

SCROOGE



the Pantomime

Adapted from Charles Dickens'
'A Christmas Carol'
by Trevor Wakefield



This script is published by

NODA LTD
15 The Metro Centre
Peterborough PE2 7UH
Telephone: 01733 374790
Fax: 01733 237286
Email: info@noda.org.uk
www.noda.org.uk

To whom all enquiries regarding purchase of further scripts and current royalty rates should be addressed.

CONDITIONS

1. A Licence, obtainable only from NODA Ltd, must be acquired for every public or private performance of a NODA script and the appropriate royalty paid : if extra performances are arranged after a Licence has already been issued, it is essential that NODA Ltd be informed immediately and the appropriate royalty paid, whereupon an amended Licence will be issued.
2. The availability of this script does not imply that it is automatically available for private or public performance, and NODA Ltd reserve the right to refuse to issue a Licence to Perform, for whatever reason. Therefore a Licence should always be obtained before any rehearsals start.
3. All NODA scripts are fully protected by copyright acts. Under no circumstances may they be reproduced by photocopying or any other means, either in whole or in part, without the written permission of the publishers
4. The Licence referred to above only relates to live performances of this script. A separate Licence is required for videotaping or sound recording of a NODA script, which will be issued on receipt of the appropriate fee.
5. NODA works must be played in accordance with the script and no alterations, additions or cuts should be made without the prior consent from NODA Ltd. This restriction does not apply to minor changes in dialogue, strictly local or topical gags and, where permitted in the script, musical and dancing numbers.
6. The name of the author shall be stated on all publicity, programmes etc. The programme credits shall state 'Script provided by NODA Ltd, Peterborough PE2 7UH'

NODA LIMITED is the trading arm of the NATIONAL OPERATIC & DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION, a registered charity devoted to the encouragement of amateur theatre.

This script is licensed for amateur theatre by NODA Ltd to whom all enquiries should be made. www.noda.org.uk E-mail: info@noda.org.uk





SCENES

1. On the shopfloor of Marley & Scrooge Manufacturing Inc.
2. In front of the factory
3. Scrooge's office
4. Outside Scrooge's office
5. Bob Cratchit's house

INTERVAL

1. The Spirit World
2. Scrooge's bedroom
3. Outside Scrooge's house
4. Bob Cratchit's house

Four scenes are needed: the factory

Scrooge's office

Bob Cratchit's house

Scrooge's bedroom

The other scenes can take place front of tabs

Description of Characters

Dickens' story must be one of the most famous and most loved stories in the English language, and the characters of Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim and the spirits are very well known. To enable the story to be told in traditional pantomime format, some extra characters have been added. Most notable amongst these is Nora, the tea lady, who is the traditional pantomime dame. I have also included two assistants to Nora, Sam and Ella. These are intended to be the comic characters, again, traditional in pantomime. The character of Frederic, Scrooge's nephew, could, if required, be played as the principal boy.

In Dickens' story, Frederic is newly married. In the pantomime, he is in love with Nora's daughter, Polly, of whom Scrooge seriously disapproves.

Also in Dicken's story there is a section where the Ghost of Christmas Past shows Scrooge a scene where a young girl, very upset, is seen releasing the young Scrooge from his vows of love. In the pantomime, it transpires that this young girl is Nora, who has been secretly in love with Scrooge all her life. This gives the opportunity for a double-wedding finale with Frederic marrying Polly, and Scrooge marrying Nora.

EBENEEZER SCROOGE

In the first act Scrooge is the traditional, pantomime villain. He is well dressed in a Victorian style suit with a frock-coat and a cape. He wears a top hat and carries a cane with a silver handle. During the first act he is arrogant, cruel, maybe even evil, and totally in control. He is on stage for nearly the whole of the second act and, although for a great deal of the time he doesn't speak, none-the-less he has to show the character changing from the greedy, mean, miserable Scrooge of the first act, to the light-hearted, merry character who finishes the pantomime.

BOB CRATCHIT

Although only a small part, this is an important character. Bob is a happy-go-lucky, cheerful chap, well liked by all his fellow workers. He is a loving and loved father. Even during the scene in act two when Tiny Tim has died, he is still positive. In the factory he wears overalls. When he gets home he is wearing a scruffy overcoat with a long scarf (a comforter) which almost touches the floor.

