

Cratchit 9.20.26
Bill Scurato

Ensemble appears in various holiday festivities setting a cheerful mood. A Reveler is leading the way—

Song: *Tides*

Ensemble:

*What a special happy time of year
 We all know the holidays are near
 Merriment and joyous times are finally here.*

*Christmas tides to you and you and you
 Family, friends and cherished neighbors too
 Happy moments, jingling all the way, it's true!*

Dance Break

Solos:

*Christmas shopping all day long.
 Caroling all night
 Wrapping presents, hearing church bells bong
 Loved ones close that we hold tight
 Crackling of the fire
 Just imagine such a lovely sight?*

Ensemble:

*When the special day is finally here
 Children with their gleaming eyes appear.
 Christmas is the grandest day of all the year.*

*May your every happy dream appear.
 At this very magic time of year
 Warmest wishes bring to you the best of cheer.*

Scene 1

Reveler: The grandest day indeed! But as the world prepares to celebrate the happiest of all days...as it does each year... embracing the joys of friends, family and peace on earth...all is not so merry in a courtroom not far away.

Cratchit: Mr. Archibald...you are charged with loan sharking, extortion, corporate fraud and conspiracy. You may well spend the rest of your natural life in prison. (cries from Sophia. Mia comforts her) And yet you refuse to reveal the names of your partners in crime.

Archibald: Aw...gee.... Lawyer Cratchit....you got that right. You musta gone to college! For the eleventy-billionth time...I ain't got no partners in crime. I conspired myself into this mess all by my lonesome..... Obviously, I got a very shrewd business coconut. (He smacks himself on the head and laughs)

Judge: I fail to see the humor, Archibald.... Come now, why should you suffer the consequences all by yourself? I don't believe for an instant, that you, yourself, broke legs or dislocated fingers...to collect from your helpless victims! Yet those were among the outcomes. You're a family man...you have two lovely daughters.. ...if you'll pardon my saying so, you just don't seem like the type.

Archibald: Look.... these "so called" victims borrowed money....they couldn't pay.....all I did was give them a good, stern talkin'- to, your honorship.

Cratchit: Did that help?

Archibald: Not really. They somehow encountered a coincidental catastrophic series of unfortunate"events"

Cratchit: And you had nothing to do with those "events"?

Archibald: No, sir! Nothin'!

Cratchit: Then...who did?

Archibald: I got no idea...no idea whatsoever. Maybe they was all just clumsy casualties of fate! Slices of life, so to speak...ya' know, Cratchit?

Cratchit: All right...Archibald....have it your way. If you're not going to talk, you're going to jail for a long, long time!

Mia: Please....Mr. Cratchit....my father is just a paper-pusher. He's done nothing wrong. He's being threatened by some very bad people. You've got to believe me!

Archibald: I'm sorry, Miss. I have no sympathy for you or your father. If he won't name names...he's going to prison,

Mia: But what about me? What about my sister? How will we live without our father?

Judge: How about that Mr. Archibald?

Archibald: I'm sorry sweetheart. I'm so sorry. Trust me, your honorship, their fate would be far badder if I squealed! Far, far badder!

Mia and Sophia cry.

Cratchit: Your honor. The prosecution rests.

Judge: Are you sure, Archibald? (Archibald bows his head) Very well, then. It is the opinion of this court, that Charles Archibald is guilty of the crimes with which he is charged. He is ordered to appear before me tomorrow morning at 10 am for sentencing.

Mia and Sophia go to Archibald in tears. They hug. Mia flashes a spiteful look at Cratchit as they exit.

Mia: (moving to Cratchit) My father is innocent. Do you hear me? *Innocent!* How can you turn your back on a fellow man...at Christmas. (Cratchit walks away)

Song: Anthem of Tim Cratchit

Reveler 1:

*Well, now Lawyer. Cratchit
Heir of Tiny Tim
Ooo, this Lawyer Cratchit
Don't get caught by him*

Reveler 2:

*He's a spiteful fellow
And he's less than kind
Ooo this Lawyer Cratchet
He's no friend of mine.*

Ensemble

*Many years and generations gone since that young tyke
With his crutch he stole the hearts of boys and girls alike
Tim was happy all his days and sired a fine large brood
His name was passed to every son as every year ensued.*

Revelers 1 & 2

*But some evil spirit
Stole our Tiny Tim
And this Lawyer Cratchit's*

all that's left of him

Ensemble

all that's left of him

all that's left of him (echo)

Scene 1 A (following)—Trixie and Mugsy in one

Trixie: Oh Mugsy, Archibald kept his trap shut...just like you said.

Mugsy: (Grunts)

Trixie: That's great news isn't it? Mugsy...I mean...isn't it? I ...I...I was so afraid he was gonna spill the beans, especially when those two bratty kids of his started whimpering and whining. But..old Archie stood his ground, didn't he Mugs....didn't he?

Mugsy: (Grunts)

Trixie: Oh...you're so exearsperating, sometimes!

Mugsy: (An angry grunt. Exits)

Trixie: Ok...ok...I'm sorry. You know, Mugsy Aloysius DeStefanowicz!...sometimes I think you take me for granted.... You better be careful. I'm not gonna be an executive assistant all my life. I got dreams, Pal. I got big dreams.

Give me a break ...Give me a break.

I've still got dreams and a plan I'm gonna make.

Give me a break ...don't deal me out

My skills are solid ...and my loyalty's devout

(Mugsy re-enters and grunts)

Grunt all you want, but you need me, have no doubt.

Scene 2 - Cratchit's Home

Cratchit's wife (Emily), daughters (Martha and Belinda) as well as son, (Peter) are seated at the dinner table. They've been waiting for a while. Cratchit enters.

Emily: There you are! I was starting to give up on you. Is everything all right? (She rises to the kitchen)

Cratchit: Yes....of course. (He sits at the table....opening his briefcase, reviewing legal papers.) I was held up listening to the desperate pleas of a whiny little girl in court.

Martha: What was she whining about?

Cratchit: Oh...it was nothing...nothing at all.

Belinda: Well, I'm glad you're finally home. We can't be late for rehearsal tonight.

Cratchit: (annoyed) You have to go *again*? You just went last night. In fact....you've had to go every night this week.

Peter: It's tech-week Dad. The show is tomorrow!

Cratchit: What nonsense! What a horrendous waste of time!

(Kids respond— "It's fun." "It's not a waste of time" "All my friends are there")

Emily: Oh...stop...Tim. They all enjoy it so much. It's Christmas!

Cratchit: Christmas.... *Blah!* You should be devoting more time to your school work.....and helping your mother around the house.

Martha: But I play the little drummer girl in the show. You're coming to see me aren't you, Dad?

Belinda: And I play an angel. I sing a solo and I have 42 lines.

Peter: And...I'm a skunk!..... I'm a Christmas skunk named Bunk!

Cratchit: *A Christmas skunk!* Well, that's just perfect. No! I will not be attending such nonsense. Christms Skunk! Blah!

The kids continue ad lib responses. Belinda knocks over her cup into Cratchit's open briefcase. Grape juice soaks Cratchit's legal papers. Cratchit explodes. Kids laugh.

Cratchit: Belinda! (Everyone sobers) Look what you've done. I need this work for court. You've *ruined* it! You are 13 years old going on 2.

