

MAN (cont'd)

We may sleep with light hearts tonight,
Caroline.

They embrace.

SCROOGE

Spirit. This person that all these people speak
of: doesn't anyone feel pity for him in the
hour of his death? Are there no people to mourn
this person? If there is a person in this town
who feels emotion caused by this man's death,
show that person to me. Spirit, I beseech you!

The Spirit points but again. OLD
JOE is sitting on a crate, his
corn cob pipe in his mouth. His
gray beard and hair is unkept. His
clothes shabby. He hums as he
rummages through a pile of rags.

MRS. DILBER Enters. She is
carrying a large, burlap sack.

OLD JOE

Well, Mrs Dilber. What have you got for me
tonight? It looks like you made quite a haul
there.

MRS. DILBER

(reaching into the sack)

Here Joe, bed curtains. How much?

OLD JOE

Not 'till I know where they come from, Mrs.
Dilber. I don't like to take chances.

MRS. DILBER

The wicked old screw finally died. Last night.

OLD JOE

So, where'd they come from?

MRS. DILBER

The bed. Rings and all. Now, how much?

OLD JOE

What bed?

MRS. DILBER

Why, his. Where else?

OLD JOE

You don't mean you took 'em down, rings and
all, with 'im lyin' there dead!

MRS. DILBER

Yes I do. And why not? He always took care of 'imself, he did. Never cared a stitch about me.

She reaches in the sack and pulls out a clean white shirt. She holds it up.

What about this?

OLD JOE

What's this?

MRS. DILBER

'Is shirt. It's the best he had. A fine one, too. They'd have wasted it if it hadn't been for me.

OLD JOE

What do you call wasted it?

MRS. DILBER

Puttin' it on 'im to be buried in, to be sure. Somebody was fool enough to do it, but I took it off again. Now, how much?

She tosses the shirt to Old Joe. He catches it reluctantly and holds it in his fingertips at arms length.

OLD JOE

He didn't die of anythin' catching, did he?

MRS. DILBER

Don't you be afraid of that. I ain't so fond of 'is company that I'd stay around if he had. Now, how much? How much?

OLD JOE

Well, I'll be bound! Takin' the bed curtains right off the poor wretch's death bed, rings and all, with 'im lyin' there.

(he laughs)

And the shirt! Took it right off 'im! You were born to make a fortune and you'll do it, too. I thought that only I could stoop that low! Congratulations, Mrs. Dilber. Congratulations!

NO. 17 - A LADY WHO'S A MAN AFTER ME OWN HEART

OLD JOE (cont'd)

YOU ARE A WRETCH., MRS. DILBER.
NO MORALS OR SCRUPLES AT ALL.
TAKIN' THE BED CURTAINS OFF OF 'IS BED
WITH 'IM LYIN' THERE DEAD.