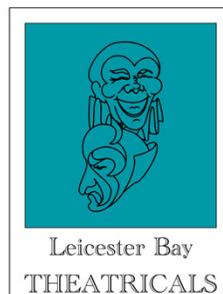


Based on The Classic Movie IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE
by Francis Goodrich, Albert Hackett and Frank Capra



Newport, Maine

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MERRY CHRISTMAS, GEORGE BAILEY

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Cast(with doubling) 16M 8W

(NOTE: **ALL CAPS** indicates roles that should not double with others. Any doubling of other roles is strictly at the discretion of the producer or director.)

Actor 1 -- **RADIO ANNOUNCER**

Actor 2 -- **JOSEPH** (assistant head angel)

Actor 3 -- **CLARENCE** (novice angel second class)

Actor 4 -- **MR. HENRY F. POTTER**

Actor 5 -- **GEORGE BAILEY** (older teen through 30s)

Actor 6 -- **TOMMY BAILEY**, child of George and Mary

Actor 7 -- **PETE BAILEY**, child of George and Mary

Actor 8 -- **UNCLE BILLY BAILEY**, George's Uncle

Actor 9 -- plays: **Martini, Mr. Gower**

Actor 10 -- plays: **Bert, Marty, Charlie, Tollkeeper, Nick**

Actor 11 -- plays: **Franklin, Salesman, Principal, Man #1, Dr. Campbell, Owner**

Actor 12 -- plays: **Young Harry Bailey, Salesman, Freddie, Man #3**

Actor 13 -- plays: **Young George Bailey, Neighbor, Sheriff**

Actor 14 -- plays: **William Bailey (Pop), Ernie, Mr. Welch, Charlie**

Actor 15 -- plays: **Sam Wainwright, Lawyer, Carter, Man #4**

Actor 16 -- plays: **Harry Bailey, Bank Teller, Rent Collector, Man #2**

Actress 1 -- **MARY BAILEY** (older teen through 30s) George's girl then wife

Actress 2 -- **JANIE BAILEY**, child of George and Mary

Actress 3 -- **ZUZU BAILEY**, child of George and Mary

Actress 4 -- plays: **Mrs. Bailey (Mother)**

Actress 5 -- plays: **Young Mary Hatch, Secretary**

Actress 6 -- plays: **Cousin Tilly, Woman,**

Actress 7 -- plays: **Ruth Bailey, Clara Jones, Jane Wainwright**

Actress 8 -- Plays: **Mrs. Hatch, Mrs. Thompson, Maria, Violet Black**

Character descriptions by character without doubling 31M 13W 2Tb 1Tg 6B 2G

Radio Announcer

Joseph (assistant Head Angel)

Clarence (Angel 2nd Class)

Young Harry Bailey (age 9)

Young George Bailey (age 12)

Young Mary Hatch (age 12)

Boys, friends of George and Harry

George Bailey (teen to adult)

Mary Bailey (teen to adult)

Henry F. Potter -- the Banker

Tommy Bailey -- child

Pete Bailey -- child

Janie Bailey -- child

Zuzu Bailey -- child

Uncle Billy Bailey

Freddie, older teen friend of George & Mary

Marty Hatch, Mary's older brother, older teen

Franklin, Head Angel
Mr. (William) Bailey (Pop)
Mrs. Bailey (Mother)
Cousin Tilly Bailey, the Telephone Operator at the Building and Loan
Harry Bailey, as an older teen and adult
Ruth Bailey, Harry's wife
Sam Wainwright, older teen to adult friend of George
Jane Wainwright, his wife
Ernie, the cab-driver
Bert, the cop
Martini, owner of the bar
Nick, bartender
Mrs. Welch, teacher
Mr. Welch, her husband
Tollkeeper, keeper at the bridge
Mrs. Hatch, Mary's mother
Neighbor (female)
Principal Partridge, of the high school
Dr. Campbell, a physician and on the Board
Owner, of the tree
Bank Teller, for Mr. Potter
Rent Collector, for Mr. Potter
Secretary, to Mr. Potter
Lawyer, for Mr. Potter
Salesman, in a luggage store
Mr. Carter, the Bank Examiner
Charlie, patron at the Building and Loan
Clara Jones, patron at the Building and Loan
Mrs. Thompson, patron at the Building and Loan
Woman
Maria, Martini's wife
Violet Black, friend of George
Man #1
Man #2
Man #3
Man #4

Note

Cast members, with the exception of the principal characters: Radio Announcer, George Bailey, Uncle Billy, Mary Bailey, Mr. Potter, Clarence, Joseph and the Bailey children; Janie, Pete, Tommy, and Zuzu, can play several roles using different voices and a hat or scarf to signal the character changes to the viewing audience. This is a radio play with scripts in hand. All cast members, except the four Bailey children, are on stage all the time. A radio play is a "voice" play and in this case with a studio audience invited to view the show in a theatre as if in a live radio studio. The original production used studio signs, 7 vintage mics and 1940's dress to signify the era. Some good lighting design also helped with scene changes to give the audience a visual of the characters. Many of the secondary characters played several roles using a different voice and a few minor props

and hats, scarves to enhance each character. This play is more of a reader's theatre where the audience becomes part of the scene created by excellent interpretation of the script with a little visual to help. The set consisted of 19 chairs, 7 mics and a studio "on the air" light. All cast members made vocal noise in the crowd scenes behind the readers at the mics. Props, hats were stored under the chairs until used.

Props

RADIO ANNOUNCER -- Headphones

JOSEPH -- plain dark blue tie to give to Clarence at finale

ACTOR 11 -- 40" felt hat

ACTOR 10 -- stocking hat, scarf, flashlight, police hat

ACTRESS 6 -- glasses for Tilly

ACTOR 9 -- lab coat, Italian beanie

MARY BAILEY -- glasses

ACTOR 12 -- stocking cap, scarf, baseball hat

ACTOR 13 -- stocking hat, scarf, sheriff hat

ACTRESS 5 -- large hair bow, glasses for secretary

ACTRESS 7 -- pink scarf, 40s hat, straw hat, sunglasses

UNCLE BILLY -- suspenders

ACTOR 14 -- cardigan sweater, plaid hat for Ernie, baseball cap for Welch

ACTOR 15 -- straw hat, sunglasses, 40s hat for Carter

ACTOR 16 -- sleeveless sweater, bank teller visor, 40s hat for Rent Collector, navy hat

ACTRESS 8 -- 40s hat for Mrs. T, head scarf for Maria, gaudy hat for Violet

Set Design

This is a staged radio play set as if in a radio studio in the 1940's. Seven standing mikes, chairs for the performers, and an "On The Air" sign with lights are the only set. Lighting can be changed to create mood for various scenes and to enhance the performance. Recorded sound effects by KUER, University of Utah are available on CD.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, GEORGE BAILEY! *A Play by Shirlee Shields* Based on "IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE" (written by Francis Goodrich, Albert Hackett & Frank Capra) (*For production by Professional, Amateur, Educational, College/University, High School groups*) *Adult and Family Audiences.* One Interior with props. Period Costumes: 1919-1940s. Large cast can be doubled to 23 performers. About 2 hours. This version of the popular and familiar film story is a fully staged radio play set as if in a radio studio in the 1940s. The battle for Bedford Falls, New York, is on as George Bailey, hometown boy, combats the miserly Mr. Potter, with the help of his family, friends and an angel 2nd class named Clarence, with little help from Uncle Billy. All the familiar story elements are there but the charming setting in a radio studio give a special edge of performance charm. The perfect Christmas production for any theatre group. **Order # 3074**

Shirlee H. Shields is the recipient of a B.S. Speech, a M.F.A., Theatre, U of U, and a Ph.D., Theatre, Speech and Cinema, BYU. She has given speech communication seminars to thousands of participants. Private students include political candidates, professionals, business executives, church and community leaders. She also is a playwright, director, and choreographer. She has written published manuals and magazine articles on the subjects of Speech, Theatre, and Dance, plus three produced plays and six readers's theatre scripts. Her work has been seen and heard at BYU, BYU Hawaii, Babcock Theatre, U of U, Promised Valley Playhouse, Assembly Hall, Palm Canyon Theatre, Palm Springs, CA, and numerous local stages in the S.L. Valley. Additional studies at USC. Married to the late attorney Jed W. Shields, she is the mother of two sons, and two daughters.

Merry Christmas, George Bailey

PRELUDE music off, lights down except for a spot on mic #2. RADIO ANNOUNCER enters and moves to mic #2. LIGHT UP "Applause Sign", if available.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Good evening. Please turn off all cell phones and pagers. After all they did not exist in the 1940's and we want you to feel as if you are there. Which also means that no recording devices or cameras -- or refreshments -- are permitted in the theatre. If you may need a cough medication, please undo the wrapper now. Thank you. Relax and enjoy as we take you back in time to the 1940s, the golden age of radio. Our radio station...

(He gestures to the mics and chairs)

... is prepared to bring you the tale of George Bailey, the "Everyman" from small town America who could be you or me. But do remember that this is a Radio Play, voices, sound effects and music will be used to create the characters and tell the story. But please, do watch the actors. That's a benefit that you get which the radio audiences of the past did not have the opportunity to enjoy. I would like you to meet our cast:

(He recites the names of the cast. After all have been introduced the APPLAUSE sign flashes. The lights dim and actors take their places in their seats at their mics.)

VOICE FROM BOOTH: Quiet please. Five seconds to air, four, three, two, one.

(ON AIR sign lights up)

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Welcome to station (name of station). Tonight (name of station & theatre group) bring you the radio play MERRY CHRISTMAS, GEORGE BAILEY. This radio play is based on the 1946 film "It's a Wonderful Life" directed by Frank Capra, with the screen play by Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett and Frank Capra. The adaptation you will hear tonight is written, by Shirlee H. Shields, produced and directed by (Insert appropriate names)

(Pause)

The scene is various streets, buildings and homes in Bedford Falls, somewhere in New York State. The streets are deserted and snow is falling. It is Christmas Eve. Over the above scenes we hear voices praying.

MARTINI: *(Italian accent)* Joseph, Jesus and Mary. Help my friend Mr. Bailey.

MRS. BAILEY: Help my son George tonight, dear Lord.

BERT: He never thinks about himself, God, that's why he is in trouble.

