

Frederick

A Merry Christmas, uncle! God save you!

The door swings open by itself. The actors freeze and stare at it. They resume the scene. A stage manager come on and shuts the door.

Scrooge

What do you want?

They both acknowledge the stage manager closing the door awkwardly.

Frederick

I've come to say hello, Uncle.

Scrooge

Cratchit, stop working, he's not a customer and he'll be gone shortly.

Cratchit

Way ahead of you, sir.

Frederick

I have come to invite you...

Scrooge

I know what you've come for and the answer is no. It's always no. Last year it was no. the year before it was no. The year before that was no. Do you know what it was the year before that, Cratchit?

Cratchit

No, sir (*as in – he doesn't know the answer*)

Scrooge

Yes! (*as in – he is correct*) **Cratchit**

It was Yes, sir?

Scrooge

No!

Cratchit

No, sir?

Scrooge

Yes!

Cratchit

Which is it, sir?

Frederick

Third base?

Scrooge

Enough of this nonsense! Go ahead and ask me...

Frederick

Constance and I would love it if you joined our family for Christmas dinner.

Scrooge

Every year you waltz in here and invite me to your place to spend Christmas and every year the answer is no. Next year, save yourself a trip.

Frederick

Constance and I would love it if you came, sir. You know how much we love Christmas.

Scrooge

Christmas? Humbug!

Frederick

Christmas a humbug, uncle! You don't mean that...

Scrooge

Of course I do, I mean everything I say. Why are you so merry anyway? You have no reason to be merry, you are poor enough.

Frederick

What reason do you have to be dismal, uncle? You're rich enough.

Scrooge

Humbug!

Frederick

Uncle, I realize that's your catchphrase but, really...

Scrooge

HUM. BUG. 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; 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.

Frederick

That seems a bit extreme, Uncle.

Scrooge

I said, good day!

Frederick

No you didn't.

Scrooge

Well, I meant to. Leave at once.

Frederick

A la Linus' "Meaning of Christmas speech" from 'A Charlie Brown Christmas'. His scarf becomes a blanket.

Lights, Please

Listen, Uncle. Christmas is a time of good. a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by

one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, 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!

Cratchit applauds behind Scrooge. Scrooge turn around to "catch" him and he stops.

Scrooge

What a lovely monologue. Maybe it will get you a Broadwayworld award or something. You know what it won't get you? My sympathies. Now get out.

Frederick

I will go. But the offer still stands, uncle. Dinner at my house tomorrow.