

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

by Charles Dickens

adapted by Walter Hackett

Characters

(14 boys, 4 girls, and a narrator)

NARRATOR

EBENEZER SCROOGE

TWO BOYS*

FRED

BOB CRATCHIT

GENTLEMAN*

MARLEY

THREE GHOSTS

FAN

BELLE

Mrs. CRATCHIT

TINY TIM

TWO MEN*

MARTHA

BOY*

NARRATOR: It is the afternoon before Christmas Day in the year of our Lord 1844. Despite the bitterly cold weather, all London is in a festive mood. As the clock strikes three, a group of young people caroling through the city pass by the offices of Ebenezer Scrooge . . .

SCROOGE (*Angrily*): Stop it! Stop it, I say. Away from here with all that noise! We'll have no singing around here! Do you understand that? No singing, I say.

1ST BOY: A Merry Christmas, sir.

2ND BOY: No need to wish 'im a Merry Christmas. That's Scrooge.

NARRATOR: Yes, that's old Scrooge, all right—Ebenezer Scrooge. And there's no sign of happiness or festivity on his lined face. He closes the door and returns to his office. He looks around, glowers at his clerk, Bob Cratchit, snorts as he sees Cratchit bent over his desk hard at work. As he adjusts his spectacles and turns, without warning the door opens.

FRED: A Merry Christmas, Uncle. God save you!

SCROOGE (*Impatiently*): Bah! Humbug!

FRED: Christmas a humbug? Surely you don't mean that, Uncle?

SCROOGE: Merry Christmas, indeed! What right have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

FRED: What right have you to be dismal? You're rich enough.

SCROOGE: What's Christmas time to you but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer? (*His voice rising*) If I had my way, every idiot who goes about with "Merry Christmas" on his lips would be boiled in his own pudding and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. You keep Christmas in your own way, and let me keep it in mine.

FRED (*Placatingly*): I came here to ask you to spend Christmas Day with Peg and me.

SCROOGE (*Flatly*): No! Certainly not!

FRED: We want nothing from you, Uncle, other than your company for Christmas Day. (*Pause*) Won't you change your mind and have dinner with us?

SCROOGE: You know my sentiments on Christmas. (*Firmly*)

Good day, Fred.

FRED (*Glimly*): A Merry Christmas, Uncle.

SCROOGE (*Sternly*): Good afternoon.

FRED (*Pleasantly*): And a Happy New Year to you.

SCROOGE (*With annoyance*): Bah! Humbug!

CRATCHIT (*Interrupting, timidly*): Er-uh-pardon me, Mr. Scrooge . . .

SCROOGE (*Impatiently*): Well, what is it?
 CRATCHIT: There is a gentleman here to see you.
 SCROOGE: What about, Cratchit?
 CRATCHIT: He didn't say, sir.
 GENTLEMAN (*Smoothly*): Ah, good afternoon, sir. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge or Mr. Marley?
 SCROOGE: Mr. Marley, my former partner, has been dead these seven years. He died seven years ago, this very night.
 GENTLEMAN: Then I have no doubt his liberality is well represented by his surviving partner.
 SCROOGE (*Suspiciously*): What do you want?
 GENTLEMAN: At this festive season, Mr. Scrooge, we try to make some slight provision for the poor and destitute. Many thousands are in want of common necessities.
 SCROOGE (*Coldly*): Are there no prisons?
 GENTLEMAN (*Trying to keep calm*): Oh, plenty of prisons.
 SCROOGE: And the workhouses, are they still in operation?
 GENTLEMAN (*Sighing*): I wish I could say they were not.
 (*Pause*) How much shall I put you down for, Mr. Scrooge?
 SCROOGE (*Heatedly*): Nothing!
 GENTLEMAN (*Puzzled*): Nothing?
 SCROOGE: Exactly! Let these deserving people of yours go to the establishments I have mentioned.
 GENTLEMAN: Most of them would rather die than do that, Mr. Scrooge.
 SCROOGE (*Harsbly*): Then let them do that, and help decrease the surplus population. I'm busy. Good afternoon to you.
 GENTLEMAN (*Quietly*): Very good, Mr. Scrooge. Merry Christmas to you.
 SCROOGE (*Grumbling*): Charity! Bah! Humbug!
 CRATCHIT: Er—Mr. Scrooge, sir.
 SCROOGE: Well, what is it, Cratchit?
 CRATCHIT (*Timidly*): I was wondering—
 SCROOGE: You were wondering if you could go home.
 CRATCHIT: Yes, sir. It is getting late.

