I ever forget them!

CHARITY WOMAN 1 *(unsure)*. Exactly.

SCROOGE. I am reminded every day that the poor need this, the poor need that! Put them in prison where they belong if they haven't money to pay their debts! At least there they would have a free meal! Are there no prisons?

CHARITY WOMAN 2. Plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE. And the workhouses! They can go to the workhouses ... put in 15 hours a day at hard labor! Oh, but wait, is it possible ... Are the workhouses still in operation?

CHARITY WOMAN 1. I wish I could say that they were not.

SCROOGE. Those who work there are fed, are they not?

CHARITY WOMAN 2. They eat gruel.

SCROOGE. Good! If they want better food, they can go find better jobs. I did!

CHARITY WOMAN 1. Mr. Scrooge ...

SCROOGE. And I am glad to hear that the workhouses are still in operation. I was afraid that something had occurred to stop them.

CHARITY WOMAN 2. We are trying to raise money to buy the poor some meat and drink to celebrate Christmas. How much would you wish to give?

SCROOGE. Nothing.

CHARITY WOMAN 2. Nothing?

SCROOGE. I wish to give nothing! I wish to be left alone! I do not make merry myself at Christmas, and I cannot afford to make idle people merry! I pay taxes to support the prisons and workhouses! Let the poor go to them!

CHARITY WOMAN 1. Many can't go there; and many would rather die.

SCROOGE. Yes, I know. So then, they had better do it and reduce the surplus population!

CHARITY WOMAN 1. But ... but ...

SCROOGE. Good afternoon!

CHARITY WOMAN 2. Well ... I ... G-g-good afternoon, Mr. Scrooge.

CHARITY WOMAN 1. Afternoon, Mr. Scrooge ... Merry ... um ... happy ... I ...

***(SFX: Door opens. Wind comes up. Door closes, killing wind.)***

***MUSIC: In and under to fade.)***

FEMALE PLAYER 2 *(no dialect)*. Meanwhile the fog and darkness thickened. The cold became intense. But the Christmas spirit warmed the people of London town.

FEMALE PLAYER 4. One young fellow stood outside Scrooge's door, and in the hope of a mug of hot chocolate, entered and serenaded him with a Christmas carol.

*(FEMALE PLAYER 4 begins the first few words of "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen," now with a dialect.)*

***SFX: Wind under song. Door opens.)***

SCROOGE. Get away! Get from my door, you young roughneck!

*(FEMALE PLAYER 4 stops and exits.)*

SCROOGE *(cont'd)*. Away with you! God rest ye merry gentlemen, indeed! Of all the ...

***(SFX: Door slams, stopping wind. Clock strikes five.)***

CRATCHIT. Good night, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE. Where do you think you're going, Cratchit?

CRATCHIT. Home, sir.

SCROOGE. You've finished your work, then?

CRATCHIT. Yes, sir.

SCROOGE. All of it?



CRATCHIT. Yes, sir.

SCROOGE. And you will want to stay home all day tomorrow, I suppose?

CRATCHIT. Yes, sir. If it's quite convenient, sir.

SCROOGE. It is *not* quite convenient!

CRATCHIT. But tomorrow's Christmas, sir.

SCROOGE. Humbug! It is not fair!

CRATCHIT. It's only once a year, sir.

SCROOGE. Only once a year, sir! You only pick my pocket once a year! You only waste a whole working day once a year! You get no other day off all year, why should you get Christmas?

CRATCHIT. But, sir ...

SCROOGE. Go on, take tomorrow off then!

CRATCHIT. Oh, thank you, sir!

SCROOGE. But be here early the next day!

CRATCHIT. Yes, sir! Very well, sir!

*(SFX: Scuffling around and under.)*

CRATCHIT *(cont'd)*. Thank you, sir! Merry Christmas, Mr. Scrooge!

*(SFX: Door opens. Wind up. Door slams, stopping wind.)*

SCROOGE. Humbug!

