

## **A CHRISTMAS CAROL- ACTING**

*This script, written by Barabra Field, has been performed by the Guthrie Theatre for 35 years. It is an ensemble show and many characters also serve as Narrators. Please choose the reading you think best showcases your talent and type of role desired.*

Narrator One: (male or female, all ages) Marley was dead to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it. And Scrooge's signature was as good as gold —

Fred: (Scrooge's Nephew, age 17-40) There are many things from which I have not profited, Uncle, Christmas among the rest. But I've always thought it a good time, a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time. The only time in the long calendar of the year, in fact, when men and women open their shut-up hearts freely. And so, 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!

MARLEY (adult) Business!! Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business. Charity, mercy, forbearance, benevolence were all my business. The dealings of our trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of our business. Heed me, for my time is nearly gone.

FAN: (young girl ages 8-12) Ebenezer! I have come to bring you home, dear brother. Home! Home for good and all. Home forever and ever. Father is so much kinder than he used to be, and when I asked him if you might come home, he said yes. We'll be together all Christmas long.

Ghost of Christmas Present: (adult) Come forward Scrooge, come and know me better. [LAUGHS.] I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. Look upon me, little man, have you never seen the like of me before? [LAUGHS.] We shall go travelling through space. And in my cup is my own blend of spices to remind you mere mortals that life is short and must be savored while it lasts.

Bob Cratchit: (adult) As good as gold ...and better. He gets thoughtful sitting by himself so much — and thinks the strangest things you've ever heard. He told me he hoped the people saw him in the church because he was a cripple — He said it might be pleasant for people to remember on Christmas Day, the miracles that made lame beggars walk and blind men see. ... He's growing stronger every day. Yes, I do believe he's growing hearty and strong.

Mrs. Cratchit: (adult) Mr. Scrooge? Mr. Scrooge, the Founder of the Feast? Founder of the Feast indeed! I wish I had him here, I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and I hope he'd have a good appetite for it. It should be Christmas day, I'm sure, on which one drinks the health of such a stingy, odious, hard, unfeeling man as Mr. Scrooge.

Tiny Tim: (child ages 7-12) God Bless Us, Every One!

Narrator: (male or female, all ages) Scrooge had never painted out old Marley's name. There it stands seven years later: Scrooge and Marley. Sometimes people new to the business called Scrooge, Scrooge, and sometimes Marley. But he answered to both. It was all the same to him.

SCROOGE LINES ON PAGE TWO...

To prepare for the role of Scrooge, please memorize BOTH of these selections...

SCROOGE (adult)

I wish to be left alone. Since you ask me what I wish, that is my answer. I don't make myself merry at Christmas and I cannot afford the luxury of making idle people merry. I am taxed — outrageously taxed — to support those fine old institutions: the workhouse, prison, and poorhouse — those that are badly off must go there.

SCROOGE: (adult)

Before I draw near, Spirit, tell me, are these the shadows of things that will be? Or are they the shadows of things that may be? Can the ends be changed? Answer, Prince of Death, for I know you now and you are He. [GRAVESTONES APPEAR. THE PHANTOM GESTURES TO ONE OF THEM. SCROOGE APPROACHES IT.] [THE SPIRIT GESTURES TO THE STONE.] No, Spirit, I am afraid to look — [THE NAME ON THE STONE IS REVEALED.] Ebenezer Scrooge! No, Spirit, no, no, no — Spirit, hear me — I am not the man I was. [THE PHANTOM STARTS AWAY. SCROOGE FOLLOWS AND FALLS. HE KNEELS.] I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year. I shall not shut out the lessons I have learned.