SCROOGE: Yes, go on. You'll want all day tomorrow, I suppose?
 CRATCHIT: If it's quite convenient, sir.
 SCROOGE: It's not convenient, and it's not fair!
 CRATCHIT: It's only once a year, sir.
 SCROOGE: A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth day of December. I suppose you must have the whole day, but be here all the earlier the next day. Under-stand?
 CRATCHIT: Yes, sir. And Merry Christmas.
 SCROOGE: Christmas! Humbug!
 NARRATOR: A few minutes later Scrooge leaves his office and makes his way to his gloomy suite of rooms. By the light of a single flickering candle, he eats his cold supper. And then to save lighting his stove, Ebenezer Scrooge retires for the night. The minutes tick away. Scrooge sleeps uneasily, tossing from side to side—then he awakes with a start. Walking toward him, dragging a heavy chain, is a gray, dim figure, which stops at the foot of the bed.
 SCROOGE (*Frightened*): Who are you? What do you want with me? (*Pause*) Who are you? Answer me!
 MARLEY (*In a quivering voice*): Ask me who I was.
 SCROOGE (*Terrified*): You are—you are—you can't be . . .
 MARLEY: Yes, in life I was your partner, Jacob Marley.
 SCROOGE (*Loudly*): But it cannot be so. You're dead.
 MARLEY: You don't believe in me?
 SCROOGE: No. (*With bravado*) You're nothing but an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese.
 MARLEY: You are wrong, Ebenezer. I am the ghost of Jacob Marley.
 SCROOGE (*Frightened*): Why do you come to me?
 MARLEY: It is required of every man that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellowmen and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death.
 SCROOGE: No, no, I don't believe it.

MARLEY: It is then doomed to wander through the world.

SCROOGE: You are chained, Jacob. Tell me why.

MARLEY: I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, and yard by yard. I wore it of my own free will. Is its pattern strange to you?

SCROOGE (*In a trembling voice*): I don't understand.

MARLEY: This chain I wear is as heavy as the one you are now forging.

SCROOGE (*Puzzled*): You talk strangely, Jacob.

MARLEY: For seven years I have been dead—traveling the whole time. (*Sighs deeply*) No rest, no peace. Only remorse.

SCROOGE: But you were always shrewd, Jacob.

MARLEY: Aye, too shrewd.

SCROOGE: A good man of business.

MARLEY: Business! Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance and benevolence were all my business. But I heeded none of these. Instead, I thought only of money.

SCROOGE: And what is wrong with making money?

MARLEY: That is your weakness, Ebenezer, as it was mine. That is why I am here tonight, part of the reason for my penance. I am here to warn you . . . to help you escape my fate. You have one chance left.

SCROOGE (*Anxiously*): Tell me how this chance will come!

MARLEY: My time draws near. I must go. Tonight you will be haunted by three spirits. The first will appear when the bell strikes one; expect the second at the stroke of two, and the third as the bell tolls three.

SCROOGE: Couldn't they come all at once and have it over with?

MARLEY: No. And heed them well when they appear. (*Fading*) Remember, it is your last chance to escape my miserable fate.

NARRATOR: As Scrooge stares in frightened silence, the figure of his deceased partner, Marley, recedes into space. Then, exhausted by the ordeal, Scrooge drops off to sleep. In the distance, the steeple clock is heard striking one. The curtains of

Scrooge's bed are drawn aside, as if by invisible hands. Suddenly, there stands by the bed a strange figure with white hair, holding a sprig of fresh green holly. Scrooge stares and then speaks.

SCROOGE (*Nervously*): Are you the spirit whose coming was told me by Jacob Marley?

1ST GHOST (*In a gentle voice*): I am.

SCROOGE (*In agitation*): Who, and what are you?

1ST GHOST: I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE: Long past?

