A Christmas Carol

A miniature musical

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SCENE 1: SCROOGE'S OFFICE

[The lights come up on Scrooge's office. Stark, bare, and decidedly dingy. The only items of furniture present are two desks and their accompanying chairs, set on opposite sides of the stage, facing each other. On each desk are a ledger, a quill-pen, a wooden ruler, and a candle. Both desks are identical except that one (Scrooge's) is slightly further forward than the other (Bob Cratchit's). At the back of the stage is the open front door of the office, through which we can hear carol-singers singing "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" out in the street. Abruptly a figure appears in the doorway, dressed in an over-large coat and a scarf -- SCROOGE.]

SCROOGE

Christmas? Bah! Humbug!

[The music for **HUMBUG!** begins.]

[SCROOGE slams the door shut, cutting off the sound of the carol-singers, and strides forward to launch a tirade at the audience.]

SCROOGE

What right have they to be merry? What reason have they to be merry? Another day older and not a day richer, Doesn't it paint a discouraging picture?

So why should they be so delighted? And why should they get so excited? They scrimp all the year and they save every penny, Then spend the whole lot and they're left without any.

Christmas? Humbug! That's what I say! Every year I dread Christmas Day! I'd have it banned if I had my way! Christmas is humbug, that's what I say!

Each fool who calls out "Merry Christmas!"

I tell you I'm going to dismiss as

Somebody who should be boiled in their own pudding,

Staked with their own holly would be a good thing!

So don't wish me joy for the season, I don't see the rhyme or the reason. I have no desire to be merry or jolly.

I don't want your turkey or mulled wine or holly!

Christmas? Humbug! That's what I say! Every year I dread Christmas Day! I'd have it banned if I had my way! Christmas is humbug, that's what I say!

[Spoken] Humbug!

[Having got this out of his system he sits down at his desk and begins working. A few seconds later the door to the office opens a fraction, and a figure slides quietly in -- BOB CRATCHIT. He begins to creep towards his desk, hoping to reach it unnoticed. Alas...]

SCROOGE

[without looking up] Mr. Cratchit.

BOB CRATCHIT

Yes, Mr. Scrooge?

SCROOGE

[still working] You are precisely two minutes late.

BOB CRATCHIT

Yes, Mr. Scrooge. I'm sorry, Mr. Scrooge.

[Scrooge at last lays down his pen and looks up from the ledger.]

SCROOGE

I suppose your excuse is that it is Christmas.

BOB CRATCHIT

Well...

SCROOGE

Hmph!

BOB CRATCHIT

It is only once a year, sir.

SCROOGE

Hmph!

[SCROOGE picks up his pen and returns his attention to the ledger. BOB CRATCHIT sighs and takes his seat at his desk to begin his work.

They have only been working for a few seconds when Scrooge's nephew, FRED, breezes in through the door.]

FRED

Merry Christmas, uncle!

SCROOGE

Bah! Humbug!

FRED

Christmas a humbug, uncle? Surely you don't mean that?

SCROOGE

I do. Merry Christmas indeed!

FRED

Scrooge, don't be cross.

SCROOGE

What else can I be when I live in such a world of fools as this. [Scornfully] Merry Christmas!

[The music for **I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU SEE IN IT** begins.]

SCROOGE

I don't know what you see in it

It doesn't seem that great to me --

Blowing all your savings in a day.

The way you treat your money

You would think that it grew on a tree --

Throwing all your hard-earned cash away.

All this talk of Christmas spirit doesn't mean a thing to me

I don't want to be renowned for my great liberality.

All this talk of Christmas cheer will only get you one response from me:

[Spoken] Humbug!

FRED

Uncle! How can you be so tight-fisted?

SCROOGE

Very easily!

FRED

It's a time for generosity!

SCROOGE

What? when every Christmas makes them more and more in debt to me? That's not what I'd call a good idea.

How they can afford to celebrate at all I'll never know.

Anyone would think that they enjoyed watching their debits grow.

I think it's a crime the way they throw their money round on Christmas day.

FRED

[Spoken] Uncle!

I've never seen this as a time to stop and count the cost of things.

SCROOGE

Then it's no wonder you're always in debt.

FRED

I just remember all the pleasure that this happy season brings.

SCROOGE

And I just try my hardest to forget.

On the morning after they will all be knocking at my door

Having got more deeply into debt than they have been before

Whining that they'll pay me back before it gets to Christmas day next year!

[Spoken] Humbug!

FRED

[Spoken] Uncle!

FRED

Don't be angry, uncle. Come! Dine with us tomorrow.

SCROOGE

Nephew! You keep Christmas in your way, and let me keep it in mine.

FRED

Keep it? But you don't keep it!

SCROOGE

Then let me leave it alone, then. Good day.

FRED

I am sorry to find you so resolute, but if you cannot be dissuaded from your position, neither can I be dissuaded from mine, and I shall endeavour to keep my Christmas humour to the last, so a Merry Christmas, uncle!

SCROOGE

Good day.

FRED

And a Happy New Year.

SCROOGE

Good day!

[FRED leaves, pausing only to greet BOB CRATCHIT.]

FRED

Merry Christmas, Cratchit.

BOB CRATCHIT

Merry Christmas, sir.

[SCROOGE glares at Cratchit, who hastily returns to his work.]

SCROOGE

If I hear another sound out of you, you'll be keeping Christmas by losing your job.

[SCROOGE also returns to his work, but not for long, because in going out FRED has let two other gentlemen in. They are smartly dressed and polite, and are carrying various books and papers. One of them quietly coughs to announce their presence. When SCROOGE looks round they bow and the FIRST GENTLEMAN consults a list.]