NORA CARROT

The traditional, pantomime dame, Nora can be as brassy and grotesque as you wish. She needs to speak most of her lines to the audience, with whom she must build up a rapport. She can be dressed in almost anything! She is a cook and for the tea-break scene she could wear a head-dress made with fruit or vegetables. For the finale she will wear a wedding dress.

POLLY CARROT

The beautiful daughter of Nora. She loves her mother, even though she realises that Nora is ever-so-slightly mad! She is also madly in love with Frederic, the nephew of Scrooge. For the finale she also will wear a wedding dress.

FREDERIC

Scrooge's handsome young nephew, this part could be played, if required, as a traditional principal boy. He is well-dressed, good-humoured and very much in love with Polly. Although Scrooge is unpleasant to him, (as he is to everyone), Frederic does show affectionate respect to his uncle.

SAM and ELLA

These are the comic characters. They are assistants to Nora so they could wear chefs outfits with chefs hats. If possible, Sam should be tall and thin with a tall, starched hat, whilst Ella is short and dumpy with a floppy hat. They are both equally gormless!

MRS CRATCHIT

Although only a small part, an important one. She is a homely figure, a caring wife and mother, who is always cheerful inspite of the difficult life she leads.

THE CRATCHIT CHILDREN

There are five children; Martha, Belinda, Peter, John and Tiny Tim. They are all cheerful and wear clean but simple clothing. Tiny Tim is a cripple and could wear a leg iron. He uses crutches to help him walk. In spite of this, like the other children, he always keeps smiling.

CHARITY COLLECTORS

These appear twice, once in the first act, and then near the end of the second. They could be played by members of the chorus. They are jovial and respectable members of the community, well-dressed and well bred.

JACOB MARLEY

The Ghost of Scrooge's former business partner. He is an emaciated character, very thin, tatty clothes, covered in dust and cobwebs. He carries a large chain. He needs to have an artificial 'hand' which should be just the skeleton of a hand. Nora accidentally pulls this off as she tries to kiss him.

THE CHIEF INSTRUCTOR OF PHANTOMS

The Instructor has a small but important role in that he starts the second act. He is a sergeant major type of character but needs to be dressed as some kind of ghost. He could be a P.E. instructor type with a skeleton leotard. He must be very bossy and loud and able to 'wind up' the audience

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

This is played by a child. He or she wears a loose costume which can be any colour (preferably not white so as to provide contrast with the other white or cream costumes). The Ghost is very even tempered and doesn't react to any of Scrooge's comments.

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT

This Ghost is larger than life, laughing and jolly. He wears a large green tunic and trousers. He has a big beard and long, curly hair, in which he wears a holly garland.

THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE

This Ghost never speaks; all he does is point. He wears a long black cloak with a large hood which completely covers his face. He moves slowly and is the most menacing of the ghosts.

Other parts, especially in the second act, can be played by chorus members. The most important of these would be **Mr Fezziwig** and **Old Joe**. The **young girl** in the scene with the Ghost of Christmas Past needs to be able to sing 'Where is Love'.

The ghost scenes in the second act need to be played at a fast pace. Since all the action takes place in Scrooge's bedrooms, the characters need to drift in and out as smoothly as possible. During these scenes all the characters, who are in fact just shadows of reality, could wear white or cream costumes. This would heighten the dream-like quality of the scenes. Scrooge and the ghosts could wear colourful costumes during these scenes to help them stand out. I have tried to keep these scenes as light as possible but some of them could be a little depressing, especially when Tiny Tim has died. These scenes especially have to be played with pace and vigour, although, of course, like any pantomime, the whole thing should be attacked with energy and enthusiasm!