*(MUSIC: Under narration.)*

MALE PLAYER 1. And so Scrooge closed up his office ...

*(SFX: Slam door. Lock door. Footsteps along cobblestones.)*

MALE PLAYER 1 *(cont'd)*. ... and went home to a gloomy suite of rooms on the upper floor of an unhappy old building in an unhappy old neighborhood. Its yard was so dark that even Scrooge, who knew every stone, had to grope his way to the foot of the wooden stairs rising up along the outside wall.

*(SFX: Climbing wooden steps, continue under.)*

MALE PLAYER 1 *(cont'd)*. And this Christmas Eve, like every Christmas Eve before, he mumbled angrily to himself as he climbed the steps to his front door.

*(MUSIC: Fade out.)*

SCROOGE. Christmas! Bah, humbug! "Merry Christmas, Uncle," he says! An idiot! A Christmas pudding-head! Hm! Much good it's ever done him! "Happy New Year," he says! And what is new about the new year? Same as the old year! Miserable! And Bob Cratchit with 15 shillings a week and a wife and family to support talking about a merry Christmas!

MALE PLAYER 4. It was very late and very dark now, and Scrooge, who took this trip every evening, could barely see as he climbed to his front door.

SCROOGE. "We are trying to raise money to buy the poor some meat and drink to celebrate Christmas." Hmf! What do they have to celebrate? They're poor, aren't they? "God rest ye merry gentlemen ... " Humbug!

***(SFX: Steps stop.***

***MUSIC: Continues under narration.)***

MALE PLAYER 4. ... but, finally, he did reach the top ... and then began searching his pockets for the key.

***(SFX: Large ring of old keys.)***

MALE PLAYER 4 *(cont'd)*. Now, there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on Scrooge's door. He had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in the apartment.

MALE PLAYER 2. Nor was Scrooge a man of great imagination, and he had not thought much about the dead Jacob Marley in seven years. But as he found his key and turned, the knocker on the door began to move ... changed ...

***(MUSIC: Eerie, transformational.)***

MALE PLAYER 2 *(cont'd)*. ... and became the face of ...

SCROOGE. Jacob Marley!

***(MUSIC: Sting and under.)***

MALE PLAYER 2. As clearly as Scrooge had seen him in life!

SCROOGE. No! You're dead! Marley is dead!

MALE PLAYER 2. Scrooge's blood ran cold, and he stood a moment, facing away from the dreaded door. Finally, he was brave enough to turn and look ... and Marley's face was gone. Scrooge stood facing his own door. And it was ... only his door, and nothing else. The door he had seen thousands of times before.

***(MUSIC: Fade out.)***

SCROOGE. Hmph! Never happened. Imagined it. Only ... shadows. Marley is dead. Humbug!

***(SFX: Latch click, door opens. Pause. Door closes hard. Latch clicks.)***

MALE PLAYER 2. Scrooge locked himself in.

***(SFX: Lock turns and clicks.)***

MALE PLAYER 2 *(cont'd)*. With a double lock.

***(SFX: Lock clicks again.)***

MALE PLAYER 2 *(cont'd)*. And thus secured against surprise, he changed into his dressing gown, slippers and nightcap, and sat down close to the fire to eat his gruel.

***(SFX: Fire in a fireplace. Spoon in gruel against bowl as he eats, and under.)***

SCROOGE. Merry Christmas! Humbug! Marley's face on the door. More humbug!

***(MUSIC: Low, eerie, sustained notes and under.)***

*The cast moans lightly, quietly off mic.)*

SCROOGE (*cont'd*). Seeing things that aren't there. Marley's dead! Been dead for seven years. Dead men don't ...

**(SFX: Chains rattling, then stop. Spoon in bowl sound stops.)**

SCROOGE (*cont'd*). What was that?

**(SFX: Chains rattling and echoing off mic, then stop.)**

SCROOGE (*cont'd*). There it is again! Who is it? Who's there? (*Pause.*) Bah! The wind!

