

# THE FINAL CAROL

by D. Brent Holland

Copyright © 2020 by D. Brent Holland, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-64479-095-3

**CAUTION:** Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

**RIGHTS RESERVED:** All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS:** All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

*Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.*

**AUTHOR CREDIT:** All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

**PUBLISHER CREDIT:** Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: *Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers LLC.*

**COPYING:** Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

**BROOKLYN PUBLISHERS LLC**  
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406  
TOLL FREE (888) 473-8521 • FAX (319) 368-8011

# THE FINAL CAROL

by D. Brent Holland

**SYNOPSIS:** Jacob Marley has one link to go on his chain... a chain that loses a single link when he helps a person repent and change their ways. Since the first link disappeared when Scrooge was saved, Jacob has been on a mission to earn his own redemption. It's Christmas and Jacob has chosen Jamie Edwards, an especially entitled high school student who is in desperate need of a life intervention. However, Jamie is turning out to be a hard nut to crack. Can Jacob help Jamie see the truth and make her change her ways, or is he doomed to wait another year?

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(8 females, 5 males, 5-8 either; 0-5 extras)*

JAMIE (f).....	A typical high school “mean girl” or is she? <i>(275 lines)</i>
ALEXA (f).....	Cheerleader, rich girl. Thoroughly unlikeable. <i>(45 lines)</i>
BRANDI (f).....	Alexa’s best friend and flunky. Not a nice person. <i>(12 lines)</i>
ALLISON (f).....	Another of the “mean girls.” <i>(12 lines)</i>
BEN (m).....	A genuinely nice guy, who is not that popular, but very good at math. <i>(43 lines)</i>
MOM (f).....	Jamie and Savannah’s mother. Has a temper when pushed. <i>(42 lines)</i>
DAD (m).....	Jamie and Savannah’s father. Easy going and family oriented. <i>(28 lines)</i>
SAVANNAH (f).....	Jamie’s 8 <sup>th</sup> grade sister. Very loving but with a snarky side. <i>(34 lines)</i>

JACOB MARLEY (m) .....	THAT Jacob Marley. 200 years later and he is finally working the last link off of his chain. (115 lines)
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST (m/f).....	Snarky, typical Ghost of Christmas Past type. (32 lines)
YOUNG JAMIE (f) .....	A younger version of the main character. (28 lines)
SARAH (f).....	Jamie's former best friend. A nice person. (26 lines)
BRAD (m).....	Jamie's first real crush, also Sarah's first crush. (23 lines)
MRS. ANDERSON (m/f) .....	An overworked high school English teacher. (10 lines)
BARTENDER (m/f) .....	The owner/operator of a local pub. (9 lines)
PERSON (m/f).....	Just a person at the local pub. (3 lines)
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT(m/f) .....	Big personality with a crude sense of humor. (36 lines)
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE (m/f).....	The silent type. (Non-Speaking.)
BRETT (m).....	Savannah's boyfriend from the future. Can be doubled with the Bartender. (3 lines)
CASHIER (m/f).....	A cashier at a Taco Champ. Can double with Mrs. Anderson. (16 lines)
TREVOR (m/f).....	A cook at a Taco Champ. Can double with Person. (8 lines)
EXTRAS (m/f).....	If desired, extras may be used for mall and school scene. (Non-Speaking)

**DURATION:** 60 minutes.

**TIME:** This Christmas.

**SETTING:** Various Locations (mall, library, living room, bedroom, school, bar, and Taco Champ.)

### COSTUMES

Most of the characters in this show are dressed in contemporary clothing, with exceptions and additions below:

JAMIE – Jacket

BEN – Santa hat

JACOB MARLEY – dressed in 1830’s apparel. Belt with one chain link attached (chain link must be removable.) A robe or hood to mirror Future’s costume.

PAST and PRESENT – costume should stand out, but is open to interpretation.

FUTURE – dressed in all black with an obscured head.

CASHIER and TREVOR – Taco Champ apron or uniform.

### SET

Jamie’s Bedroom is a constant throughout the play, so that can remain as the rest of the set transitions. Jamie’s Bedroom consists of a bed with blankets and pillows and a nightstand. The multiple locations can be represented by a single set piece and/or background flat. Transitioning set pieces are listed below:

Library: Table and chairs

Bar: Bar and several stools

Taco Champ: Counter and register

Crib Room: Baby’s crib

Restaurant: Table and chairs

### PROPS

- six cell phones
- shopping bags
- gift for Dad, wrapped (collectors glass)
- gift for Mom, wrapped (bracelet)
- gift for Savannah, wrapped (phone)
- gift for Jamie, wrapped (phone)

- baby
- jump rope
- gift for Savannah, wrapped (handheld game, gift card)
- wrapped presents
- bag of Taco Champ
- Taco Champ hat, shirt, and nametag

### **SOUND EFFECTS**

- eerie music
- phone ring
- phone alarm
- annoying phone alarm song
- Sarah's recording

### **PRODUCTION NOTES**

**SARAH'S RECORDING:** The recording is a very innocent scene. It is of Sarah sleep talking. Sarah's voice is heard, she mumbles for a second, then says clearly "I love you Brad. I love you soooo much...." Then some more mumbling and "I do, I love you more than anything".