SUGGESTED SONGS

A Wonderful Day Like Today	Chorus & Bob
Let Me Call You Sweetheart	Frederic & Polly
Everything Stops For Tea (Parody)	Chorus & Bob
Any Old Iron (Parody)	Chorus & Nora
Ah Yes, I Remember It Well	Nora & Scrooge
When the Night Wind Howls (from Ruddigore)	Dance - Juveniles
The Wiffenpoof Song (Parody)	Nora
Food Glorious Food	All except Scrooge
Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy	Dance - Juveniles
Dance of the Valkyries	Dance - Juveniles
Medley of Childrens' Games/Songs (Ring-a-Roses, Oranges & Lemons, Boys & Girls Come out To Play)	Song & Dance - Juveniles
A Scottish Reel	Chorus
Where is Love	Young Girl
If I Were A Rich Man	Bob
There's a Tiny House	Songsheet, Nora & Scrooge
Where is Love (Reprise)	Nora
We'll Have An Old-Fashioned Wedding	Nora & Scrooge
It's Love Makes the World Go Round	All

There are also various times when Christmas carols are sung by the children.

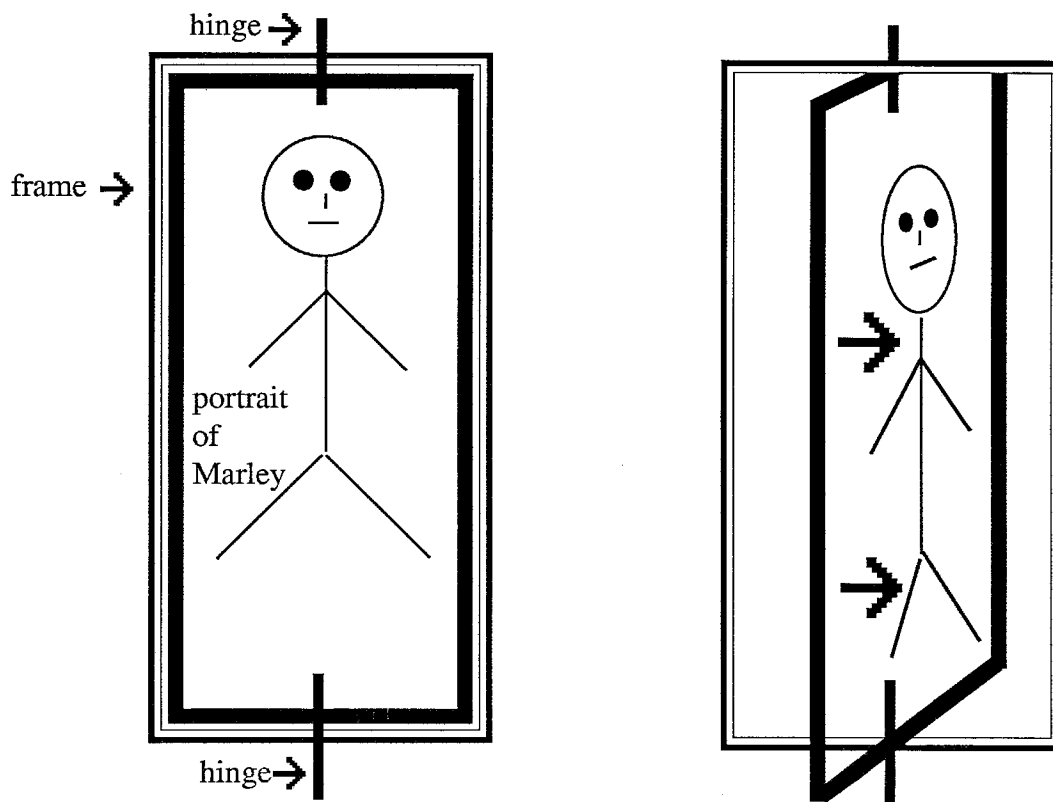
You may wish to alter the choice of songs but remember, for any songs, to obtain permission from the Performing Rights Society.

The sets for this production need not be complicated. The **factory** set can be created with a painted backcloth depicting machinery, dials, levers, etc. There should be a sign over the factory set reading, 'Marley & Scrooge Manufacturing Limited'. **Bob Cratchit's House** can again be depicted by a painted backcloth showing simple but homely surroundings. The only furniture in the room is a kitchen table with some chairs. **Scrooges Bedroom** is where most of the action in the second half takes place. Apart from a bed, on castors, there is no other furniture. The backcloth needs to be painted with a scene overlooking the roof-tops of the city and there needs to be a clock tower with a clock face visible. It will be necessary to change the time on this clock throughout the second act.

Scrooge's Office: The set for this scene could be made from flats and screens placed in front of the factory set. The sign over the factory set, 'Marley & Scrooge Manufacturing Limited' could still be visible over the office set. The only furniture necessary is a large desk and a chair.

