

Scrooge offers a nod and smile as they walk away, then turns to the camera.

SCROOGE

They're good people, the Crandalls.
Shame they're about to lose
everything. This will be their
last Christmas in that tiny little
apartment where their youngsters
grew up. So many happy memories
there. Dirty rotten shame.

Scrooge gathers his Ukulele, stands, and walks away. Sensing that the camera is following him, he turns back. Raises an eyebrow.

SCROOGE

What?

He narrows his eyes, realizing that we (the audience) aren't going anywhere.

SCROOGE

Oh, I get it. He floats me a
couple bucks so now I'm supposed to
fly in and save the day? Bah
humbug. That's not the way the
world works, and you know it.

With a HUMF, Scrooge turns and takes a few more steps. But then he stops. Contemplating. The camera continues to PUSH IN toward him.

SCROOGE

But then...wouldn't it be nice if
it were? Perhaps if I --

Scrooge turns back, and HITS his face on the camera lens.

SCROOGE

Ow! Back it up. Back it up.

The camera slowly PUSHES OUT, giving Scrooge room.

SCROOGE

Let's be clear, this has nothing to
do with that little tip back there.
You can't buy a miracle, certainly
not for two measly dollars. But
that doesn't mean miracles can't
happen. Especially when people are
praying.

Scrooge snaps out of his thoughtful gaze, and smiles, offering his hand for a handshake.

SCROOGE

I'm afraid I haven't introduced myself. The name's Scrooge. Ebenezer Scrooge.

Scrooge turns, and walks down the sidewalk. The camera moves in front of him now.

SCROOGE

Bob and Penelope own the Springdale Cafe here in town. Good food, but underpriced. Four dollars for dinner with beverage? Not if I ran it! And worse, if you can't afford that, they let you choose how much you want to pay so you won't go hungry.

Scrooge stops, and turns to another camera at his side in disgust.

SCROOGE

And somehow, he finds himself struggling financially. It's certainly not a business model I would have invested in, but these are different times. In my day, business owners lived like kings. We had all the money. All the power. Jobs were scarce. If I fired a man, he was doomed to ruin. Ahh...those were good times.

Scrooge turns back to the camera in front of him, and continues walking.

SCROOGE

Today, people have become lazy. There's a shortage of good workers so the employees have become the kings. The big businesses get by with automation. But mom and pop shops, the kind that make up the backbone of small towns, can't survive without employees, and the workers know it so they demand more money and less responsibility, to the point where they eventually force those businesses into bankruptcy.

(MORE)

SCROOGE (CONT'D)

Hence, Springdale is falling apart and many of the people who could help are leaving town. Who knows? Perhaps one day, business owners and employees will strike a balance, and share a mutual respect for one another. But until then, the ship has run aground. And it's sinking fast.