

## Young Man Scrooge, Belle

Y. SCROOGE: (COMES TO BELLE, TAKES HER HANDS.) Belle! Such wonderful news! We've just decided! Jacob and I are going to be business partners!

BELLE: I'm very happy for you, Ebenezer.

Y. SCROOGE: And we'll be such a great success! You'll see! Before you know it, we'll be surrounded with gold! Bags and bags of it!

BELLE: And that's what you want, isn't it?

Y. SCROOGE: Oh, yes, yes, I do! In a few years you and I will be married, and you'll have a big house, and a carriage and gold and jewels. We'll be rich, Belle! Very rich!

BELLE: Ebenezer. ... ?

Y. SCROOGE: (STILL VERY EXCITED BY HIS VISION OF THE FUTURE.) Yes, Belle, what is it?

BELLE: What would you say if I if I told you — that I don't care very much about being rich?

Y. SCROOGE: What? You don't care? Not at all?

BELLE: No, I don't. Not really.

Y. SCROOGE: Belle! What do you mean? Why, wouldn't you care about being rich? Everyone wants to be rich! I want to be rich.

BELLE: Yes. Yes, I know you do.

Y. SCROOGE: Well, what's wrong with that?

BELLE: Nothing, Ebenezer, nothing. If that's what you really want.

Y. SCROOGE: It is!

BELLE: More than anything?

Y. SCROOGE: Yes! More than anything! You can understand that, can't you?

BELLE: Yes, I see ...

Y. SCROOGE: And just what do you "see?"

BELLE: No, I don't understand, Ebenezer. I only "see" that my feelings don't seem to mean very much to you any more.

Y. SCROOGE: Why, Belle! That's not true!

BELLE: This passion of yours, this desire to be rich, to acquire so much gold —

Y. SCROOGE: But — that's the way of the world — of business!

BELLE: (SIGHS.) Day by day, week by week, month by month I've watched all of your thoughts and feelings turn to one idea — you want to be rich. That's all you think about.

Y. SCROOGE: I've grown up and I've grown wiser, that's all. Nothing is changed between us.

BELLE: But you've changed, Ebenezer, don't you see? When we first promised to marry, you were another man, with different hopes and different thoughts and feelings. (SHE TURNS AWAY.)

Y. SCROOGE: But I was a mere boy then!

BELLE: Oh, Ebenezer, you just don't understand. You can't even recognize what I feel — and, oh, I wish I could feel otherwise, but I can't. But, my dear, I believe that — and this is so difficult to say — but I truly believe that if you were free today, you wouldn't want to choose me — or anyone.

Y. SCROOGE: But — have I ever asked you to release me from my promise?

BELLE: Not in words. No, never.

Y. SCROOGE: Well how then? I haven't changed.

BELLE: Oh, yes. Yes, you have. More than you know.

Y. SCROOGE: But Belle —

BELLE: Ebenezer, you've chosen your way of life. You want to be rich. Very well, then, be rich, but I don't want a husband who cares more for his bags of gold than he does for me. Oh, Ebenezer, you can't measure your love by the jewels and carriages and houses you can give me. Perhaps my leaving will bring you some pain, or a little sadness, but I fear that you'll forget me very soon. In a short time, you'll be so absorbed in your pursuit of wealth, you'll be glad I let you go. (TAKES HIS HAND.) You won't miss me very much at all. I hope you'll be very happy in the life you've chosen. (LETS GO OF HIS HAND.)

Y. SCROOGE: Belle, I —

BELLE: Good-bye, Ebenezer. (SHE GOES OFF.)

(YOUNG SCROOGE, STANDS HELPLESSLY, WATCHING BELLE WALK AWAY.)