### **AUTHOR'S NOTES**

When we did this show at Laney High School (Christmas of 2019) we set Jamie's bed up on the stage and put three separate stations. One had the mall/restaurant, one had the School/Library, and the other was the living room/Taco Champ. This is just an idea, but it allowed us to change sets quickly by using a reversible flat and a set piece or two in each area.

**PREMIERE PRODUCTION**

THE FINAL CAROL premiered at Laney High School in Wilmington, North Carolina with the following cast:

JAMIE .....	Killian Spangler
ALEXA .....	Bella Myers
BRANDI.....	Cassidy Fitz-Randolph
ALLISON .....	Autumn Lee-Reed
BEN .....	Nathan Mroz
MOM.....	Madison Jackson
DAD .....	Jacob Penny
SAVANNAH.....	Autumn Ash
JACOB MARLEY.....	Caleb Caron
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST .....	Antanzia Ellerby
YOUNG JAMIE .....	Ella Van Slyke
SARAH .....	Allie Pooley
BRAD.....	Joshua McGhee
MRS. ANDERSON .....	Bella Stalls
BARTENDER .....	Nate Contreras
PERSON.....	Doug Hernandez
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT.....	Hyrum Van Slyke
GHOST OF CHRISTMAS FUTURE.....	Nicholas Mathis
BRETT .....	Nate Contreras
CASHIER.....	Zayda Chatfield
TREVOR.....	Vincent Costagliola

**AT START:** *As the lights come up JAMIE, ALEXA, BRANDI and ALLISON are talking. They have been shopping and are carrying bags.*

**JAMIE:** So remember when Mrs. Anderson gave me a detention for facetimeing Mark in class?

**BRANDI:** Yeah?

**JAMIE:** Well, when I didn't serve it, she mailed a note home and my parents got it today. They freaked again. I can't believe I got a note from school the day before Christmas.

**ALEXA:** You tell them to chill?

**JAMIE:** Yeah, but they want to talk about it when I get home. Mrs. Anderson is the worst.

**ALEXA:** I hate that class. She just doesn't get it.

**JAMIE:** Totally.

**BRANDI:** *(Indignantly.)* I didn't do my homework in there last week, and she gave me a zero.

**ALLISON:** Is she allowed to do that?

**BRANDI:** I'm looking into it. I don't think the school system allows them to give us zeros any more.

**JAMIE:** The whole grading scale is stupid. I don't know why we need math anyways.

**ALEXA:** Your mom is still making you go to tutoring?

**JAMIE:** Yeah. I got my grade up to a C, but they're still making me go.

**ALLISON:** I would die if I had to go to tutoring.

**JAMIE:** It's a pain. Ben's really extra.

**ALEXA:** Ben Weir? I didn't know you had to be tutored by Ben.

**JAMIE:** He's really good at math.

**ALEXA:** Yeah, but he's weird.

**BRANDI:** Big time weird.

**ALEXA:** You have to spend two hours a week with Weird Ben Weir?

**JAMIE:** *(Not enjoying this conversation.)* Yes. And if I don't go now, I'm going to be late.

**ALLISON:** But it's Christmas break!

**BRANDI:** Wait... your parents are making you get tutored on Christmas Eve day??

**JAMIE:** Shut up, Brandi. It's part of the deal for getting the new phone I want for Christmas. I don't care about my math grade.

**ALEXA:** Your parents totally suck.

**JAMIE:** Tell me about it.

**ALLISON:** Well have fun with Weird Ben Weir!

*JAMIE makes a rude gesture as she crosses the stage to the next scene where a table is set up in the library. The first scene fades and ALEXA, ALLISON, and BRANDI exit. BEN is sitting at the table.*

**BEN:** *(Seeing JAMIE.)* Hey, Jamie!

**JAMIE:** Hey, Ben.

**BEN:** Ready to get calculating?

**JAMIE:** It's Christmas Eve day, what do you think?

**BEN:** *(Putting on a Santa Hat.)* Ho, Ho, Ho! *(Pause.)* Well, that's what I heard about you anyways.

*JAMIE is taken aback for a minute until BEN starts to laugh good naturedly.*

**BEN:** Just kidding. Like I would know, right?

**JAMIE:** What?

**BEN:** *(Seeing that she misunderstood.)* Not that I would KNOW... I meant like not that anyone would have told me one way or the other. Weird Ben isn't in the know... ya know?

**JAMIE:** Uh... yeah. OK.

**BEN:** Well, this just got awkward. How about we talk about math?

**JAMIE:** Wait... you know people call you Weird Ben?

**BEN:** Of course, I do. You know people call you hatchet head, right?

**JAMIE:** *(Absorbing this.)* Who calls me hatchet head?

**BEN:** *(Smiling.)* Nah, no one calls you that. *(Laughs.)*

**JAMIE:** *(Loosening up some.)* It's a good thing... if you had given me some names, there a few people who wouldn't have made it to Christmas.