Belinda: I'm sorry, Dad. It was an accident!

Cratchit: It was *not* an accident. It was *carelessness*! You are irresponsible and totally unreliable. Go to your room!

Belinda: What!? No....but rehearsal...

Cratchit: You will not be attending any rehearsal tonight. You will not be an Angel for any one of your 42 lines. You are grounded...indefinitely.

Belinda: But...the show...

Cratchit: Go....*immediately*.

Belinda exits fighting back tears.

Everyone is stunned. Emily regains composure.

Emily: Well...(To Martha and Peter) You two wait for me in the car. I'll be right there. (They exit) What is wrong with you?!

Cratchit: She has to learn some responsibility!

Emily: It was an accident. It could just as easily have happened to anyone...even me! Would you have sent *me* to my room too?

Cratchit: If you were careless about my property? Yes, I would.

Emily: (Stunned) She's 13 years old. She has a good part in this play. She loves every minute of it.

Cratchit: If that play is so important to her, she's in worse shape than I thought. It's a waste of her time and mine.

Emily: *Yours*? You've have had nothing to do with it. You haven't driven them to rehearsal. You haven't helped them learn their lines. You haven't shown any interest....and she's so proud. She wants to make you proud.

Cratchit: I have half a mind to pull all of them *out* of this monstrosity. It's made them smart-mouthed and impertinent.

Emily: It's given them confidence and a sense of capability.

Cratchit: *Blah!* They're my children and they'll do what I say!

Emily: Tim! Stop! Don't be like this. They're my children too. They're *our* children.
(Car horn SFX) I have to get them to the school. But we're not finished talking about this.

Cratchit: Fine! But I suggest you get your head straight in the meantime.

Emily: (Beat) You're an idiot! (She exits)

Cratchit: (Calling after her). I'm an idiot?! Well, you're.... You're.... (He gestures at her in anger. He sits at the table with his grape stained papers and begins working..occasionally muttering varied ad libs.... "idiot".... "Rehearsals"...*"Christmas skunk"*)

MUSIC- Ensemble humming

(Light change— Belinda appears, unseen by Cratchit... cautiously maneuvers around the table and sneaks out.)

Solitude

Cratchit: (Voiceover)

*Why am I here all by myself
Yearning for understanding
Working all day. Fighting the fray
Downhearted guilt expanding*

(Live w/ensemble)

*Not asking much I meet the test
Yet nothing seems to matter
Children and wife don't seem to care
Forcing my pride to shatter.*

Ensemble

Forcing his pride to shatter.

Scene 3 - Play rehearsal

Song: We Wish You A Merry Christmas (or a similar public domain Christmas song)

Youth Ensemble

All:

*We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year!*

*Good tidings we bring
To you and your kin;
Good tidings for Christmas
And a Happy New Year!*

Now bring us some figgy

Accompaniment continues but the second chorus falls silent—obviously something is wrong—Harrison Stanley, the director, calls out-

Harrison: Whoa! Cut! Cut! What's happening— Where's our angel— Where's Belinda? Come on people! The show is tomorrow! Where is Belinda!

Martha: She isn't here.

Harrison: Well, I can see that! The question is...*why* isn't your sister here?

Martha: Well, we were sitting around the table talking about the show when she—

Peter: She's sick.

Harrison: Hmm....she seemed fine in school today.

Peter: No, she's really sick. She threw up all over my mother's head.

Martha:(Caught off guard) Uhm...yes she's really sick.(helplessly affirming).....all over Mom's head. *EEyuch!*

Harrison: Well, that's too bad....I guess we'll have to replace her in her part.

Martha: No! No, don't do that. I'm sure she'll be better tomorrow!

Harrison: Hmm....no I can't take a chance. Clementine...

Clementine: Yes, Mr. Stanley.

Harrison: I want you to take over for Belinda.

Clementine: Oh, of course... Thank you Mr. Stanley. My mother will be very happy. She said you should have given me that part to begin with. (She starts singing the song)

Now bring us some. figgy pudding—

Belinda rushes in at break neck speed.

Belinda: *I'm here!* I'm here! Sorry I'm late. My...My.... mother couldn't find her false teeth.

(Kids laugh)

Harrison: (Incredulous) Okay.... Well, we're all glad you're back, Belinda. Let's take the second chorus of *We Wish You*... right on Belinda's entrance. Uh...Never mind, Clementine sorry.

Thanks anyway.

Clementine: My mother is not going to be happy about this. And neither am I. (She stomps her foot)

Song: *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*

Belinda:

*Good tidings we bring to you and your kin,
Good tidings for Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

*We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year!*

All:

*We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year!*

Scene 4- Home of Archibald

Mia, Sophia and Archibald are exuberantly engaged in a video racing car game.

Mia: Watch out for that truck!

Sophia: Aaah! Dad, you're in my way....move over!

Archibald: For what reason should I move over. Huh?

Sophia: Because you're blocking me! *MOVE OVER!*

Archibald: Sorry Sweetie! Such is 'da way of 'da world.

Mia: Watch out Sophia...you're gonna crash....look out! Look out!

Crashing SFX

Archibald: Holy Mackerel! Looks like I win...*again!*

Sophia: That's because *you cheat!*

Mia: *You sure do!*

Archibald: Who? Me?!! Oh, c'mon. Let your old Dad have a little fun. After all....(he tosses a throw pillow at Sophia, who quickly returns. The three engage in a mini-pillow fight.)

Music: *Pillow Fight*

Mia: "After all" is right...after all... tonight is your last night of freedom.

Sophia: And your last night here with us. (She tears up)

Archibald: (He hugs her) Oh come on now, Sophia. Your Pops don't think it's gonna be that bad. That old judge might just give me a break....on account'a it's Christmas, ya know?!

Mia: He didn't look to me like a "Merry Christmas" kinda guy.

Archibald: Hey...everybody has a warm heart at Christmas.

Sophia: What's gonna happen to us Dad?

Archibald: Things are gonna be just like normal. You'll get up every day and go to school. You'll play with your friends. Your big sister here is gonna take good care of you.

Mia: Of course, I'll do my best. But how are we gonna survive? How are we gonna pay the rent and buy food. Don't forget, I have school too. I was going to start looking at colleges. That's out now, right?

Archibald: Hmm...yeah....I guess that's out for now, Kitten, but-

Mia: For now? What if you go to jail for 10 years.... or 20? What's gonna happen to us?

Archibald: I told you. Every Monday morning, you'll find an envelope underneath the flowerpot on the front porch. That envelope will be full of cash for your weekly expenses. I got it all covered.

Mia: *Cash under a flower pot!* (She moves to him) Don't you hear how insane that sounds? (Walking away from him) Dad...please...tell that lawyer what he wants to know.

Sophia: Daddy, please! *Please!*

Archibald: I can't girls. You've got to trust me on this. If I was to squeal....(He winces)all of us would be in deep trouble.

Mia: But-

Archibald: *Trust me!*

Mia: Okay. I trust you.

Sophia: Me too.

Archibald: Listen....I've made some mistakes....some whoppers. I admit that. But I sincerely love you'se two honey bunches....and I always will. You know that right? (Both girls nod) And I truly believe that things will turn out all right in the end.