The walls of the office should be panelled with the dominant feature on the back wall being two full-length portraits; one of Scrooge and the other of Marley. The actor playing the part of Marley could make his entrance through the portrait (see below). As the lights dim and the thunder sounds, the portrait could be swung round, allowing Marley to walk through. He should hold his pose for a few seconds and then 'come alive'. This is a very simple but effective device. Should the manufacture of this portrait prove too difficult, then Marley could enter from either the wings or through a door in the flats.

There should be further smaller pictures hanging on the walls. One of these needs to be on a peg which can be removed by a stage hand from behind, so that when Marley proves he is 'real', as well as throwing a chair he can make the picture fall off the wall.



The portrait can swing round on its hinges allowing Marley to enter from behind as the lights dim.

Curtain opens on the shop floor of Marley & Scrooge Manufacturing Inc.

There are lots of dials, levers, flashing lights, buttons, etc. The name of the company needs to be prominent over the back of the set

The chorus is on stage in the form of a 'human machine' performing mechanistic movements to 'clockwork' music and chanting the following rhyme. They could be dressed in brightly coloured overalls

Hour after hour
And day after day
We slog and we toil
For such meagre pay

For twelve hours a day
Regardless of pain
We work in this factory
For miserable gain

Measuring, cutting
Lifting and stacking,
Whether we're weak or strong

Grinding, polishing,
Sanding and finishing
Working all day long

Packing, delivering,
Checking and loading
Passing from me to you

It's hard and it's shattering,
Our bodies take a battering,
But what else can we do

The chorus could repeat the rhyme twice, speeding up the second time.

Bob Cratchit enters excitedly. He is wearing overalls and is pushing a wheelbarrow containing cardboard boxes

Bob Stop a minute everyone. Look what I've found!

The 'work' stops and the chorus "machine" breaks up and gathers excitedly around Bob

Chorus What is it?
What have you found?
What's in the box?
Good old Bob!
Etc

Bob It's some boxes of old Christmas decorations. I found them in the back of the store-room. We can put them up in the factory and brighten the place up for Christmas!

Chorus Great idea
Fantastic
Wonderful
Etc

Chorus Member But will it be alright with Old Misery-Guts Scrooge? Are you sure he won't mind?

Bob Surely he won't complain about a few decorations. After all, it is Christmas Eve, and we're all going to be working for him over Christmas. Not even Mr Scrooge would object to us brightening up the place a bit - would he?

Chorus Member Well, you're the foreman - it's up to you.

Bob I'm sure he won't mind. So come on, let's get on with it! If everybody helps we can have the job done in a few minutes and then get back to work. Come on, Christmas is a wonderful time of year! Let's enjoy ourselves!

Song and dance routine: A Wonderful Day Like Today

Since this is the opening number it needs to be very lively and bright - hitting the audience between the eyes! During the routine, some of the chorus must hang up the decorations and balloons. They only need to be draped around the set since after the number they will have to be taken down

On a wonderful day like today
I defy any cloud to appear in the sky
Dare any snow flake to drop in my eye
On a wonderful day like today

On a wonderful morning like this
When my heart is as bright as a big red balloon
Even the seagulls are singing in tune
On a wonderful morning like this

On a morning like this I could kiss everybody
I'm so full of love and goodwill
Let me say furthermore I'd adore everybody
To come and dine, the pleasure's mine
And I will pay the bill

May I take this occasion to say
That the whole human race should go down on its knees,
Show that we're grateful for mornings like these
For the world's in a wonderful way
On a wonderful day like today

As the chorus are singing and dancing, Scrooge enters. He is smartly dressed in a Victorian frock-coat, cloak and top hat. He carries a walking cane.

He is very bad-tempered and cross about the noise

Scrooge What's going on in here? What's all that infernal noise?

Bob Sorry, Mr Scrooge, we're just putting up a few Christmas decorations

Scrooge Christmas! Decorations! Not in my factory, Cratchit. Take 'em down.

Bob But Mr Scrooge , it's Christmas Eve and I thought. . .

Scrooge Thought? You thought? I don't pay you to think, Cratchit, I pay you to work. If you want to think, that's fine, but don't expect to do it in my time!