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Scrooge and Marley's, I believe. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge or Mr. Marley?

SCROOGE

Mr. Marley has been dead for seven years. He died seven years ago this very night.

[The SECOND GENTLEMAN presents a sheet of paper.]

SECOND GENTLEMAN

Our credentials.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

We have no doubt that Mr. Marley's liberality is well-represented by his surviving partner.

[SCROOGE frowns and hands back the credentials. The FIRST GENTLEMAN opens one of his books and produces a pen.]

FIRST GENTLEMAN

At this festive season, Mr. Scrooge, it's usually desirable to make some small provision for the poor and destitute, who suffer greatly at this time. Many thousands are in want of common necessities, sir.

SCROOGE

Are there no prisons?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

There are plenty of prisons.

SCROOGE

And the union work-houses, are still in operation?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

They are. Though I wish that I could say they were not.

SCROOGE

The Treadmill and the Poor Law are in full vigour, then?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Both very busy, sir, but...

SCROOGE

Oh! I was afraid that something had happened to stop their usual course.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

But as they scarcely furnish Christian cheer of mind or body a few of us are endeavouring to raise a fund to buy the poor some meat and drink, and means of warmth.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

What shall we put you down for?

SCROOGE

Nothing.

[Momentary confusion on the part of the two gentlemen.]

SECOND GENTLEMAN

You wish to remain anonymous?

SCROOGE

I wish to be left alone. *I* don't make merry at Christmas, and I can't afford to make idle people merry. I support the establishments I mentioned; those who are badly off must go there.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Many can't go there, and many would rather die.

SCROOGE

If they'd rather die then they'd better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Good day, gentlemen.

[He returns to his work. The two gentlemen exchange glances, shrug their shoulders, and leave. A few moments later SCROOGE consults his watch and closes his book, ready to end for the day. BOB CRATCHIT does likewise.]

SCROOGE

You'd better not be late in tomorrow morning.

BOB CRATCHIT

Um...tomorrow's Christmas Day, sir.

[The music for **ALL THAT I ASK** begins.]

SCROOGE

I suppose you want your usual one day's holiday And I expect that you'll expect to still get your usual pay --Anyone would think I'd money to burn.

BOB CRATCHIT

All that I ask
Is to be free
To enjoy the celebrations properly.

SCROOGE

How's a man to run his business at a profit When every Christmas Day his clerk must take a day off it? I don't like wasting money doing good turns.

BOB CRATCHIT

All that I ask

SCROOGE

[Spoken] All? You call that all?

BOB CRATCHIT

Just once a year

SCROOGE

[Spoken] And that's once too often

BOB CRATCHIT

Is a chance to join in with the Christmas cheer.

SCROOGE

[Spoken] Humbug!

Anyone would think that I'd got money to throw away Giving you a holiday on every Christmas Day But if I refuse to you will think yourself put upon And you'll say that I have done you wrong.

Maybe I should try to teach you just what it means to be Trying to ensure a profit for your own company.

Maybe I should try to teach you about economy -- In this world you don't get things for free

[Spoken] Except Christmas Day holidays!

How's a man to run his business at a profit When every Christmas Day his clerk must take a day off it? I don't like wasting money doing good turns.

BOB CRATCHIT

All that I ask
Just once a year
Is a chance to join in with the Christmas cheer

SCROOGE

Be here all the earlier the next morning, though!

BOB CRATCHIT

Thank you, Mr. Scrooge. Merry Christmas!

[SCROOGE grabs his ruler threateningly. BOB CRATCHIT makes a hasty exit through the door.]

[Curtain / Blackout]

SCENE 6: SCROOGE'S OFFICE

[Everything is exactly the same as in the first scene, except that SCROOGE is already seated at his desk, quill pen in hand, working on his ledger. The door to the office opens a fraction, and BOB CRATCHIT again attempts to quietly reach his desk without being noticed. Alas...]

SCROOGE

[Without looking up] Mr. Cratchit!

BOB CRATCHIT

Yes, Mr. Scrooge.

SCROOGE

[Still working] You are precisely eighteen and a half minutes late.

BOB CRATCHIT

Yes, Mr. Scrooge. I'm sorry, Mr. Scrooge. It won't happen again.

[Scrooge flings down his pen and finally looks up.]

SCROOGE

It's not good enough, Bob, and I'm not going to stand for this sort of thing any longer, and therefore... I am going to raise your salary!

[He leaps to his feet, and shakes BOB CRATCHIT's hand heartily.]

[The music for **SCROOGE** begins.]

SCROOGE

A Merry Christmas, Bob! A merrier Christmas than I have given you in many a long year!

SCROOGE

Don't you believe them when they try to tell you

That Scrooge is mean.

I really don't know how that tale got around

But let me tell you it's completely unfounded.

In fact he's twice as gen'rous as the next man

And I should know.

He might have been a miser once I'll agree

But things have changed a lot, and now you'll find he is

Making up for lost time!

Scrooge has finally caught the Christmas Spirit Nothing now is going to be the same And if he's gone to the other extreme, well Who would complain?

Scrooge has finally caught the Christmas Spirit, Everyone had better stand well clear. Given half a chance he'd celebrate Christmas All through the year!

The man that you once knew has now said goodbye And gone forever.

The Scrooge you see before you isn't the same
The only thing that still remains is the name.

Meet the new improved Scrooge!

NARRATOR

Scrooge was as good as his word. He became as good a friend, as good a master, as good a man, as the good old city knew; and to Tiny Tim -- who did **not** die -- he was a second father. It was always said of him that he knew how to keep Christmas well. May that be said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God bless us, every one!

[The rest of the cast enters and joins with SCROOGE and BOB CRATCHIT.]

