The main idea

Mrs Cratchit combines practical affection with anger at unfair treatment. Her voice keeps the family's warmth from excusing Scrooge's behaviour.

Character development

Organises the meal

Shares in family pride

Challenges Scrooge

Protects her household

Scarcity and ingenuity

"brave in ribbons" — Narrator, Stave 3

"like a speckled cannon-ball" — Narrator about the pudding, Stave 3

The costume detail gives inexpensive decoration dignity. The comic simile makes the pudding a dramatic achievement; presentation and shared effort create celebration despite limited resources.

A toast contested

"an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man" — Mrs Cratchit about Scrooge, Stave 3

"for your sake and the Day's" — Mrs Cratchit to Bob, Stave 3

The accumulating adjectives refuse to sentimentalise exploitation. Her eventual participation in the toast honours family and Christmas without becoming approval of Scrooge.

Develop the interpretation

She is not simply the angry opposite of a kind husband. Her criticism protects the same family whose happiness Bob celebrates.

Recall question

How does Mrs Cratchit make the reader reconsider Bob’s gratitude?

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