MARY: I love him, dear Lord. Watch over him tonight.

JANIE: Please, God. Something's the matter with daddy.

ZUZU: Please bring daddy back.

GOWER: I owe everything to George Bailey. Help him, dear Father.

PETE: Heavenly Father, I need my dad for Christmas.

TOMMY: My daddy helps me fly my airplane. I want him back.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The scene moves upward above the falling snow rising to a firmament full of stars. We hear heavenly voices talking as the stars twinkle.

SFX of stars twinkling

FRANKLIN: Hello, Joseph, trouble?

JOSEPH: Looks like we'll have to send someone down--a lot of people are asking for help for a man named George Bailey.

FRANKLIN: George Bailey. Yes, tonight's his crucial night. You're right, we'll have to send someone down immediately. Whose turn is it?

JOSEPH: That's why I came to see you, sir. It's that clock-maker's turn again.

FRANKLIN: Oh-Clarence. Hasn't got his wings yet, has he? We've passed him up right along.

JOSEPH: Because you know, sir, he's got the I .Q. of a rabbit.

FRANKLIN: Yes, but he's got the faith of a child--simple. Joseph, send for Clarence.

SFX of a small star twinkling

CLARENCE: You sent for me, sir?

FRANKLIN: Yes, Clarence. A man down on earth needs our help.

CLARENCE: Splendid! Is he sick?

FRANKLIN: No, worse. He's discouraged. At exactly ten-forty-five tonight, earth time, that man will be thinking seriously of throwing away God's greatest gift.

CLARENCE: Oh, dear, dear! His life! Then I've only an hour to dress. What are they wearing now?

FRANKLIN: You will spend that hour getting acquainted with George Bailey.

CLARENCE: Sir...if I should accomplish this mission-- I mean--might I perhaps win my wings? I've been waiting for over two hundred years now, sir-- and people are beginning to talk.

FRANKLIN: What's that book you've got there?

CLARENCE: "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer".

FRANKLIN: Clarence, you do a good job with George Bailey, and you'll get your wings.

CLARENCE: Oh, thank you, sir. Thank you.

JOSEPH: Poor George; Now take a good look.

CLARENCE: Look? Where? At What?

JOSEPH: If you are going to help a man, you want to know something about him, don't you?

CLARENCE: Naturally. Of course.

JOSEPH: Well, keep your eyes open. See the town?

CLARENCE: Where? I don't see a thing.

JOSEPH: Oh, I forgot. You haven't got your wings yet. Now look, I'll help you out. Concentrate. Begin to see something?

CLARENCE: Why, yes. This is amazing.

JOSEPH: If you ever get your wings you'll see all by yourself.

CLARENCE: Oh, wonderful!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The next scene is winter 1919 at the top of a snowy hill with a frozen river at the bottom. A group of boys is preparing to ride down the hill on large shovels. One of them makes the slide, then shoots out onto the ice of the frozen river.

SFX of boys excitedly talking and sounds of metal shovels scraping on snow and banging around

BOYS: Go George go...yeah!

YOUNG GEORGE: Yippee!!

CLARENCE: Hey, who's that?

JOSEPH: That's your problem, George Bailey.

CLARENCE: A boy?

JOSEPH: That's him when he was twelve back in 1919. Something happens here you'll have to remember later

on.

BOYS: (*ad lib*) Here we go. Last one down is a "scaredy cat". Yeah, here we go... Yippee!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George, at the bottom of the slide shouts up to his brother Harry at the top of the hill.

YOUNG GEORGE: And here comes the scare-baby, my kid brother, Harry Bailey.

YOUNG HARRY: I'm not scared.

BOYS: (*ad lib*) Come on, Harry! Attaboy, Harry!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Harry makes his slide very fast. He passes the marks made by the other boys, and his shovel takes him onto the thin ice at the bend of the river. The ice breaks, and Harry disappears into the river.

YOUNG GEORGE: Oh, Harry, I'm coming, I'm coming!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George jumps into the icy water and grabs Harry, starts to pull him out and yells to the other boys:

YOUNG GEORGE: Make a chain...make a chain!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The other boys lie flat on the ice, forming a human chain. When George reaches the edge with Harry in his arms, they pull them both to safety.

JOSEPH: George saved his brother's life that day. But he caught a bad cold which infected his left ear. Cost him his hearing in that ear. It was weeks before he could return to his after-school job at old man Gower's drug store.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: It is now spring in Bedford Falls. George and a few of his friends are strolling down Main Street when they see an elaborate horse-drawn carriage proceeding down the other side of the street with an elderly man riding inside it.

BOYS: Who is that!

YOUNG GEORGE: Mr. Potter.

CLARENCE: Is he a king?

JOSEPH: No, that's Henry F. Potter, the richest and meanest man in the county.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The boys continue until they reach Gower's Drug store. The drug store is old fashioned with dignity. Jugs of colored water in the windows and little else. There is a soda fountain, with counter stools, a prescription window, and shelves with sundry items.

YOUNG GEORGE: Well this is where I leave you. S'long.

BOYS: (*ad lib*) Got to work, slave? Hee-haw. Hee-haw.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George enters the drugstore and stops at the counter where he sees an old fashioned cigar lighter. He shuts his eyes and makes a wish.

YOUNG GEORGE: Wish I had a million dollars.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: He clicks the lighter and a flame springs up.

YOUNG GEORGE: Hot dog!!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: He passes the soda fountain noticing a young girl, Mary Hatch, seated on a stool, then he calls to the back room where he interrupts Mr. Gower taking a drink from a bottle.

YOUNG GEORGE: It's me, Mr. Gower. George Bailey.

MR. GOWER: (*Gruffly*) You're late!

YOUNG GEORGE: Yes, sir. But I'm getting my apron on and waiting on a customer right away...sir. A young girl...sir...

PERUSAL -- Merry Christmas, George Bailey! Adapted by *Shirlee H. Shields*

(Speaks to girl)

A...made up you're mind yet?

YOUNG MARY: I'd like a chocolate sundae.

YOUNG GEORGE: With coconuts?

YOUNG MARY: I don't like coconuts.

YOUNG GEORGE: You don't like coconuts! Say brainless, don't you know where coconuts come from?

Lookit here at this magazine I just got.

YOUNG MARY: A new magazine. I never saw it before.

YOUNG GEORGE: *(Proudly)* Of course not, you never. Only us explorers can get it. I've been nominated for membership in the National Geographic Society.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George leans over to scoop out the ice cream, his deaf ear toward her. She leans over the counter slightly and speaks softly.

YOUNG MARY: *(Whispering)* Is this the ear you can't hear on? George Bailey, I'll love you till the day I die.

YOUNG GEORGE: I'm going exploring some day, you watch. And I'm going to have a couple of harems, and maybe three or four wives. Wait and see.

YOUNG MARY: Mmm, oh.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George gives Mary her sundae and acting very important around this young girl, he turns back to the cash register and begins to whistle. Gower comes out of the prescription room at the end of the fountain. He is bleary-eyed, unshaven, chewing an unlit cigar, and it is evident that he has been drinking.

GOWER: George! George!

YOUNG GEORGE: *(Stops whistling)* Yes, sir.

GOWER: You're not paid to be a canary.

YOUNG GEORGE: No sir.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George continues polishing the area around the cash register when he notices an open telegram on the shelf nearby. He is about to discard it as trash when he starts to read it.

YOUNG GEORGE: *(Reading)* "We regret to inform you that your son Robert, died suddenly this morning of influenza, stop. Everything possible was done for his comfort, stop. We await instructions from you. Edward Mellington, President, Hammerton College." Mr. Gower, do you want something...anything?

GOWER: No.

YOUNG GEORGE: Anything I can do back there?

GOWER: No!!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George looks curiously and sympathetically at Gower realizing that he is quite drunk as he tries putting some capsules in a box. Gower fumbles and drops some of the capsules on the floor.

YOUNG GEORGE: I'll get them, sir.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: He picks up the capsules, puts them in the box as Gower chews on his wet cigar, waves George aside and sinks into a chair. George turns the bottle around from which Gower has taken the powder for the capsules. It's label reads, POISON. George stands still, horrified.

GOWER: Take those capsules over to Mrs. Blaine's. She's waiting for them.

YOUNG GEORGE: A...yes, sir. They have diphtheria over there, haven't they, sir.? Is it a charge, sir?

GOWER: Yes...charge

YOUNG GEORGE: Mr. Gower, I think...

GOWER: Aw, get going!

YOUNG GEORGE: Yes...sir.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George comes out into the fountain room and as he puts his cap on he sees a Sweet Caporals ad which says: "Ask dad, he knows". With an inspiration he dashes out the door as Mary follows him with her eyes. George runs down the street until he comes to a two-story building with a sign on it reading: "Bailey Building and Loan Association." He sees Mr. Potter's elaborate carriage waiting at the entrance. He rushes up the stairs. The offices in the building are ancient and a bit on the rickety side. Before a door marked, PETER BAILEY- PRIVATE, George's Uncle Billy is standing, obviously trying to hear what is going on inside. Also there is cousin Tilly Bailey, the telephone operator.

UNCLE BILLY: Avast, there Captain cook! Where you headin'?

YOUNG GEORGE: Got to see Pop, Uncle Billy.

UNCLE BILLY: Some other time, George.

YOUNG GEORGE: But this is very important.

SFX Phone rings

UNCLE BILLY: There's a squall in there that's shaping up into a storm.

COUSIN TILLY: *(Calls out)* Uncle Billy...telephone.

UNCLE BILLY: Who is it?

COUSIN TILLY: Bank Examiner.

UNCLE BILLY: Oh, darn I forgot. I should have called him yesterday. Switch it inside.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George enters the door marked: William Bailey, Private. He stands irresolute a moment, aware of crisis in the affairs of the Bailey Building and Loan Association, but aware more keenly of his personal crisis. His father is seated behind his desk nervously drawing swirls on a pad. He looks tired and worried. He is a gentle man, an idealist, stubborn only for other people's rights. Nearby, arrogant Henry F. Potter is seated in a large chair.

BAILEY: I'm not crying, Mr. Potter.

POTTER: Well, you're begging, and that's worse.

BAILEY: All I'm asking is thirty days more....

YOUNG GEORGE: *(Interrupting)* Pop!

BAILEY: Just a minute, son.