**BEN:** Local girl arrested after misunderstanding about nickname. Sounds like a good "Florida man" story.

**JAMIE:** Florida man?

**BEN:** You know... every day in the news... Florida man arrested for robbing bank dressed like a lobster. Florida man found naked in Burger King complaining about having it his way... there's a whole website about Florida man!

**JAMIE:** There is?

**BEN:** *(Pulling out his phone.)* Yeah. Ol' Florida-man is a superhero legend. He's done all kinds of things.

**JAMIE:** *(Reading aloud.)* Florida man arrested for trying to ride a live camel into Hard Rock Stadium. *(Laughs.)* Look at the picture!

**BEN:** Well, I'm glad I've enlightened you to the wonders of Florida Man. Keep looking at that while I hit the bathroom real quick

**JAMIE:** You won't need your phone?

**BEN:** Nah, I can actually go to the bathroom without it.

**JAMIE:** *(Laughs.)* Weirdo.

*BEN exits. A few moments pass and SFX: JAMIE'S phone rings. It's ALEXA. On a different part of the stage, lights up on ALEXA.*

**JAMIE:** Hello?

**ALEXA:** You getting out of tutoring any time soon?

**JAMIE:** I just got here.

**ALEXA:** Yeah, but there are all kinds of sales going on at the mall. You don't want to miss this.

**JAMIE:** My parents are paying for this and if I bail on it, it will be even worse when I get home. They're already mad about the letter they got today.

**ALEXA:** Look... if you don't want to go, all you have to do is say so. You must really like hanging out with Weird Ben.

*BEN enters but stops at the door seeing that JAMIE is on the phone.*

**JAMIE:** Shut up. If my parents didn't make me do this, there's no way I would be caught dead with this guy.

*BEN hears this.*

**JAMIE:** But I have to stay whether I want to or not.

**ALEXA:** Well, try not to have too much fun! Say hey to the freak for me!

*Lights out on ALEXA, she exits. BEN backs out of the room and gives it a few seconds then enters.*

**JAMIE:** *(Seeing BEN.)* Florida man is pretty epic.

**BEN:** *(Is hurt but not showing it.)* Yeah, he's one of my favorites.

**JAMIE:** *(Being nice.)* So, what math do you plan to cram into my head tonight?

**BEN:** Well, I was just thinking about that. Do you want to just take the night off?

**JAMIE:** Really?

**BEN:** Uh... yeah. I mean, it's Christmas Eve and all...

**JAMIE:** Are you OK, Ben?

**BEN:** Yeah... it's just that, you know there's a lot going on... I'm sure you have a lot of things you'd rather be doing than sitting here with me, doing math.

**JAMIE:** For real?

**BEN:** Yeah. I'll call your parents and tell them that I'm sick and can't make it so they don't pay me or anything...

*Before he has finished that sentence, JAMIE has her phone out and has ALEXA on the line.*

**JAMIE:** Hey girl! I'll be at the mall in ten! Where you going to be?  
*(Exiting.)*

**BEN:** *(As JAMIE leaves.)* Merry Christmas, Jamie...

*BEN exits as the lights go out on the library. The next scene is in the living room of Jamie's family's home. MOM, DAD, and SAVANNAH, are waiting as JAMIE enters. There are gifts stacked, waiting to be opened.*

**MOM:** Merry Christmas!

**SAVANNAH:** Where have you been? We usually start at six!

**JAMIE:** I've been busy.

**MOM:** Shopping?

**SAVANNAH:** For presents?

**JAMIE:** No... there were sales at the mall.

**DAD:** Ben called and let us know that he was too sick to tutor you today. You could have let us know before you headed out to the mall.