1ST GHOST: No. Your past. Rise and walk with me.

SCROOGE: Where?

1ST GHOST: Out through the window.

SCROOGE (*Terrified*): But we are three stories above ground. I am only a mortal.

1ST GHOST: Bear but a touch of my hand upon your heart and you shall be upheld in more than this.

SCROOGE: What are we to do?

1ST GHOST: I am going to help redeem you. Come! Walk with me out into the night . . . into the past.

SCROOGE: Tell me, Ghost of Christmas Past, where are we?

1ST GHOST: Look down, Ebenezer, and think back to your youth. . . .

SCROOGE (*Amazed*): Why . . . why, of course. The river . . . the meadows . . . and—there's the old school where I went as a lad. But there is no one about.

1ST GHOST: It's the Christmas holiday. Look into this study hall. (*Pause*)

SCROOGE: Empty, except for a young boy sitting at a desk, his head in his hands. Left behind. He . . . he's crying. Poor chap! No place to go at Christmas. Ah, now he's looking up.

1ST GHOST: Do you recognize him?

SCROOGE (*Stunned*): Why, it's—it's—

1ST GHOST: What is his name?

SCROOGE (*Slowly*): Ebenezer Scrooge. (*Pause*) I wish (*Sighs*)—but it's too late now.

1ST GHOST: What is the matter?

SCROOGE: Nothing, nothing. (*Sadly*) There were some boys singing Christmas carols outside my office door yesterday afternoon, and I drove them away. (*Pause*)

1ST GHOST: Come. Let us look back on another Christmas a year later.

SCROOGE: Why, there's the school again. (*Hesitantly*) There is a boy pacing up and down in the school yard . . . I wonder who . . .

1ST GHOST: Do you recognize him?

SCROOGE: Yes, I see it is myself as a boy. . . . A coach is coming up the roadway. Now it has stopped, and a little girl gets out. Look, she is hugging me. It's my sister, Fan.

1ST GHOST: Listen to what she says.

FAN: I've come to bring you home, dear brother Ebenezer.

Father's not mean anymore, and he says you're never coming back here, and from now on we'll always be together. (*Fading*) Just think, we're together for the first time in four years.

1ST GHOST: Your sister was a delicate creature . . . kind . . . soft-hearted.

SCROOGE (*Sighing*): So she was, so she was. She died comparatively young.

1ST GHOST: And left one child behind her.

SCROOGE: Yes—Fred, my nephew.

1ST GHOST (*Mildly*): He came to wish you a Merry Christmas yesterday.

SCROOGE: Yes, yes, he did! (*Pauses, then in agitation*) Please, please take me back!

1ST GHOST: Not yet. There is one more spirit for you to see.

SCROOGE (*Pleadingly*): No more, please. I do not wish to see it.

1ST GHOST: You must. Several years have passed. In the house below, there sits a young, very beautiful girl. . . .

SCROOGE (*Incredulously*): It's Belle.

1ST GHOST: The girl you were to marry. And there you sit next to her, a young man in your prime. Only now your face begins to show the signs of avarice. There is a greedy, restless motion in your eyes. Listen to what she is saying to you.

BELLE: It matters very little to you, Ebenezer. Another idol has displaced me, a golden one. You hold money more important than me—or anything else, for that matter. And I am going to grant your wish: free you from marrying me. (*Fading*)

That is what you desire, Ebenezer. I feel sorry for you. SCROOGE (*In anguish*): Spirit, show me no more.

1ST GHOST: Today, Belle is a happy woman, surrounded by her fine children. Those children might have been yours if you hadn't been so selfish.

SCROOGE: Take me back. (*Wildly*) Haunt me no more! I beg of you, cease.

NARRATOR (*After a pause*): The second hour of Christmas Day! Scrooge finds himself back in his bedroom. Slowly, his door, though bolted, swings open.

2ND GHOST (*In a booming voice*): Good morning, Ebenezer. I am the Ghost of Christmas Present. Look upon me.

SCROOGE (*Fearfully*): You're practically a giant. Yet you have a young face.

2ND GHOST: Have you never seen the like of me before? SCROOGE: Never.

