

CHRISTMAS PAST. Forced!

JUDGE PEARSON. Order.

SCROOGE. Forced you to do what?

CHRISTMAS PAST. He forced us to break the rules.

SCROOGE. Rules? What rules?

GHOST'S VOICE. ...

TRANSLATOR. When we show someone their future,  
we're not allowed to use a dead body.

SCROOGE. You're not allowed to use a dead body?

CHRISTMAS PAST. No. Tombstones, yes. Dead bodies,  
no. But Mr. Marley didn't think a tombstone would be  
enough to scare Mr. Scrooge into changing his ways, so  
he forced us to use a dead body.

MARLEY. I didn't—

CHRISTMAS PAST. Forced.

MARLEY. I—

CHRISTMAS PAST. Forced.

MARLEY. I—

GHOST'S VOICE. ...

TRANSLATOR. Forced forced forcily force forced.

SCROOGE (to MARLEY). That was you in my bed?  
(MARLEY doesn't answer. PAST and YET TO COME  
nod.) Did you fabricate anything else that night?

(Uh-oh.)

GHOST'S VOICE. ...

TRANSLATOR. Technically your entire future.

SCROOGE. That wasn't my future?

CHRISTMAS PAST. It was an approximation.

SCROOGE. You approximated my future?

GHOST'S VOICE. ...

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TRANSLATOR. We approximate everyone's future.

SCROOGE. What?

CHRISTMAS PAST. We speculate. That's where the word  
spectre comes from.

SCROOGE. So on the night in question, you intentionally  
deceived and frightened me into changing my ways with  
a fabricated future and a counterfeit corpse?

MARLEY. It was for your own good!

SCROOGE. Mr. Marley, you and the Spirits of Christmas  
are nothing but smooth-talking double-dealing self-right-  
teous charlatans who terrorize people in the name of re-  
demption!

JUDGE PEARSON. Mr. Scrooge, sit down!

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Your Honor—

JUDGE PEARSON. You too, Mr. Rothschild!

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD, But, Your Honor—

JUDGE PEARSON. Not another word.

SCROOGE. Throw them all—

JUDGE PEARSON. Not another word! (*Everyone stops.*)

Now sit down. All of you. (*Everyone sits...including the  
BAILIFF. To the BAILIFF.*) Not you.

BAILIFF (*quickly stands*). Sorry.

JUDGE PEARSON. In all my years, I have never wit-  
nessed a more reprehensible assemblage than I have to-  
day. You have collectively made a mockery of my  
courtroom with your abhorrent and impertinent behavior.  
If I could work my will, every last one of you would be  
boiled in your own pudding and buried with a stake of  
holly through your heart.

BAILIFF. Surely you don't mean that.

JUDGE PEARSON (to the BAILIFF). And you'd be the  
first! (*Holy Christmas!*) There will be no closing argu-

**START**

ments. I have heard more than enough to pass judgment. Although Mr. Scrooge failed to present overwhelming evidence that anyone, living or deceased, attempted to kidnap or murder him, he did provide, in a rather uncustomary way, evidence of trespassing, breaking and entering, stalking, pain and suffering and the intentional infliction of emotional distress. Furthermore, I found there was overwhelming evidence, including his own admission, that Mr. Marley carefully plotted, contrived and conspired the events of the night in question and without his contrivance none of these events would have occurred. Therefore, I find Mr. Marley and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future guilty of said charges and condemn them to a fine of one thousand pounds apiece and a termination of all ghostly duties.

SCROOGE. I've won?

JUDGE PEARSON. Yes.

SCROOGE. I've won. I've won. I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do. I'm as light as a feather. I'm as happy as an angel. I'm as merry as a schoolboy. I'm as giddy as a goose.

JUDGE PEARSON. Take your giddiness elsewhere.

*(Raises gavel.)* This court is—

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Your Honor, termination!?

JUDGE PEARSON. Effective immediately.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. You can't terminate my clients from their spiritual obligation.

JUDGE PEARSON. I just did, didn't I?

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. But they'll cease to exist. It's a death sentence.

JUDGE PEARSON. It won't be much of a change for them, will it?

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Your Honor, please reconsider. Community time. They'll pay twice the fine. Triple. Anything. But not termination.

JUDGE PEARSON. That's enough, Mr. Rothschild.  
*(Raises gavel.)* This court is—

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. But Mr. Scrooge made a promise. A verbal agreement.

SCROOGE. Yes, Mr. Rothschild, I made a promise. A promise made on my knees to honor the spirit of Christmas and to keep that spirit alive within my heart all the year.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. And you have broken that verbal agreement.

SCROOGE. On the contrary, I did not shut out the lessons the Spirits taught me. The Spirits of all three have thrived within me.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. I beg to differ.

SCROOGE. Bob Cratchit is the highest-paid clerk in all of London, I dare say. Young Tiny Tim, thanks to me, will live to be Old Enormous Tim. I have given money to the poor, I have patted children on the head and I have been irresistibly pleasant.

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. Mazel tov. The lessons of the Spirits of Christmas worked.

SCROOGE. But why should I keep the Christmas spirit all year long, or at all for the matter, when the ones who forced me into doing so fail to do so themselves?

SOLOMON ROTHSCHILD. They don't fail to keep it.

SCROOGE. By their own admission the Spirits of Christmas appear only once a year.