**JAMIE:** Since when do I have to check in all the time?

**MOM:** It's Christmas Eve, Jamie... we have traditions. (*Lightening up.*) But you're home and that's what matters!

**SAVANNAH:** And it's time for presents!

**MOM:** Just one tonight! The rest are for Christmas morning!

*JAMIE takes her jacket off as MOM hands out presents.*

**SAVANNAH:** I want Dad to go first!

**DAD:** Me?

**MOM:** We're really excited for you to open it!

**JAMIE:** (*To SAVANNAH.*) What did we get him?

*SAVANNAH ignores JAMIE.*

**SAVANNAH:** Open it!

*DAD opens his gift.*

**DAD:** You didn't!

**SAVANNAH:** We did!

**JAMIE:** Yeah... we did...

*DAD pulls out his gift, which is a collector's glass.*

**DAD:** Where on earth did you find the last one I needed?

**MOM:** Savannah saw it on the shelf of this little resale shop!

**DAD:** There has never been one for sale on ebay! This thing is priceless to me!

**MOM:** (*Excited.*) You like it?

*DAD jumps up and hugs MOM.*

**DAD:** Like it? I've been looking for one for two years!

*DAD hugs SAVANNAH, who squeals, and then JAMIE, who seems lost.*

**SAVANNAH:** Now it's Mom's turn!

*MOM opens her gift. It's a bracelet.*

**MOM:** *(Stunned.)* Good lord, how much did you spend on this?

**DAD:** Not nearly as much as you're worth to us.

**SAVANNAH:** Dad and I shopped all day trying to find the perfect one.

**MOM:** Well, you more than succeeded. It's beautiful!

**DAD:** I'm so glad you like it. Does it fit?

**MOM:** *(Puts it on.)* Perfectly!

**DAD:** Now it's your turn.

**SAVANNAH:** Me?

**MOM:** Go ahead.

*SAVANNAH opens her present and when almost done starts to have a happy attack.*

**SAVANNAH:** Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God!!

**JAMIE:** *(Looking at MOM and DAD.)* What did you get her?

**SAVANNAH:** *(Taking it out.)* They got me a new phone!! I can finally get rid of the battle axe!

**MOM:** The battle axe has been a good phone, but it was time. It's had three owners.

**SAVANNAH:** *(Hugging them both.)* Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you! You're the best!

**JAMIE:** *(With a little attitude.)* I had to wait until high school to get a brand new phone.

**MOM:** You did, but they had a special going on and since you held up your end of the deal on tutoring... *(Indicating the package.)*

**JAMIE:** *(Perking up a bit.)* Is this it?

**DAD:** *(Innocently.)* Is it what?

**JAMIE:** It is, isn't it! *(Tears into the package.)*

**MOM:** We had to sign a new contract, but we got the protection plan on both phones.

**JAMIE:** *(Getting to the phone.)* I'm so excited! *(Takes it out of the box and is confused.)* Hold on...

**MOM:** What?

**JAMIE:** You got me the 305A?

**MOM:** Yes. That's the one you wanted right?

**JAMIE:** I asked for the 305H.

**DAD:** What's the difference?

**JAMIE:** The H is pink and has the better camera... I really wanted the H.

**SAVANNAH:** The camera on the H isn't that much better!

**JAMIE:** Did anyone ask you?

**SAVANNAH:** I got a 202 and I love it!

**JAMIE:** Well good for you!

**MOM:** You're being ungrateful, Jamie.

**JAMIE:** (*Building steam.*) I've been going to tutoring for weeks and have been working myself to death...

**SAVANNAH:** For what, a C? Way to put the hours in...

**JAMIE:** Shut up, Savannah!

**SAVANNAH:** I'm surprised you haven't had an aneurysm from all that math...

**DAD:** That'll be enough.

**JAMIE:** Can I take it back?

**MOM:** No. It's already programmed and set up for you.

**JAMIE:** Well, I don't want it. I want the H.

**DAD:** It's the one with the biggest hard drive and it's brand new.

**JAMIE:** But it's not the one I worked for.

**DAD:** Worked for? This is a gift!

**MOM:** We ought to take it back.

**JAMIE:** And get the H?

**MOM:** (*Angry.*) No! And tell them to keep it! I'm starting to think that maybe you should be paying for your own phone!

**JAMIE:** (*Livid.*) Fine, maybe I will!

**SAVANNAH:** Gonna have to get a job first...

**JAMIE:** (*Turning on SAVANNAH.*) I might go do that!

*SAVANNAH laughs.*

**JAMIE:** May I go to my room?

**MOM:** Maybe you should.

**JAMIE:** Fine!

**MOM:** Fine!

**SAVANNAH:** (*As JAMIE storms off.*) Phone?

**JAMIE:** *(Screaming, as she exits.)* Take it back!

*Lights out on MOM, DAD, and SAVANNAH as JAMIE exits. The next scene is in her bedroom, represented by a bed in a section of the stage. She goes to her bed, throws her pillow in anger and lays on the bed.*

**JAMIE:** *(Typing into her phone.)* Going to bed early.  
#disappointingchristmas #didntgetwhatiwant #whyme.

*The lights fade as JAMIE falls asleep. The lights dim and SFX: eerie music plays. JAMIE wakes up.*

**JAMIE:** Hello? Savannah? Is that you? I'm not in the mood! *(No answer. She goes to lay down again, but then there is a noise.)*  
Seriously... if that's you Savannah... it's not funny!

*Suddenly JACOB MARLEY appears and turns on the light. He is dressed in old clothes but the chains are gone... minus one single link.*

**MARLEY:** *(Quickly.)* Don't scream!

*JAMIE screams.*

**MARLEY:** *(Annoyed.)* I said don't scream!

**JAMIE:** *(Shouting.)* Dad! Help! There's a man in my room!

**MARLEY:** They can't hear you.

**JAMIE:** Did you kill my parents??

**MARLEY:** *(Taken aback.)* No. Of course not. What do I look like?

**JAMIE:** You look like a creepy old man standing in a teenage girl's room! *(Yelling.)* Daaaaaaadddd!

**MARLEY:** *(Thinking.)* I guess that is what I look like. *(Approaching.)*  
Look, can you calm down for a minute?

**JAMIE:** Stay over there!

**MARLEY:** Fine, I'll stay over here. Just calm down.

**JAMIE:** What did you do to my parents?

**MARLEY:** Nothing. I promise.

**JAMIE:** Then why aren't they coming?

**MARLEY:** Because they can't hear you.

**JAMIE:** And why can't they hear me?

**MARLEY:** Magic. It's tough to explain the exact way it works, but it's definitely magic.

*JAMIE shoots MARLEY a look.*

**MARLEY:** What?

**JAMIE:** (*Shouting.*) Dad! An old man dressed like he's from the 1500's is in my room claiming to be a magician!

**MARLEY:** (*Aggravated.*) Good grief. Look, your parents are asleep and will stay that way. (*Quickly.*) Not forever... I didn't kill them. I promise. Also, these clothes are from the 1820's, not 1500's. I take it you're not much on history... and that part about me being a magician...

