

A CHRISTMAS CAROL, Scene 3

MARTHA, PETER, BELINDA, MRS. CRATCHIT, BOB CRATCHIT and TIM

PETER *(to MRS. CRATCHIT)*

Can I tell him, mother?

MRS. CRATCHIT

Go ahead, Peter.

PETER

Martha's not coming, father.

CRATCHIT

What? Why?

BELINDA

She got her hand chopped up in the machine and it was bloody and everyone screamed and now she's got no fingers!

CRATCHIT

What!?

MRS. CRATCHIT

Belinda! No! NO! Bob, she's fibbing. Belinda Cratchit! *(PETER is in hysterics. MARTHA is laughing under the table)*

TIM

There's Martha, under the table.

MRS. CRATCHIT

What has gotten into you?

BELINDA

It was just a joke.

CRATCHIT *(laughing despite himself)*

A rather sinister joke.

TIM

Have you got all your fingers, Martha? *(MARTHA crawls out and shows her digits to TIM)*

MARTHA

Of course, I do, Tim.

TIM

I knew it!

CRATCHIT

Merry Christmas, my dear Martha.

MARTHA

Merry Christmas, Father.

MRS. CRATCHIT

Children. Thank you for the amusement, please go and get the punch. Give us some peace for a moment.