(To Potter)

Just thirty short days. I'll dig up that five thousand somehow.

YOUNG GEORGE: Pop!

POTTER: *(Ignoring the boy)* Have you put any real pressure on those people of yours to pay those mortgages?

BAILEY: Times are bad, Mr. Potter. A lot of these people are out of work.

POTTER: Then foreclose!!

BAILEY: I can't do that. These families have children.

YOUNG GEORGE: *(Anxiously)* Pop!

POTTER: They're not my children.

BAILEY: But they are somebody's children, Mr. Potter.

POTTER: Are you running a business or a charity ward?

BAILEY: Well, all right, I

POTTER: (*Interrupting*) Not with my money!!

BAILEY: Mr. Potter, what makes you such a hard-skulled character? You have no family--no children. You can't begin to spend all your money.

POTTER: So I suppose I should give it to miserable failures like you and that idiot brother of yours to spend for me.

YOUNG GEORGE: He's not a failure! You can't say that about my father! He's the biggest man in town!

BAILEY: George, I think you should run along.

YOUNG GEORGE: Bigger'n him!

BAILEY: Run along, son.

YOUNG GEORGE: Bigger'n anybody!

POTTER: Gives you an idea of the Baileys.

YOUNG GEORGE: Don't let him say that about you, Pop.

BAILEY: All right, son, thanks. I'll talk to you tonight, at home.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Bailey closes the door on George and turns back to Potter. George stands dejectedly outside the door with the capsules in his hand. He runs back to Gower's drugstore where he finds Gower, drunk, talking on the phone.

GOWER: Why, that medicine should have been there an hour ago. It'll be over in five minutes, Mrs. Blaine.

YOUNG GEORGE: Sir.

GOWER: (*Angrily*) Where's Mrs. Blaine's box of capsules?

YOUNG GEORGE: Capsules...

GOWER: Did you hear what I said?

YOUNG GEORGE: (*Frightened*) Yes, sir, I ...

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Gower starts hitting George about the head with his open hands and George tries to protect himself the best he can. Gower grabs his shirt and drags him into the back room.

GOWER: What kind of tricks are you trying to play, anyway? Why didn't you deliver them right away? Don't you know that boy is very sick?

YOUNG GEORGE: (*Tearfully*) You're hurting my sore ear.

GOWER: You lazy loafer!

YOUNG GEORGE: (*Sobbing*) Mr. Gower, please, you don't know what you are doing. You put something wrong in those capsules. I know you're unhappy. You got that telegram and you are upset. You put something bad in those capsules. It wasn't your fault, sir. Just look and see what you did. Look at the bottle you took the powder from. It's poison! I tell you it's poison! I know you feel bad...and...

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George pulls the box of capsules from his pocket. Gower savagely rips it away from him. George falters off, cupping his aching ear with a hand. Gower looks at the large brown bottle which has not been replaced on the shelf. He tears open the package, shakes the powder out of one of the capsules, cautiously tastes it, then abruptly throws the whole mess to the table and turns to George again. Mary is still at the soda fountain counter, wincing every time George cries out.

YOUNG MARY: (*softly*) Oh, no! Don't hit him.

YOUNG GEORGE: Oh, don't hurt my ear again.

GOWER: No...no...no...

YOUNG GEORGE: Sir, don't hurt my ear again.

GOWER: Come here, and let me put my arms around you.

(Sobbing)

Oh, George, George....

YOUNG GEORGE: Mr. Gower, I won't tell anyone, ever. I know what you are feeling. I won't tell a soul.

Hope to die, I won't.

GOWER: Oh, George.

(Pause)

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The scene now moves to 1928, a late summer day in Bedford Falls in a luggage shop where a young man is looking over an assortment of suitcases.

SALESMAN: An overnight bag--genuine English cowhide, combination lock, fitted with brushes, combs...

GEORGE: Nope. Nope. Now look Joe, I want a big one.

(The actors freeze.)

CLARENCE: Hey, why did you stop this scene?

JOSEPH: I want you to take a good look at that face.

CLARENCE: Who is it?

JOSEPH: George Bailey.

CLARENCE: Oh, you mean the kid that had his ears slapped by the drunk druggist?

JOSEPH: That's the kid.

CLARENCE: It's a good face. I like it. I like George Bailey. Tell me, did he ever tell anyone about the pills?

JOSEPH: Not a soul.

CLARENCE: Did he ever marry the girl? Did he ever go exploring?

JOSEPH: Well, wait and see.

(Action resumes)

GEORGE: Big--see! I don't want one for one night. I want something for a thousand and one nights, with plenty of room for labels from Italy and Baghdad, Samarkand...a great big one.

SALESMAN: I see, a flying carpet, huh? I don't suppose you'd like this old second hand job, would you?

GEORGE: Now you're talking. Gee whiz, I could use this for a raft in case the boat sunk. How much does it cost?

SALESMAN: No charge.

GEORGE: That's my trick ear, Joe. It sounded as if you said, no charge.

SALESMAN: That's right.

GEORGE: Hey, what's my name doing on it?

SALESMAN: A little present from old man Gower. Came down and picked it out himself.

GEORGE: He did? Watta you know about that? My old boss.

SALESMAN: What boat you sailing on?

GEORGE: I'm working across on a cattle boat.

SALESMAN: A cattle boat?

GEORGE: Okay, so I like cows. Bye Joe.

SALESMAN: Have a great time.

SFX of juke box music & teens talking at soda fountain.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George heads down Main Street, his "new" bag in hand, toward Gower's drugstore.

PERUSAL -- Merry Christmas, George Bailey! Adapted by *Shirlee H. Shields*

The place is practically the same as when he was a boy working there except that it is now full of school kids having sodas and listening to the juke box. Many tables have been added, it is the local hangout for the kids and there are now three boys jerking sodas. Gower is a different man now--sober, shaven and good humored. He is behind the counter when George comes in and his face lights up as George enters.

GEORGE: Mr. Gower...Mr. Gower...thanks ever so much for the bag. It's just exactly what I wanted.

GOWER: Aw, forget it.

GEORGE: Oh, it's wonderful!

GOWER: Hope you enjoy it on all your exploring adventures.

GEORGE: Oh my gosh. You still have this old cigar lighter on the counter. I'm going to close my eyes and make a wish. Okay here I go, I'm snapping the lighter. I wish I had a million dollars. Do I dare open my eyes? I do and it still lights a flame. Hot dog!!

SFX out.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George and Mr. Gower shake hands vigorously. George leaves the drugstore and crosses the street to the Building and Loan offices and sees Uncle Billy, and cousins Tilly and Eustace leaning out the second floor windows.

UNCLE BILLY: Avast there, Captain Cook, you got your sea legs yet?

COUSIN TILLY: Parlez-vous Francais? Hey, send us some of them French picture postcards, will you George? Hey, George. Your suitcase is leaking.

UNCLE BILLY: Don't take any plugged nickels.

GEORGE: I'm not leaving yet. I'm just on my way home for dinner.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: At the Bailey home, Pop Bailey is seated at the dinner table with Mrs. Bailey as they hear banging and scuffling upstairs.

SFX of banging and scuffling.

MOTHER: (*calling out*) George! Harry! You're shaking the house down! Stop it and come down to dinner.

POP: Oh let 'em alone. I wish I was up there with them.

MOTHER: Harry'll tear his dinner suit.

(*Calling upstairs again*)

George! Harry! Come down this minute. Everything is getting cold and you know we are waiting for you.

GEORGE: We're coming....mother.

MOTHER: I hope the stairway holds up till they bounce down.

SFX out.

HARRY: We're here! We're Here!!

MOTHER: You characters. Now sit down and have your dinner.

HARRY: I've eaten.

MOTHER: Well, aren't you going to finish dressing for your graduation party? Look at you.

HARRY: I don't care. It's George's tux.

GEORGE: Boy oh boy, my last meal at the old Bailey boarding house.

HARRY: Can I have the car Pop? I'm going to take over a lot of plates and things.

MOTHER: What plates?

HARRY: Oh, mom...I'm chairman of the eats committee and we only need a couple of dozen.

MOTHER: Oh, no you don't Harry, not my best Haviland.

GEORGE: Oh, let him have the plates, mother.

POP: Have a good trip, George. Uncle Billy and I are going to miss you.

GEORGE: I'm going to miss you, too, Pop. What's the matter? You look tired.

POP: Oh, I had another tussle with Potter today.

GEORGE: Oh.

POP: I thought when we put him on the Board of Directors, he'd ease up on us a little bit.

GEORGE: I wonder what's eating that old money-grubbing buzzard anyway?

POP: Oh, he's a sick man. Sick in his mind, sick in his soul, if he has one. Hates everybody that has anything that he can't have. Hates us mostly, I guess.

MOTHER: I'll help you put those things in the car Harry. Maybe everything will get ther in one piece. I'll get your tie and studs together.

HARRY: That'll be great mom. Hey George. You coming over later?

GEORGE: What do you mean, and be bored to death?

HARRY: Couldn't want a better death. Lots of pretty girls and we're going to use that new floor of yours tonight, too.

GEORGE: I hope it works.

HARRY: See ya. Gotta go.

GEORGE: Pop, did I act like that when I graduated from high school?

POP: Pretty much. You know, George, wish we could send Harry to college with you. Your mother and I talked it over half the night.

GEORGE: We have that all figured out. You see, Harry'll take my job at the Building and Loan, work there four years, then he'll go.

POP: He's pretty young for that job.

GEORGE: Well, no younger that I was when I started.

POP: Maybe you were born older.

GEORGE: How's that?

POP: I say, maybe you were born older. I suppose you've decided what you are going to do when you get out of college.

GEORGE: Oh, well, you know what I've always talked about--build things--design new buildings--plan modern cities--all that stuff I was talking about.

POP: Still after that first million before you are thirty?

GEORGE: No, I'll settle for half that much, in cash.

POP: Of course it is just a hope, but you wouldn't consider coming back to the Building and Loan, would you? I know it may be too soon to talk about it....but...

GEORGE: Oh, now pop, I couldn't face being cooped up for the rest of my life in a shabby little office.
(Realizes he has hurt his father)

Oh...sorry pop. I didn't mean that remark, but this business of nickels and dimes and spending all your life trying to figure out how to save three cents on a length of pipe...I'd go crazy. I want to do something big and something important.