SONG - That's The Way of 'Da World

Archibald:

*Sometimes life throws you off guard
This and that all seem so hard
Easy just to pitch the towel
Whine and moan, complain and growl*

*But don't do it... stay the course
Just when things could not seem worse
Gusting winds begin to blow
All good things commence to show*

*That's the way of the world, Sweetie
That's the way of the world
Up and down and side to side
Everyone abides-*

*Good times, bad times even strides
That's the way of the world*

Mia:

*If you say we'll be okay
I trust every word you say*

Sophia:

*It's so hard to say goodbye
I know I'm too old to cry*

(Reality hits all three)
Musical interlude

All three:

*That's the way of the world, Sweetie (Daddy)
That's the way of the world
Up and down and side to side
Everyone abides-
Good times, bad times even strides
That's the way of the world*

Girls fall asleep

Archibald:

That's the way of the world
(Looks up to the higher power. Gestures "Please, help!")

Scene 5- Cratchit Home

Cratchit is still working at the dining room table. He occasionally blots grape juice from his legal papers. Emily enters coldly. Awkward silence. Cratchit breaks the ice.

Cratchit: Any problems getting the kids to the rehearsal?

Emily: No. Not really.

Cratchit: What do you mean, "not really?"

Emily: They are very upset....with you.

Cratchit: Oh, really!? Well, I think I just might manage to survive that!

Emily:and so am *I*. You went totally ballistic on Belinda for no reason.

Cratchit: *No reason!* Look at these papers. (Holds up the grape stained papers)

Emily: ...*it was an accident!* You have been out of your head lately, Tim. I'm worried about you. Maybe you need to see somebody and get some help.

Cratchit: *I need to see someone!* You mean a shrink? Oh, well that's just great. Now I've heard it all.

Emily: (Moves to him) Tim-

Cratchit: Stay away from me. Not only you are you disrespecting me in front of my children.... you think *I'm* crazy. Deny it, Em!(screams) *You think I'm crazy!!!!!!*

Emily: Tim....look at yourself. You have to calm down. The whole neighborhood will hear you.

Cratchit: Calm down? *YOU CALM DOWN!*

Emily: If you don't care about the neighbors....Belinda can hear you. She's just in the next room.

Cratchit: (He has forgotten about Belinda) Oh...right...

Emily: I'm sure she's already upset about missing her rehearsal. And now hearing your tirade isn't going to help at all. Let me get her. You can apologize.

Cratchit: *I HAVE NO REASON WHATSOEVER TO APOLOGIZE!.....* I will....explain.

Emily: All right...explain.

Emily exits to retrieve Belinda. Cratchit picks up his legal pad and paces.

Emily: (Off stage) Tim...she's gone!

Cratchit: What?

Emily runs onstage

Emily: She's gone, Tim. She left me this note.

Cratchit: Let me see that. (takes note and reads) "Dear Mom, Don't worry. I'm all right. I snuck out to go to rehearsal while Dad was absorbed in sending people to jail. I'm not going to let my fellow cast members down just because I accidentally spilled some grape juice. Mom, Dad is a

jackass. He's always been a jackass. But now he's the biggest jackass in the world. Love you, Belinda (Cratchit pauses to reflect, then angrily crumples note)

Emily: I'm sure she didn't mean that, Tim.

Cratchit: I don't care if she meant it or not. It's a sign of the disrespect for me that you've instilled in them.

Emily: Me!?-

Cratchit: I'm going down to that school. And I'm pulling all three of my children out of that stupid play. If she thought I was a jackass before....she ain't seen nothing yet. (He exits.)

Emily: Tim... (She follows him out)

Scene 6: PLAY REHEARSAL

Bunk The Skunk

Full Ensemble

Here's the song of Bunk the skunk

Peter

I was born on Christmas day.

Full Ensemble

*Made him kinda mad and also kinda sad
Caused his tail to lift and spray (SFX)*

Full Ensemble

Bunky's Mom, she felt so bad

Peter

My birthday, was overlooked.

Full Ensemble

*Brothers had a party every single year
Bunky's day was double-booked..*

Bunk the skunk

Bunk the skunk

Peter

My birthday was on Christmas day.

Full Ensemble

Bunk the skunk

Bunk the skunk

“Happy Birthday” did no one say.

Bunk, he went to visit Joe

Joe, a goose of skill in flight

Peter

“I need a ride to see Santa Claus

Please give me a lift. All right?”

Joe

“Okay Pal”

Full Ensemble

.....and in a snap

(Peter & Joe lift off)

Northward bound they quickly flew

Santa, he was nice and sympathized the plight

Of Bunk and his sad birthday blues.

Joe:

Santa, he gave Bunk a tour

Reindeer were a big delight.

Santa flashed his eyes. He had a big surprise

One to make Bunk’s future bright.

Peter:

Here’s a secret no one knows

Reindeer need some help to fly

Santa’s sled is rigged with tanks of special gas

Helping deer on Christmas night.

Bunk the skunk

Bunk the skunk

His birthday was on Christmas day.

Bunk the skunk

Bunk the skunk

“Happy Birthday” did no one say.

Full Ensemble

*Santa's tanks were just half full
Gas supplies had all run dry
Santa asked of Bunk:*

Santa:

"Pal, can you lend a hand"

Full Ensemble

Bunk's reply was,

Peter:

"Sure I'll try"

Full Ensemble

*Tail ascended in the night
Gas he sprayed with all his might (SFX)
Winter air turned gold and soon it was foretold
Santa's deer they took to flight*

(Dance Break)

Peter:

*From then on the story goes
Santa never left the Pole
But for, by his side, our Bunk he sat with pride
Spraying his bombast of gold (SFX)*

Full Ensemble

*Bunk, he was a hero now
Birthdays, they were so much fun
Everybody smiled and ran to say hello
"Happy Day" from everyone*

Peter:

*Bunk the skunk
Bunk the skunk
My birthday was on Christmas day.*

Full Ensemble

*Bunk the skunk
Bunk the skunk
"Happy Birthday" hip-hip- hooray!
"Happy Birthday" hip-hip- hooray!*

Harrison: All right gang. Not bad. Not bad at all. We're definitely getting into the swing of things. Stacy...make sure you're open to the audience when you sing your solo. You're sounding great....but I want to make sure everyone can see you. Okay...why don't we take it once more from the top....then we can probably call it a night.

Kids reassemble onstage....

Full Ensemble

Here's the song of Bunk the skunk

Peter:

I was born on Christmas day.

Full Ensemble

Made him kinda mad and also kinda sad

Caused his tail to lift and spray (SFX)

Cratchit: (Barging onto the stage) All right! All right! Stop this. Stop this nonsense right now.

Harrison: Hold on. Mr. Cratchit...Tim....what are you doing? We are in the middle of rehearsal.

Cratchit: I couldn't care less about what you're in the middle of. I'm taking my children home.. *Now!* Peter...Martha...come along. (They fall out of formation and approach Cratchit.) And of course...Belinda....my little Angel.(She freezes in place. Cratchit moves to her) Let's go! (She turns away.) Your acting days are over....as are yours (referring to Peter and Martha)

Harrison: What?! You're pulling them out?

Cratchit: I am indeed.

Harrison: But what about the show? It's tomorrow. They're important members of our cast.

