

SIDE 1: ALEX / SAM / CHRIS

ALEX. *(With effort:)* OK. Fine, sure. OK. So we'll do the Grinch, get it out of the way and move on...

(The following is delivered to the audience very rapidly, just getting it over with.)

OK, so there's this mean guy -- all GREEN mind you -- who lives on the top of this mountain called... Mt. Crumple-butt, or something. And he just *hates* all the creatures who live down below. And he just *hates* when they go and celebrate something that vaguely resembles Christmas, so he gets this idea to go on this obviously drug-induced orgy of theft and steal all their whozits and billybingers and roast beast and then thinks, "Oh. Why am I so mean?" So he gives it all back and turns nice.

And he has a dog.

SAM. Wait a minute! There's more to it than that! Sure he's mean... But that's because "His heart was two sizes too small."

(A placard with a tiny heart is held up in front of ALEX.)

CHRIS. Or it could be that his shoes were too tight...

(CHRIS places the "Grinch hat" on ALEX's head)

SAM. Whatever the reason, his heart or his shoes... *(prompting ALEX:)* ...go on!...

ALEX. You're gonna make me do this, aren't you? You're gonna make *me* be the Grinch...

(SAM nods.)

SAM. Whatever the reason, his heart...

CHRIS. ...or his shoes...

ALEX. *(Reluctantly:)* He stood there on Christmas just *hating* the Whos.

SAM. *(Gasping, with CHRIS:)* How can you hate the Whos? We've got who-bangles, who-beads, whiz-ops, and fraps...

CHRIS. Who-dickies, who-werps, zinboffs, and baps!

ALEX. *(Aside:)* I'm beginning to understand the Grinch's point of view in all this.

SAM. Boffles, buffles, whizbangs and flecks...

CHRIS. Bingos and bottles and lots of...bad checks!

SAM. And the sing, Sing, SING, SINGING! Whoo Hoo!

ALEX. I must stop this Christmas from coming, but Howwww-oooo... *(What a painful rhyme.)*

SIDE 2: CHRIS / ALEX / SAM

CHRIS. Contestant Number Two, for your bonus points, and a chance to win the match... is there a Santa Claus?

ALEX. What?

CHRIS. Is there a Santa Claus? Yes or no?

ALEX. Uhhh...well...that's a hard...uh...a hard question...I, uh...

(ALEX looks at SAM, who is beaming, signalling "Yes!," fingers crossed.)

CHRIS. Time's a wasting, we'll need an answer Number Two...

ALEX. Well, it's...it's complicated, sorta...

CHRIS. Come on, Number Two, what's your answer for all the millions of children watching the show? All those shiny faced tykes, eyes all aglow, visions of sugarplums dancing in their heads...all those kids who wait all year for this one night, this *one* night when they pin their hopes and dreams on a visit from good ol' St. Nick, whose lives are so simple, as yet unsullied by the harsh realities of adulthood, who have maybe a few more years of innocence, a few more years to dream and experience true wonder, who will grow up soon enough and have to deal with mortality, and world issues, and growing old and wondering what happened to those carefree days, who will sit and wait and watch the clock tick away what's left of their desperate lives, wishing they had held onto the magic just a little bit longer... is Santa real, yes, or no?

SAM. Yes!!

ALEX. NO!

(Beat.)

CHRIS. What?

ALEX. I am so sorry, Sam, but...look, I really can't do this any longer...ya just gotta understand...there comes a time when you have to accept reality. Santa...Santa is, well...he's...

(CHRIS is aghast, SAM is stricken. They both back away from ALEX)

CHRIS. Yes, Alex? Would you care to tell Sam just what Santa is? Why don't you just tell us *all* the truth about Santa?

ALEX. Oh, come on! This is not fair!

CHRIS. No, I believe you have something to tell Sam. I think we'd *all* like to hear it.

SAM. Say it ain't so, Alex...

ALEX. You're making me out to be the bad guy here...

CHRIS. Really, Alex, I had no idea you were so... Santa CLAUSTrophobic.

ALEX. Oh, for cryin' out loud, this is...I can't believe this, this is absurd...I don't make the rules, this is *reality*. You're a fully grown adult...almost...All right, why don't *you* tell the truth about the Easter bunny?

CHRIS. Oh, Alex, I think you've done enough damage already today, don't you? Why don't you just stick to the point, and tell little Sammy here about "reality"?

SIDE 3: ALEX / SAM

CHRIS. And when they stopped, Scrooge was greeted by a strange and fearsome apparition...

ALEX / SCROOGE. Marley's Ghost!!

SAM / CLARENCE. (*Entering in an antique nightshirt and dark pork-pie hat:*) No, Clarence Oddbody, Angel Third Class. I'm here to help you George Bailey, and you can help me earn my wings!

ALEX / SCROOGE. (*Totally confused:*) What?!

SAM / CLARENCE. No one is born to be a failure, George. I'm here to show you that your life truly *has* been Wonderful.

ALEX. Sam, what are you doing! You're supposed to be the ghost of Jacob Marley!

SAM. It's a Wonderful Life...we forgot It's a Wonderful Life!

ALEX. But we're doing Christmas Carol! We are doing Christmas Carol. And I'm Ebenezer Scrooge. (*Back to Scrooge voice:*) And I don't believe in you one bit, *Jacob Marley*, you're probably just a bit of undigested beef...

SAM. But it's the *M.B.H.C.*!

ALEX. The what?!

SAM. The *Most* Beloved Holiday Classic!

ALEX. No! NO! You are *not* going to do this! We're doing Christmas Carol, and I'm Scrooge, and you're Marley, and you're... you're... (*Scrooge voice:*) ...you're probably here to tell me that Mankind was your business, and that after death, we all wear the chains we forged in life...

SAM / CLARENCE. I'm here to save you George Bailey, and to show you what Bedford Falls would've been like if you'd never been born.

ALEX. Stop calling me George!

SAM / CLARENCE. The Building and Loan has helped a lot of people, George, and you should be proud of that.

ALEX / SCROOGE. And then you'll probably tell me that I'll be visited by Three Spirits, when the clock strikes one...and that it's my only hope of redemption, right?

SAM / CLARENCE. You know, I'd really enjoy a flaming rum punch right about now, heavy on the cinnamon, light on the cloves -- now off with you my good man, and be lively...

(ALEX approaches menacingly)

Joseph! Joseph!...

(SAM exits)