POP: You know, George, I feel that in a small way we are doing something important. Satisfying a fundamental urge. It's deep in the desire of a man to want his own roof and walls and fireplace, and we're helping him get

those things in our shabby little office.

GEORGE: (*Unhappily*) I know pop. I wish I felt...but I've been hoarding pennies like a miser in order to...most of my friends have already finished college. I just feel like if I don't get away, I'll bust.

POP: Yes, yes, you are right, son.

GEORGE: You see what I mean, don't you, pop.

POP: This town is no place for any man unless he's willing to crawl to Potter. You've got talent, son. I've seen it. You get yourself an education. Then get out of here.

GEORGE: Pop you want a great shock? I think you are one great guy!

POP: Have a great time, son.

SFX Dance band music under

RADIO ANNOUNCER: For the lack of anything better to do, George decides to go over to the graduation dance and see how Harry is getting along. Several couples are standing around the refreshment table. Harry is passing out plates as George joins him feeling very grown-up and out of place.

HARRY: (*introducing George*) You know my a....kid...brother, George. I'm going to put him through college.

SAM: (*Laughing*) Boy do I know George. Hee, haw!

GEORGE: I thought I heard a familiar voice. Sam Wainwright! How are you? When did you get here?

SAM: Just this afternoon I thought I would give the kids a treat. Visit the old alma mater.

GEORGE: Old college graduate now, huh?

SAM: Yeah...old Joe College Wainwright, they call me. Well, freshman, looks like you're going to make it after all.

GEORGE: Yep, I'm on my way.

SAM: Harry! You're the guy I want to see. Coach has heard all about you.

HARRY: He has.

SAM: Yeah. He's followed every game with his mouth watering. He wants me to find out if you're going to come along with us.

HARRY: Well I gotta make some dough first.

SAM: Well you better make it fast. We need great ends like you, not broken down old guys like George here. Hee haw.

GEORGE: Hee haw, yourself.

SAM: My goodness, even the principal is here tonight.

GEORGE: Hello, Mr. Partridge. How are you?

PRINCIPAL PARTRIDGE: George, putting a pool under this floor was a great idea. Saved us another building. Now, Harry and Sam, have a lot of fun. Lots to eat around here. Pretty girls too.

GEORGE: Hiya Marty. Well, it's old home week.

MARTY: Do me a favor, will you George?

GEORGE: What's that?

MARTY: Well, you remember my kid sister, Mary?

SAM: Oh yeah. "Momma wants you Marty, Momma wants you Marty". every time we had something going as boys.

MARTY: Dance with her, George, will you?

GEORGE: Oh...me? I, well, I feel funny enough already around all these kids.

MARTY: Aw, c'mon. Be a sport. Just dance with her once. Give her the thrill of a lifetime.

SAM: Aw, go on.

MARTY: Hey, sis.

GEORGE: Hey don't be long Marty. I don't want to be a wet nurse for...

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Mary Hatch turns as her brother calls to her. She is standing drinking punch with one of the high school boys, Freddie. For the first time she is wearing an evening gown and she has gained assurance from the attention she is getting at the dance. As she turns and sees George, she loses her poise staring at him. He is also staring at her.

FREDDIE: The next thing I know, some guy came up and tripped me. That's the reason I came in fourth. If it hadn't been for that...

MARTY: *(Interrupting)* You remember George? This is Mary. Well, I'll be seeing you.

GEORGE: Well, well, well.

FREDDIE: Now to get back to my story, see...

GEORGE: Son, take Mary's punch cup, so she can dance.

FREDDIE: Hey, this is my dance!

GEORGE: Oh, why don't you stop annoying people!

FREDDIE: Well, I'm sorry. Hey!

GEORGE: C'mon Mary, we don't want to miss a beat. Well, hello, hello.

MARY: Hello. You look at me as if you didn't know me.

GEORGE: Well, I don't.

MARY: You have passed me on the street nearly every day.

GEORGE: Me?

MARY: Uh-huh.

GEORGE: Uh-uh. That was a little girl named Mary Hatch. That wasn't you.

SFX Dance music stops.

HARRY: *(Loud whistle)* Hey, hey, hey, everybody! Time for the big Charleston contest. An-n- n-nd a big prize! Those not tapped by the judges will remain on the floor!!! Let's go!!!!

SFX Charleston music starts.

GEORGE: I'm not very good at this.

MARY: Neither am I.

GEORGE: Okay--let's do it. What can we lose?

MARTY: What's the matter, Freddie--jealous? Did you know there is a swimming pool under this floor? And did you know that button behind you causes this floor to open up? And did you further know that George and Mary are dancing right over that crack? And I've got the key?

SFX Crowd cheering under narration.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Freddie needs no more. He takes the key from Marty and turns the switch. The floor begins to part in the middle, each half sliding under the bleacher seats. Pandemonium starts. Dancers begin to scurry noisily off the floor. Some are so engrossed in their dancing they continue at top speed. George and Mary are so engrossed in dancing with each other that they don't notice the floor opening.

GEORGE: Hey, they are cheering us. We must be good.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The crowd watches as Mary and George move backward and fall into the pool below,

laughing all the way they continue dancing in the pool. The crowd on the edge cheer them and some jump in to join them in the water. The Principal tries to restore order, finally gives up and jumps in himself.

Charleston music, cheering out.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The night is warm with a bright moon. George and Mary are alone in a park nearby. George is dressed in a jersey sweater and oversize football pants that keep wanting to come down. Mary is in an old white bath robe. Each is carrying their wet clothes tied into a bundle, that leaves a trail of dripping water. They pause near some trees and shrubs.

GEORGE: And I told Harry I thought I'd be bored to death. You should have seen the commotion in that locker room. I had to knock down three people to get this stuff we're wearing now. Here, let me hold that wet dress.

MARY: (*Laughing*) Do I look as funny as you do?

GEORGE: I guess I'm not quite the football type. You...you look wonderful. You know, if it wasn't me talking I'd say you were the prettiest girl in town.

MARY: Well, why don't you say it?

GEORGE: I don't know. Maybe I will say it. Okay, I already said it. How old are you anyway?

MARY: Eighteen

GEORGE: Eighteen. Why it was only last year you were seventeen.

MARY: Too young or too old?

GEORGE: Oh, no. Just right. Your age fits you. Yes, sir, you look a little older without your clothes on...I mean without a dress...you look older...I mean...younger...you look just ri...

MARY: (*Interrupting*) Sir, you just stepped on the belt of my bathrobe, or rather, my regal gown. Hand me my train, please.

GEORGE: (*Joining her playful mood*) A pox upon me for being a clumsy lout. At your service, *my lady*.

MARY: You may kiss my hand.

GEORGE: MMMM.mmmmm.

MARY: (*Changes the mood*) Hey, look at that old house over there.

GEORGE: That's the old Granville house. I think I'll throw a rock at it.

MARY: Oh, no. I love that old house. I know it is weather-beaten, not cared for -- old fashioned, but once beautiful...

GEORGE: (*Interrupting*) No. You see, you make a wish and then try to break some glass. You got to be a pretty good shot.

MARY: No, no, George, don't. It's full of romance. I'd like to live in it.

GEORGE: In that place?

MARY: Uh-huh.

GEORGE: I wouldn't live in it as a ghost. Now.. watch....right on the second floor.

SFX of window glass being broken.

MARY: What did you wish, George?

GEORGE: Well, not just one wish. A whole hatful, Mary. I know what I'm going to do tomorrow and the next day and the next year. I'm going to shake the dust of this crummy little town off my feet and I'm going to see the world. Italy, Greece, the Parthenon, the Coliseum. Then I'm coming back here and go to college and see what they know...and then I'm going to build things. I'm going to build air fields, skyscrapers seventy

stories high....bridges... are you going to throw a rock?

MARY: Here I go.

SFX of window glass being broken.

GEORGE: Hey. that's pretty good. What'd you wish, Mary?

MARY: (*Singing, "Buffalo Gals"*) ...can't you come out tonight, can't you come out tonight. Buffalo Gals can't you come out tonight and dance by the light of the moon.

GEORGE: What did you wish when you threw that rock?

MARY: Oh, no.

GEORGE: Come on, tell me.

MARY: If I told you it might not come true.

GEORGE: What is it you want Mary? That full moon up there? Just say the word and I'll throw a lasso around it and pull it down. Hey, that's a good idea. I'll give you the moon.

MARY: I'll take it. And then what?

GEORGE: Well, then you could swallow it and it'd all dissolve, see? And the moonbeams would shoot out of your fingers and your toes, and the ends of your hair.

(Pause)

Am I talking too much?

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George stammers as he looks at the moonlight in Mary's hair. A man is walking his dog nearby and observes the couple.

MAN #1: Why don't you quit talking her to death and just kiss her.

GEORGE: Want me to kiss her, huh?

MAN #1: Aw youth, is wasted on the wrong people.

GEORGE: Hey, hey, hold on mister, come on back and I'll show you some kissing that'll put hair back on your head. Hey... Mary what are you...

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George has again been standing on the dangling belt of Mary's borrowed robe.

Somewhat flustered by the remarks of the man she runs behind some bushes her robe staying behind at

George's feet. He drops his bundle of wet clothes and picks up Mary's robe. He cannot see her anywhere.

GEORGE: Mary....Mary. Okay, I give up, where are you?

MARY: Over here in the hydrangea bushes.

GEORGE: Here you are....I'll throw you the robe.

(To himself)

...wait a minute. What am I doing? This is a very interesting situation.

MARY: (*Shouting*) Please give me the robe!

GEORGE: Hmmm...a man doesn't get in a situation like this every day. Especially in Bedford Falls.

MARY: (*Impatient*) George Bailey, give me the robe!

GEORGE: I've heard about things like this, but I've never...

MARY: Shame on you. I'm going to tell your mother.

GEORGE: Oh, my mother's way up beyond the corner.

MARY: (*Desperate*) I'll call the police!

GEORGE: There're way downtown. They'd be on my side, anyway.

MARY: I'm going to scream!