Cratchit: Oh, please...Harrison, how important could any of this nonsense be? Besides, it's not my problem..(sarcastic) *sir*. In fact....I don't think anyone cares about you or your little play. Good night (He exits with his very unhappy children)

Emily: I'm so sorry, Harrison. (She starts out)

Harrison: (Looks up at Emily slowly). Emily (steps close to her)....Emily!

A moment. Emily is shaken. Cratchit watches this.

Emily: I'm...I'm so sorry.

(Emily backs away then exits after her family.)

Harrison: Kids....what we're doing *is* important.... Remember, "the show must go on". And you're all doing an terrific job. This is going to be the best Christmas show ever, or my name isn't Harrison Stanley. Plan on being here by six tomorrow night. You are definitely ready for your audience.

Clementine: Mr. Stanley...I could play all three parts. (Harrison starts walking off. Clementine barrages him as he exits) My mother made multiple costumes for me just in case something like this were to happen. "Be prepared" ...that's my mother's motto. Aren't we lucky, Mr. Stanley? Aren't we lucky?

Harrison: (Very unenthused) Lucky.

Scene 7- Cratchit Home

Emily, Martha, Peter and Belinda enter solemnly. The kids are obviously angry.

Martha: I've never been so totally embarrassed in my life.

Peter: I really wanted to be "Bunk the Skunk." Why can't I be the skunk?

Belinda: How could you let him humiliate us like that? He is a total jerk.

Emily: Now wait just a minute young lady. That "total jerk" is your father.

Cratchit: (Entering) It's really cold out there. I had to turn the heat on in the garage. I don't want the car to freeze up.

Belinda: Of course...you're more concerned for your stupid car than you are about us.

Emily: Belinda, you know that's not true.

Cratchit: You see? *That* impertinence is what I'm talking about.

Emily: Now wait. I don't think she's being impertinent. I think she would like an explanation. We all would.

Cratchit: I don't have to justify myself to you or anyone. This is my house and what I say....goes. You will *not* be in that play....not *any* of you. I have made my decision and that's the end of the discussion.

(Kids start exiting. Belinda turns back)

Belinda: You're not just a jerk....you're a *repulsive* jerk. I *hate* you!

(Cratchit tenses and steps toward her.)

Emily: Go to bed kids. We'll talk about this in the morning.

Kids exit

Emily: Tim. What's going on with you?

Cratchit: What's going on with *me*? What's going on with *you*?! Belinda blatantly disobeyed me and snuck out. Total disrespect! And you're taking her side?

Emily: No....I just felt she deserved a reasonable explanation from her father. Pulling them out of the play is an extreme punishment. Don't you think?

Cratchit: She disobeyed me!... And she called me a jerk. The punishment fits the crime.

Emily: *Fits the crime?!!* You know something Tim. While you were in the garage, I scolded Belinda for calling you that name.

Cratchit: Well, thank you.

Emily: But now I've changed my mind. She's right. You *are* a jerk... repulsive to be sure. In fact....you are a..... prodigious, ponderous and pathetic, repulsive jerk! Good night! (She exits. Cratchit follows. Before he can exit, Emily re-enters with a pillow and a blanket) *Good night!*

Cratchit takes the bedclothes and shakes his head

Cratchit: Good night. (He steps to couch and prepares to spend the night.)

Scene 8- Cratchit Home (Midnight— SFX 12 chimes)

Cratchit is tossing, turning and snoring on the couch. The ghost of (Tiny)Tim Cratchit appears in a puff of smoke or some similarly cheesy effect. He's quite mobile, but still walks with a slight limp and carries a cane. He's in *Christmas Carol* period dress. He steps to the couch and shakes his head disapprovingly.

TT: Twit! (He walks around inspecting the room. Picks up a game controller. He manipulates it and we hear the digital sound effects, which sets him back.) Hmm! Gnarly. (He picks up and

examines a Barbie Doll. He finds Peter's water pistol.) Aha!! This'll do us. (He moves toward Cratchit and unloads)

Cratchit: Hey what's going on?! Stop it! Stop it! Who are you? How did you get in here? (Cratchit picks up his phone....repeatedly calls 911- No response) What have you done to my phone?

TT: Forget it Guv'nor... That phone won't work for you any more. You're in my world now.

Cratchit: What!? Then again I say, "Who the devil are you?"

TT: Funny you should ask. I go by the moniker of Timothy Cratchit.

Cratchit: Blah!that's my name... Timothy Cratchit, Esquire! (TT squirts him again) Stop that! Stop it! I demand an explanation.

TT: (Another squirt) You are not in a position to *demand* anything? All right then. Simply put old sot. I am Timothy Cratchit the first. (Cratchit looks incredulous) That's right. I'm your Great, Great, Great, Great, Great Grandfather "How do you like them jelly babies!"

Cratchit: But that's crazy...how can that be?

TT: Well, let's put it this way. You're being officially haunted...by me.

Cratchit: Haunted!? Nonsense!

TT: (Squirt) I suggest you believe what's happening! And....believe it's for your own good. (Squirt)

Cratchit: (Towling his face) All right....I'll bite. How is this for my own good.?

TT: Don't you realize what a total pillock you've become lately? —Nasty to your wife, nasty to your kids, nasty to your kids' teacher. And a total prat in your courtroom! — And for absolutely no good reason whatsoever.

Cratchit: Again, I call *nonsense*! My children have become belligerent and disrespectful. Their teacher... that dippy play director is obnoxious, arrogant and a "know it all" And my wife..... Look you....you leave Emily out of this!

TT: Sure...just like you leave her out.... of *everything*. She's sick of it, buddy. And if you don't watch out, you're gonna lose her.

Cratchit: How dare you! (He charges TT— Squirt)

TT: Look, you sod. You're sinking fast. I'm your last chance to redeem yourself. Let's get going.

Cratchit: Going? Where?

TT: Never mind. Take a hold of my cane.

Cratchit: What?

TT: Take a hold of my cane.

(Cratchit hesitates, then skeptically takes the cane)

TT: Cor! Here we go!

SFX and Light effects

Scene 9- A school room ...long ago

Cratchit: Where are we?

TT: This is your 5th grade classroom at Dayton Elementary school...December 1996.

Cratchit: Dayton....yes.... I remember....barely.

Kids are standing in a line getting ready to practice reciting a Christmas Poem for their Pageant. Young Cratchit is seated to one side reading a book. He spots Emily and calls her over to him.

Young Cratchit: Emily! Emily, come here.

Young Emily: (moving to him) What is it. I can't talk now. We're getting ready to rehearse.

Young Cratchit: Oh, *Blah!* Don't bother with that nonsense. I'm not. It's a waste of time.

Young Emily: I like it. It's fun. C'mon and join us.

Young Cratchit: No thank you. Listen. My parents are taking me to the movies tomorrow night and they said I could invite friend to come along. What do you say?

Young Emily: (smiling) Oh, thank you Tim. Wait...tomorrow night? Tomorrow night is the Christmas Pageant.

Young Cratchit: I know. So what. Wouldn't you rather come to the movies with me?

Young Emily: Tim. I couldn't miss the pageant. I just couldn't.

Young Cratchit: Oh *please!* I'm not going and neither should you.

Young Emily: Tim, it's Christmas.

Young Cratchit: Emily!

Young Emily: No, Tim. Thank you for inviting me. But I'm busy tomorrow. (She walks away from him)

Miss Crabtree: (Clapping her hands) Alright children. Let's try it again...right from the beginning. Emily...

