

GHOST

#### Scene 4

*Lights change. A clock strikes one. Scrooge opens his eyes.*

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Oh. The clock strikes one. Oh dear. I don't want to see a ghost. *(Enter the Ghost. She is dressed as a UPS delivery man.)*

GHOST. UPS delivery. UPS delivery. Oh, Mr. Scrooge, I have a package.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Really? I was expecting a ghost. But a UPS delivery person is a welcome relief. What is it?

GHOST. A Christmas present from all your grateful friends and relatives. *(She offers him a package ... but wrapped like a festive Christmas gift, not like a UPS package.)*

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Really? That doesn't seem very likely. *(Opens it.)* Ah. A pair of socks. How fascinating. Bah humbug!

GHOST. Mr. Scrooge, I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. And you're reduced to delivering packages?

GHOST. Yes, but with a purpose. Because I am here to teach you various lessons so you can improve your manner of keeping Christmas.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Oh, you keep Christmas, leave me out of it.

GHOST. First of all, the way you receive presents is just no good. Try it again. *(Offers him a second identical package.)* Now before opening, you must proclaim in loud and grateful tones how lovely the wrapping is.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. I don't want to. *(The Ghost reaches over with an electrical zapper and zaps him.)*

ELECTRICAL ZAPPER. Zap! Zap!

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Aaaaaaggggghh! What is that?

GHOST. That is an energy unit that we in the afterlife have fashioned into a zapper. And it zaps painful jolting electric currents through your body. And if you disobey, I shall use it again and again and again.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. O Lord.

GHOST. Now as I said, I want you to make a big fuss over the Christmas wrapping. *(Scrooge stares at her with annoyance. She brandishes the zapper again. He gives in, decides to do what she says.)*

EBENEZER SCROOGE. *(With feigned, if slightly unconvincing, delight.)* Oh ... what a lovely package. It is so, so very nice. Very, very, very nice.

GHOST. Be more specific.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. It's so ... colorful. I love the ribbon on it. Ummm ... what a lovely shade of yellow it is. Makes me think of egg yolk, makes me think of vomit. *(She zaps him.)* Aaaaaaggggghhh! Makes me think of daffodils. Lovely, lovely daffodils. What a wonderful package. I ... I ... hate even to open it, it's so lovely.

GHOST. Much better. Now open it, and then gush about the gift.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. All right. *(While he starts to open it.)*

What do you think is in it? It's too light to be a book. It's too small to be a ... cast-iron statue of Oliver Cromwell. What do you think it is? Shall I see? *(Opens it; takes out a pair of white gym socks.)* Oh, how marvellous! Socks! Just what I need. I love socks. Thank you so very, very, very much.

GHOST. That was so-so. Gush some more.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Ummm. I love white socks. They're so ... clean. And useful. I'm thrilled out of my mind. Out of my mind, I tell you. Is that enough? Can I stop talking about the socks please???

GHOST. Yes, you may. For I am the Ghost of Christmas Past, and we have visiting to do. First off, I think we shall go to the Fezziwigs.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Oh not those loud, awful bores.

GHOST. The very ones. Come touch my arm and the set shall change around us.

EBENEZER SCROOGE. Very well. *(Scrooge touches the Ghost's arm, and there are air rustling sounds, like racing through space and time. And the set changes around them and we find ourselves at.)*

