

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Objection. Badgering the witness.

JUDGE PEARSON. Sustained.

SCROOGE. It was a compliment.

JUDGE PEARSON. I didn't like your tone.

SCROOGE. Mr. Fitzpatrick, in the past ten years, approximately how many times have you come to see me?

FRED. That's easy. Ten.

SCROOGE. Ten times? You're sure?

FRED. Yes.

SCROOGE. You're positive?

FRED. Yes. Every Christmas Eve.

SCROOGE. You never stopped by New Year's Eve?

FRED. No.

SCROOGE. Boxing Day?

FRED. No.

SCROOGE. Guy Fawkes Day?

FRED. No.

SCROOGE. St. George's Day?

FRED. No.

SCROOGE. May Day? First day of summer? Crisp day in autumn?

FRED. No.

SCROOGE. Surely on my birthday.

FRED. I'm afraid I don't know when it is.

SCROOGE. I suppose you're right, then. Ten times. Ten years. Ten visits. In your diatribe about Christmas—

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Objection.

JUDGE PEARSON. Sustained. Mr. Scrooge—

SCROOGE. In your *speech* about Christmas, you said that Christmastime is the only time you know of when men

and women open their hearts freely to each other. Did you say that?

FRED. Yes.

SCROOGE. And you believe that?

FRED. I do.

SCROOGE. This opening of hearts, is this what you would call "the Christmas spirit"?

FRED. Yes it is.

SCROOGE. A spirit of caring and generosity.

FRED. Yes.

SCROOGE. This spirit which you believe I do not possess?

FRED. Yes.

SCROOGE. And at Christmastime, do you feel you possess this spirit?

FRED. I do.

SCROOGE. More than most men?

FRED. More than you, I'm afraid.

SCROOGE. Let me ask you this, Mr. Fitzpatrick... Where does your Christmas spirit, your spirit of caring and generosity, go the other three hundred and sixty-four days of the year?

FRED. It doesn't go anywhere. It's always inside me.

SCROOGE. In ten years, you've only visited me ten times. Each time on Christmas Eve.

FRED. Yes. I make those visits in homage to the Christmas spirit.

SCROOGE. And yet you just said your Christmas spirit is always inside you.

FRED. Yes.

SCROOGE. So why don't you visit me any other time of the year?

FRED. I...

— END

START
SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Fred, what is your relationship to Mr. Scrooge?

FRED. Mr. Scrooge is my uncle.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. By birth or by marriage?

FRED. By birth. My mother and he were brother and sister.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Were? Is your mother deceased?

FRED. Yes, sir.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. I'm sorry. On the night in question, did you see your uncle?

FRED. I saw him that afternoon.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. And where was that?

FRED. At his office.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. What kind of mood was your uncle in when you saw him that afternoon?

FRED. His usual mood...grumpy, crotchety, disagreeable.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Did your visit cheer him up?

FRED. No. If anything it made him more disagreeable.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Did you come bearing bad news?

FRED. I came to wish him a Merry Christmas and invite him to Christmas dinner.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. And this made him more disagreeable?

FRED. My uncle has taken a keen dislike to Christmas.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Any reason why?

FRED. He's never said.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Did he accept your invitation to dinner?

FRED. As usual he declined the invitation.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. As usual?

FRED

FRED. Every Christmas I invite him to my house and every Christmas he says no.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Because of his dislike for Christmas?

FRED. Or because of his dislike for me.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Have you done anything to warrant this behavior?

FRED. We've never had a quarrel as far as I can recall.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. And yet you return every Christmas to invite him to dinner even though you receive the same response each time?

FRED. I've always thought of Christmastime as a good time. A kind, forgiving, charitable time. The only time I know of in the long calendar of the year when men and women seem by one consent to open their hearts freely and to think of one another as if they really were fellow passengers to the grave and not just another race of creatures bound on other journeys. So yes, I return every Christmas because Christmas has done me good and will do me good and I say, "God bless it."

BAILIFF (*applauding*). Bravo!

JUDGE PEARSON (*to the BAILIFF*). Let me hear another word from you and you'll keep your Christmas by losing your situation.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. No more questions, Your Honor.

(*ROTHSCHILD sits as SCROOGE rises.*)

SCROOGE. You're quite a powerful speaker, sir. I wonder you don't go into Parliament.