

BELLE

It matters little. To you: very little. Another Idol has displaced me.

YOUNG SCROOGE

What Idol could displace *you*?

BELLE

A golden one.

YOUNG SCROOGE

Belle, this is the hypocritical dealings of the world! There is nothing on which it is so stern as those in poverty and at the same time “condemns” with such severity one’s pursuit of wealth!

BELLE

Oh, Ebenezer, you fear the world too much. And I have watched your nobler aspirations gradually fall off one by one. Now you weigh everything according to your new master passion: this “pursuit of wealth.”

YOUNG SCROOGE

What then? If I have grown so much *wiser*—so ‘changed’ as you say—what then?— I am not changed towards you. (*Noting her silence.*) Am I?

BELLE

Yes, you *have* changed. When we were engaged, we were both of us young and poor; contended to be so and happy in that contentment. But, now—

MUSIC: May You Be Happy

YOUNG SCROOGE

—What?

BELLE

Oh, Ebenezer, your own feelings must tell you that you are not what you were. But, *I* am. I have thought carefully of this, and I have come to the regrettable conclusion that I must release you of your promise and engagement.

YOUNG SCROOGE

Release me? Have I ever sought release?

BELLE

Oh, Ebenezer, in words no. But, if we were *not* engaged, and you *were* free, would you seek me out now? As I am? A girl with neither the wealth nor social standing you desire?

YOUNG SCROOGE is silent.

SCROOGE

Yes. Yes. I would.

*She, of course, doesn't hear SCROOGE's line but reacts to
YOUNG SCROOGE'S silence.*

BELLE

As I thought. So, my dear: I release you. But with a full heart, for the
love of him you once were.

YOUNG SCROOGE remains silent.

May you be happy in the life you have chosen!