2ND GHOST: I have many brothers, over eighteen hundred of them, one for each Christmas since the very first.

SCROOGE (*Frightened*): And you are here to take me with you? 2ND GHOST: Yes. I trust you will profit by your journey. Touch my robe, Ebenezer. We have little time, and there is a place we must visit. It is a very poor house in a very poor section of London. This one directly below us.

SCROOGE: Indeed it is. Who, may I ask, lives here?

2ND GHOST: An underpaid clerk named Bob Cratchit.

SCROOGE: The Bob Cratchit who is employed by me?

2ND GHOST: The very same.

SCROOGE: That woman . . . those four children.

2ND GHOST: His wife and family.

SCROOGE: That's Cratchit coming up the stairs right now. He's carrying a young boy. . . .

2ND GHOST: His fifth child . . . Tiny Tim.

SCROOGE: The child carries a crutch.

2ND GHOST: Because he is crippled.

SCROOGE: But the doctors—
2ND GHOST: Cratchit cannot afford a doctor, not on fifteen shillings a week.

SCROOGE: But—

2ND GHOST: Sh-h-h! Listen!

CRATCHIT (*Heartily*): Good afternoon, everyone.

TIM: And a most Merry Christmas!

Mrs. CRATCHIT: Father . . . Tiny Tim.

OTHER CRATCHITS (*Ad lib*): Merry Christmas! Welcome! Tiny Tim, sit next to me. Father, let me take your muffler. (*Etc.*)

Mrs. CRATCHIT: And how did Tiny Tim behave at church?

CRATCHIT (*Affectingly*): As good as gold, and better.

TIM: I was glad to be able to go to church. That's because I wanted the people to see that I'm a cripple.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: Now that's a peculiar thing to say, Tiny Tim.

TIM (*Eagerly*): No, it isn't. That's because I was in God's House, and it was God who made the blind able to see, and the lame able to walk. And when the people at church saw me and my crutch, I was hoping they would think of what God can do, and that they would say a prayer for me.

Mrs. CRATCHIT (*Tearfully*): I . . . I'm certain they prayed for you.

TIM (*Cheerfully*): And one of these days I'm going to get well, and that'll mean I can throw away this crutch, and run and play like the other boys.

CRATCHIT (*Softly*): You will, Tim—one of these days. (*Heartily*) And now, Mother, the big question. When will dinner be ready?

Mrs. CRATCHIT: It's ready now: just about the finest goose you have ever seen. Martha, you carry it in. Tom, you fetch the potatoes and turnips. Dick, Peter, set the chairs around the table.

TIM (*Happily*): And I'll sit between Father and Mother.

CRATCHIT: This is going to be the best Christmas dinner anyone could hope for. (*Fading*) And I'm the luckiest man in the world, having such a fine family.

SCROOGE: It isn't a very big goose, is it? I could eat the whole bird myself, I believe.

2ND GHOST: It is all Bob Cratchit can afford. His family doesn't complain. To them, that meager goose is a sumptuous banquet. But more important, much more important, Ebenezer—

SCROOGE: Yes?

2ND GHOST: They are a happy and united group. Look at their shining faces. Listen to them.

CRATCHIT (*Contentedly*): What a superb dinner we have had . . . the tempting meat, the delicious dressing.

TIM: And the plum pudding. Father. Don't forget that.

CRATCHIT: That pudding was the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since her marriage. (*All laugh.*)

Mrs. CRATCHIT (*Happily*): Thank you for the compliment. I must confess it was good.

CRATCHIT: And now for the crowning touch. The punch!

ALL (*Ad lib*): The punch! Good! Delicious, I'm sure! (*Etc.*)

CRATCHIT: Here we are. Get your glasses. You, Peter . . . Dick . . . Tom . . . Martha . . . Tiny Tim . . . and last, but far from least, you, Mother. And not to forget myself. (*With finality*) There!

TIM: A toast!

CRATCHIT (*Heartily*): First, to the founder of this feast, the man who has made it possible. I give you Mr. Scrooge.

Mrs. CRATCHIT (*Bristling*): Mr. Scrooge, 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.

CRATCHIT (*Warningly*): My dear, the children! Remember, this is Christmas Day.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: He's a hard, stingy, unfeeling man. You know he is, Robert; you know better than anybody else.

