

## 'Twas the night before Christmas by Sid River

<b>Background</b>	A Christmas tale of extremely ungrateful children who get taught a lesson at the hands of a reformed Scrooge, with a good few laughs built in. There are two versions of this, the original rhyming couplet poem so that you can see and hear its rhythm (p2-5), and the scripted version that you can use for performance and allocating parts (p6-11)
<b>Parts</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Narrators</b>	There are six of these scripted but you can increase or decrease the number and re-allocate the lines depending on how many parts you need for your group.
<b>Rodney</b>	A spoilt bully who treats his mother like a doormat.
<b>Agnes</b>	A snivelling wretch who fakes illness to get her own way.
<b>Priscilla</b>	A two-faced little schemer only interested in herself.
<b>Rodney's mother</b>	Downtrodden and miserable woman who ends up insane.
<b>Granddad</b>	Unfortunate old man who is a victim of a zimmer frame mugging.
<b>Removal men (3)</b>	Overalls and flat caps. They need to drag granddad off stage.
<b>Agnes's Mum &amp; Dad</b>	Spineless and gullible parents who are taken in by their daughter's 'hypocondria'.
<b>Priscilla's Dad</b>	An old fool who sits there and spoils his daughter.
<b>Scrooge</b>	Hero of this story. Give the kids some of the treatment he received at the hands of the ghosts to teach them a lesson.
<b>Scientist</b>	Pops in to offer Stephen Hawking type advice.
<b>Doctors (3)</b>	No words, just to come on and prod a patient in a suspiciously medical way.

**Notes** If more parts are needed, Scrooge's dramatic arrival is accompanied by music and dancers (*music from a James Bond film would be ideal*) Limited in numbers only by stage size.

## 'Twas the night before Christmas – POEM VERSION

'Twas the night before Christmas and all round the town  
the last minute shopping was getting us down.  
Rodney wants a Playstation. Agnes wants a Barbie.  
Priscilla just wants everything and all of them are mardy.  
Their Christmas lists are six feet long, their patience very short  
If they don't get their hearts desire, they're sure to stamp and snort!

### THE BULLY

Rodney has a way with words "If you loved me then you'd get it!  
Borrow money from the bank! Use your stupid cards of credit!  
A brand new surfboard if you please!" he pressed for all his worth.  
Next year he plans to bully more and end up with the surf!  
"OK! OK! Rodney love," His spineless mother pleaded.  
They sold their Granddad's zimmer frame to get the cash they needed.

All I want for Christmas is me two front teeth. All I want .....Aarghhh!  
*(Granddad's zimmer frame is snatched out from under him and he falls to the floor)*  
Never mind Granddad. Have a nice party hat!  
Go and put him under the tree!

### THE FAKER

Now Agnes, she could throw a fit to get the gifts she sought  
She'd fake emotions most extreme without a second thought  
Last year she faked bubonic plague complete with felt tip sores  
"Oh father dear, my last request...Is take me to the stores!  
I've seen a Cinderella dress, I t's only fifty quid!  
I'm poorly...and I'm sure you can't... refuse...an invalid!"  
Conniving little Agnes, knew how to break a heart.  
Her worried parents and their cash were very soon apart

### THE ACTOR

Priscilla was the Queen of Scheme, her plans were real hum-dingers  
She had her weak-kneed father wrapped around her little fingers.  
She soft-soaped him to part with dosh by squeezing out a tear.  
"My friends have all got brand new bikes," She'd grizzle in his beer.

"Mine is nearly six weeks old! Don't leave me to this fate!  
"You wouldn't want me picked on, for being out of date.  
Would you, Daddy?"  
"Of course not!" the old fool replied, falling for this stinker.  
She had him every single time, hook and line and sinker!

So there you have it "***twa*** ***onfont tereeb!***" (that's your actual French!)  
Our three disgusting little tykes, whose games create a stench  
Year after year, it's all you hear, "I want...I want . . . I want!"  
Ten years ago, we missed our chance to drown them in the font!

Night! Night!

HOWEVER!

Somewhere in the mists of time, a spirit slowly rises.  
His sleeping body gently stirs, he opens up his eyeses.  
This man and Christmas are as one; his following is huge.  
No, not the mythical Santa Claus. The one and only...Scrooge!

*Music and dance*

He learnt his lesson long ago, how not to be so mean.  
To grasp the Christmas spirit; to be a bit more keen.  
And now he watches our three kids and thinks into reverse  
"These three horrible ghouls," said he "a visit from ME they deserve!"  
So Ebenezer made his way to the to where the vampires lay  
He woke them with a terrible roar and flung off their duvet.