Bob But . . .

Scrooge No buts! Take 'em down I say - immediately! Christmas - stuff and nonsense, I say - humbug!

(Scrooge strides around knocking down decorations and balloons with his stick)

Come on - you over there - get those decorations down. And you in the corner, do it now you snivelling fool or I'll stop your wages.

(He turns and spots the audience. He walks down to stagefront)

What are you lot gawping at, you lazy, good-for-nothing wretches? You should be at home doing something useful, not wasting your time sat in here. It's no wonder we have an surplus population with the world full of miserable, pathetic morons like you lot! You're like warts on the chin of humanity! And I suppose all you little children are looking forward to Christmas are you? Bah! Christmas! Humbug! A complete waste of time - it should be banned! Don't you agree?

Audience NO

Scrooge Oh yes it should!

Bah, humbug! I'm not wasting my time talking to you vile, miserable wasters. I've got work to do, money to earn, idle workers to sack.

(He returns up-stage)

I said IDLE WORKERS TO SACK!!! And that means you lot if you don't tidy this place up and get back to work immediately!

*The Chorus and Bob busy themselves with taking down the decorations which are placed in the boxes
Scrooge sets off towards the wings at the same time as Nora Carrot, the tea lady, enters. She is accompanied by her daughter, Polly. Nora is carrying a tray of cakes. Nora and Scrooge collide and Nora spins onto the stage and falls down*

Scrooge Get out of my way, you flabby, clumsy idiot.

Scrooge exits

Bob , Polly and some of the chorus go to help Nora

Polly Oh mother! He pushed you over!

Bob Are you all right, Auntie Nora?

Nora Ooh! I think I've squashed me currant buns!

What's wrong with old Sausage-Face Scrooge today? He's worse than normal, and that's bad enough!

Bob He got cross with us for putting up some Christmas decorations in the factory. We didn't think he'd mind, it being Christmas Eve and us having to work all over Christmas. But he got in a right old state over it and made us take them all down.

Nora Ooh, the miserable old skinflint! Just because he doesn't like Christmas, he's determined to spoil it for everyone else. But then, he's always been like that - I've known him for years and he's never been any different. All he thinks about is making more and more money for himself.

Look at me buns - ruined! I'll have to go and make another batch now, in time for your tea-break. There's no rest for the wicked! And speaking of wicked you lot had better get back to work before Scrooge comes back - if he sees you standing around, you'll all get the sack. Come along now, back to work. Polly - you and me must get back to the kitchen. I've left some bread in the oven and I don't want it to burn.

Bob , Polly and the rest of the chorus collect up the remaining decorations and exit. They leave behind the wheelbarrow and one small Christmas tree. Nora is just about to leave when she spots the tree.

Nora

Ooh look - they've forgotten that sweet little Christmas tree. If old Skinflint Scrooge sees that he'll chop it up for firewood. I know, I'll hide it so that he can't get it and then I might be able to take it round to Bob and his family later. I'm sure Tiny Tim and the other kids will love it.

She takes the tree and puts it at the front corner of the stage. As she looks up she spots the audience

Hello - I didn't spot you lot down there! You must think I'm very ignorant, not speaking to you. Trouble is, my eyes aren't as good as they used to be (to say nothing of the rest of me!)

Anyway, let me introduce myself - Nora Carrot is the name, teas and cakes is the game! Yes, I'm the tea-lady at Scrooge's factory. I'm the one who puts the cream in the cream cakes, the cherries in the cherry cakes and the rocks in the rock cakes!! And I can punch holes in a doughnut faster than anyone this side of (*local place*)! And what's more, I'm a fully qualified cordless blue cook. In fact, I'm a religious cook - everything I cook is either a sacrifice or a burnt offering! , I pride myself that everything I make is home-made (at least, that's what it says on the tin!)

Ooh, I really do enjoy my job - I'm never happier than when I'm battering a cod fillet or pumping up some Yorkshire puddings! And people come from miles around to admire my dumplings!