**JAMIE:** What do you want from me?

**MARLEY:** Ah! Finally back on script!

**JAMIE:** What?

**MARLEY:** Sorry. Can you repeat that last line again?

**JAMIE:** What?

**MARLEY:** Not that one... the one before.

**JAMIE:** Huh?

**MARLEY:** Oh, never mind. (*Walks around behind JAMIE and imitates her voice.*) What do you want from me? (*Then crosses quickly back to his spot and in an ominous voice.*) MUCH!

**JAMIE:** Much? You want much from me?

**MARLEY:** Yes.

**JAMIE:** I'm not into old guys.

**MARLEY:** (*Confused.*) What? No. That's not what I mean at all.

**JAMIE:** You're a guy, you're in my room and you've cast some kind of spell on my parents.

**MARLEY:** You're totally not my type.

**JAMIE:** Not your type? (*Offended.*) What do you mean by that?

**MARLEY:** Nothing.

**JAMIE:** (*Standing.*) Nothing? No seriously... what's wrong with me? Are you calling me ugly?

**MARLEY:** We don't have time for this.

**JAMIE:** Answer the question!

**MARLEY:** *(This line can be altered if needed.)* Fine. Well, you are a little thin for me. I like my girls to be a bit... meatier.

**JAMIE:** Meatier?

**MARLEY:** And I like a big back yard.

**JAMIE:** Ew!

**MARLEY:** You asked. *(Pause.)* But at least you're not screaming any more.

**JAMIE:** That's because this is a dream.

**MARLEY:** No, it isn't. This is real.

**JAMIE:** Prove it.

**MARLEY:** Prove it? Well... OK... do you normally talk about dreaming when you are actually in a dream?

**JAMIE:** Maybe... it could happen.

**MARLEY:** And when dreaming, do you—

**JAMIE:** *(Interrupting.)* You should probably quit while you're ahead.

**MARLEY:** What do you mean by that?

**JAMIE:** Because the fact that I think I'm dreaming is the only thing that's keeping me from screaming again.

**MARLEY:** OK. Gotcha.

**JAMIE:** So... dream dude from the 1800's... what are you here for?

**MARLEY:** I'm here for you, Jamie Edwards.

*JAMIE shoots MARLEY a look.*

**MARLEY:** And not in THAT way. *(Beat.)* I have come to warn you to change your ways, to avoid the fate that I have suffered for almost 200 years.

**JAMIE:** Suffered? How?

**MARLEY:** *(Eerily.)* I wear the chain I forged in life. I made it link by link, yard by yard. I have worn this chain since drawing my final breath. I have been doomed to walk the earth, watching but never experiencing the joy I should have felt in life. I have worn this chain...

**JAMIE:** What chain?

**MARLEY:** *(Breaking out of the ghostly rhetoric.)* I was about to get to that. Give me a second.

**JAMIE:** You keep talking about a chain, but I don't see one.

**MARLEY:** It's here! (*Wiggles a single link of chain attached to his belt.*)

**JAMIE:** That's not much of a chain. Am I supposed to feel sorry for you because you've had to carry THAT around?

**MARLEY:** It used to be bigger!

**JAMIE:** I hear that happens when you get older.

**MARLEY:** Stop joking around! This is serious!

**JAMIE:** Fine! So you're dead and you've been tormented by that key ring you wear on your belt.

**MARLEY:** It's not a key ring. It used to be a chain that was many, many yards long!

**JAMIE:** Used to be? What happened to it?

**MARLEY:** It's a long story really, but in short... about 190 years ago I was given the chance to help redeem my old business partner, Ebenezer Scrooge.

**JAMIE:** Ebenezer Scrooge? That name sucks. Did he go by Eb?

**MARLEY:** No, he went by Ebenezer. Or Mr. Scrooge.

**JAMIE:** Did all people back in the 1820's have silly sounding names? What's your name?

**MARLEY:** I'm Jacob.

**JAMIE:** Got a last name, Jacob?

**MARLEY:** It's Jacob Marley.

**JAMIE:** Well, that's not nearly as bad as Ebenezer Scrooge.

**MARLEY:** Uh... thanks. Can I finish now?

**JAMIE:** Yeah, sure. I guess.

**MARLEY:** Anyway... on Christmas Eve, 1828, I came in the form of this ghost, with a much, much bigger chain and with the help of three spirits changed the destiny of my friend and helped him learn the true meaning of Christmas.

**JAMIE:** Is that why you're here?

**MARLEY:** Basically.

**JAMIE:** I know what Christmas means.

**MARLEY:** You know what the holiday means, but there is something missing in your heart, Jamie Edwards. You have already started forging your own chain, although you won't be able to see or feel it until after you die.