ALL

The man that you once knew has now said goodbye And gone forever.

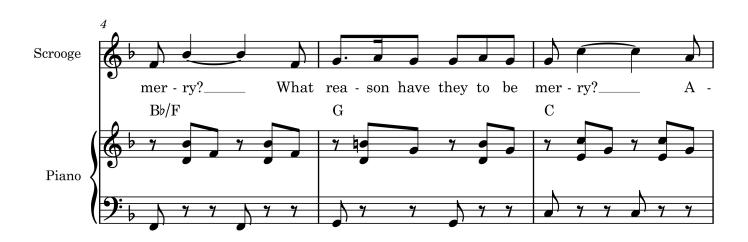
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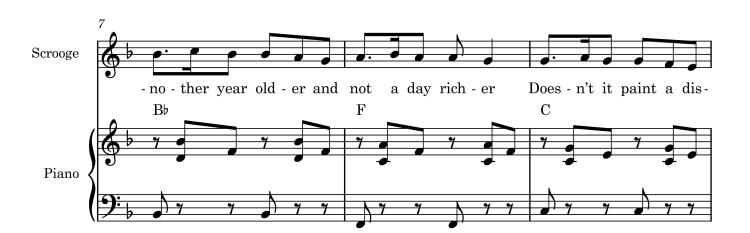
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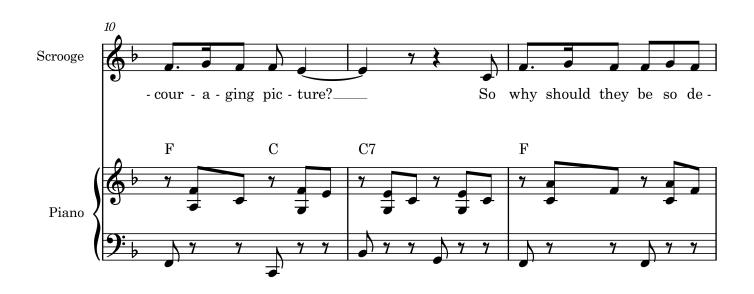
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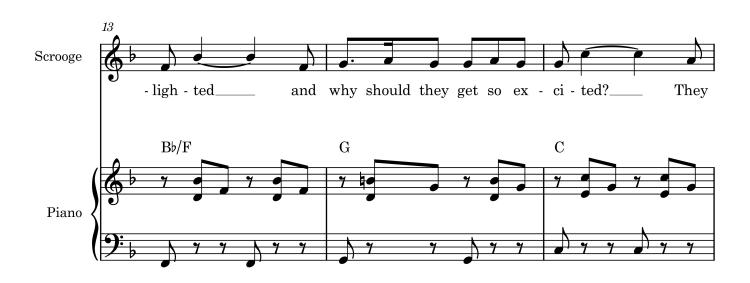
Chris Sandow