Did you see old misery-guts Scrooge earlier? Isn't he rotten? Even at Christmas he's horrible and mean to everyone. He's too mean to even shiver when it's cold! He won't pay to go on a holiday - he just stays at home and lets his mind wander! Do you know, last week he bought himself three oysters and ate them in front of a mirror so that they'd look like six! Still, I'm not going to let him spoil my Christmas. I shall take this tree round to my nephew's house later - that's Bob Cratchit, the foreman here. He's a lovely man, with such a sweet family, especially the youngest, Tiny Tim.

Well, I'm sorry, I'd love to talk to you for longer but if old Scrooge sees me he'll go nuts so I must go and get on with my work.

Now, where can I put this tree? I know, you can help me. You can guard the tree. Look, if I leave it here, you lot can keep an eye on it and if anyone tries to touch it you can shout out and warn me. What a good idea! Now, what should you shout out? We need a secret code word. I know, what's your favourite food?

Audience

The audience will shout out various dishes

Nora What did you say? Fish 'n chips? Right - that's what we'll use as our secret code - fish'n chips! Lets try it. I'll go off and you lot shout out fish 'n chips as loud as you can and I'll know to come back. Ready? Lets try it

Nora exits

Audience Fish 'n chips

Nora returns

Nora Why aren't you doing it? You are? Well I must be more deaf than I thought 'cos I can't hear a thing! Lets try again

Nora exits

Audience Fish 'n chips

Nora returns

Nora Oh, that's much better! Well done! Now, if anyone touches that tree you must shout out as loud as that to warn me. Will you do that? Thank you.

Polly enters

Polly Mother - I thought you were coming to the kitchen

Nora Oh, sorry dear, but I got talking to all these lovely people. They're going to help me by guarding this tree.

(To audience) This is my beautiful daughter, Polly. Isn't she gorgeous? You can see the family resemblance, can't you? She's got my hair (that's why I wear a wig!) and my teeth (that's why mine are false!) I'm glad she's got her own legs!

Polly Stop being silly, mother! I want to get finished in the kitchen as soon as we can because Frederic is calling round later.

Nora Ooh, Frederic! That's Scrooges handsome young nephew. He's lovely! And I think he's got a soft spot for Polly. Ooh! What a hunk!

Polly Mother!

Nora Oh, all right. Come on then, lets get back to work. Are Sam and Ella in the kitchen? *To audience* - they're my assistants.

Polly No, I haven't seen them today.

Nora Ooh! They're never here when you need them. Come on then, Polly, let's go. Bye bye. See you later. Remember the Christmas tree.

Nora and Polly exit. From the opposite wing, Sam and Ella enter. They are arguing.

Sam You're always making us late. Nora is going to be mad with us and it's all your fault!

Ella No it's not!

Sam Course it is! Where were you anyway?

Ella Well you see, I had a dream.

Sam You had a dream?

Ella Yes

Sam Well how come a dream made you late?

Ella Well you see, in this dream I was captured by a wicked witch and locked in a cell in her castle and it was a magic cell and it didn't have any doors or windows and all there was in the cell was a wooden table.

Sam So what did you do?

Ella Well you see, I rubbed my hands together until they were sore. Then I used the saw to cut the table into two halves. Now, what do two halves make?

Sam A whole.

Ella Correct! So I put the hole against the wall of the cell and jumped through it! Then I found myself in the witches castle which was surrounded by a moat filled with water. So I was still trapped.

Sam So what did you do?

Ella I just hung around until I was bored. Then I used the board to make a bridge over the moat

Sam What did you do next?

Ella I shouted and shouted until I was hoarse. Then I got on the horse and rode back to safety. And that's why I'm late!

Sam *Exasperated* Ooh! Why don't you grow up, stupid?

Ella I did grow up stupid!

Sam You're hopeless

Ella I'm trying

Sam I know you're trying!

Ella No. I mean I'm trying to improve myself

Sam Really

Ella Yes

Sam What are you doing?

Ella Well you see, for instance, last night I was reading the dictionary in bed.

Sam Really? Did you finish it?

Ella No, I got up to P!

Sam You idiot! I bet you can't even read

Ella Oh yes I can! In fact I got a letter from my mother only today.

Sam Well go on then - read it to me

Ella takes out a pair of spectacles and puts them on. There are no lenses in them. Sam does a double take at the spectacles. He snatches them off Ella.

Sam There are no lenses in these glasses!