Young Emily steps forward on the line.

Young Emily (singing):

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
and mild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to all!

Miss Crabtree: That's fine, Emily. Very good..... Michelle...

Young Emily steps back
Michelle steps forward on the line

Michelle (singing):

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries... (pronounces like french fries)

Miss Crabtree: Hold it. That's (pronouncing correctly) "belfries" Michelle

Michelle:

Oh, ok.
And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to all!

Miss Crabtree: Good, Michelle.... Robert...

Michelle steps back

Robert steps forward on the line. He is very nervous. Each word he says is a struggle.

Robert (singing): (wiggling as if he has to go to the bathroom...singing at a barely audible volume and at a jack-rabbit rate)

‘Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,——
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to all!

Miss Crabtree: Robert that was a very good effort, Robert. But we couldn’t hear you or understand you. Can you say it a little louder and a little slower?

Robert: I don’t think I can. I’m very nervous, Miss Crabtree. Can’t you let someone else do it? Please!

Miss Crabtree: I suppose so, Robert. If you’re that nervous.

Robert: I really am. I’m sorry Miss Crabtree. Can I just pull the curtain instead?

Miss Crabtree: Oh, dear. Well...of course Robert. You may pull the curtain.

Robert: Thank you...(he runs off. Other kids laugh.)

Miss Crabtree: Now don’t laugh at Robert, boys and girls. At least he tried. But we now need a replacement for him. Timothy...won’t please help us here?

Young Cratchit: (Standing. Very obnoxious) *No, Miss Crabtree! No!* I told you before.... I don’t want to have anything to do with this Christmas stuff...and you can’t make me.

Miss Crabtree: Very well Timothy. If that’s the way you feel.

Young Cratchit: *That’s the way I feel!* (He sits)

Young Emily: How about Harrison Stanley, Miss Crabtree? He doesn’t have a part in the play, Maybe he could recite the last verse.

Miss Crabtree: It's a good thought Emily. But Harrison has such a speech problem. I don't want to embarrass him.

Young Emily: Harrison. Would you be willing to recite the last verse of the poem in the play.

Harrison is very shy and shows it. He hesitates.

Young Emily: Please Harrison, give it a try. I can help you.

Young Cratchit watches with great interest...as does Old Cratchit.

Harrison: O- K-Kay, Emily. I'll t-try....if you'll h-help me.

Young Emily: Oh, thank you. Of course I'll help you, Harrison. (She takes his hand.)

Harrison begins...he struggles. Emily joins him and together they get through it.

Harrison: T-Till r-ringing, s-singing on its w-way,
The-the-the

Emily and Harrison together:

Till ringing, singing on it's way
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to all!

Miss Crabtree: Very good, Harrison. Excellent. (Harrison smiles and kisses Emily's cheek. Emily shows surprise. Young Cratchit rises in anger. Old Cratchit also reacts. Then Miss Crabtree leads kids to sing the final verse together) All right, boys and girls. Lets all try to repeat the last verse again as a song.

All kids together (singing)

*Till ringing, singing on it's way
The world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to all!*

All the kids (except Young Cratchit) smile and laugh. Emily hugs Harrison. Young Cratchit scowls and breaks his pencil.

TT: See that? You were a tosser even then.

Cratchit: I don't know. I still think making such fuss for Christmas is a waste. I thought so then and I think so now..

TT: Obviously. But Emily didn't think so. She ditched your movie offer didn't she?

Cratchit: Yes...she did. But she finally came around. When we grew up she married me.

TT: Yes. I guess she did.

Cratchit: I got the girl in the end, Gramps. And she's been happy ever since.

TT: Oh. Is that why I found you sleeping on your couch? Face the facts, Cratchit! You've been an unpleasant fellow your whole life. Miraculously, you have a wife and children who adore you. But...you're pushing it pal. It's not too late but you must act quickly. You've got to change!

Cratchit: (A thoughtful beat...then) Blah!

SFX and Light FX-

Cratchit: (As in a dream. SFX) Blah!....Blah!....Blah!

Scene 10- Archibald Home

TT and Cratchit are in the home of Archie Archibald

Seated on the couch is Trixy, alongside Mugsy. Mia and Sophia are on hands and knees scrubbing the floor.

TT: Calm down you twit. I'm here to help you figure it out.

Cratchit: Don't call me a twit. (looking around) Where are we? I don't know this place. And who are these people?

TT: The children scrubbing the floor are Archie Archibald's kids.

Cratchit: Who the devil is Archie Archibald?

TT: The man you're about to send to prison for 20 years. Shh! Watch.

Trixy: Aren't you brats finished with that floor yet? Hurry up...I need you to iron and fold my laundry. My unmentionables are very delicate need special attention.

Mia: Yes, Ma'am. Hey, Trixie...can't we take a little break. Sophia and I both have homework to do.

Trixy: First of all ...it's *Aunt* Trixie. I told ya' a hundred times. As long as your Pop's in the big house....I'm your *Aunt* Trixie...Got it?

Mia: Yes, Ma'am... *Aunt* Trixie...can't we take a little break?

Trixy: Oh, you wanna take a little break?! I'll give you a break....right out on the street. You take a break when I tell you to...not before. Got it?!

Sophia:(under her breath) Whatever you say, you old battleaxe!

Trixy: What!? What did you call me? (She stands Mia up, grabs her by the ears and is in her face) What did you call me?

Mia: She called you an*attractive.... lass* She said *attractive lass*...of course....because she wants to grow up to be as attractive as you.

Trixy: Is that what you said?

Sophia: Yup...Isure did.

Trixy: Aw...how sweet. Did you hear that Mugsy? Little Sophia wants to grow up to be an attractive lass just like me. Ain't that sweet?

Mugsy: (Grunts)

Trixy: Gee....I always wanted to be a role model. Anyways....(she inspects the floor) Did you two scrub all the corners.

Mia and Sophia: Yes Ma'am.

Trixy: Okay. It looks pretty good. Now Mugsy and me is gettin' a little hungry, so get yourselves into the kitchen and warm us up a couple a' turkey potpies. (They start out) Oh...and there are some left-over fish sticks in the fridge....you can each have one of those for dinner.

Sophia: But we just had a fish stick last night. Can't we have something else?

Trixy: (wagging her finger) Why you ungrateful little.... Don't you know about all the kids starvin' in China? Hey, you should thank your lucky stars that I and your Uncle Mugsy is taking such good care of you. It's a big sacrifice on both of us. Right Uncle Mugsy?

Mugsy: (Grunts)

Mia: Our Dad didn't say anything about you and (sarcastic) *Uncle* Mugsy. He told us there would be money left *for us* under the flower pot on the porch every week....and that *I* would take care of things while he was away.

Trixy: (panicky and in a screechy high voice) *Flower pot?* What flower pot!!?? Well, he must'a been lyin' to you sweet cheeks. 'Cause I sure don't know nothin' 'bout no money under no flower pot. Me and your Uncle Mugsy is takin' care of you outta the goodness of our hearts. (Threatening) *Get it!*

Mia and Sophia: Yes, ma'am.

Trixy: Good. Mugsy and me'll be out in the dinin' room. Get goin' on them turkey potpies. We're hungry. Right Mugsy.

Mugsy: (Grunt)

Trixie and Mugsy exit.