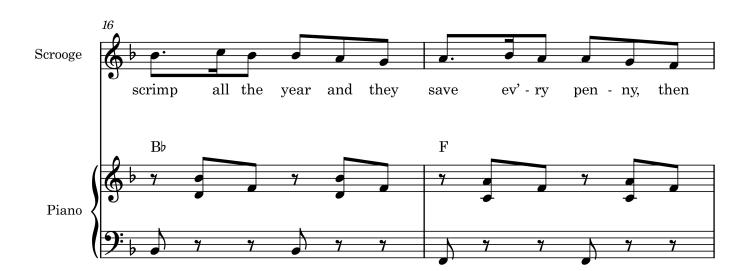


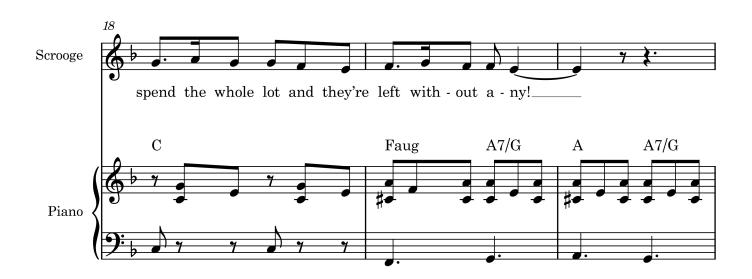


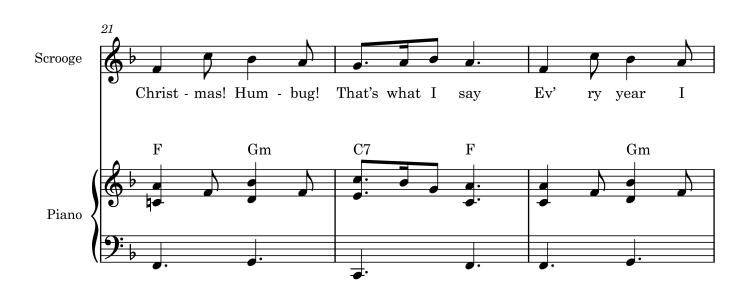




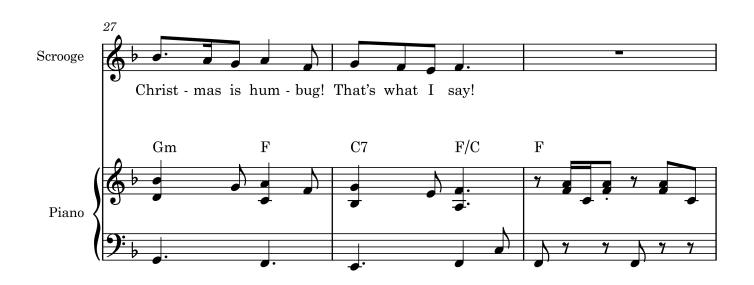


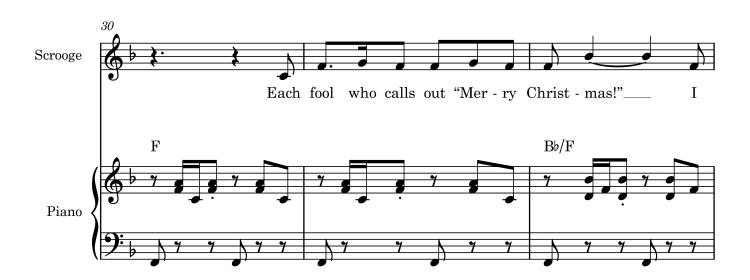


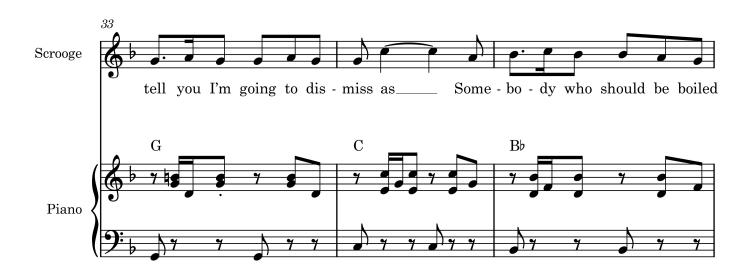


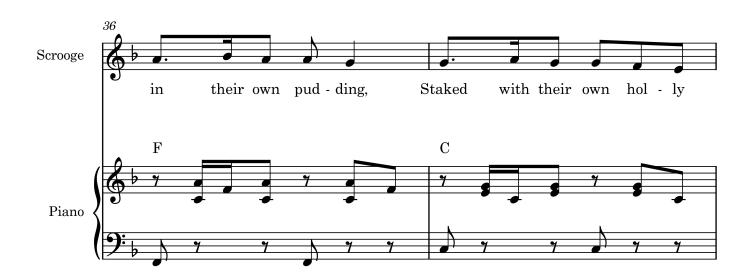


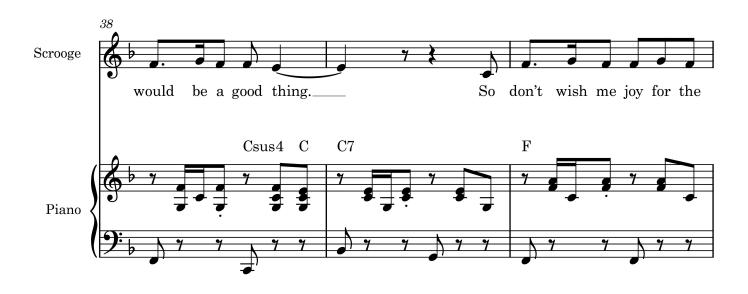


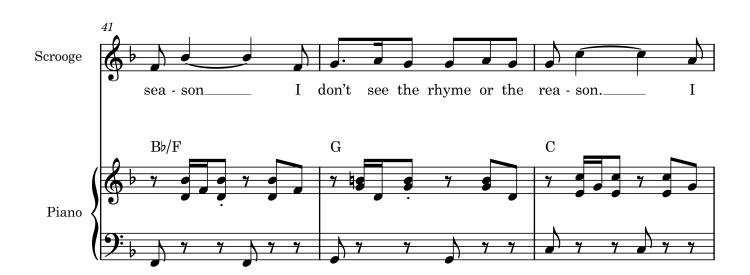




