

Nectar! Pure nectar! And at tuppence a pint you can't really complain.

Martha The stuffing's ready, Mother.

Mrs Cratchit That's lovely, Martha...

Bob promptly sets down his wooden spoon. With immense pride he carries across to the parlour table a crockery platter on which sits the scrawny, poorly plucked goose. The pile of stuffing is bigger than the goose

Bob Cratchit The marriage of roast goose and sage and onion stuffing *a la Cratchit* is one of the culinary miracles of our day—a living legend throughout the length and breadth of Camden Town! (*He sets the platter down upon the table*) The only remaining problem, my dears, is whether to put the stuffing inside the goose or the goose inside the stuffing.

This is greeted with renewed gusts of mirth from the family

But since the ultimate intention is to put them both inside ourselves, I don't suppose it much matters!

Kathy and Tiny Tim enter, looking highly delighted with life

Kathy Come along, Tim.

Bob Cratchit And here they are—the one and only carol-singing Cratchits, newly returned from their triumphant musical tour of Regent's Park and the Euston Road.

The entire family cheers and applauds itself. Bob Cratchit leaves what he is doing, picks up his son and kisses him, and hugs Kathy

Mrs Cratchit How did you do — Tiny Tim?

Tiny Tim Tuppence ha'penny!

Redoubled cheers as he proudly displays his handful of copper coins

Mrs Cratchit Well done! And you too, Kathy!

Bob Cratchit Another fantastic coup by young Timothy Cratchit, the financial wizard! At only seven years of age, the youngest millionaire in the vast Cratchit empire! Let's put the pennies in the jar..

Beautiful Day (No. 15a) starts (underscore)

Mrs Cratchit (*to Kathy*) And how did little Tim behave?

Bob Cratchit sets Tiny Tim on a chair at the parlour table and begins to

arrange the pouring of punch into tiny glasses and eggcups

Kathy Good as gold, Mother. When we sang outside the church, he let them see he was a cripple, to remind them at Christmas who made lame beggars walk and blind men see.

Mrs Cratchit He gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much.

Bob Cratchit Ladies and gentlemen, if I may steal a moment of your valuable time, I would like you to drink to the sparkling good health of the two gentlemen whose industry and generosity have made possible our sumptuous Christmas repast—Master Timothy Cratchit ——

They all raise their glasses

— and Mr Ebenezer Scrooge.

They all lower their glasses. Scrooge mutters a surprised and pleased reaction to the mention of his name in this context—until he sees the smiles fade from the children's faces, and Mrs Cratchit looking at her husband as though he is mad

Mrs Cratchit Mr Scrooge? What are you trying to do—spoil our Christmas?

Bob Cratchit His money paid for the goose, my dear.

Mrs Cratchit No! Your money paid for the goose, my dear.

Bob Cratchit But he paid me the money!

Mrs Cratchit Because you earned it, my love! Believe me! Fifteen shillings a week at threepence an hour, and not a penny rise in eight years. You earned it!

Bob Cratchit Mr Scrooge assures me that times are hard.

Mrs Cratchit He's right. For you, they are! But not for himself!

Bob Cratchit Nonetheless, he is the founder of our feast, and we shall drink to him!

Scrooge (*nodding in agreement*) Quite right!

Mrs Cratchit The founder of our feast, indeed! I wish I had him here! I'd give him a piece of my mind to feast upon, and he'd have indigestion for a month!

Bob Cratchit Ethel, my dear, the children! Christmas!

Mrs Cratchit It needs to be Christmas Day, Bob, to drink to a rotten, stingy old miser like Scrooge!

Scrooge gives the Ghost an embarrassed smile. The Ghost chuckles

Bob Cratchit But, Ethel ——