PERUSAL -- Merry Christmas, George Bailey! Adapted by *Shirlee H. Shields*

GEORGE: (*Thoughtfully*) Maybe I could sell tickets. Mmmm...let's see. No, the point is, in order to get this robe...I've got it! I'll make a deal with you, Mary.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Headlights from a car flash in George's eyes and he sees the old Bailey car with Harry at the wheel and Uncle Billy beside him. He quickly throws the robe over the bushes to Mary.

UNCLE BILLY: George! George! Come, get in. Come on home. Your father has had a stroke!

GEORGE: (*Calling back to Mary*) Mary...Mary, I'm sorry. I've got to go!

HARRY: C'mon George, let's go.

GEORGE: Did you get the doctor?

UNCLE BILLY: Yes, Doc Campbell is there now.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The next scene, three months later, takes us to the Bailey Building and Loan Office in the afternoon as we see about twelve directors seated around a long table. They are substantial citizens of Bedford Falls: Doctor Campbell, a lawyer, an insurance agent, a real estate salesman, are among those present along with Henry F. Potter. Uncle Billy and George are seated among the directors. There has been much discussion about the future of the Building and Loan. Dr. Campbell, chairman of the board, is speaking to the group.

DR. CAMPBELL: I think that's all we'll need you for, George. I know you're anxious to make a train.

GEORGE: I have a taxi waiting downstairs.

DR. CAMPBELL: I want the board to know that George gave up his trip over seas to help straighten things out here these past few months. Good luck to you at school, George.

GEORGE: Thank you, sir.

DR. CAMPBELL: Now we come to the real purpose of this meeting, to appoint a successor to our dear friend, Peter Bailey.

POTTER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to get to my REAL purpose.

UNCLE BILLY: Wait just a minute, now.

POTTER: Wait for what? I claim this institution is not necessary to this town. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I make a motion to dissolve this institution and turn its assets and liabilities over to the receiver.

UNCLE BILLY: George, did you hear that old buzzard?

LAWYER: Peter Bailey died three months ago. I second Mr. Potter's motion.

DR. CAMPBELL: Very well. In that case I'll ask the two executive officers to withdraw. But before you go George and Billy Bailey, I'm sure the whole board wishes to express its deep sorrow at the passing of Peter Bailey.

GEORGE: Thank you very much.

DR. CAMPBELL: It was his faith and devotion that are responsible for this organization.

POTTER: I'll go further than that. I'll say that to the public Peter Bailey was the Building and Loan.

UNCLE BILLY: That surprises me, Mr. Potter, coming from you, considering that you probably drove him to his grave.

POTTER: Peter Bailey was not a business man. That's what killed him. Oh, I don't mean any disrespect to him, God rest his soul. He was a man of high ideals, so called, but ideals without common sense can ruin this town. Now, you take the loan to Ernie Bishop...You know, that fellow that sits around all day on his brains in his taxi. You know...I happen to know the bank turned down that loan, but he comes here and we're building him a house worth five thousand dollars. Why?

GEORGE: I've got Ernie waiting downstairs in his taxi to take me to the train. But he can wait a minute longer while I tell you a thing or two. I handled that, Mr. Potter. You have all his papers there. His salary, insurance. I can personally vouch for his character.

POTTER: *(Sarcastically)* A friend of yours?

GEORGE: Yes, sir.

POTTER: You see, if you shoot pool with some employee here, you can come and borrow money. What does that get us? A discontented, lazy rabble instead of a thrifty, working class. And all because a few starry-eyed dreamers like Peter Bailey stir them up and fill their heads with a lot of impossible ideas. Now, I say...

GEORGE: Uncle Billy, hold my coat, there are a few more things I want to say here. Now, hold on, Mr. Potter. You're right when you say my father was no business man. I know that. Why he ever started this cheap, penny-ante Building and Loan, I never know. But neither you, nor anybody else can say anything against his character, because his whole life was... Why, in the twenty-five years since he and Uncle Billy started this thing, he never once thought of himself. Isn't that right, Uncle Billy? He didn't save enough money to send Harry to school, let alone me. But he did help a few people get out of your slums, Mr. Potter. And what's wrong with that? Why...here, you're all businessmen here. Doesn't it make them better citizens, better customers? You...you said...what did you say just a minute ago? They had to wait and save their money before they even ought to think of a decent home?. Wait!

(Becoming incensed)

Wait for what? Until their children grow up and leave them? Until they're too old and broken-down that they... Do you know how long it takes a working man to save five thousand dollars? Just remember this, Mr. Potter, that this rabble you're talking about, they do most of the working and paying and living and dying in this community! Well, is it too much to have them work and pay and live and die in a couple of decent rooms and a bath? Anyway, my father didn't think so. People were human beings to him, but to you, a warped, frustrated old man, they're cattle. Well, in my book he died a much richer man than you'll ever be!

POTTER: I'm not interested in your book. I'm talking about the Building and Loan.

GEORGE: I know very well what you're talking about. You're talking about something you can't get your fingers on, and it's galling you. That's what you're talking about, I know.

(Calmly to the board)

I'm sorry gentlemen, I've said too much here. You are the board. You do what you want with this thing. Just one thing more, though. This town needs this measly one-horse institution if only to have some place where people can come without crawling to Potter. C'mon Uncle Billy, we're leaving.

POTTER: Sentimental hogwash. I want my motion...

(Board members chatter excitedly)

SFX of door closing is heard.

UNCLE BILLY: Boy, oh boy, that was telling him, George, old boy. You really shut his big mouth.

(To Cousin Tilly)

You should have heard him.

COUSIN TILLY: What happened? We heard a lot of yelling.

UNCLE BILLY: Well, we're being voted out of business after twenty-five years. Easy come, easy go.

COUSIN TILLY: Gosh, I'd better start looking in the "Help Wanted; Female" ads.

GEORGE: *(Yelling down to Ernie)* Ernie, I'll be right down. Hang on.

UNCLE BILLY: Hey, you gotta go. You'll miss your train. You're already a week late for school. Go on.

GEORGE: I wonder what's going on in there?

UNCLE BILLY: Oh, never mind. Don't worry about that. They're putting us out of business. So what? I can get another job. I'm only fifty-five.

COUSIN TILLY: Fifty-six.

UNCLE BILLY: Go on, go on. Hey, look, you already gave up your boat trip, after your father's death to keep things running. Now you don't want to miss college too, do you? Good luck, George. We'll miss you!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George gives Cousin Tilly a hug good-bye and starts to shake Uncle Billy's hand when Dr. Campbell comes running out of the board meeting.

DR. CAMPBELL: (*Excited*) George! George! They voted Potter down! They want to keep it going!

UNCLE BILLY and COUSIN TILLY: Oh goody! Yippee!!

DR. CAMPBELL: But, they have got one condition and only one condition.

GEORGE: What's that?

DR. CAMPBELL: That's the best part of it. They've appointed George here as executive secretary to take his father's place.

GEORGE: Oh, no! But, Uncle Billy...

DR. CAMPBELL: You can keep him on, that's all right. As secretary you can hire anyone you want to.

GEORGE: (*Emphatically*) Dr. Campbell, now let's get this thing straight. I'm leaving. I'm leaving now, right now. I'm going to school. This is my last chance. Uncle Billy here, he's your man.

DR. CAMPBELL: But George, they will vote with Potter otherwise.

SFX of stars twinkling.

CLARENCE: I know, I know. He didn't go.

JOSEPH: That's right. Not only that, but he gave his college money to his brother Harry and sent him to college. Harry became a football star- made second team All American.

CLARENCE: Yes, but what happened to George?

JOSEPH: George got four years older, waiting for Harry to come back and take over the Building and Loan. As a matter of fact we see George and Uncle Billy waiting at the train station for Harry's arrival. Uncle Billy is munching on peanuts as George nervously paces in front of him.

SFX of train station, people, etc.

GEORGE: Oh, there are plenty of jobs around for somebody that likes to travel. Just look at this folder. There...Venezuela oilfields, wanted, man with construction experience. Here's the Yukon, right here-- wanted, man with engineering experience.

SFX Whistle and sound of approaching train.

GEORGE: That she blows. Know what the three most exciting sounds in the world are?

UNCLE BILLY: Uh-huh. Breakfast is served. Lunch is served, dinner...

GEORGE: No, no, no. Anchor chains, plane motors, and train whistles.

UNCLE BILLY: Peanut?

SFX of train stopping.

GEORGE: Oh, there's Harry getting off.

UNCLE BILLY: And followed by a very attractive young lady.

GEORGE: (*Joyously*) There's the professor now! Old professor Bailey, Phi Beta Kappa Bailey, all American

Bailey.

HARRY: Well, if it isn't old George Geographic Explorer Bailey! What? No husky dogs? No sled? Hey Uncle Billy, you haven't changed a bit.

UNCLE BILLY: Nobody ever changes around here. You know that.

GEORGE: Oh, am I glad to see you.

HARRY: Where's mother?

GEORGE: She's home cooking the fatted calf. C'mon, let's get you bags and go home.

HARRY: Wait a minute. There is someone important I want you to meet. Ruth, my brother George and my Uncle Billy.

GEORGE: Well...hello.

UNCLE BILLY: How do you do.

RUTH: Ruth Dakin Bailey, if you don't mind.

UNCLE BILLY: Huh?

HARRY: Well, I wired you I had a surprise. Here she is. Meet the wife.

GEORGE: Well, how do you do. Congratulations! Congratulations. What am I doing.....a brother can at least kiss the bride. Harry, why didn't you tell somebody? And Ruth, what's a pretty girl like you marrying this two-headed brother of mine?

RUTH: Well, I'll tell you. It's pretty mercenary. My father offered him a job .

UNCLE BILLY: Oh, a...he gets you and a job? Well, Harry's cup runneth over.

HARRY: George...about that job. Ruth spoke out of turn. I never said I'd take it. You've been holding the bag here for four years, and... well, I won't let you down, George. I would like to...oh, I had better get the bags. I'll be right back.

UNCLE BILLY: This is really a surprise. This is the new Mrs. Bailey, my nephew's wife. I'm an old, old friend of the family.

RUTH: Oh, of course. I've heard him speak of you often, Uncle Billy.

UNCLE BILLY: And I want you to know we are going to give the biggest party this town has ever seen.

RUTH: And George, big brother George, George...that's all Harry ever talks about.

GEORGE: (*Quietly*) Ruth, this....what about this job?

RUTH: Oh well, my father owns a glass factory in Buffalo. He wants Harry started in the research part of the business.

