

SCENE FOUR

(Westminster chimes. With each section of the chime Scrooge speaks.)

SCROOGE

A quarter past. Half past! A quarter to it. The hour itself and nothing else!

(The bell tolls one. Snow begins to fall and the Ghost of Christmas Past flies in.)

SCROOGE

Are you the Spirit, sir, whose coming was foretold to me?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

I am!

SCROOGE

Who and what are you?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.

SCROOGE

Long past?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

No. Your past.

SCROOGE

Well do you have to shine so brightly? It's one o'clock in the morning.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

What! Would you so soon put out, with worldly hands, the light I give? Indeed, I would be brighter if it wasn't for your dark nature.

SCROOGE

I didn't mean to offend you, Spirit. But what business has brought you here?

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Your welfare!

SCROOGE

I should think that a night of unbroken rest would have been more conducive to my welfare.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Your reclamation, then. Take heed! Rise! And walk with me!

SCROOGE

I am mortal and liable to fall.

GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Bear but a touch of my hand on your heart and you shall be upheld in more than this!