*(Scrooge was able to see all three at once by utilising a tear in the space-time continuum, just in case you thought the tale was getting a little far-fetched)*

Said little Priscilla, sleepy eyed "Santa -are you here?"

Said little Rodders from his pit "I s Christmas morning near?"

Said little Agnes from her bed "Did you bring my gift?"

Said little Ebenezer Scrooge "No way! Get out! Now shift!"

He took all three to the window and pointed to the dark  
"I will show you all your future if you continue with this lark!"  
Outside there came a swirling mist and all three stared in shock.  
"You first, young Rodney. Look and learn, and of this tale take stock!"

The scene unfolds. A prison cell. A woman sits alone.  
She sews to pass the time away, without TV or phone.  
"My mother!" shouted Rodney. "What's she done, the silly old fool?  
Forget to pay her bills? Stopped sending me to school?"  
"Alas far worse than that," said Scrooge "let me fill you in.  
For the way to beat a bully is to stand right up to him!  
One day she said "Enough is enough! I'm standing up to you!"  
She lost her head; and **did you in**; and made a Christmas stew!  
And now she sits with memories in a HM prison vault.  
Repeating this annoying phrase "I should have used more salt!"

(Rodney faints)

"And now to you, young Agnes. Are you feeling well?"  
Too ill to open presents? I think we'll have to sell!  
Look hard through that window. You see that padded cell?  
Do you recognise the face? Do the features ring a bell?"  
In there sits a girl whom the scientists find a puzzle.  
Absolutely barking mad, she needs to wear a muzzle.  
She faked so many illnesses that one day, she lost track.  
She began to believe them all herself and now there's no way back!  
Her Mom and Dad were worried sick, and in the house they locked her.  
Not knowing what to do for the best, they handed her over to doctors!  
Wail!

*(Agnes sits up a corner with her thumb in her mouth)*

And so on to Priscilla, where all the worlds a stage.  
A two faced little actress, marvellous for her age.  
You turned your life into a play, deceiving all around.  
Now take a look on the TV screen and then turn up the sound.  
"It's me. Am I now famous? Have I turned into a star?  
Does everyone adore me? I knew that I'd go far."  
Oh yes my dear, you did go far. Far too far, in fact.  
Look around the studio. Who watches while you act?  
There is no audience any more. They all saw through your plan.

No one listens. No one's fooled. They understand your scam.  
Your future is performing, a solo all the way.  
For you will act alone until your dying day!

*(kneels at front stage)*

"Please Mister Scrooge. Don't' go away. Stay and help us now.  
There must be something we can do. You can show us how."  
You must do what I did, and stop your wicked ways.  
It's not too late to change your fate and end with different days.  
So go back home and start afresh and make a difference do,  
For the only ones who can do this, are you and you and you!

We will!

Well that's a good night's work I think. I need to have a rest.  
But one more thing before I go. I'll say this now, it's best.  
These brats were really awful, on that we all agree.  
But seedlings only grow in the manner of the tree.  
How did they become, like the monsters you have seen  
We need to ask their parents why they seemed to be so keen  
To let them get away with the tantrums and demands.  
If only they'd been firmer then they just might understand  
That Christmas is for give, not take, and goodwill to all men  
And how you treat your near and dear comes round to you again.  
Now it's time to go I fear, but I hope I've put things right  
A merry Christmas to you all, and to you all, good night!

THE END

## 'Twas the night before Christmas - SCRIPT VERSION

Narrator 1: 'Twas the night before Christmas and all round the town  
The last minute shopping was getting us down.

Narrator 2: Rodney wants a Playstation. Agnes wants a Barbie.  
Priscilla just wants everything and all of them are mardy.

Narrator 3: Their Christmas lists are six feet long, their patience very short  
If they don't get their hearts desire, they're sure to stamp and snort!

Narrator 4: (*announces*) THE BULLY!

*A woman enters dressed in an apron and doing housework. A boy stomps on looking sulky.*

Narrator 5: Rodney has a way with words . . .

Rodney: If you loved me then you'd get it!  
Borrow money from the bank! Use your stupid cards of credit!  
A brand new surfboard if you please!"

Narrator 6: He pressed for all his worth.  
Next year he plans to bully more and end up with the surf!

Rodney's mother: OK! OK! Rodney love!

Narrator 1: . . . his spineless mother pleaded.

Narrator 2: They sold their Granddad's zimmer frame to get the cash they needed.