MARLEY (*whispers*). Ebenezer Scrooge!

**(MUSIC: Up, frantic, eerie.**

*Each cast member whispers, "Ebenezer Scrooge," in turn. This continues under SCROOGE's following line.)*

SCROOGE. Who is it? Who's there? Who calls me? Let me see you! Where are you hiding? You won't frighten me! (*He's frightened.*) How did you get in? Where are you? Show yourself! Stop it! Stop it!

**(MUSIC: Stops.**

*The cast stops.)*

SCROOGE (*cont'd*). It's stopped. Of course it has. Wind in the chimney flue ... that's all. Wind in the ...

MARLEY (*breathless, echoed*). Ebenezer Scrooge.

SCROOGE. Who are you? Why do you call me? Show yourself!

**(MUSIC: Rising minor scale, followed by eerie minor chords under all that follows.**

**SFX: JACOB MARLEY's chains rattle.**

**NOTE: Echo voice and chains throughout.)**

MARLEY. I am here, Ebenezer Scrooge.

SCROOGE. Jacob Marley! Jacob Marley! But ... I ... but, you ... you're ... dead!

MARLEY. I am.

SCROOGE. Then you ... you must be ...

MARLEY. I am.

SCROOGE. What do you want with me?

MARLEY. Much.

SCROOGE. This can't be Marley. Who are you? Tell me who you are.

MARLEY. Ask me who I *was*.

SCROOGE. Who were you, then?

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

SCROOGE. It *is* Marley! No ... no ... I'm imagining this. I've gone ... mad ... mad with all this infernal Merry Christmas!

MARLEY. You don't believe in me.

SCROOGE. No.

MARLEY. You doubt your own senses?

SCROOGE. I may be dreaming you. You ... you might be a nightmare brought on by eating too much. You might be a crumb of spoilt cheese or an underdone potato. You may not have risen from your grave, but from my gravy!

*(MARLEY raises a terrible wailing.*

**MUSIC: Up, sudden, violent.**

**SFX: Violent shaking of chains.)**

SCROOGE (*cont'd*). Please, Jacob, why do you trouble me?

**(SFX: Chains stop shaking but remain under the scene, rattling with MARLEY's every move.**

**MUSIC: Under all.)**

MARLEY. Do you believe, then?

SCROOGE. I must. I must. But why are you here?

MARLEY. It is my curse.

SCROOGE. You're cursed, Jacob?

MARLEY. I have been cursed to wander through the world and witness what I cannot share ... to witness the unhappiness I caused in life ... unhappiness I cannot change in death ... *(He howls and moans.)*

**(SFX: Chains.**

*SCROOGE howls and moans as well, and for a time, they moan together.)*

SCROOGE. Why do you moan? Are you in pain?

**(SFX: Chains stop.)**

MARLEY. I grieve. I grieve over the chain I wear.

SCROOGE. Why do you wear it?

MARLEY. Because it is my own. Because I forged it in life. I made it myself, link by link and yard by yard. Each link a sin committed in life.

**(SFX: Chain sounds match the action indicated by the dialog. The chains punctuate everything MARLEY says, every movement we hear him make.)**

MARLEY (*cont'd*). Look. Here. With this link I turned my back on a man who asked for my help ...

SCROOGE. Yes. I see it. But I ...

MARLEY. And this one. I cheated a friend out of what was his.

SCROOGE. Tell me ...

MARLEY. And this ... thievery ... this ... greed ... then apathy, sloth, malice, revenge, disloyalty, selfishness, cowardice! Link upon link, I forged the chain in life I now bear in death. We pay for our sins, Ebenezer Scrooge.

SCROOGE. It is quite a long chain, Jacob.

MARLEY. Yours is longer.

SCROOGE. My chain?

MARLEY. The chain you will wear in the afterlife. It grows longer each day.