GEORGE: Is it a good job?

RUTH: Oh yes, very. Not much money, but a good future, you know. Harry's a genius at research. My father fell in love with him.

GEORGE: And you did too.

RUTH: Oh, yes.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: A few days later there was a very large party celebrating the marriage of Harry and Ruth at the Bailey home. George and Uncle Billy are alone on the porch as the last guests depart. Uncle Billy is a bit tipsy.

UNCLE BILLY: Oh, boy, oh boy, oh boy. I feel so good I could spit in 'ol Potter's eye. think I will. What did you say? Huh? Oh, maybe I'd better go home. Now where is my hat. George help me find my hat. It's right here. Now which one is mine?

GEORGE: The middle one.

UNCLE BILLY: Oh, thank you George ol' boy. Now...look...if you will just point me in the right direction...would you do that, George?

GEORGE: Right down here. I'll help you down the steps.

UNCLE BILLY: That way?

GEORGE: Now just go straight down the street.

UNCLE BILLY: Old Building and Loan pal...right? This way, huh?

(sings)

“My wild I rish Rose...sweetest flower that grows ...”

SFX crash of cans and bottles is heard.

“I'm...okay, George... "the sweetest flower ...”

GEORGE: Oh, hi mom. Just Uncle Billy leaving. Nice party.

MRS. BAILEY: And here's a kiss for the brother of the groom. That's for nothing. Just 'cause. Hey, you dropped these travel folders by the garbage can. Here...a... how do you like her?

GEORGE: She's....swell.

MRS. BAILEY: Looks like she can keep Harry on his toes.

GEORGE: Keep him out of Bedford Falls anyway.

MRS. BAILEY: Do you know Mary Hatch is back from school?

GEORGE: Uh- huh. .

MRS. BAILEY: Came back three days ago.

GEORGE: Hmmmmm.

MRS. BAILEY: Nice girl, Mary.

GEORGE: Hmmmmm.

MRS. BAILEY: The kind of girl that will help you find some answers, George.

GEORGE: Hmmmmm.

MRS. BAILEY: Oh, stop that humming. Can you give me one good reason why you shouldn't call on Mary?

GEORGE: Sure. Sam Wainwright.

MRS. BAILEY: Hmmm?

GEORGE: Yes, Sam's crazy about Mary.

MRS. BAILEY: Well, she's not crazy about him.

GEORGE: Well, how do you know? Did she discuss it with you?

MRS. BAILEY: Well, she didn't have to. I've got eyes haven't I? Why she lights up like a firefly whenever you're around.

GEORGE: Oh...haven't noticed...

MRS. BAILEY: And besides, Sam Wainwright is in New York and you're here in Bedford Falls.

GEORGE: All is fair in love and war?

MRS. BAILEY: (*Primly*) I don't know about war....but....

GEORGE: (*Kidding*) Mother, you know I can see right through you, right back to your collar button. You're trying to get rid of me, huh?

MRS. BAILEY: Uh-huh. Here's your hat, George.

GEORGE: Well, here's you hat what's your hurry? Well, all right mother, old Building and Loan pal, I think I'll

go out and find a girl and do a little passionate necking.

MRS. BAILEY: Oh, George.

GEORGE: Now if you will just point me in the right direction. Good night Mrs. Bailey.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George goes over to Mary's house walking very slowly meditating as he does. Her home is a nice but a simple dwelling. He walks on by, then turns and paces back a few yards, turns, then starts back again. Mary notices him from her window watching him walk back and forth. She comes to the porch and calls out to him.

MARY: What are you doing George, picketing?

GEORGE: Oh, a...just happened to be passing by.

MARY: Yes, so I noticed. Have you made up your mind?

GEORGE: How's that?

MARY: Have you made up your mind yet?

GEORGE: About what?

MARY: About coming in. Your mother just phoned and said you were on your way over.

GEORGE: My mother called you? Well, how did she know.

MARY: Didn't you tell her?

GEORGE: I didn't tell anyone. I just went for a walk after the party and just happened to be passing by...went for a walk, that's all.

MARY: Well are you coming in or aren't you?

GEORGE: Well, I'll come in for a minute, but I didn't tell anyone I was coming over here.

MARY: Come, let's sit on the porch swing.

GEORGE: Oh, yes...okay. When did you get back?

MARY: Tuesday.

GEORGE: Where did you get that dress.

MARY: Do you like it?

GEORGE: It's all right. I thought you would be back in New York like Sam and the rest of them.

MARY: Oh, I worked there for a couple of vacations, but I don't know...I guess I got homesick.

GEORGE: Homesick? For Bedford Falls?

MARY: Yes, my family and...oh, everything. Would you like some lemonade?

GEORGE: No, I can just stay a minute. I still can't understand it though. You know I didn't tell anyone I was coming here.

MARY: Would you rather leave?

GEORGE: Oh, a...no I don't want to be rude.

MARY: Well, then, just sit and relax.

GEORGE: Hmmmm. I see it still smells like pine needles here.

MARY: Thank you.

(Desperately keeping the conversation going)

It was nice about your brother Harry, and Ruth, wasn't it?

GEORGE: Oh, yeah...yeah. That's all right.

MARY: Don't you like her?

GEORGE: Well, of course I like her. She's a...peach.

MARY: Oh, it's just marriage in general you're not enthusiastic about, huh?

GEORGE: No. Marriage is all right for Harry, and Marty, and Sam and you.

MRS. HATCH: *(Calling from upstairs)* Mary! Mary! Who's down there with you?

MARY: *(Calls back to her mother)* It's George Bailey, mother.

MRS. HATCH: George Bailey! What does he want?

MARY: I don't know,

(To George)

What do you want?

GEORGE: *(Indignant)* Me? Not a thing. Just walking by, stopped to rest my feet.

MARY: *(To mother)* He's making violent love to me, mother.

MRS. HATCH: Tell him to go right back home, and don't you leave the house, either. Wainwright promised to call you from New York tonight.

GEORGE: *(Heatedly)* But your mother needn't.....you know I didn't come here to....to....

MARY: What did you come for?

GEORGE: I don't know. You tell me. You're supposed to be the one that has all the answers. You tell me.

MARY: *(Terribly hurt)* Oh, why don't you go home.

GEORGE: That's where I'm going. I don't know why I came here in the first place. Good night.

MARY: Good night!

MRS. HATCH: Mary, Mary. It's the telephone. Sam Wainwright's on the phone.

MARY: *(Almost weeping)* I'll get it.

MRS. HATCH: Whatever were you doing that you couldn't hear the phone ring? Mary? Sam's waiting.

MARY: *(Changing to overly enthusiastic)* Hee, haw. Hello Sam, how are you?

SAM: *(Telephone voice)* Aw great. Gee it's good to hear your voice again.

MARY: Oh, well, that's awfully sweet of you, Sam.

(To George)

Yes...?

GEORGE: I forgot my hat.

MARY: There's an old friend of yours here. George Bailey.

SAM: You mean ol' moss-back George?

MARY: Yes, ol' moss-back George.

SAM: Hee-haw. Put him on.

MARY: I'll put him on.

MRS. HATCH: He doesn't want to speak to George, you idiot!

MARY: He does so. He asked for him. Here George.

GEORGE: Hello Sam.

SAM: Well, George Baileyosffski! Hey a fine pal you are. What're trying to do, steal my girl?

GEORGE: What do you mean? Nobody's trying to steal your girl. I was just walking by...here's Mary.

SAM: No, only kidding, wait a minute. I want to talk to both of you. Tell Mary to get on the extension.

MARY: Mother is on the extension. A...come closer George, we can both hear on this phone. We're listening, Sam.

SAM: I have a big deal coming up that's going to make us all rich. George you remember that night in Martini's

bar when you told me you read someplace about making plastics out of soy beans?

GEORGE: Yeah...soy beans...yeah ...uh-huh.

SAM: Well, dad snapped up the idea. He's going to build a factory outside Rochester. How do you like that?

GEORGE: Rochester? Why Rochester?

SAM: Why not? Can you think of anything better?

GEORGE: Oh, I don't know...why not right here? You remember the old tool and machinery works? You tell your father he can get that for a song. And all the labor he wants, too. Half the town was thrown out of work when that closed down.

SAM: That so? Well, I'll tell him. Hey, that sounds great. Oh, just a minute...

(Laughter and conversation is heard in the background of Sam's conversation. He speaks to someone in the room with him)

Yeah, I'll have a refill. Put 'er there.

(Back to George and Mary)

Oh, baby I knew you'd come through. Now, here's the point Mary, Mary, you're in on this too. Now listen. Have you got any money?

GEORGE: Money? Yeah....well a little.

SAM: Well, now listen. I want you to put every cent you've got into our stock, you hear? And George, I may have a job for you, that is, unless you're still married to that broken-down Building and Loan. This is the biggest thing since radio, and I'm letting you in on the ground floor. Oh, Mary, Mary...

MARY: *(Nervously)* I'm here. Have you been drinking, Sam?

SAM: Hee-haw, noooo... Would you tell that guy that I'm giving him the chance of a lifetime?

MARY: *(Whispering while looking into George's eyes)* He says it's the chance of a lifetime.....you're....we're standing awful close, George.

GEORGE: That happens when two people talk on the same phone...

(to Sam, fiercely)

Now you listen to me! I don't want any plastics! I don't want any ground floors and I don't want to get married...ever... to anyone. You understand that? I want to do what I want to do.

(To Mary softly)

...and you're...and you're...

MARY: George, you dropped the phone...

(He embraces her tightly and kisses her)

George...George, mmmmm.

GEORGE: Oh, Mary...Mary.

MRS. HATCH: *(Calling down stairs)* Mary....Sam's still on the phone.

MARY: *(Tearfully)* Tell him I'm busy...and hang up the phone, mother.

SFX of wedding march under narration.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The scene is the living room of the Bailey home several months later. People are crowded into the living room.

SFX out

(Wedding guests chatter)

After the ceremony, George and Mary appear at the top of the stairs in traveling clothes, with Mrs. Hatch,

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red-eyed behind them. Cousins Tilly and Uncle Billy are busy snapping pictures as the bride and groom dodge rice being thrown at them as they go out to the curb and enter Ernie's cab. They all say good-bye as they slip into the back seat and into each other's arms.