**JAMIE:** OK.

**MARLEY:** OK? Doesn't it bother you?

**JAMIE:** You said your chain was huge, but now you're doing pretty well. It can't be that bad.

**MARLEY:** I have worked tirelessly for almost two centuries to rid my body of that heavy chain.

**JAMIE:** How'd you do it?

**MARLEY:** Well... after getting Ebenezer to see the light, I noticed my chain had lost one of its links. Apparently by doing good, I can undo all of the evil I did in life. So, all through the year I started looking at people... and I found another candidate to help and it worked and I lost another link.

**JAMIE:** And you only have one link left? That's a lot of Christmases.

**MARLEY:** After a few years, I realized that just doing this on Christmas wasn't going to be enough. I started visiting people on Easter, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. Sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't. On certain holiday's people just couldn't take us seriously.

*GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST enters.*

**PAST:** Remember when we tried to get that guy to learn the true meaning of Columbus Day? (*Spooky.*) I am the Ghost of Columbus Day Past!

**MARLEY:** You're not on yet!

**JAMIE:** Who the hell was that?

**MARLEY:** Don't worry about her... you'll meet her in a bit.

**PAST:** So I should go?

**MARLEY:** Yes!

*PAST exits.*

**MARLEY:** Sometimes I succeeded and my chain grew lighter... sometimes I failed and it stayed the same. But tonight... on this Christmas Eve, I have the chance to rid myself of this last piece!

**JAMIE:** So, you're supposed to get me to... do what?

**MARLEY:** Tonight you will see the error of your ways and change the dark road you are going down. Three ghosts will visit you this night... the first at the strike of one.

*PAST enters.*

**PAST:** I'm already here. Can we just do it now?

**MARLEY:** Stick to the program!

*PAST exits.*

**MARLEY:** The first will come when the clock strikes one!

**JAMIE:** What clock?

**MARLEY:** You don't have a grandfather clock? One that chimes on every hour?

**JAMIE:** No. That would be stupid. Wouldn't it wake us up?

**MARLEY:** (*Thinking.*) Well, the first ghost will be here at 1:00 A.M.

**JAMIE:** What time is it now?

**MARLEY:** I'm not sure. I think it's about 10:30.

**JAMIE:** (*Looking at her phone.*) Yeah, it's 10:38.

**MARLEY:** I thought your parents were getting you a new phone...

**JAMIE:** They got me the 305A!

**MARLEY:** And being ungrateful, you threw a fit about it?

**JAMIE:** I wanted the H!

**MARLEY:** When your old phone's alarm goes off at 1:00 A.M., the first ghost will appear!

**JAMIE:** (*Looking at her phone.*) You just set my alarm! How?

**MARLEY:** Magic.

**JAMIE:** Wow. That's pretty awesome.

**MARLEY:** Uh... thanks. Also... this is my fourth attempt to get rid of this last link, so could you do me a solid and really listen tonight?

**JAMIE:** I'm pretty sure this is still a dream, but if a ghost does show up at 1:00 A.M., I'll listen.

*An awkward pause.*

**JAMIE:** Um... now what am I supposed to do?

**MARLEY:** Now you go back to sleep.

**JAMIE:** With you just staring at me like that?

**MARLEY:** Sorry. I guess I should leave.

*MARLEY exits as the lights fade... as soon as it goes to black, SFX: phone alarm sounds. JAMIE doesn't move. It keeps ringing. PAST enters and gets ready to make a big opening statement. But when JAMIE finally stirs it's only to cut her alarm off, leaving PAST just standing there.*

**PAST:** Hey!

*JAMIE doesn't move.*

**PAST:** Wake up.

*JAMIE doesn't move.*

**PAST:** WAKE UP! *(Beat.)* Jacob! What do I do if she won't wake up?

**MARLEY:** *(Enters.)* Shake her.

**PAST:** But that would mess up my big opening line.

**MARLEY:** What do you want me to do about it?

**PAST:** Can you re-set the alarm?

**MARLEY:** Yeah. I can do that.

*SFX: phone alarm sounds and after a few moments, JAMIE groggily cuts it off again.*

**PAST:** I have an idea. *(Grabs the phone and moves it several feet away.)* Do it again.

*MARLEY makes the SFX: phone alarm sound. JAMIE ignores it.*

**MARLEY:** Now what?

**PAST:** Can you make the noise more annoying?

**MARLEY:** Good idea!

*SFX: annoying phone alarm song sounds. JAMIE starts to stir uncomfortably after a few seconds... then bolts upright in bed. MARLEY gives a thumbs up, which is returned by PAST and exits.*