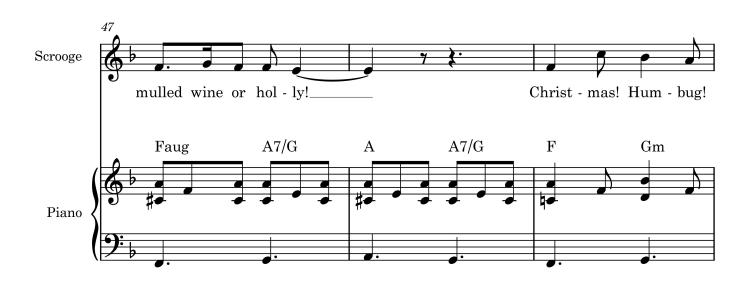


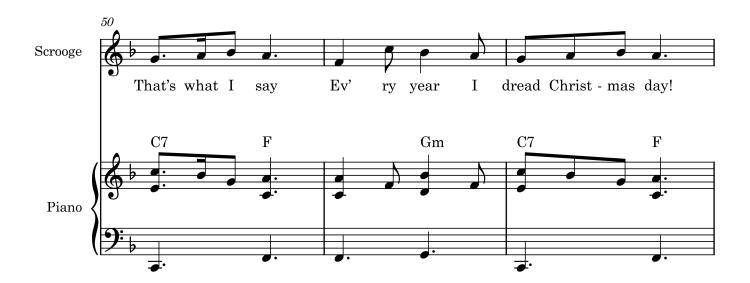


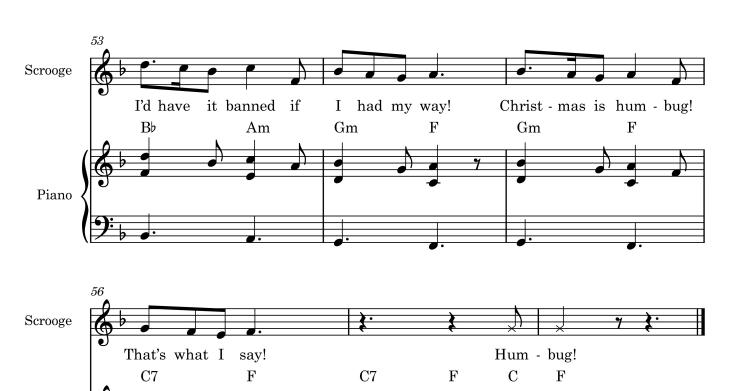












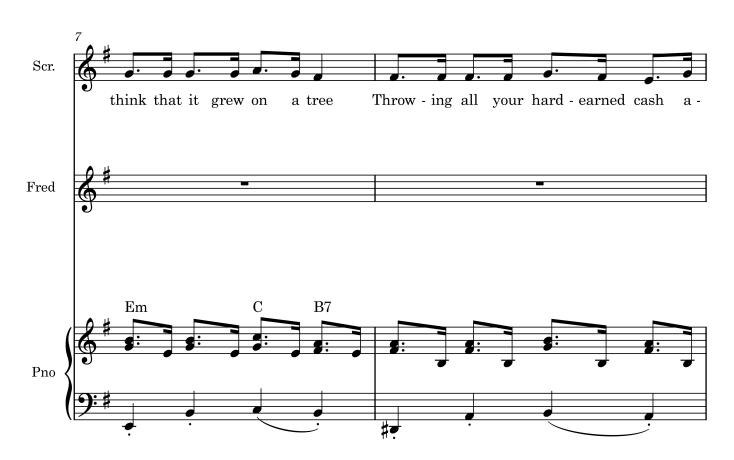
Piano

I Don't Know What You See In It

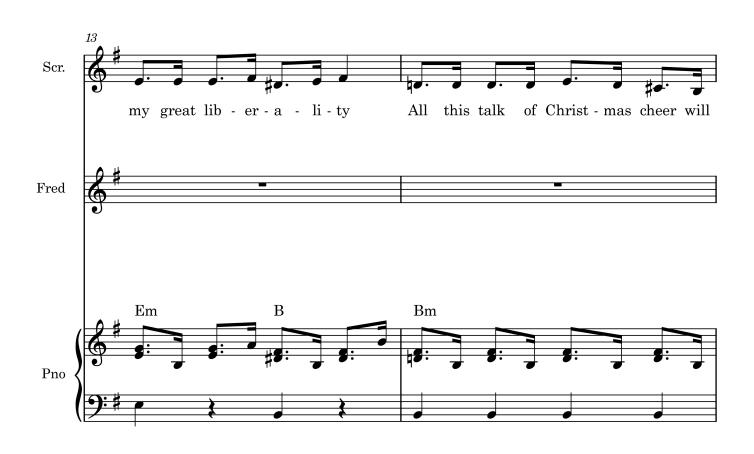
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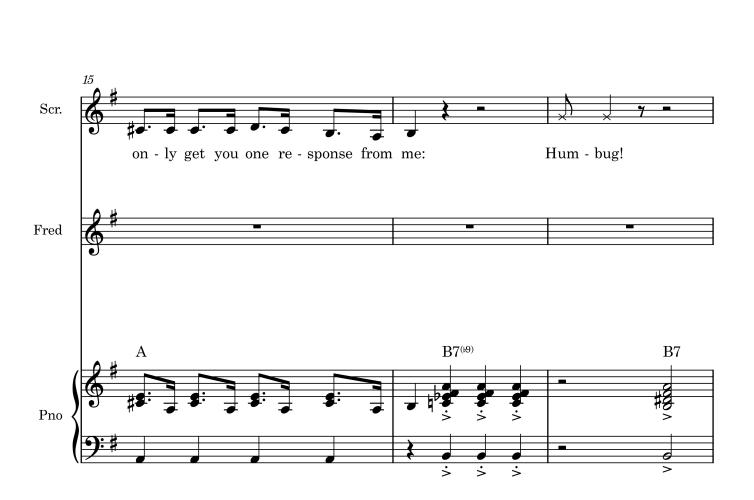