SFX of chatter out.

ERNIE: If either of the two of you see a stranger around here, it's me.

GEORGE: Oh, look! Somebody's driving this cab. And he has a brightly wrapped gift in his hands.

ERNIE: Bert, the cop sent this over. He said to float away to Happy Land on the bubbles.

GEORGE: Oh, look at this. Champagne!

MARY: Good old Bert.

ERNIE: By the way, where are you two going on this here now honeymoon?

GEORGE: Where are we going? Look at this roll of bills, Ernie. There's the kitty. Here, Mary, c'mon count it.

MARY: I feel like a bootlegger's wife. Wow!

GEORGE: You know what we're going to do? We are going to shoot the works. A whole week in New York. A whole week in Bermuda. The highest hotels--the oldest champagne--the richest caviar--the hottest music, and the prettiest wife.

ERNIE: That does it, and then what?

GEORGE: And then what, Mary?

MARY: After that, who cares?

GEORGE: That does it---come here....mmmm.

ERNIE: Sorry to interrupt you two, but what the heck is happening at the bank? People are scurrying all over and it looks like the employees of the bank are trying to close the doors and people are pushing to get in. Don't look now, but something funny is going on over there at the bank, George. I've never really ever seen one, but that has all the earmarks of a run.

MAN #2: Hey, Ernie, if you got any money in the bank, you better hurry.

MARY: Oh, George, let's not stop.

GEORGE: Oh, my, look at that crowd. Just a minute dear, I need to take a look at this. I'll be back in a minute.

MARY: Please, George, don't stop.

GEORGE: Got to see what's happening at the Building and Loan. I'll just walk up there, Ernie, sit tight.

SFX crowd noise under narration.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: An iron grill blocks the street entrance to the Building and Loan. It has been locked. A crowd of men and women are waiting around the grill. In their hearts there is panic and fear. George quickly unlocks the grill door and pushes it open. Followed by the crowd, he runs upstairs and into the outer offices. Uncle Billy is standing in the doorway to his private office, taking a drink from a bottle.

GEORGE: What is this, Uncle Billy? A holiday? Come on in, everybody. Just come on in and sit down. There are a lot of chairs over there. C'mon and sit down, you needn't stand in front of the teller's office. Uncle Billy, why didn't you call me?

SFX crowd noise softens.

UNCLE BILLY: I did. Come in your office, I'll explain. They said you had just left. This is a pickle, George. A real pickle.

GEORGE: All right, now, what happened? How did it start?

UNCLE BILLY: How does anything like this ever start? All I know is the bank called our loan.

GEORGE: When?

UNCLE BILLY: About an hour ago. I had to hand over all our cash.

GEORGE: All of it?

UNCLE BILLY: Every cent of it, and it still was less than we owe.

GEORGE: Holy Mackerel!

UNCLE BILLY: And then I got scared, George, and closed the doors. I... I...

GEORGE: The whole town's gone crazy.

SFX of telephone ringing.

UNCLE BILLY: (*Answers phone*) Hello, yes? Yes, he's here.

(*To George*)

It's Potter. He's calling from the bank. take it.

GEORGE: Hello.

POTTER: George, there is a rumor around town that you've closed your doors. is that true? Oh, well I'm very glad to hear that... George, are you all right? Do you need any police?

GEORGE: Police? What for?

POTTER: Well, mobs do get angry, pretty ugly sometimes, you know. George, I'm going all out to help you in this crisis. I've just guaranteed the bank sufficient funds to meet their needs. They'll close up for a week and then re-open.

GEORGE: (*To Uncle Billy*) He just took over the bank.

POTTER: I may lose a fortune, but I'm willing to guarantee your people, too. Just tell them to bring their shares over here and I will pay them fifty cents on the dollar.

GEORGE: (*Furiously*) You never miss a trick, do you, Potter? Well, you're going to miss one now.

(*George hangs up the phone*)

POTTER: If you close your doors before six P.M. you will never reopen..... Hmm, he hung up!

UNCLE BILLY: Was it a nice wedding? I wanted to stay until you left on your honeymoon....

GEORGE: Yes, oh yeah. We'd better get back out to our people. Let's go.

SFX of angry voices.

(*George talking to crowd of customers*)

Now, folks, just remember that this thing is not as bad as it sounds. I just talked to Mr. Potter over at the bank and he's guaranteed cash payments at the bank. The bank's going to reopen, next week.

CHARLIE: But George, I got my money here. Did he guarantee this place?

GEORGE: Well, no, Charlie. I didn't even ask him. We don't need Potter over here.

(*To Mary and Ernie who just entered*)

Oh, Mary, Ernie, I'm glad you came in. We have a bit of a problem here, but we're figuring it out. It will take ...

CHARLIE: I'll take mine now.

GEORGE: Charlie....no, but you....you're thinking of this place all wrong. As if I had the money back in a safe. The money's not here. Your money's in Joe's house...right next to yours. And in the Kennedy house, and Mrs. Macklin's house, and a hundred others. Why, you're lending them the money to build, and then, they're going to pay it back to you as best they can. Now what are you going to do? Foreclose on them?

CLARA JONES: I got two hundred and forty-two dollars in here, and two hundred forty- two dollars isn't

going to break anybody.

GEORGE: Okay, Clara. All right, here you are. You sign this agreement and you'll get your money in sixty days.

CLARA JONES: Sixty days?

GEORGE: Well, now that's what you agreed to when you bought your shares.

CHARLIE: Clara, Clara, did you get your money?

CLARA JONES: No.

CHARLIE: Well I did. Old man Potter'll pay fifty cents on the dollar for every share you got. Look at these bills!

CROWD: (*Ad lib*) Fifty cents on the dollar!

CHARLIE: Yes, cash!

CLARA JONES: (*To George*) Well, what do you say?

GEORGE: (*To Clara*) Now, Clara, you have to stick to your original agreement. Now give us sixty days on this.

CLARA: Well...

MRS. THOMPSON: (*To Clara*) Are you going to Potter's?

CLARA JONES: Better to get half than nothing.

GEORGE: Clara, Charlie, Mrs. Thompson...all of you. Now, wait...now listen...now listen to me. I beg of you not to do this thing. If Potter gets hold of this Building and Loan there will never be a decent house built in this town. He's already got charge of the bank. He has the bus line. He's got the department stores and now he's after us. Why? Well, it's very simple. Because we're cutting in on his business, that's why. And because he wants to keep *you* living in his slums and paying the kind of rent he decides.

CROWD: (*Ad libbing responses*) Yeah but I want my money now. Well, maybe you're right...

GEORGE: Joe, you lived in one of his houses didn't you? Well, have you forgotten? Well, have you forgotten what he charged you for that broken-down shack? Here, Ed, you know, you remember last year when things weren't going so well, and you couldn't make, your payments. You didn't lose your house, did you? Do you think Potter would have let you keep it? Can't all of you understand what is happening? Potter isn't selling. Potter's buying! And why? Because we are panicky and he's not. That's why. He's picking up some bargains. Now, we can get through this thing all right. We've got to stick together, though. We've got to have faith in each other.

CHARLIE: Well...I suppose twenty dollars.

GEORGE: Twenty dollars. Now you're talking. Fine. Here you are. Now, Mrs. Thompson, how much do you want?

MRS. THOMPSON: But it's your own money, George.

GEORGE: Never mind about that. How much do you want?

MRS. THOMPSON: I can get along with twenty all right.

GEORGE: Twenty...here you are.

MRS. THOMPSON: And I'll sign a paper.

GEORGE: You don't have to sign anything. I know you'll pay it back when you can. That's okay. Bless your heart.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The crowd of shareholders are appeased by George and depart leaving him, Uncle

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Billy and cousin Tilly counting the seconds until the usual closing time of the Building and Loan. Mary and Ernie quietly left the scene earlier. George is holding in each hand a dollar bill. Uncle Billy is taking a drink out of a bottle. Cousin Tilly is closing the door as the clock ticks six o'clock.

GEORGE: Counting the seconds. Two, one, bingo. We made it. We're still in business and we've still got two bucks left! And we didn't close our doors not until our usual time. Uncle Billy, let's have some of that. Get some glasses, Tilly. Uncle Billy, we're a couple of financial wizards.

UNCLE BILLY: Yeah, those Rockerfellers have nothing on us.

GEORGE: A toast! A toast to Mama Dollar and Papa Dollar, and if you want the old Building and Loan to stay in business, you better have a family quick!

COUSIN TILLY: I wish they were rabbits.

GEORGE: I wish they were, too. Okay, let's put them in the safe and see what happens.

COUSIN TILLY: Folks, folks, to go with your drink, here's a couple of wedding cigars.

GEORGE: (*Startled*) Oh-oh. Wedding! Holy Mackerel, I'm married! Where's Mary? She was here a minute ago. Mary ... poor Mary. Look I've got to catch a train. Gosh, look at the time. The train's gone. I wonder if Ernie is still waiting in his cab?

SFX Telephone ring

COUSIN TILLY: (*On the phone*) Oh, yes... he is.

(*To George*)

You're wanted on the phone.

GEORGE: Get on the other line and get my wife on the phone. She's probably over to her mother's.

COUSIN TILLY: Mrs. Bailey is on the phone.

GEORGE: I don't want Mrs. Bailey, I don't want my mother...I want my wife. Mrs. Bailey! Oh, that's my wife. Here, I'll take it in my office.

(*On the phone*)

Mary? Hello... Listen dear, I'm sorry...what? Come home? What home? Three-twenty Sycamore Street? Well, what...whose home is that? The Waldorf Hotel, huh?

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George, a bit puzzled by the phone call but happy to hear Mary's voice, bids good-bye to Uncle Billy, and cousin Tilly as they close the Building and Loan.

(*Pause*)

The next scene is the exterior of an old-fashioned, run down house, unpainted and warped by the weather, once classy, but empty for years. This is the house that George and Mary will live in from now on. The rain is pouring down. A faint glow of light shines out from bottom windows. Inside, Bert, the policeman, and Ernie, the cab driver, are hurriedly putting up travel posters they "borrowed" from the local travel agency. The posters are not only to remind George of all the romantic places he wants to go to with Mary, but also to cover up a couple of broken windows. On the front door of the house is a sign with "Bridal Suite" in large letters. George, approaching the front gate, stops to make sure it's the right address.