**JAMIE:** *(Moving to her phone.)* Why is that playing?

**PAST:** (*Posing.*) Because I am the Ghost of Christmas Past and we have an appointment!

**JAMIE:** (*Looking confused.*) What?

**PAST:** I'm the Ghost of Christmas Past!

**JAMIE:** What are you doing in my room?

**PAST:** Jacob Marley sent me.

**JAMIE:** (*Groggy.*) Who's that?

*MARLEY enters in a snit.*

**MARLEY:** Me! It's me! Remember?

*JAMIE stares at MARLEY for a beat.*

**JAMIE:** Oh yeah, the old guy with the little chain. I remember now.

*MARLEY leaves, shaking his head.*

**JAMIE:** Who are you again?

**PAST:** The Ghost of Christmas Past!

**JAMIE:** Christmas Past? How's that work?

**PAST:** I'm here to show you things that once were.

**JAMIE:** Do I get to choose what we go see?

**PAST:** (*Has never been asked that.*) Uh... no.

**JAMIE:** Well that sucks. Who chooses?

**PAST:** I do.

**JAMIE:** That doesn't seem right. You don't even know me.

**PAST:** Yeah, but I've been doing this a long time. Trust me. Like this...

*MOM and DAD enter the crib room carrying a baby.*

**PAST:** Remember this?

**MOM:** Isn't she adorable?

**JAMIE:** Is that me?

**PAST:** Yes, it is.

**JAMIE:** How would I remember that? I'm a baby.

**PAST:** Good point. Fine. It doesn't matter... just watch.

**DAD:** (*Looking at the baby.*) Merry Christmas, Jamie.

**MOM:** Our first. I didn't think we'd ever make it.

**PAST:** Your parents had a hard time getting pregnant, didn't they?

**JAMIE:** It took them five years.

**DAD:** I can't wait until she's old enough to be excited about opening gifts. I can't wait to dress up like Santa Claus.

**JAMIE:** (*Thinking.*) He used to do that every year.

**PAST:** Why did he stop?

**JAMIE:** (*A little embarrassed.*) Because I told him it was stupid.

**MOM:** She's such a sweet baby.

*MOM and DAD lay the baby down in a crib.*

**DAD:** (*Bends down to kiss the baby.*) Goodnight angel! Being your dad is the best Christmas present I could ever ask for.

*The lights fade on MOM and DAD, they exit. Lights up on ALLISON, BRANDI, ALEXA, and SARAH as they enter. They are second graders jumping rope.*

**PAST:** Now here are some familiar faces!

**JAMIE:** Look how young they are! Is this second grade?

**PAST:** It is.

**JAMIE:** That's the year we moved here.

*YOUNG JAMIE enters. SARAH crosses to her.*

**SARAH:** You're Jamie, aren't you?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Yeah.

**SARAH:** Last year was my first year here and I didn't have any friends... so... want to be my friend?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** I guess.

**SARAH:** (*To the others.*) Hey... this is Jamie! Jamie, this is Alexa, Allison, and Brandi.

*YOUNG JAMIE, ALEXA, ALLISON, and BRANDI exchange hellos.*

**ALEXA:** Want to jump rope with us?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** That would be great!

**JAMIE:** I loved elementary school.

**PAST:** It sure was a fun time, wasn't it? So what happened in middle school?

**JAMIE:** I liked middle school too, but it was different.

*They jump rope for a few beats and then put the rope up and get out cell phones... they are now in middle school. SARAH exits. YOUNG JAMIE is much darker in this scene.*

**ALLISON:** (To YOUNG JAMIE.) I can't believe she did that to you.

**ALEXA:** She knows you've been crushing on him since sixth grade!

**YOUNG JAMIE:** (Angry.) I know. I'm handling it.

**BRANDI:** What are you going to do?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Done. You mean, what have I done?

**BRANDI:** You already did something?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** I did, or at least I did as of right now. (Presses her phone.) I took this video of her at my house. Did you know that Sarah talks in her sleep?

**ALEXA:** You didn't!

*YOUNG JAMIE starts the video, SFX: SARAH'S recording.*

**ALEXA:** She drools a lot.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Tell me about it.

*As SARAH'S recording ends, ALEXA, BRANDI, ALLISON, and YOUNG JAMIE start laughing and not in a nice way.*

**BRANDI:** How many people did you send that to?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** My entire contact list.

**ALLISON:** That's cold.

**JAMIE:** Maybe I shouldn't have done that.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** She totally deserves this. She knows I've been after Brad since sixth grade! And now they're going to the dance together!

*BRAD enters.*

**ALEXA:** *(Mimicking Sarah's recording.)* I love you Brad. I love you soooooo much!

**BRAD:** Shut up.

**ALLISON:** *(Mimicking Sarah's recording.)* More than anything!

*YOUNG JAMIE, ALEXA, ALLISON and BRANDI giggle.*

**BRAD:** Jamie, can I speak to you for minute?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Sure Brad... what's up?

**BRAD:** *(Pointing at his phone as he takes her to the side.)* This isn't funny.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Yeah, it is!

**BRAD:** Well, I don't think so. It's mean. Sarah's your best friend.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Is she?

**BRAD:** She is! She's the best friend you've got. Look... this is about me, isn't it?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** I don't know what you're talking about.

**BRAD:** When I asked her to go to the dance with me, she told me she couldn't. She wouldn't tell me why.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** That's not what I heard.

**BRAD:** Well, that's because I pressed her and she admitted that she wouldn't go with me because she said you like me.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** *(Embarrassed.)* She said that?

**BRAD:** She did. But I told her that she didn't need to worry about that because I didn't like you at all.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** *(Stunned by his honesty.)* You... don't? Why?