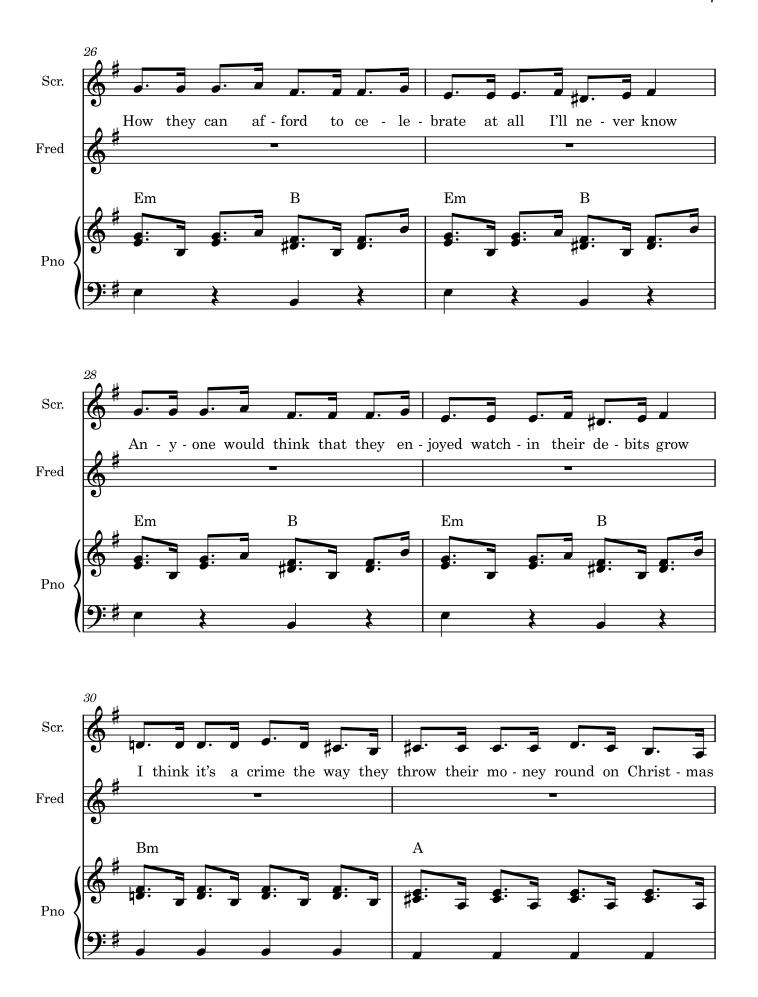


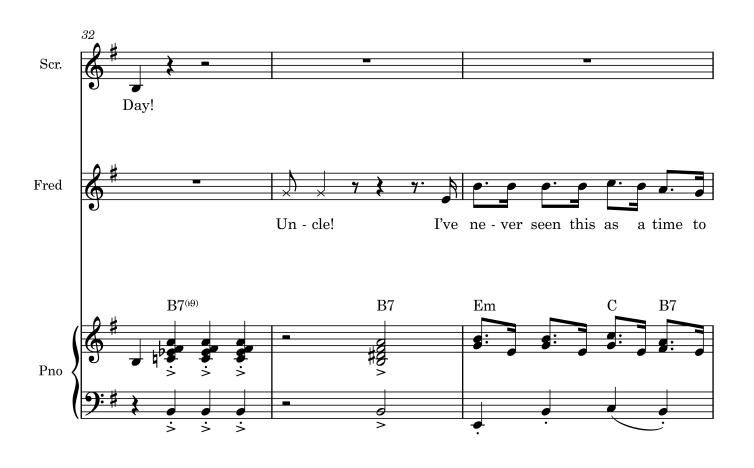


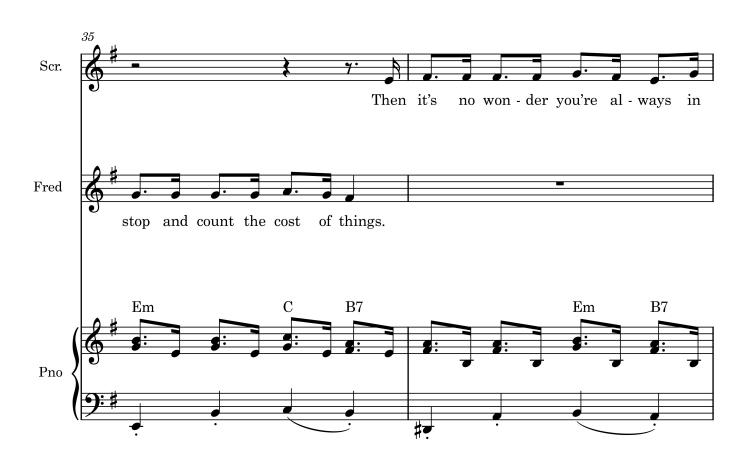






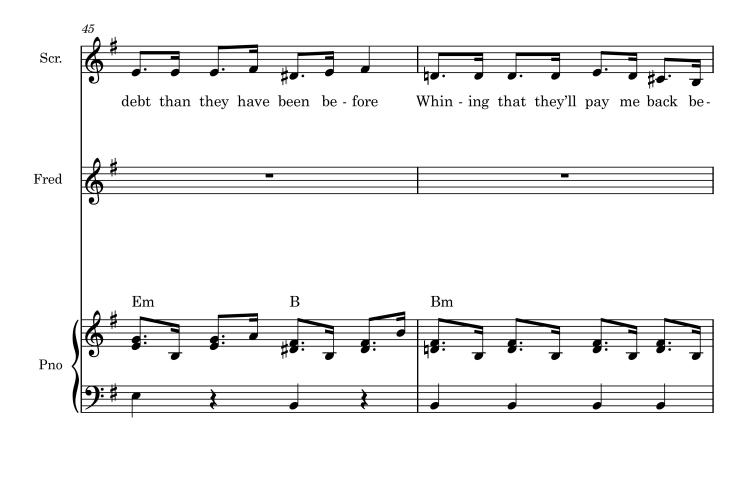


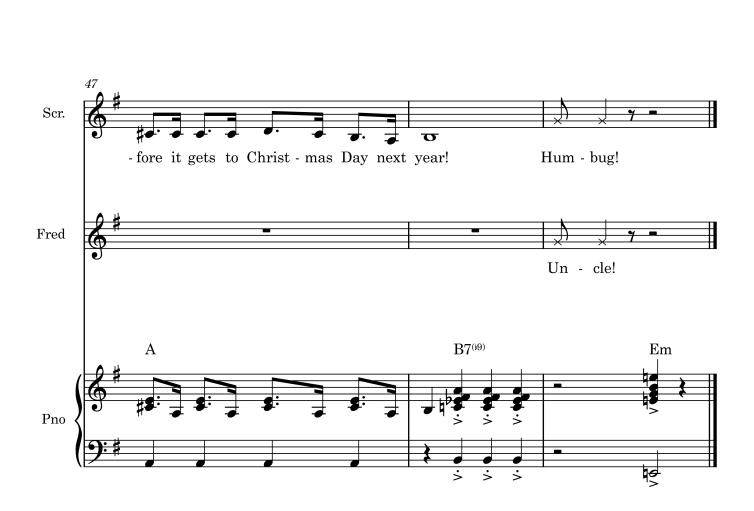






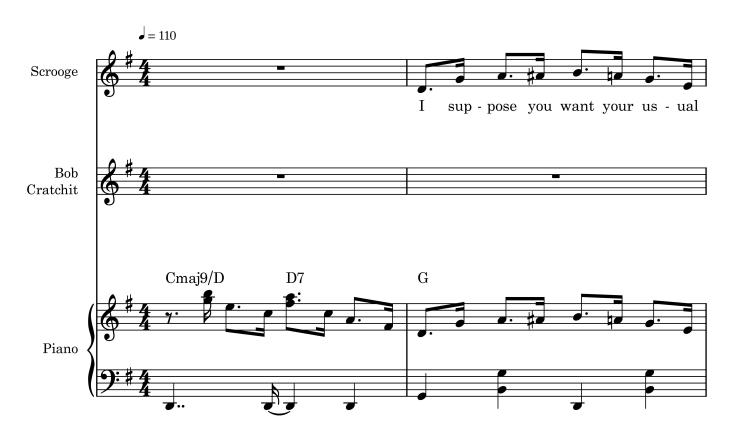


