

JULIET AND SCROOGE: Empty...empty...empty...

AESOP: But excellent acoustics! (*Aesop listens for another echo – but there is none.*) A fascinating building. I believe it is one of those new-fangled theaters. Not at all like the atrium—after all it is inside. But so dark—how does the audience see?

(The stage is suddenly awash in light.)

Oh! That's how! (*Aesop peers into the audience:*) My, there are a lot of seats. So many to choose from! But the perfect way for me to rest.

(Aesop moves as if going to go into the audience. A booming voice is heard.)

VOICE OF GEORGE: Who dares to enter my theater?

AESOP: Why, good day! Rather—I'm afraid the day is actually not very good—which is why I am here. There's a bit of a storm raging. The door was unlocked, so I came in. I hope you don't mind.

VOICE OF GEORGE: *You hope I don't mind? This is my home!* As you were perfectly capable of letting yourself in—I shall assume you are now perfectly capable of letting yourself out!

AESOP: My word! That's not a very warm welcome to one who has traveled many miles and even more years!

VOICE OF GEORGE: Whooo aaaare youuuuu?

AESOP: Aesop.

VOICE OF GEORGE: Who?

VOICE OF ALL ECHOES: Aesop...sop...sop...

AESOP: You do that very well! Quite mysterious—but not unpleasing. Say my name again, please!

VOICE OF ALL ECHOES: Aesop...sop...sop...

(Suddenly a figure moves onstage. It is GEORGE, "the theater ghost." George is not at all imposing – he could be a wee bit pathetic – even laughable. He is dressed in a shabby old costume of the past.)

GEORGE: Boo!

VOICE OF ALL ECHOES: Booooooooooooooooooooo...

AESOP: Whooooooooo – are you?

GEORGE: I'm George! A ghost! Pay attention – I'm scaring you.

AESOP: Forgive me. I've been around for many centuries. There is not much that frightens me.

GEORGE: Nobody is afraid of me! Everyone laughs at me! I am ridiculous! Why even the mice in the theater brazenly cross my feet without so much as a shudder!

(The 8 – or more – Echoes appear.)

JULIET: Oh! There goes one!

SCROOGE: And another one!

SNOW WHITE: Wait until the bats come out!

GENE: They scare George!

GEORGE: Stop that!

SAM: Sorry, George. We know your ghostly existence is hard on you!

GEORGE: I'm a failure! My time as a ghost has been for naught! And what's worse – I can never leave this place until I fulfill my promise as a ghost!

AESOP: I say dear fellow – are you absolutely sure about that?