

BOB. Hello, my dears. And how are you getting on?

GRACE holds up some of the black material. They are funeral arm-bands.

Oh, that's good work! You'll be finished long before Sunday.

MRS CRATCHIT. Sunday? You went today then, Robert?

BOB sits down by the fire.

BOB. Yes, my dear. I wish you could have gone. It would have done you good to see how green a place it is. But you'll see it often. I promised him that I would walk there on a Sunday and...

He looks away quickly.

You'll never guess who I saw today, my dear! Mr Scrooge's nephew! I can't have spoken to him more than half a dozen times but he greeted me like an old friend and seeing that I was... just a little down, you know asked what was the matter. On which – for he is the pleasantest-spoken gentleman you ever heard, I told him. 'I am heartily sorry for it, Mr Cratchit,' he said, 'and heartily sorry for your good wife.' By the by, how he ever knew that, I don't know.

MRS CRATCHIT. Knew what?

BOB. That you were a good wife.

PETER. Everybody knows that!

BOB. Very well observed, my boy. 'Heartily sorry,' he said, 'for your good wife. If I can be of service to you in any way,' he said, giving me his card, 'that's where I live. Pray come to me.' Now, it wasn't for the sake of anything he might be able to do for us, so much as for his kind way, that this was quite delightful. It really seemed as if he had known our Tiny Tim, and felt with us.

MRS CRATCHIT. I'm sure he's a good soul.

BOB. You would be surer of it, my dear, if you saw and spoke to him. I shouldn't be at all surprised mark what I say, if he got Peter a better situation.

PETER. Get along y

BOB. It's just as lik  
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was among us.

EDWIN. Never, I

MRS CRATC

BOB. I'm very t

SCROOGE. Oh

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BOB. My  
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PETER. Get along with you!

BOB. It's just as likely as not one of these days – though there's plenty of time for that, my dear. But however and whenever we part from one another, I am sure we shall none of us forget poor Tiny Tim, shall we, or this first parting that there was among us.

EDWIN. Never, Dad.

MRS CRATCHIT *holds him tight.*

BOB. I'm very happy. Very happy.

SCROOGE. Oh God... God...

*BOB pats her on the back and pulls away, then, looking towards the stairs, gathers himself.*

*He mounts the stairs. SCROOGE looks at the GHOST and they're suddenly upstairs in a tiny, dark bedroom.*

*A single candle burns by the little bed. On it lies TINY TIM, at peace.*

*He looks down at the floor. BOB comes in. With difficulty, he makes his way to the bedside and sits down. He looks at the little boy and bends to kiss his forehead.*

*He sits back and smiles.*

*Then, all at once, BOB breaks down into a terrible, ragged sobbing.*

BOB. My little, little child! My little child!

SCROOGE *turns away. Lights dim.*

SCROOGE. Spectre – something informs me that our parting moment is at hand. I know it, but I know not how. Tell me what man that was whom we saw lying dead!

*They are suddenly on the move.*