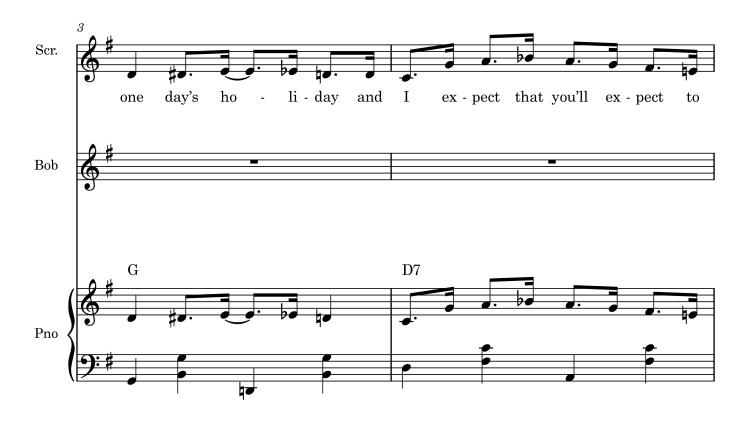




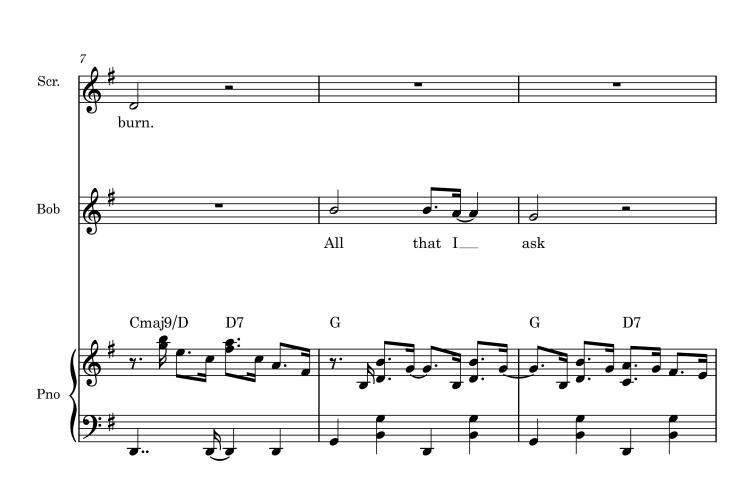
All That I Ask

Chris Sandow



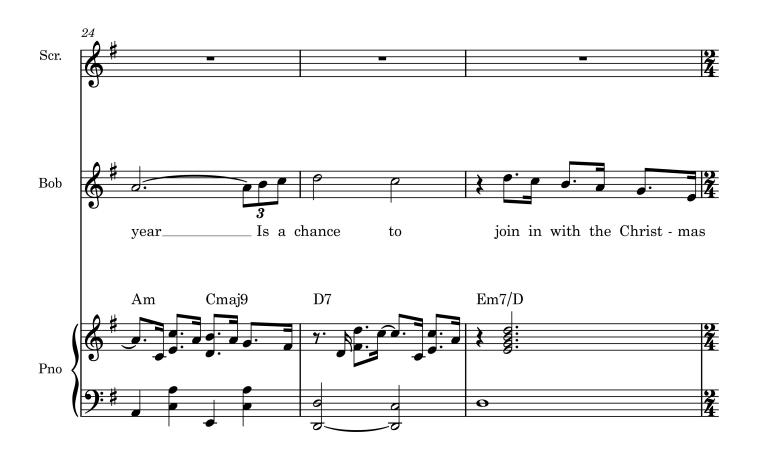


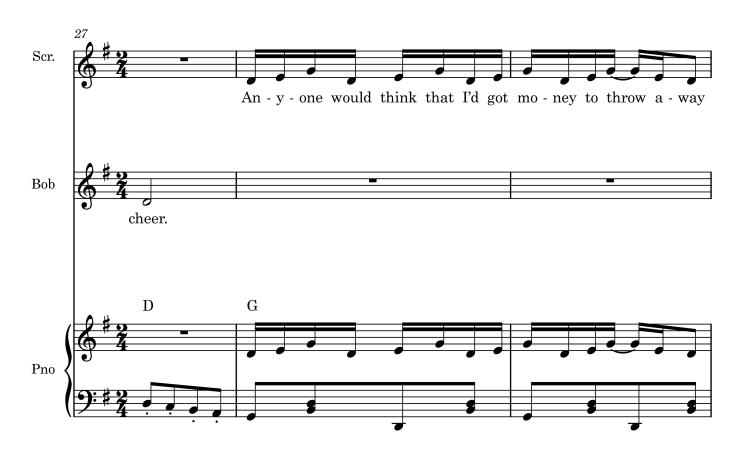






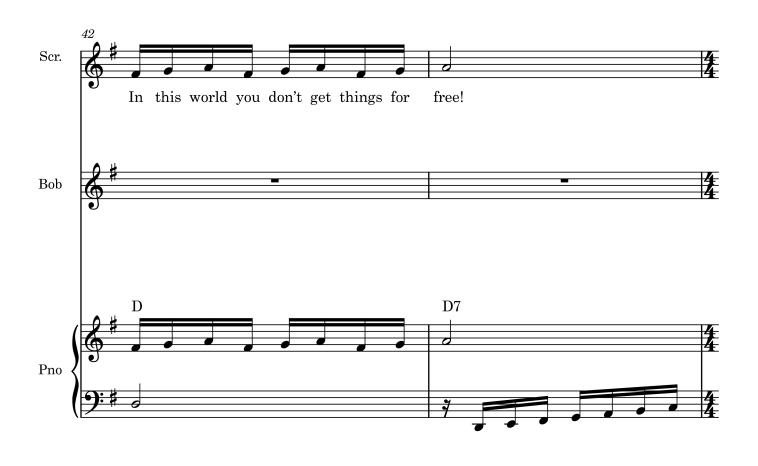


