

(Sound of chains - which will abruptly stop)

It's all a humbug!

(The appearance of Jacob Marley - chains & ledgers cover his body. A kerchief is over his chin and tied on his head.)

How now! What do you want with me?

MARLEY: Much!

SCROOGE: Who are you?

MARLEY: Ask me who I was.

SCROOGE: Who were you then?

MARLEY: In life, I was your partner, Jacob Marley.

SCROOGE: Jacob! Can you sit down, Jacob?

MARLEY: I can.

SCROOGE: Do it then. *(Marley sits)*

MARLEY: You don't believe in me.

SCROOGE: I don't. *(more firmly)* No, I don't.

MARLEY: What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your own senses?

SCROOGE: I don't know.

MARLEY: Why do you doubt your senses?

SCROOGE: Because a little thing affects them. A slight disorder of the stomach makes them cheat. You may be an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato. There's more of gravy than grave about you, whatever you are.

(Trying to outsmart the ghost. . .)

You see this toothpick?

MAREY: I do.

SCROOGE: But you are not looking at it.

MARLEY: But I see it, not withstanding.

SCROOGE: Well! I have but to swallow this, and for the rest of my days, be persecuted by a legion of goblins, all of my own creation. Humbug, I tell you, humbug.

(at this the ghost lets off a frightful cry, shaking his chains with much anger, taking the kerchief off this jaw drops open)

Mercy! *(on his knees)* Dreadful apparition, why do you trouble me?

MARLEY: It is required of every man, that the spirit within should walk abroad among his fellow men, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world, and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness. *(the ghost wails and rattles its chains)*

SCROOGE: You are fettered and chained. Why, Jacob?

MARLEY: I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link and yard by yard; I girded it of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is it's pattern strange to you? Do you know the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and as long as this, seven Christmas Eves ago. You have labored on it since.
(rattling chain) It is a ponderous chain you wear.
(Scrooge looks about himself and sees nothing)

SCROOGE: Jacob! Old Jacob Marley, tell me more. Speak comfort to me, Jacob.

MARLEY: I have none to give, Ebenezer Scrooge. I have no time to tell you what I would. Very little more is all that is permitted to me. I cannot rest, I cannot stay, I cannot linger anywhere. My Spirit never walked beyond our counting house - mark me! In life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!