CRATCHIT (*Mildly*): My dear. Remember, Christmas Day.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: I'm sorry. (*Sighing*) Very well, I'll drink his health. Long life to him! A Merry Christmas to him! To Mr. Scrooge.

ALL: To Mr. Scrooge.

CRATCHIT: And now a toast to us: A Merry Christmas to us all. God bless us!

ALL: God bless us all.

TIM: God bless us every one!

SCROOGE: Spirit, tell me—will Tiny Tim live?

2ND GHOST: I see a vacant seat in the chimney corner, and a crutch without an owner, carefully preserved. If these shadows remain unaltered by the Future, the child will die.

SCROOGE: No, no. Oh, no, kind Spirit! Say he will live, that he will be spared.

2ND GHOST: Why concern yourself about him? (*Harshly*) Isn't it better that he die and decrease the surplus population?

SCROOGE (*Franzically*): But these poor people must be helped.

2ND GHOST (*Sarcastically*): Are there no prisons? And the workhouses, are they still in operation?

SCROOGE (*Disturbed*): Do not taunt me.

2ND GHOST (*Coldly*): Come. It is time for us to go.

SCROOGE: No, I wish to remain.

2ND GHOST: I can remain no longer. Touch my robe, and we shall go.

SCROOGE: No! No, I say! Spirit, don't desert me. I need your help.

NARRATOR: Ebenezer Scrooge shortly finds himself standing outside his lodgings. A heavy snow is falling, blanketing a sleeping London. The wind has died down. It is still early Christmas morning.

3RD GHOST (*Warningly*): Ebenezer . . . Ebenezer Scrooge.

SCROOGE: You are the third and last.

3RD GHOST: I am the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come.

SCROOGE: You are about to show me shadows of the things that have not happened, but will happen in the time before us. Is that so, Spirit?

3RD GHOST: Yes, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE: I fear what I am to see.

3RD GHOST: Come, Ebenezer.

SCROOGE: Why do we stop here on this street corner, Spirit?

3RD GHOST: Those two men standing there, do you know them?

SCROOGE (*Uncomfortably*): Why, yes, I do business with them.

3RD GHOST: Their conversation is interesting.

1ST MAN: When did he die?

2ND MAN: Last night, I believe.

1ST MAN: I thought he'd never die.

2ND MAN: What has he done with his money?

1ST MAN: I haven't heard. Left it to his company, perhaps. Well, one thing is certain, he didn't leave it to charity.

2ND MAN: Are you going to his funeral?

1ST MAN: Not unless a free lunch is provided.

2ND MAN (*Fading*): A very good point. Can't say that I blame you.

SCROOGE: Spirit, this dead man they were discussing, who is he?

3RD GHOST: I will show you. There is a bed in front of you. On it lies a man—that is, the body of a man—the one those gentlemen on the street were talking about.

SCROOGE: And no one has come to claim this body?

3RD GHOST: No one, for he left not a friend behind him. Come closer and look into his face.

SCROOGE (*In horror*): No!

3RD GHOST: Look!

SCROOGE: Spirit, this is a fearful place.

3RD GHOST: Look at the face of this unclaimed man.

SCROOGE (*Terrified*): I would do it if I could. But I haven't the

power. Let me see some tenderness connected with a death. If I don't, that lonely body in this dark room will ever haunt me.

3RD GHOST: Yes, I know of such a home, one where there is tenderness connected with death. Over here on this poor street and in this dismal house.

SCROOGE: But this house—Why, yes, I've been here before. Bob Cratchit, my clerk, lives here. There are Mrs. Cratchit and her oldest daughter, Martha.

MARTHA: Your eyes, Mother—you'll strain them working in this bad light.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: I'll stop for a while. I wouldn't want to show red, tired eyes to your father when he comes home. It's time he was here.

MARTHA: Past it, rather. But these days he walks slower than he used to, Mother.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: I have known him to walk with Tiny Tim upon his shoulder very fast, indeed. He was very light to carry and your father loved him so, it was no trouble. There is your father at the door now, Martha.

MARTHA: I'll let him in. Hello, Father. You look tired.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: You are late tonight, Robert.

