

SOLICITOR (Combined Quimby, Rummidge, Worthy, and Do-Well for audition)

SOLICITOR PREPARES TO ENTER SCROOGE'S OFFICE. WHEN HE/SHE STEPS INSIDE, SCROOGE GLARES AT HIM/HER.)

SOLICITOR: (CLEARING HIS THROAT.) Ahem!

SCROOGE: Yes? What d'you want?

SOLICITOR: (CONSULTING HIS NOTEBOOK.) "SCROOGE AND MARLEY'S," I believe.

SCROOGE: It is.

SOLICITOR: Do I have the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge or Mr. Marley?

SCROOGE: Mr. Marley is dead.

SOLICITOR: Oh.

SCROOGE: He died seven years ago this very night.

SOLICITOR: Oh, my! On Christmas Eve! Most unfortunate, I must say. (OFFERS NOTEBOOK.) Our credentials, sir.

SCROOGE: Bah!

SOLICITOR: But — I have no doubt, sir, that Mr. Marley's generosity is well represented by his surviving partner.

SCROOGE: Generosity?

SOLICITOR: At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make some slight provision for the poor and destitute.

SCROOGE: Ah! I see. ((PAUSE.) Are there no prisons?

SOLICITOR: (STARTLED.) Why, plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE: And the Union workhouses? Are they still in operation?

SOLICITOR: They are, sir. But I wish I could say they were not.

SCROOGE: (ENJOYING HIMSELF.) Oh, well, I was afraid from what you said at first, that some lunatic had interfered with those excellent establishments.

SOLICITOR: Oh, my goodness! Sir. We feel that prisons and workhouses scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body to the multitudes.

SCROOGE: Hmph!

SOLICITOR: That is why at this special time of year a few of us are trying to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth. (READY TO WRITE IN HIS BOOK.) What shall I put you down for?

SCROOGE: Nothing!

SOLICITOR: Ah, I understand! You wish to remain anonymous?

SCROOGE: No, I wish to be left alone!

SOLICITOR: Oh, dear!

SCROOGE: I can't afford to make idle people merry! Let those who are badly off go to the prisons and workhouses!

SOLICITOR: Sir, many of them can't go there — and many would rather die!

SCROOGE: Well, if they would rather die, then they had better just do it, and decrease the surplus population.

SOLICITOR: (INDIGNANT.) Mr. Scrooge!

SCROOGE: It's enough for a man to care for his own business, without interfering with other people's!

SOLICITOR: (SPEECHLESS WITH INDIGNATION.) Well! Of all the . . . “ It seems I've wasted my time here.

SCROOGE: I should say so!