Sophia: (breaks into tears) Oh, Mia.

Mia hugs her

Song "Mia And Sophia"

Mia:

Please don't cry Sophia

I'll take care of you.

Just hold tight...together we'll get through

It looks dark Sophia

But pretty soon you'll see

We'll find our way, and be okay

Just stay close to me

Sophia:

Dad made us a promise

Said we'd be okay

But he's gone—I miss him everyday.

Mia:

Dad will not forget us

He'll come home you'll see

Both:

We'll find our way, and be okay

Just stay close to me

Sophia: When will Daddy come home to us?

Mia: Not for a long time. ...unless they let him out for good behavior.

Sophia: What'll we do in the meantime?

Mia: I wish I knew, Sis. I wish I knew. C'mon.....(imitates Trixy) "lets make some turkey pot pies."

Sophia: (Grunts)

Mia and Sophia exit laughing

TT: How about that?

Cratchit: But that's awful. How can that be? Where are the child welfare people?

TT: You got me, Thistlebrain.. Looks like those two fell through the cracks of your system.

Cratchit: That's nonsense.

TT: Sure is. Hey....you're a big time lawyer. Why don't you do something about it.

Cratchit: Me?! I'm a criminal attorney. I can't do anything! I had nothing to do with this.

TT: Oh, right. You only sent their father to the box for twenty years.

Cratchit: That man refused to name names.

TT: So because he wouldn't rat out the big wig...you made him pay the price!

Cratchit: Yes.....but....I didn't think....

TT: Of course you didn't think..... because you're a *twit*!

Cratchit: Stop calling me that.

TT: Hey, Buddy!.... If it looks like a twit....and talks like a twit....(he takes a whiff) and smells like a twit... Guess what?

Cratchit: Oh...why don't you go back where you came from. And....what the heck is a twit anyway. Why don't you speak American?

TT: Hey, I wasn't born here. I was born in Jolly olde England way back in 1843. Them was different times, bloak.

Song— Different Times

TT:

*In my childhood life was bad
Working class..we lived real sad
Few hot shots owned all the land
Rest of us walked hat in hand.*

Cratchit:

*If you worked and tried your best
You could be rich like the rest
It's my guess that all your clan
-Lazy clods to every man*

Both:

*Different times, different times.
We grew up in different times
Upstairs Downstairs 'twas no doubt
Were you in or were you out?*

TT:

*No, old prat 'twas how you're born
It's called called "class" - your life was sworn
No escaping...no advance
'Ever poor —you had no chance.*

Cratchit::

*You are overstating sir
 Although rich you never were
 You weren't destined to be broke
 No ambition, that's no joke*

TT:

*(Maybe a rap)
 Yes, Your Lordship! No, Your Lordship!
 Tell us where to go, Your Lordship!
 Make us grill your cheese, Your Lordship!
 Mop my sleeve when you sneeze, Your Lordship!
 Give us a kick, in the knees Your Lordship!
 Give us a kick, if you please, Your Lordship!
 Oh! That was good, Your Lordship!*

Both with ensemble:

*Different times, different times.
 We grew up in different times
 Upstairs Downstairs 'twas no doubt
 Were you in or were you out?*

SCENE 11- (Dream FX) School auditorium

Martha, Belinda and Peter seem a little older now. Emily appears to be in a close *friendship* with Harrison. Emily is choreographing the dance break in “Tides”— all the kids are in it.

Dance Break

TT and Cratchit enter during the song.

Emily: All right....that's much better, kids. It's looking good. Remember to keep your steps sharp.

Belinda: Mom, you're sure Dad is coming to the show, right?

Emily: Well, he said he was...but as you well know....what your father says and does can be two different things altogether

Martha: Mom, please don't talk about Dad like that.

Peter: Yeah...if he said he's coming....he's coming.

(Emily hugs her three children.)

Emily: I hope so. I really hope so.

Harrison: Okay! Yeah...it's looking all right....But a few of you are still straggling. Remember... someone in the audience is always watching you. I just need a little more energy. Now let's do it again.

(Moans from kids)

Emily: Harrison...uh..Mr. Stanley.....they're exhausted. I think you need to give them a short break.

Harrison: All right. All right *Mrs. Cratchit*. Take five, kids.

Kids exit....but the Cratchit kids linger in the shadows
Harrison takes Emily by the hand and leads her to far side of the stage.

Harrison: (Taking both of her hands) Now then, Mrs. Cratchit, I think we need to discuss the show's progress at the café on main street as soon as rehearsal is over.

Emily: Harrison, I can't. I need to get my kids home.

Harrison: So get them home and meet me later.

Emily: But—

Harrison: C'mon, they're old enough to stay by themselves, right? Emily...

Emily: I don't know-

Harrison: Emily, you changed my life....way back in fifth grade...remember?— I was an outcast —no friends, no confidence. But you encouraged me to do better. I owe you a lot Emily.

Emily: Harrison-

Harrison: You are very special to me, Emily.

Emily: (slight hesitation) Harrison, you're sweet...and I do care for you but.....

Harrison: *C'mon*. You've been separated from Tim for over a year now. It's time you moved on.

Emily:...I guess you're right but I'm just not comfortable.

Harrison: Emily....When are you going to face the facts? Timothy doesn't care about you. He doesn't care about his kids. The simple truth is...he doesn't care about anyone but himself. And you know that's true.

Emily: I want with all my heart to believe that's *not* true.

Harrison: Just think about it. And meet me later. (Kids are returning to the stage) All right kids one more time from the top.

Repeat Dance Break in slow motion. Second verse in slow-mo.

Cratchit: That weasel! I'm gonna rearrange his stupid face!

TT: Violence is not the answer old sod.

Cratchit: Oh, yeah....well what would you do?

TT: First of all....is he wrong? Would you attend that show?

Cratchit: Of course not....I can't be bothered

TT: Uh-huh. Well maybe that's the place to start.

Cratchit: What do you mean?

TT: This little show seems to be very important to all the people you supposedly care about.

Cratchit: So what!?

TT: They all want you to be part of it....to be proud of them...to be part of their lives.

Cratchit: Aaehehh!

TT: You need to recall your U-S-of A, history, chum. Listen to your better angels. They'll point you in the right direction.

Cratchit: What?! What the heck are you talking about. Better angels!? All I know is....I can't lose Emily. I need you to help me!

TT: It's very simple. GET YOUR HEAD OUT OF YOUR BUTTOCKS! (Repeat w/echo and sfx)

(Maybe a reverbed Lincoln recitation recording)

Instrumental music under—

Lincoln voice FX: "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

SCENE 12- Cratchit House

Cratchit turning and tossing on couch. He wakes up in a cold sweat. He sits up. Then stands up. Paces the room trying to figure out what's been going on. Peter enters.

Peter: Hi Dad.

Cratchit: Oh.... Hi! How are you, son?

Peter: Fine Dad. Why are you sleeping on the couch?

Cratchit: Uhh...long story. I think I must have had a bad dream. Maybe I was sleep- walking. Are your mother and sisters here too?

Peter: Sure...why wouldn't they be?

Cratchit: (uncomfortable laugh) I'm not sure. Listen son. I'm going to drive you to school today. I want to spend more time with you.

Peter: Thanks, Dad. That's great. But....there's no school today.

