

A Very Cryptic Victorian Christmas
Narrator / Host Intro Script

My dear ladies and gentlemen, gathered here by hearth and candle-glow,

It is, as you know, the eve of Christmas – that most estimable time of year when, as Mr. Dickens tells us, “want is keenly felt

And yet... something is not quite right.

Ordinarily, at such an hour, the great Christmas Ledgers of the world are in perfect balance. Every kindness is entered in credit

Somewhere between the counting-house of Scrooge and the laboratories of curious gentlemen, a certain overzealous spirit

This meddling creature has crept through columns and cogs, through circuits and stories, through maps and manuscripts, and

In the halls of science, laws of currents and coils and strange geometries have been shuffled like a cheap deck of cards. In the

The result, my friends, is singularly alarming:

If the Christmas ledgers are not set right before this night is out, the season itself—its lights, its gifts, its gentle warmth—may

The good news (for there is always good news at Christmas) is this:

The world has not been abandoned to its fate. Word has gone out, quietly but urgently, and a certain society has been convened

That society... is you.

Tonight, you are formally inducted as members of:

“THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF PROPER CHRISTMAS.”

Throughout this house—indeed, throughout this Victorian house-that-is-not-quite-a-house—there are clues, contraptions, books

Eight particularly eccentric “gentlemen” lurk within the papers you will shortly receive—fellows concerned with constant-

Your task, dear Society, is threefold:

1. To traverse this house as if it were a tiny, snow-frosted London—
from counting-house to attic rookery, from pantry to scullery, from workshop to pool of chilly reflection, and at last to the
2. To overcome each test placed in your path—
opening boxes that refuse to yield, deciphering verses that wear disguises, and coaxing sense from clever nonsense.
3. To restore the balance of Christmas—
so generosity tallies against greed, joy outweighs mischief, and, above all, the final gift beneath the tree may be opened with

You will not compete against one another, but with one another, as befits a proper Victorian society. Your only rival is the

Along the way you may handle devices that would make Mr. Tesla raise a curious eyebrow, examine shapes that would puzzle

You will be guided from place to place by handbills—short stanzas, penned in an old-fashioned hand, that love nothing better

There are many stages to your undertaking this evening—each a leg in your curious Christmas journey. Somewhere along

Should you persevere, deciphering each handbill and contraption in turn, you will arrive at last beneath the boughs of the C

So: are you ready, members of the Society, to take up your wits and rescue Christmas from the ledgers of confusion?

Very well.

Then let the record show that on this night of nights, in this house of riddles and holly, the Society for the Preservation of F