Sam pokes his finger through the spectacles

Ella *(snatching back the specs)* I know! I took them out

Sam Why did you take them out?

Ella Well, they kept getting steamed up in the kitchen - so I took out the glass and now they don't get steamed up!

Ella opens the letter and looks at it. She hold the letter up close to her eyes and peers at it shortsightedly. She frowns. She is puzzled

Sam looks over her shoulder. He snatches the letter out of Ella's hand and turns it the other way up. He returns it to Ella

Ella Oh thank you.

(Reading) Dear Ella, I am writing this letter slowly because I know you can't read very fast.

How thoughtful of her

Your Uncle Albert sends his best regards and asks if you could send some money in return

Sam He'll be lucky!

Ella Yesterday was your Aunty Nellies birthday. She's one hundred and eleven

She doesn't look it!

Sam One hundred and eleven? That's impossible

Ella That's what it says

Sam Here, let me have a look

Sam snatches the letter

Sam It doesn't say one hundred and eleven you lame-brain - it says she's ill!

Ooh. I'm not going to waste any more time on you. We're late enough already. Come on. Let's find Nora.

Ella spots the tree and goes over to touch it

Ella Hang on a minute. What's this? A Christmas tree!

Audience Fish 'n chips!

Nora comes running in

Nora Did you call? Who's tampering with me baubles?

Oh! It's you two. What time do you call this? You're late! Where have you been?

Sam and Ella *Together:* It's her fault, she made us late for work
It's not my fault, he was late getting up

Nora One at a time! One at a time!!

Sam and Ella *Together:* I had a terrible dream and it made me late getting up
She's always coming up with stupid excuses for being late

Nora You're doing it again! I can't understand you!

Sam Let me tell her. I'll do the talking

Ella You're just trying to stop me from telling her

Sam No - you can tell her - but not now

Ella If not now, when?

Sam When I've finished

Ella When are you going to be finished?

Sam After I've started

Ella When are you going to start?

Sam Listen - you can tell her, later!

Ella Well who's telling her now?

Sam Me

Ella No - *I'm* me

Sam Oh no - I'm 'me'

Ella Well, in that case who am I?

Sam You're you

Ella I can't be you - I must be me

Sam You're only me to you! I'm me to me and I'm you to you

Nora For goodness sake! Belt up!! You've both got hold of the wrong end of the stick!

Sam and
Ella What stick?

Nora No! When I say 'you've both got hold of the wrong end of the stick' I don't mean there *is* a stick, I mean there *isn't* a stick!

Ella You're as daft as we are!

Nora Ooh! It's no wonder my hair is going grey, working with idiots like you two!
Come on - into the kitchen

Polly enters holding a tray on which there are two burnt loaves. They are black and smoke is rising off them

Polly Mother, mother, the bread burnt!

Sam grabs the loaves off the tray

Sam Aargh! They're hot!

Sam throws the loaves into the air. They are caught by Ella

Ella Ouch!! They're hot!

Ella throws the loaves and Nora catches them

Nora You gormless idiots! They're hot!!

The loaves are thrown between the three. Nora backs towards the wheelbarrow and falls into it.

Get me out of here, you fools!!

Sam grabs the wheelbarrow handles and wheels Nora off stage, followed by Ella, leaving Polly alone on the stage. She is just about to follow them off when Frederic enters from the opposite wing.

Frederic Polly

Polly Frederic

They embrace

Frederic What on earth was going on here?

Polly Oh, it's only mother, causing her usual chaos!

Frederic I see - so everything is normal

They laugh, obviously very much in love with each other

Polly Have you come to see your Uncle Ebenezer?

Frederic I have. I hope he's in a better mood than usual - he should be, after all it *is* Christmas!

Polly From what I've seen and heard he's in a *worse* mood than usual. Christmas seems to have the opposite effect on him!

Frederic Well, I don't care. I won't let his bad temper affect me. I love you Polly, and I'm determined to marry you whatever the old skinflint says.

Polly Oh Frederic, do you think he *will* allow us to get married?

Frederic *(Confidently)* Of course he will! *(Doubtfully)* Won't he?

 Listen, we'll invite him to have Christmas lunch with us tomorrow. We can pour some fine old claret down his throat - that should soften him up!

Polly Are you sure that's such a good idea? After all, my mother will be cooking the lunch!