CRATCHIT (*Dispiritedly*): Yes, I am late.

MARTHA: I'll get some tea for you.

CRATCHIT: Thank you, Martha.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: You went there today?

CRATCHIT: Yes. I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: I'll see it soon.

CRATCHIT: I promised him I would walk there every Sunday. My poor Tiny Tim. (*Sighing*) At last he is rid of his crutch.

Mrs. CRATCHIT: Yes, at last. Our poor Tiny Tim.

SCROOGE: Tell me, Spirit, why did Tiny Tim have to die?

3RD GHOST: Come, there is still another place to visit. When you

see the next place I am taking you, perhaps you will understand. Come.

SCROOGE (*Trivially*): Is this a graveyard? Why do we pause here?

3RD GHOST: Look at that tombstone . . . read the name on it.

SCROOGE: Before I do, answer me one question. Are these the shadows of the things that *will* be, or are they the shadows of things that *may* be?

3RD GHOST (*Ignoring him*): Read the inscription on the tombstone.

SCROOGE: It reads . . . (*Slowly*) "Ebenezer Scrooge." (*Screaming*) No, Spirit! Oh, no, no! Hear me! I am not the man I was! I will not be like the man you have just shown me! I will honor Christmas.

3RD GHOST: Are you certain of this?

SCROOGE: Oh, yes. (*Anxiously*) I will try to keep it alive all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present and the Future. I will not shut out the lesson that all three Spirits have taught me. Oh, tell me there is hope, that I may rub away the writing on this stone!

3RD GHOST: We shall soon see.

SCROOGE (*Morning, as though coming out of a dream*): Tell me there is hope, that I may rub away the writing on this stone. (*Coming to*) Eh, what am I holding on to? The bedpost. I am in my own bed . . . home. Those bells! It must be Christmas Day—I wonder if it really is. I'll look out the window. (*Calls*) You, boy, down there.

Boy: Yes, did you call me, sir?

SCROOGE: What day is it today, lad?

Boy: Today! Why, Christmas Day.

SCROOGE: And to think the Spirits have done it all in one night.

Boy: What did you say, sir?

SCROOGE: Do you know the poulterer's in the next street?

Boy (*Happily*): I should say so!

SCROOGE: An intelligent boy! A remarkable boy! (*To Boy*) Do

you know whether they've sold the prize turkey that was in the window?

Boy: The one as big as me?

SCROOGE (*Laughing*): A delightful boy. Yes, the one as big as you.

Boy: It's hanging there now.

SCROOGE: Go and buy it. I am in earnest. Here is the money.

Catch. (*Pause*) Deliver it to Bob Cratchit, on Golden Street in Camden Town.

Boy (*Puzzled*): But, sir, there will be considerable change left over.

SCROOGE (*Chuckling*): Keep it, lad!

Boy (*Delighted*): Oh, thank you, sir.

SCROOGE (*Seriously*): Don't let Mr. Cratchit know who sent the turkey. It's a surprise. And, lad—

Boy: Yes, sir?

SCROOGE (*Cheerfully*): A very Merry Christmas to you.

NARRATOR: Scrooge quickly dons his hat and coat and makes his way through the city. He knocks timidly on Fred's door.

FRED: Who can that be at the door? (*Pause*) Why, bless my soul, Uncle!

SCROOGE (*Heartily*): Yes, yes, it is—your Uncle Scrooge. I've come for Christmas dinner. Now let me in. I have a present for your good wife. From now on I'm going to be one of your most persistent guests. I've changed, my boy; you'll see! (*Laughs.*)

NARRATOR: Scrooge was better than his word. He did everything he promised, and infinitely more. He became a regular visitor to his nephew's home, and even took Fred into business with him. He raised Bob Cratchit's salary to a figure that left the bewildered gentleman gasping; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father. He provided doctors for the little lad, and very soon Tiny Tim will have his wish; he will be able to throw away his crutch and run and play like the other boys. As for the three Spirits, Ebenezer Scrooge

never saw them again. That was due to the unchallengeable fact that Scrooge, for the rest of his days, helped keep alive the spirit of Christmas. And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless us every one.

THE END