Cratchit: No school? Why not?

Peter: Because it's Christmas Day, Dad.

Cratchit: Christmas Day?

Peter: Sure. Of course, we have the play tonight, but today is Christmas.

Cratchit: (To himself) Christmas Day....I thought....I thought... I missed it. (*Angels We Have Heard on High*...after a line or two... (to Peter) Son, I'm due in court in a little while. But tell everyone I'll be home as soon as I can to celebrate with all of you.

*Angels we have on heard high
Sweetly singing 'oer the plains
(Angels, angels, angels we heard on high)
Angels we have on heard high
Sweetly singing 'oer the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains
Gloria in excelsis deo
Gloria in gloria, in excelsis deo
Joy to the world
The Lord has come in glory, in gloria
Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing
Come adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord the newborn King
Gloria in excelsis deo
Gloria (in gloria, in glory)
In excelsis deo
In excelsis deo*

Peter: Okay, Dad. Sure.

Cratchit: And Peter.....do me a favor. (He gives Peter cash from his wallet) Head down to the Farmer's Market and buy two dozen red roses for your mother. Okay?

Peter: Okay... red roses. Got it.

Cratchit: Two dozen, son, two dozen.

Peter: Wow! Two dozen! I'll bet she'll really like them.

Cratchit: Yes...I hope so.

Angels continues during scene change

SCENE 13- Courthouse

Cratchet stands at his podium.....Archibald at his. Mia and Sophia stand to the side.

Judge: Archie Archibald....you have been found guilty of loan sharking, extortion, corporate fraud and criminal conspiracy. Before I pronounce sentence, do you have anything to say for yourself?

Archibald: Yeah, I mean yes, your Honor. I'm just a poor working stiff, your honor. I know I've made mistakes...lots of 'em... and I'm very sorry for all those whatayacall, errors in judgement. But, I have a good heart, sir...and I have two dear daughters who depend on me. I'm asking your honorship to show a little whatayacall ...compassion.

Judge: Well, that's all well and good, Mr. Archibald. But perhaps you should have thought of your daughters before committing those "errors in judgement."

Archibald: You're right sir. You are absolutely right. But I'm begging you....please....give my girls and me a break...please?

Judge: I'm sorry, Archibald....but the law is the law. I hereby sentence you to—

Cratchit: Your honor...may I say something.

Judge: Hurry up, Cratchit...in case hadn't noticed... it's Christmas Day... I've got a family to get home to. (Mia and Sophia weep softly)

Cratchit: As do I, sir. But overnight I've thought a lot about this case. I even had a dream about it. I've come to this conclusion. Mr. Archibald *is* essentially a good person. He does his best to provide for his family. And although he's certainly not perfect, I believe he deserves a second chance. I was recently reminded of our great American President, Abraham Lincoln, who urged us to consider the "better angels" that reside within all of us. I've pledged to pursue that mission in my own life, your honor. And at this wonderful time of year I urge you to do the same.

Judge: *Better angels?! Cratchit have you been nipping at your egg nog this morning?*

Cratchit: Your honor, the prosecution urges that any criminal sentence being considered for Mr. Archibald be suspended.

Judge: Suspended sentence?! Well...that is quite a turn. Hmm! (Beat for reflection) Very well. Based on the recommendation of the prosecution... Mr. Archibald, the intended sentence of 8 years in prison is hereby suspended. *Merry Christmas!* You are free to go. (Mia and Sophia jump for joy)

Archibald: Thank you, your honor. You won't regret it. (He steps to Cratchit) Thank you very much Mr. Cratchit. I'm gonna find my own angel. Merry Christmas, sir!

Cratchit: Merry Christmas, Archibald. Enjoy your family.

Archibald moves to Mia and Sophia for hugs. They begin to joyfully exit together. Mia notices Cratchit starting off)

Mia: (To Archibald and Sophia) You guys go ahead. I'll catch up with you. (Archibald and Sophia exit. Mia moves to Cratchit) Mr. Cratchit.

Cratchit stops and turns to her.

Cratchit: Yes?

Mia: I want to thank you as well. But I also wanted to ask you about those "angels." What's that all about?

Cratchit: Hmm...yeah.. "better angels". Funny thing. I didn't know about them either (pulls speech out of his pocket) until a young friend of mine...that is... an *old* friend...(TT appears on stage) enlightened me about President Lincoln.

Mia: What did President Lincoln know about angels?

Cratchit: Well, when he was elected President, half the people in this country were angry at the other half. Things were very bad. Lincoln was trying to prevent the two halves from going to war with each other. Look at this...(Cratchit hands speech to Mia)- (They hold a freeze)

Song: Better Angels

Ensemble:

*We are not enemies but friends
Through hurtful pain we can't pretend
The strain of our beliefs so deep, so deep
Our tragic heroes we do keep, we keep... right here.*

TT:

*But we forgive and we absolve
With due respect we do resolve
To disagree but in the end, the end
Our human mutuality we defend*

Cratchit and TT : (Cratchit breaks freeze and kneels to Mia)

*Our better angels here and now
Guiding respect and due goodwill
Our better angels won't you please allow*

Kindly affection, tender affection, human affection to fulfill

Cratchit:

And reaching out from North to South

TT:

And to the East and West as well

Cratchit, TT & Mia:

Our better angels touch our souls...our souls

'Till past offenses we do quell..we do quell

ALL:

Our better angels here and now

Guiding respect and due goodwill

Our better angels won't you please allow

All:

Kindly affection,

Mia:

....tender affection,

All:

....human affection to fulfill...to fulfill

Mia: That's so beautiful. "Better Angels" I want to always remember that. Thank you so much Mr. Cratchit. (She hugs him) Merry Christmas.

Cratchit: Merry Christmas, young lady.

Cratchit exits. Trixie and Mugsy enter.

Trixie: Here she is Mugsy....here she is. Here's our little "pumpkin." We couldn't find you dearie. (Mia looks confused)

Mia: Who the heck are you?

Trixie: Oh, well, of course, nobody prob'ly told you. My name is Beatrix Bunderbubble. But all my friends call me Trixie

Mia: Trixie?

Trixie: However, you my dear, must call me *Miss Bunderbubble*...or better yet... *Aunt Trixie*

Mia: *Aunt Trixie*? I don't understand.

Trixie: It's very simple, sweetie. Mugsy here....uh, that is your *Uncle Mugsy*....is a business associate (long "a") of your father. Right Uncle Mugsy?

Mugsy: (Grunt)

Mia: I see. And how do you fit in?

Trixie: Oh...I am your Uncle Mugsy's.....assistant. Right Uncle Mugsy?

Mugsy: (Grunt)

Mia: I still don't understand.

(During the following....Archibald re-enters with Sophia)

Trixie: Okay kid, listen up...and listen good. Me and Mugsy is gonna be in charge of you and your sister as long as your Pop's in the can, see? We're gonna collect all the dough your Father has set aside for you. *And (very sarcastically) we're gonna take real good care of you.* Right Mugs!

Mugsy: (Grunt)

Archibald: Hey Mugs! Hiya Trixie! I guess the news was not conveyed to you'se two in a timely manner. But...I ain't a'goin' to no can.

Trixie: You ain't. You mean you ratted out Mugsy

Mugsy: (Grunt! a bit more energized)

Archibald: No Ma'am. I surely did not. I not no such thing did do. I was true to my word. But I am a totally free man, thanks to some....