ERNIE: Hey Bert! Here he comes.

BERT: Hurry, help, quick, We need one more poster hung here.

ERNIE: Okay, okay, but I gotta get my ol' coachman's hat on, and my jacket so I can be a proper butler.

BERT: Go for it. I can see him on the porch through the broken glass in the door.

ERNIE: (*Using a "French" accent*) Hiya....I mean, goo-oo-d evening, sir. Entray, Monsier, entray.

SFX of music playing on a record player.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George enters with the bowing and scraping of Bert and Ernie. The house is bare and drafty. A few wooden packing boxes have been made into a table set with a checkered tablecloth, candles, a bottle of champagne in an ice bucket and a bowl of caviar. Two small chickens are impaled on a spit over the fire in the fireplace. A phonograph is on a box, and a string from the phonograph is turning the chickens on the spit from an attached string as the record plays. Through a doorway, George notices a rickety bed with a frilly nightie and pajamas.

MARY: Welcome home, Mr. Bailey.

GEORGE: Well, I'll be...Mary, Mary ...Ernie, Bert...where did you. Mary, you just come right here now and let me hold and kiss you...mmmmm.

BERT, ERNIE: (*Singing*) I love you truly, truly I do... We think it's time to exit...

GEORGE: Oh, Mary....

MARY: Remember the night we broke the windows in this old house? This is what I wished for. You're holding me awfully tight.

GEORGE: Get used to it, Mrs. Bailey.

SFX Music out.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Two years later we see George and Mary in a slum area in front of one of the miserable shacks that line the street. In front of one of the shacks are two vehicles, George Bailey's rickety car, and the other an even more rickety truck piled high with household goods. The Martini family, consisting of Martini, his wife Maria and three small children are busy hauling out the last of their belongings assisted by George and Mary.

NEIGHBOR: Martini? You rented a new house?

MARTINI: (*Italian accent*) Rent? You hear that Mr. Bailey?

GEORGE: What's that?

MARTINI: I own the house. Me, Guiseppa Martini, I own my own house. No more we live lika pigs in thisa Potter's Field. Hurry, Maria, we go now.

MARIA: (*Italian accent*) Yes...I get the baby's things.

GEORGE: Come on Mary...you bring the baby. Martini, we'll take the kids in the car.

MARTINI: Oh, thank you Mr. Bailey.

GEORGE: All right, let's go. Mary, you and the baby in the front seat. Okay, now kids get right in the back here... Oh, boy, the goat... We need to take the goat... Oh, okay, in we all go.

MARTINI and MARIA: Good-bye, everybody.

SFX Martini sings "O Sole Mio" under narration.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Twenty minutes later we see the small "caravan" passing a sign with large letters hanging from a tree. "Welcome to Bailey Park". This is a community with small houses, not all alike, but each individual, with new lawns and young trees and the promise of becoming a pleasant middle class neighborhood. George and Mary arrive first and greet the Martini's on the porch of their new home. Across the street, standing by his large chauffeur-driven black town car, is Sam Wainwright dressed in his tailor made business suit accompanied by his attractive, sophisticated wife, dripping in jewels.

GEORGE and MARY: Mr. and Mrs. Martini. Welcome home.

SAM: That old George...he's always making a speech.

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(Calls across the street)

Hey George. Hee-haw!

GEORGE: Mary, that's Sam Wainwright.

MARY: Oh, who cares? Come Mrs. Martini, here's a loaf of bread that this house may never know hunger, and salt that life may always have flavor.

GEORGE: And Martini, here's wine, that joy and prosperity may rein forever. Now enter the Martini castle.

MARTINI and MARIA: *(ad lib)* Oh, thank you, thank you, bless you.

GEORGE: Mary, I guess we better go over and say hi to Sam...meet his wife.

SAM: We just stopped in town to take a look at the new factory, and then we're going to drive on down to Florida. Jane meet George and Mary.

GEORGE: Oh...nice to meet you.

MARY: Welcome to Bedford Falls.

JANE: Why don't you have your friends join us, Sam?

SAM: Why sure. Hey, why don't you kids drive down with us, huh?

GEORGE: Oh, I'm afraid I couldn't get away, Sam.

SAM: Still got the nose to the old grindstone, eh? Jane, I offered to let George in on the ground floor in plastics, and he turned me down cold.

GEORGE: Oh, now, don't rub in it in...

SAM: I'm not rubbing it in. Well, I guess we better be running along.

JANE: Awfully glad to have met you George and Mary. Sam has told me a lot about you both.

MARY: Nice meeting you. Have a nice trip.

GEORGE: Good-bye. Thanks for dropping by.

SAM: So long, George. See you in the funny papers. Well on to Florida. Hee-haw!

GEORGE: And hee-haw to you too.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The big black limo glides away, leaving George standing with his arm around Mary, gazing broodingly after it. They slowly walk over to George's old car and look at it silently.

(Pause)

Two days later in Mr. Potter's office we see Potter and his rent collector talking, and pointing at maps spread out on the desk.

RENT COLLECTOR: Look, Mr. Potter, it's no skin off my nose. I'm just your rent collector. But you can't laugh off this Bailey Park any more. Look at it.

SECRETARY: Mr. Potter. congressman Blatz is here to see you.

POTTER: Tell him to wait for a moment.

(To rent collector)

Go on.

RENT COLLECTOR: Fifteen years ago, a half-dozen houses stuck here and there. There's the old cemetery, squirrels, buttercups, daises. Used to hunt there myself. Look at it today. Dozens of the prettiest little homes you ever saw. Ninety percent owned by suckers who used to pay rent to you. Your Potter's Field, my dear Mr. Employer, is becoming just that. And are the local yokels making with those David and Goliath wisecracks.

POTTER: Oh, they are, are they? Even though they know the Bailey's haven't made a dime out of it?

RENT COLLECTOR: You know very well why. The Baileys were all chumps. Everyone of those homes is worth twice what it cost the Building and Loan to build. If I were you, Mr. Potter.....

POTTER: (*Gruffly interrupting*) Well, you are not me. The Bailey family has been a boil on my neck long enough. As you leave, tell my secretary to send in Congressman Blatz and get a meeting with George Bailey over here as soon as possible.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The next afternoon, George Bailey is seated across from Potter's desk as Potter is lighting a big cigar. He graciously offers George one.

GEORGE: Thank you, sir. Quite a cigar.

POTTER: You like it? I'll send you a box.

GEORGE: (*Nervously*) Well ... I ... I suppose I'll find out sooner or later, but just what did you want to see me about?

POTTER: (*Laughs and speaks pleasantly and smoothly*) George, now that's just what I like about you, right to the point. George, I'm an old man, and most people hate me. And I don't like them either, so that makes it all even. You know just as well as I do, that I run practically everything in this town but the Bailey Building and Loan. You know, also, that for a number of years I've been trying to get control of it...or kill it. But I haven't been able to do it. You have been stopping me. In fact, you have beaten me, George, and as anyone in this county can tell you, that takes some doing. Take during the depression, for instance. You and I were the only ones that kept our heads. You saved the Building and Loan. And I saved all the rest.

GEORGE: Well, most people say you STOLE all the rest!

POTTER: The envious ones say that, George, the suckers. Now, I have stated my side very frankly. Now, let's look at your side. Young man, twenty- seven, twenty-eight, making say.....forty a week.....

GEORGE: Forty-five!

POTTER: Forty-five. Forty-five out of which, after supporting your mother and paying your bills you're able to keep, say ten, if you skimp. A child or two comes along, and you won't even be able to save ten. Now, if this young man of twenty-eight was a common, ordinary yokel, I'd say he was doing fine. But, George Bailey is not a common, ordinary yokel. He's an intelligent, smart, ambitious young man--who hates his job-- who hates the Building and Loan, almost as much as I do. A young man who's been dying to get out on his own ever since he was born. A young man the smartest of his crowd, mind you, who has to sit by and watch his friends go places, because he's trapped into frittering away playing nursemaid to a lot of garlic-eaters. Do I paint a correct picture, or do I exaggerate?

GEORGE: (*Mystified*) Now what's your point, Mr. Potter?

POTTER: My point? My point is, I want to hire you.

GEORGE: (*Dumbfounded*) Hire, me?

POTTER: I want you to manage my affairs, run my properties. George, I'll start you at twenty thousand dollars a year.

GEORGE: (*Flabbergasted*) Wow! Twenty thou.....twenty thousand dollars a year?

POTTER: You wouldn't mind living in the nicest house in town, buying your wife a lot of fine clothes, a couple of business trips to New York a year, maybe Europe once in a while. You wouldn't mind that, would you George?

GEORGE: (*Looking around*) Would I? You're not talking to somebody else around here, are you? You know, this is me, George Bailey, you remember me? Geor...

POTTER: (*Interrupting*) Oh, yes, George Bailey, whose ship has just come in...providing he has the brains to climb aboard.

GEORGE: Well, what about the Building and Loan?

POTTER: Oh, confound it man, are you afraid of success? I'm offering you a three year contract at twenty thousand dollars a year, starting today. Is it a deal or isn't it.

GEORGE: Well, Mr. Potter, I ... I know I should jump at the chance, but I ... I just wonder if it would be possible for you to give me twenty-four hours to think it over?

POTTER: Sure, sure, sure. You go home and talk to your wife about it.

GEORGE: Yes, I'd like to do that.

POTTER: In the meantime I'll draw up the papers.

GEORGE: All right, sir.

POTTER: Okay, let's shake on it.

GEORGE: A ...okay, Mr. Potter.

(Pauses)

Now wait a minute, here! I don't have to talk to anybody! I know right now, and the answer is no! NO! Doggone it!

(Getting madder all the time)

You sit around here and you spin your little webs and you think the whole world revolves around you and your money. Well, it doesn't, Mr. Potter! In the...in the whole vast configuration of things, I'd say you were nothing but a scurvy little spider. You...

RADIO ANNOUNCER: George slams the cigar down on Potter's desk and hurriedly leaves his office. He goes straight home and finds Mary asleep in their cheaply furnished bedroom. As he enters his head is filled with many confusing thoughts, relating to incidents and dreams in his past life. He takes off his hat and coat and stares at his reflection in the dresser mirror and speaks to himself.

33 more pages to the end.