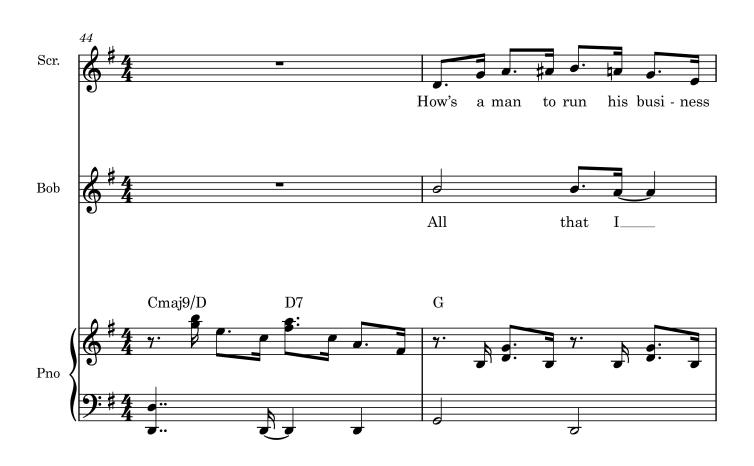


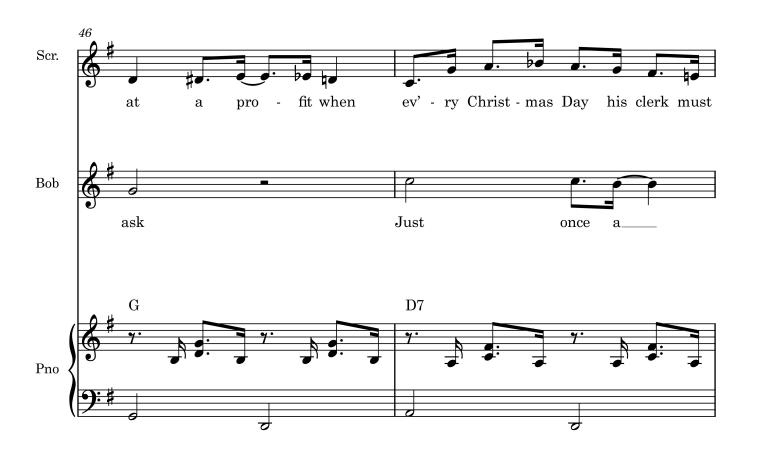


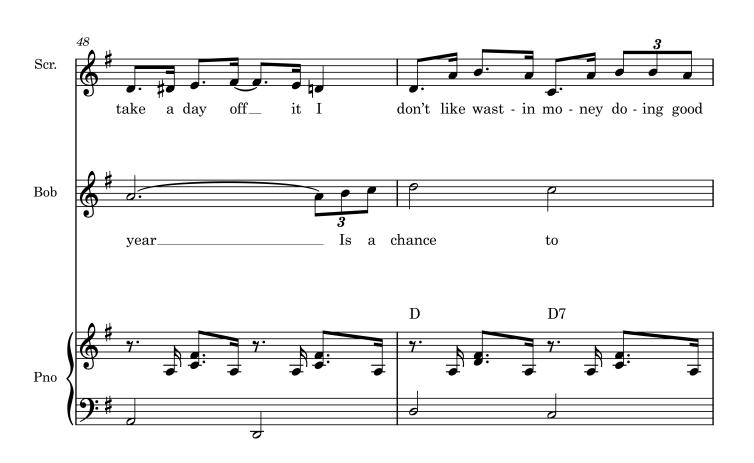


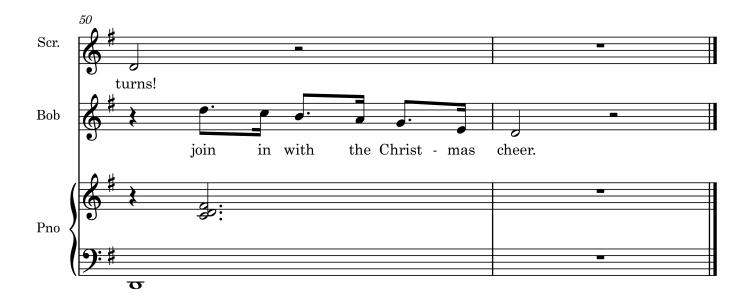












Scrooge (Finale)

Chris Sandow