Mia: Angels!

Trixie: (Dumb as dirt) Huh?

Archibald: And me and my girls are head'n home to celebrate Christmas. And this just might be the best Christmas ever. (Archibald, Mia and Sophia exit)

Trixie: (Calling after them) But what about me? What about my money? What about *Aunt Trixie*? (She turns to Mugsy.) This is ...b-b-b- balderdash! That judge is a dirty double crosser!

Mugsy: (Grunt)

Trixie: Hey...Mugs. You're still gonna need an assistant, ain't you? You're still gonna need me to.... help you out. You're still gonna provide me with my livin' expenses. Right? Right, Mugs? Right?

Mugsy: Grunt...(exit)

Trixie: Awww....baloney! What's a girl gotta do to get a break around here.

Song: Give Me A Break

Trixie:

*Back when I was eight years old
My Daddy said to me
Be a good girl and work hard
And happy days you'll see.*

*So I tried to do my best
But school was awfully tough
So I quit and went to work
Which also I found rough*

*Every job I had was bad
My bosses were so lame
Always late they docked my pay
And said I was to blame.*

*.
Give me a break ...Give me a break.
I've still got dreams and a living I must make
Give me a break. Don't be a obtuse.
Won't you help me put my many skills up to good use.*

*Then when I got older
Opportunities arose
Though the work was shady
How my bank account did grow*

*Now it seems that well's run dry
I'm back to the beginning
What's a girl to do
To keep this sweet petunia grinning*

*Give me a break ... Give me a break.
I've still got dreams and a living I must make
Give me a break. Don't be obtuse
Won't you help me put my many skills up to good use.*

(Judge cross stage. Trixie follows)(Spoken) Hey judgey ... are you hiring?

I can be your hostess, your secretary or your clerk. Or your book keeper, or your hair stylist or your manicurist I can do anything. Just give me a chance. Huh? Please? Do you need someone to walk your dog? I love animals. Really!.....

Scene 14 Cratchit home

Christmas wrappings are strewn about the room...as are 2 dozen red roses. Peter is on the couch playing with a video game. Cratchit enters and uncomfortably takes in the scene.

Cratchit: Hello, son. Merry Christmas.

Peter: (Distracted from his Switch) Oh....Hi Dad. Merry Christmas

Cratchit: Where is everybody?

Peter:uhh...Mom and the girls are downstairs working on the new dollhouse Santa brought Martha.

Cratchit: I see. Peter, why are the roses scattered all over the floor?

Peter: Huh? ...Oh...yeah... I guess Mom didn't like them after all.

Cratchit: "*She didn't like them*" *Blah!* What insolence! That's it. I've had it up to here. I will not be made a fool in my own home. I will *not*- (TT appears- Upon seeing him, Cratchit calms down. He shakes his head and paces around the room.) Peter...(Peter is distracted by the game and doesn't answer) *Peter!*

Peter: Yes, Dad.

Cratchit: Would you do me a favor and ask your mother to come up here. I really need to speak with her.

Peter: Sure Dad. (He continues playing game.)

Cratchit: *Now, Peter!* (TT Clears his throat) Please.

Peter: Okay, Dad.are you going to yell at her again?

Cratchit: *I did not*—(TT glares) Peter, please just ask her to come up. All right, son?

Peter: Sure. (He exits)

TT: (Moving to Cratchit) Look inside yourself, Tim. Dig deep. You can do this.

Emily enters cautiously

Emily: Hello. Merry Christmas.

Cratchit: Thank you. Merry Christmas to you as well.

Emily: Thanks. I tried to make the kids wait until you got home to open their gifts, but they were too excited.

Cratchit: Of course...I understand. (Beat) I guess you didn't like your roses.

Emily: I was hurt, Tim. Those flowers seemed pretty hollow. You couldn't even give them to me yourself.

Cratchit: I had to be in court.

Emily: Of course....you always have an excuse.

Cratchit: (About to yell, but remembers and calms) I'm sorry Emily. You're right. I should have given them to you myself. But I want to do better. I know I *can* do better.

Emily: You not only humiliated your children last night, you humiliated me....again. You've never regarded me as a partner. In your eyes...I'm here to help *you* in every way....but it never goes the other way.

Cratchit: Emily-

Emily: I don't think I can take it much longer. Of course, I love you. You know that. But I'm a person. I have a life too. And my life is just as important as yours

Cratchit: I know that Em. I do know that. (A look to TT) I'm sorry. I've taken you for granted, it's true. I'm flawed. But, I know I can do better. I'll try to do better. I promise. (Beat) (He kneels

before her) Please Emily, give me another chance. I give you my word that from this day forward, I will never overlook your value again.

Emily: Words are easy, Tim. Talk is cheap.

Cratchit: I know. But I also know I can change. I will prove it to you every day. You and I will be partners in every way. I promise.

Emily: All right then. (She gets him up off his knees) Let's give it one more try.. (They kiss. She looks at her watch.) We'd better get ready to go.

Cratchit: Go where?

Emily: To the show, of course.

Cratchit: (Dawning...dull) Oh...the show. (TT again clears his throat. Cratchit becomes enthusiastic) Oh...the show...of course. (Calling off) It's showtime kids. Let's go! We don't want to be late.

Peter, Martha and Belinda enter.

Emily: Everybody ready to go?
(Kids give excited affirmation)

Cratchit: You sure do! I can't wait...how about a little preview?

Bunk The Skunk Reprise

Cratchit kids sing

*Bunk the skunk
Bunk the skunk*

*Peter:
My birthday was on Christmas day.*

*Kids:
Bunk the skunk
Bunk the skunk
"Happy Birthday" hip-hip- hooray!
"Happy Birthday" hip-hip- hooray!*

Cratchit approaches Emily. They hug...

Set transitions to the show. All kids are onstage. The song continues.

*All Ensemble:
Bunk the skunk
Bunk the skunk*

*Peter:
My birthday was on Christmas day.*

*All Ensemble:
Bunk the skunk
Bunk the skunk
"Happy Birthday" hip-hip- hooray!
"Happy Birthday" hip-hip- hooray!*

*Deck the halls with boughs of holly
Fa la la la la, la la la la (fa la la la la, la la la la)
'Tis the season to be jolly
Fa la la la la, la la la la (fa la la la la, la la la la)
Don we now our gay apparel
Fa la la la la, la la la la (fa la la la la, la la la la)*

Better Angels Reprise

All
*We are not enemies but friends
Through hurtful pain we can't pretend
The strain of our beliefs so deep, so deep
Our tragic heroes we do keep, we keep... right here.*

Cratchet and Emily & Cratchet kids

*But we forgive and we absolve
With due respect we do resolve
To disagree but in the end, the end
Our human mutuality we defend*

All
*Our better angels here and now
Guiding respect and due goodwill
Our better angels won't you please allow
Kindly affection, tender affection, human affection to fulfill*

Archibald, Mia and Sophia

*And reaching out from North to South
And to the East and West as well
Our better angels touch our souls...our souls
'Till past offenses we do quell..we do quell*

All

Our better angels here and now

Guiding respect and due goodwill

Our better angels won't you please allow

Kindly affection, tender affection, human affection to fulfill...to fulfill