

Do the Narration with Standard American Speech. Use appropriate Brit dialect for scene work.

NARRATION
(remember, this is a ghost story)

Marley was dead, to begin with. There was 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 name was good 'Change for anything he chose to put his hand to. Old Marley was as dead as a doornail.

This must be distinctly understood or nothing wonderful can come of the story we are about to relate. Scrooge knew he was dead. Of course he did. How could it be otherwise? Scrooge and he were partners for I don't know how many years. Scrooge was his sole executor, his sole administrator, his sole assign, his sole legatee, his sole friend and sole mourner. And even Scrooge was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event, but that he was an excellent man of business on the very day of the funeral and solemnized it with an undoubted bargain.

FRED

FRED A Merry Christmas Uncle Scrooge!

SCROOGE Bah! Humbug!

FRED (*Crossing to Scrooge*) Christmas a humbug Uncle? You don't mean that I am sure?

SCROOGE I do. What reason have you to be merry? You're poor enough.

FRED Come then, what reason have you to be so 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! Out on Merry Christmas! 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; a time for balancing your books and having every item in 'em presented dead against you? 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.

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 might have derived good, by which I have not profited. Christmas among the rest. I have always thought of Christmas time as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time. When men and women seem to open their shut up hearts freely, and to think of other people as if they really were fellow passengers to the grave. Therefore Uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!

(*Cratchit applauds from the other side of the stage*)

SCROOGE (*To Cratchit*) Let me hear another sound from you, and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation! (*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. (*Scrooge turns away with a snort*) But why? Why?

SCROOGE Why did you get married?

FRED Because I fell in love.

SCROOGE Because you fell in love! Good afternoon!

FRED Nay Uncle, you never came to see me before that happened. Why give it as a reason for not coming now?

SCROOGE Good Afternoon.

FRED I want nothing from you; I ask nothing of you; why cannot we be friends?

SCROOGE Good afternoon.

FRED I am sorry, with all my heart to find you so resolute. But I'll keep my Christmas humor to the last. So, (*Fred leans over and plants a kiss on the top of Scrooge's head. Scrooge cringes as if he's been struck.*) a Merry Christmas Uncle Scrooge! (*Fred starts to exit.*)

SCROOGE Good afternoon.

FRED (*Turning back to Scrooge*) And a Happy New Year!