**BRAD:** Because I see how you treat your friends... you're really mean, and you care too much about what *(Indicating the ALEXA, ALLISON and BRANDI who are watching intently from a distance.)* they think.

*SARAH enters looking for YOUNG JAMIE, but seeing BRAD and becoming terrified, goes to leave.*

**ALEXA:** Hey Brad, your girlfriend is here!

**ALEXA, ALLISON, and BRANDI:** *(Mimicking Sarah's recording.)* We love you Brad... soooooo much! *(ALL giggle.)*

**BRAD:** Sarah... don't go! Come here, please!

**SARAH:** (*Embarrassed.*) Hey Brad.

**BRANDI:** (*Calling out.*) More than anything!

**BRAD:** Could you three grow up?

*ALEXA, ALLISON and BRANDI giggle.*

**BRAD:** (*To SARAH.*) I just told Jamie that you weren't going to go to the dance with me because of her and you only agreed after I told you there was no way I would ever go with her.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Well, you didn't put it quite that strongly...

**SARAH:** (*To YOUNG JAMIE.*) How could you have sent that video?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** How could you stab me in the back?

**SARAH:** But I didn't! He told you the truth.

**BRAD:** I should probably let you two talk...

*BRAD exits.*

**ALEXA:** (*Seeing BRAD leave.*) Love you Brad!

*BRANDI, ALEXA, and ALLISON exit after him.*

**SARAH:** That was really mean, Jamie.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** You know how much he means to me.

**SARAH:** Well, I've had a crush on him too! I just couldn't tell you because you're so possessive over him. I've known him since kindergarten and now you've messed it all up!

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Well I'm soooooo sorry to have ruined it for you when you shouldn't have ever let it get there in the first place!

**SARAH:** But he told me he wouldn't go with you, even if you asked.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Well, then you shouldn't have gone with him either.

**SARAH:** Just because you couldn't have him?

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Yeah.

**SARAH:** Well, fine. I won't go with him. I'll tell him tonight.

*SARAH exits crying. YOUNG JAMIE stays on stage, still fuming.*

**PAST:** She didn't go to the dance with him did she?

**JAMIE:** No... she didn't.

**PAST:** But you and the other girls kept picking on her about it and you were never friends again, were you?

**JAMIE:** (*Ashamed.*) That's right. Can we go somewhere else? Can I see my parents again?

**PAST:** Sure thing! How about two Christmases ago?

**JAMIE:** Why that one? (*Realizing.*) Oh... wait...

*MOM, DAD, SAVANNAH, and YOUNG JAMIE enter and begin to open presents.*

**SAVANNAH:** (*Opening a gift... it's a game boy or other hand game console.*) Thank you so much! It's exactly what I wanted!

**MOM:** We're so glad. We also got you a gift card to pick out a couple of games.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** You didn't get her any games?

**MOM:** We got her a gift card.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** Yeah, but the stores don't open today. Pretty disappointing to have a video game player and not be able to play any games on it.

**DAD:** Jamie!

**YOUNG JAMIE:** What?

**MOM:** We're sorry we didn't think to get you a game to play on it today, Savannah.

**SAVANNAH:** I'm not disappointed, Mom. You got me the best gift... you got me exactly what I wanted!

*SAVANNAH hugs both MOM and DAD.*

**YOUNG JAMIE:** If you guys listened to me, things wouldn't be so awkward right now.

**MOM:** Things are awkward because you've made them so again. (*Finding a reason to leave.*) The cookies are probably done. I'm going to go check them.

**DAD:** I'll go with you.

*MOM and DAD exit. A moment passes.*

**SAVANNAH:** You didn't have to do that, Jamie.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** I only said what you were thinking.

**SAVANNAH:** But it's Christmas... they were excited to give us gifts.

**YOUNG JAMIE:** But they should know better than to give someone a system with no games.

**SAVANNAH:** But they DON'T know and it's OK. I can wait until tomorrow.

*Lights fade on SAVANNAH and YOUNG JAMIE as they exit.*

**JAMIE:** Savannah's always been like that.

**PAST:** Like what?

**JAMIE:** Always worried about what other people are feeling.

**PAST:** Someone I know could stand to be more like that.

**JAMIE:** Maybe so.

*A beat.*

**PAST:** Want to see anything else?

**JAMIE:** No. I want to go home. I want to go back to bed.

*Blackout. JAMIE moves back to her bed and after a few moments SFX: annoying phone alarm song sounds. The phone is several feet away from her. She gets up and turns her phone off and crawls back into bed. A few moments pass and we see that the GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT is in the bed behind her.*

**PRESENT:** This is nice, I prefer to be the big spoon.

*JAMIE screams and jumps out of bed.*

**PRESENT:** (Alarmed.) What??

**JAMIE:** Why are you in my bed??

**PRESENT:** Dunno, just popped in here. Guess there's no time for spooning anyway... lots of work to do tonight... and you know what they say.

**JAMIE:** What do they say?

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from THE FINAL CAROL by D. Brent Holland. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:***

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC**

**P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406**

**Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011**

**[www.brookpub.com](http://www.brookpub.com)**