

PAST . I am.

MARLEY . Does he take this to be a vision of his green grocer?

SCROOGE . Who. and what are you?

PAST . I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE . Long past?

PAST . Your past.

SCROOGE . May I ask. please, sir. what business you have here with me?

14 **PAST** . **Your welfare.**

SCROOGE . Not to sound ungrateful, sir, and really, please do understand that I am plenty obliged for your concern, but. really, kind spirit, it would have done all the better for my welfare to have been left alone altogether, to have slept peacefully through this night.

15 **PAST** . **Your reclamation, then.** Take heed

SCROOGE . My what?

PAST . [*Motioning to SCROOGE and taking his arm*] Rise! Fly with me! [*He leads SCROOGE to the window.*]

SCROOGE . [*Panicked*] Fly. but I am a mortal and cannot fly?

PAST . [*Pointing to his heart*] Bear but a touch of my hand *here* and you shall be upheld in more than this!

(SCROOGE *touches the SPIRIT'S heart and the lights dissolve into sparkly flickers. Lovely crystals of music are heard. The scene dissolves into another. Christmas music again*)

Scene 5

[SCROOGE and the GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST walk together across an open stage. In the background, we see a field that is open: covered by a soft, downy snow: a country road. I

SCROOGE . Good Heaven! I was bred in this place. I was a boy here!

[SCROOGE *freezes, staring at the field beyond. MARLEY'S ghost appears beside him: takes SCROOGE'S face in his hands, and turns his face to the audience.*]

MARLEY . You see this Scrooge: stricken by feeling. Conscious of a thousand odors floating in the air, each one connected with a thousand thoughts, and hopes, and joys, and care long, long forgotten. [Pause] This one—this Scrooge—before your very eyes, returns to life, among the living. [To audience, sternly] You'd best pay your most careful attention. I would suggest rapt.¹⁷

[There is a small flash and puff of smoke and MARLEY is gone again.]

PAST . Your lip is trembling, Mr. Scrooge. And what is that upon your cheek?

SCROOGE . Upon my cheek? Nothing ... a blemish on the skin from the eating of over-much grease . . . nothing . . . [*Suddenly*] Kind Spirit of Christmas Past, lead me where you will, but *quickly!* To be stagnant in this place is, for me, *unbearable!*

PAST . **YOU** recollect the way?

SCROOGE . Remember it! I would know it blindfolded! My bridge, my church, my winding river! [*Staggers about, trying to see it all at once. He weeps again.*]

PAST . These are but shadows of things that have been. They have no consciousness of us.

[Four *Jocund* travelers enter, singing a Christmas song in four-part harmony—
“God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen.”**!]