*Granddad shuffles on with a zimmer frame, singing to himself.*

Granddad: All I want for Christmas is me two front teeth. All I want  
.....Aarghhh!

*Granddad's zimmer frame is snatched out from under him by Rodney and he falls to the floor. 3 removal men in overalls enter. 2 grab Granddad by the legs and drag him off stage. The 3rd places a small party hat on his head.*

Removal man 1: Never mind Granddad. Have a nice party hat!  
Go and put him under the Christmas tree!

Narrator 3: (*announces*) THE FAKER!

*A girl with a spotty face enters in a dressing gown, carrying a hot water bottle and draped in a blanket. She sits or lies, propped up on a chair/bed. Two worried parents fuss round her, taking her pulse, mopping her brow and placing a thermometer into her mouth etc.*

Narrator 4: Now Agnes, she could throw a fit to get the gifts she sought,  
She'd fake emotions most extreme without a second thought.

Narrator 5: Last year she faked bubonic plague complete with felt tip sores!

Agnes: Oh father dear, my last request...I s take me to the stores!  
I've seen a Cinderella dress, I t's only fifty quid!  
I'm poorly...and I'm sure you can't... refuse...an invalid!

Narrator 6: Conniving little Agnes, knew how to break a heart.  
Her worried parents and their cash were very soon apart!

*All three exit. Mother holding Agnes up, father getting money from his wallet. Agnes snatches money and begins to count it.*

Narrator 1: (*announces*) THE ACTOR!

*A man is on stage on a chair reading a newspaper and drinking from a pint glass. A girl flounces in, dressed like a Barbie doll. She kneels next to him and clasps her hands, batting her eyelids. She pushed the newspaper out of the way so that he can see her smarmy smile.*

Narrator 2: Priscilla was the Queen of Scheme, her plans were real hum-  
dingers  
She had her weak-kneed father wrapped around her little fingers.  
She soft-soaped him to part with dosh by squeezing out a tear.

Priscilla: My friends have all got brand new bikes!

Narrator 3: She'd grizzle in his beer

Priscilla: Mine is nearly six weeks old! Don't leave me to this fate!  
You wouldn't want me picked on, for being out of date.  
Would you, Daddy?

Priscilla's  
father: Of course not!

Narrator 4: . . . the old fool replied, falling for this stinker.  
She had him every single time, hook and line and sinker!

*Both exit arm in arm. As she leaves, Priscilla winks at the audi-  
ence.*

Narrator 5: So there you have it "twa onfont terr-ee-bla"  
That's your actual French.

Narrator 6: Our three disgusting little tykes, whose games create a stench  
Year after year, it's all you hear, "I want...I want. . . I want!"

Narrator 1: Ten years ago, we missed our chance to drown them in the font!  
Night! Night! (*All narrators sit and pause*)

Narrator 2: (*Standing*) HOWEVER!

Narrator 3: (*Overly dramatic voice*) Somewhere in the mists of time, a spirit  
slowly rises.  
His sleeping body gently stirs, he opens up his eyeses.

Narrator 4: This man and Christmas are as one; his following is huge.  
No, not the mythical Santa Claus. The one and only...Scrooge!  
*Music begins and dancers enter stage. They mask a figure in a top hat and Victorian coat. Scrooge is revealed during the dance to James Bond/dramatic music. Dancers exit and the three children enter and lie under a big blanket or duvet in the middle of the stage.*

Narrator 5: He learnt his lesson long ago, how not to be so mean.  
To grasp the Christmas spirit; to be a bit more keen.

Narrator 6: And now he watches our three kids and thinks into reverse

Scrooge: These three horrible ghouls. . .

Narrator 1: . . . said he . . .

Scrooge: . . .a visit from ME they deserve!

Narrator 2: So Ebenezer made his way to the to where the vampires lay  
He woke them with a terrible roar and flung off their duvet.

Scientist: (*Enters side of stage, all actors on stage freeze*) Scrooge was  
able to see all three at once by utilising a tear in the space-time  
continuum, just in case you thought the tale was getting a little  
far-fetched!

Narrator 3: Said little Priscilla, sleepy eyed . . .

Priscilla: Santa -are you here?

Narrator 4: Said little Rodders from his pit. . .

Rodney: Is Christmas morning near?

Narrator 5: Said little Agnes from her bed . . .

Agnes: Did you bring my gift?

Narrator 6: Said little Ebenezer Scrooge . . .

Scrooge: No way! Get out! Now shift!