Frederic Oh Polly, don't worry. *(He takes her in his arms)* I'm so happy that nothing could be a problem for me. I could climb the highest mountain and fight the fiercest lion, I'm so much in love with you. I'm not going to let anything come between us - not even Uncle Ebenezer - or your mother's cooking! I spend all my time dreaming of you

Song: Let Me Call You Sweetheart

Frederic I am dreaming, dear, of you,
Day by day
Dreaming when the skies are blue,
When they're grey
When the silvery moonlight gleams
Still I wander on in my dreams
In a land of love, it seems,
Just with you

Frederic
Let me call you Sweetheart, I'm in love with you.
Let me hear you whisper that you love me too.
Keep the love-light glowing in your eyes so true,
Let me call you Sweetheart, I'm in love with you

At the end of the song Polly sees Scrooge approaching

Polly
Oh no - here comes your Uncle! He mustn't see us together. I must go. Good luck.

Polly leaves as Scrooge enters

Frederic
A Merry Christmas, Uncle. God save you.

Scrooge
Bah! Humbug!

Frederic
Christmas a humbug? You surely don't mean that, do you?

Scrooge
I surely do! Merry Christmas, indeed! What right have you to be merry? You're as poor as the church mouse!

Frederic
Well then, what right have you to be miserable? You're rich!

Scrooge
Bah! Humbug!

Frederic
Come on, Uncle. Don't be cross

Scrooge
What else can I be when I live in a world surrounded by fools and idiots (*pointing to the audience*) Like this lot!

Audience
Boo

Scrooge
Boo yourself, you morons!

Merry Christmas - what nonsense! What's Christmas apart from a time for over-eating, drinking and spending money on stupid presents for even more stupid, ungrateful little children. Everybody who says Merry Christmas should be boiled with his own pudding and hung on his own Christmas tree!

Frederic
Oh, Uncle!

Scrooge
(*Mocking*) Oh, Nephew!

Frederic But Christmas is a happy time - a time to show your love for your fellow man; a time to be kind, forgiving and charitable; a time to give thanks for the good things in life.

Scrooge Very good, Nephew, very good. Carry on like that and you'll end up as a member of Parliament!

Frederic Don't be angry, Uncle, please! Look, Polly and I would like to invite you to lunch tomorrow

Scrooge (*Mocking*) Polly and I, eh? You're still wasting your time with that ignorant wench are you?

Frederic She's not ignorant! She's very intelligent, and beautiful as well, and I intend to marry her

Scrooge Marry! Marry!! Ha! Why marry?

Frederic Because I love her.

Scrooge Because I love her! Ha!

 Good afternoon, Nephew.

Frederic Come on, Uncle, please come to lunch

Scrooge Good afternoon

Frederic Uncle - I want nothing from you, only your friendship

Scrooge Good afternoon

Frederic Well, I'm sorry you won't change your mind. But I'm not going to let your ill temper affect my happiness. I won't lose my good Christmas humour, so I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Scrooge Good afternoon

Frederic And a Happy New Year.

Scrooge Good afternoon

Frederic exits

Scrooge Marriage, huh! stuff and nonsense! Humbug!

The charity Collectors enter

Charity 1 Good afternoon, Mr Marley

Scrooge I'm not Marley, I'm Scrooge. Marley has been dead for seven years - in fact, seven years to this very day

Charity 2 Oh, I'm so sorry. How did he come to meet his death?

Scrooge He didn't go to meet it - it overtook him!

Charity 1 Well, what was the cause of his complaint?

Scrooge There was no complaint! Everyone was very satisfied when he died!

Who are you, any way? How did you get in?

Charity 2 The young gentleman who was leaving invited us in. You see, we are collecting for charity.

Scrooge Charity? Don't use such filthy language in my presence!

Charity 2 At this festive time of year we all like to think of those others, less fortunate than ourselves

Scrooge I don't!

Charity 1 Many hundreds of our fellow men are in need of basic comforts like food and warmth

Scrooge Isn't there room in our prisons for them?

Charity 2 Prisons?

Scrooge And what about workhouses?

Charity 1 Well, yes, of course, but we shouldn't have to resort to such places for the good people I speak of. Now, how much should I put you down for?

Scrooge Nothing