Narrator 1: He took all three to the window and pointed to the dark

Scrooge: I will show you all your future if you continue with this lark!

Narrator 2: Outside there came a swirling mist and all three stared in shock.

Scrooge: You first, young Rodney. Look and learn, and of this tale take stock!

*Rodney's mother enters wearing striped pyjamas or overalls. She is sewing a blanket and staring into distance.*

Narrator 3: The scene unfolds. A prison cell. A woman sits alone.  
She sews to pass the time away, without TV or phone.

Rodney: My mother

Narrator 4: shouted Rodney.

Rodney: What's she done, the silly old fool?  
Forget to pay her bills? Stopped sending me to school?

Scrooge: Alas far worse than that. . .

Narrator 5: said Scrooge

Scrooge: . . . let me fill you in.  
For the way to beat a bully is to stand right up to him!  
One day she said . . .

Rodney's mother: Enough is enough! I'm standing up to you!

Scrooge: She lost her head; and ***DID YOU IN***, and made a Christmas stew!

Narrator 6: And now she sits with memories in a HM prison vault.  
Repeating this annoying phrase . . .

Rodney's mother: (*she stands and shout into distance*) I should have used more salt!

*Rodney faints at edge of stage and stays there. Mother exits*

Scrooge: And now to you, young Agnes. Are you feeling well?"  
Too ill to open presents? I think we'll have to sell!  
Look hard through that window. You see that padded cell?  
Do you recognise the face? Do the features ring a bell?

*Agnes sits on the chair in the middle of the stage and wraps her arms around her body, like she's wearing a straight jacket. She rocks backwards and forwards and giggles hysterically.*

Narrator 1: In there sits a girl whom the scientists find a puzzle.  
Absolutely barking mad, she needs to wear a muzzle.

Narrator 2: She faked so many illnesses that one day, she lost track.  
She began to believe them all herself and now there's no way back!

Narrator 3: Her Mom and Dad were worried sick, and in the house they locked her.  
Not knowing what to do for the best, they handed her over to doctors!

*3 doctors enter and proceed to prod and examine Agnes. One puts a surgical mask on her. They shake their heads and look at each other. Her Mum and Dad stand at the back looking upset.*

Agnes: Wail!

*Agnes runs and sits up a corner with her thumb in her mouth. A box painted like a TV is placed on the corner of stage nearest audience.*

Narrator 4: And so on to Priscilla, where all the worlds a stage.  
A two faced little actress, marvellous for her age.

Scrooge: You turned your life into a play, deceiving all around.  
Now take a look on the TV screen and then turn up the sound.

Priscilla: *(She walks towards the TV and kneels in front of it)* It's me. Am I now famous? Have I turned into a star?  
Does everyone adore me? I knew that I'd go far.

Narrator 5: Oh yes my dear, you did go far. Far too far, in fact.  
Look around the studio. Who watches while you act?

*She walks slowly towards centre stage. The smile slowly disappears and the hands drop to her sides.*

Narrator 6: There is no audience any more. They all saw through your plan.  
No one listens. No one's fooled. They understand your scam.

Scrooge: Your future is performing, a solo all the way.  
For you will act alone until your dying day!

*She drops to her knees and puts her head in her hands. Scrooge pause and then turns to leave. Rodney jumps up from the side of the stage and stops him.*

Rodney: Please Mister Scrooge. Don't go away. Stay and help us now.

Agnes: There must be something we can do. You can show us how.

Scrooge: You must do what I did, and stop your wicked ways.  
It's not too late to change your fate and end with different days.  
So go back home and start afresh and make a difference do,  
For the only ones who can do this, (*he points to each in turn*) are  
you . . . and you . . . and you!

Priscilla: (*standing*) We will!

Scrooge: Well that's a good night's work I think. I need to have a rest.  
But one more thing before I go. I'll say this now, it's best.  
These brats were really awful, on that we all agree.  
But seedlings only grow in the manner of the tree.  
How did they become, like the monsters you have seen  
We need to ask their parents why they seemed to be so keen  
To let them get away with the tantrums and demands.  
If only they'd been firmer then they just might understand  
That Christmas is for give, not take, and goodwill to all men  
And how you treat your near and dear comes round to you again.  
Now it's time to go I fear, but I hope I've put things right

Whole cast: A merry Christmas to you all, and to you all, good night!

*End with an uplifting Christmas song/carol, during which, dancers re-appear and characters from the cast throw artificial snow (shredded paper!) over the audience. Young kids in the front row love this!*