

It's a Wonderful Life

Soft music is playing. Voices are heard praying.

Mr. Gauer : I owe everything to George Bailey. Help him dear Father.

Harry: Jesus, help my brother George.

Mrs. Bailey : Help my son George tonight...

Bert : He never thinks of himself, God. That's why he is in trouble.

Ernie : George is a good guy. Give him a break, God.

Mary : Help him dear Lord....watch over him tonight.

Child 1: *(crying)* Please God, something's the matter with daddy.

Child 2: Please bring daddy back.

(all the voices together murmuring softly)

Act 1

Scene1: Angel and Joseph

Angel 1: Hello Joseph.....trouble?

Joseph: It looks like we will have to send someone down. A lot of people are asking for some help for a man named George Bailey.

Angel 1: George Bailey, yes, tonight's his crucial night. Yes, we will 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.

Angel 1: *(chuckling)* Oh, Clarence. He hasn't got his wings yet, has he?

Joseph: We passed him up right along, because you know sir.....he hasn't got the IQ of a rabbit.

Angel 1: Yes, but he's got the faith of a child. Simple. Joseph, send for Clarence.

(a silly trumpet blows as Clarence enters eagerly)

Clarence: You sent for me?

Angel 1: Yes Clarence. A man on earth needs our help.

Clarence: Is he sick?

Angel 1: No, worse. He is discouraged. At exactly 10:45 PM, earth time, that man will be thinking seriously of throwing away God's greatest gift.

Clarence: Oh dear, dear.....his life. Then I have only one hour to dress. What are they wearing down there now?

Angel 1: 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 200 years and Sir, people are beginning to talk.

Angel 1: What's that book you got there?

Clarence: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer.

Angel 1: Clarence, you do a good job with George Bailey and you get your wings.

Clarence: Oh thank you sir.....Thank you!

Angel 1: Oh Clarence.....sit down.

Clarence: (*puzzled*) Sit down? What we.....?

Angel 1: If you are going to help a man, you want to know something about him, don't you?

Clarence: Naturally, of course.....

2
Scene: Children at Play

(*shouting, cheering*)

George: OK, let's go.

Clarence: Hey, who's that?

Angel 1: That's your problem, George Bailey.

Clarence: A boy?

Angel 1: That's him when he was 12, back in 1919. Something happens here you will have to remember later on.

(*boys are sliding down the hill on to the river. George is cheering them on, calling them each by name*)

George: Marty let's go...Marty. Let's go Sam.

Sam: Hee Haw, Hee haw!!!

Little George: Ernie....Burt let's go.....Harry.....and here comes the scary-cat, my kid brother Harry.

Harry: I'm not scared.(action!!! Harry falls through the ice. George saves him.)

Angel 1: 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 get back to his after-school job at old man Gauer's drug store.

(George is walking to the store and meets Mr. Potter)

Little George: Mr. Potter.

Clarence: Who's that? A king?

Angel 1: That's Henry F. Potter, the richest and meanest man in the country.

(George is whistling as he walks so we can see he is happy. George goes in to the drug store.)

Little George: *(whistling)*it's me Mr. Gauer, George Bailey.

(George goes about the store whistling.)

Mr. Gauer: *(Shouts out from the back)* George, George!!!!

Little George: Yes Sir.

Mr. Gauer: Did I hire you to be a canary?

Little George: No sir....*(He finds the letter saying Gauer's son died.)* **Dear Mr. Gauer. Your son Robert died this morning of influenza...***(looking worried)* Mr. Gauer do you want something? Anything?

Mr. Gauer: No.

(George goes in the back. Gauer spills the pills)

Little George: I'll get them sir. *(picks up the pills)*

Gauer: Take those capsules over to Mrs. Blane. She's waiting for them.

(He sees the poison.)

George: Aside (Wait a minute! this is poison)

Little George: They have the diphtheria there, haven't they, sir?

Gauer: Ya.

Little George: Is it a charge sir? (George is stalling for time)

Gauer: Yes George.

Little George: Mr. Gauer....*(he is interrupted)*

Gauer: *(Shouting)* Git going!!!

Angelic Interlude:

Joseph: By now George was getting worried. Mr. Gauer had accidently put poison in the capsules. He decided to go ask his father what to do.

Clarence: Ohhh!

Scene: At His Father's Office

(George goes in to his father anyway)

Father: I'm not crying Mr. Potter.

Potter: Your begging is a whole lot worse.

Father: All I'm asking for is 30 more days.

Little George: Papa.

Father: Just a minute son. Just 30 short days, I'll dig up the 5 thousand somehow.

Little George: Papa.

Potter: Show me out. Show me out.

Little George: Papa.

Potter: Do you put any real pressure on those people that used to pay those mortgages?

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

Potter: Foreclose.

Father: I can't do that. Those families have children.

Potter: They're not my children.

Father: But they're somebody's children, Mr. Potter.

Potter: Are you running a business or a charity ward? Well, not with my money.

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

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

Little George: He's not a failure.

Father: George.

Little George: You can't say that about my father.

Father: George.

Little George: You're not, you're the biggest man in town.

Father: Run along.

Little George: Bigger than him.

Father: Run along.

Little George: Bigger than everybody.

Potter: Already thinking like a Bailey.

Little George: Don't let him say that about you pa.

Father: All right son, all right. Thanks. I'll talk to you tonight.

(Back at the grocery store)

Mr. Gauer: *(on the telephone)* What! That medicine should have been down an hour ago. I'll be over in five minutes Mrs. Blane. *(George comes in)* What have you been doing with those capsules?

Little George: I----I *(Mr. Gauer starts hitting him. He hits him on his left ear.)*

Mr. Gauer: Didn't you hear what I said?

Little George: Yes sir. I

Mr. Gauer: What kind of tricks you playing anyway? *(hits George)* Why didn't you deliver them right away? Didn't you know that boy's very sick?

Little George: Don't hurt me sore ear!

Mr. Gauer: You lazy loafer.

Little George: Mr. Gauer you don't know what you're doing. You put something wrong in those capsules. I know you didn't mean to. You got the telegram and you're upset. You put something bad in those capsules. It wasn't your fault Mr. Gauer. Just look and see what you did. The bottle you took the powder from. It's poison. I tell you it's poison. I know you feel bad.

Mr. Gauer: (*tastes a capsule he opens*) Oh! (*He moves towards George*)

Little George: Don't hurt my sore ear again!

Mr. Gauer: Oh George, George (*embraces him.*)

Little George: Oh Mr. Gauer, I won't ever tell anyone. I know how you're feeling. I never felt sore. I hope to die I won't.

Mr. Gauer: George, George.

Act 2

Time passes, George is now a young man.

Scene: At The Store.

Joe: An overnight bag, ^{George}Genuine English Cowhide, Combination lock, fitted up with brushes, combs----

George: Nope, nope, no, no, no. Now look Joe, look.... I want a big one.

Angelic Interlude:

Clarence: What did you stop it for?

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 ear slapped by the druggist?

Joseph: That's the kid.

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

Joseph: No, not a soul.

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

Joseph: Well, wait and see.

George: Big! See, I don't want one for one night. I want one for one thousand and one nights. With plenty of room here for labels from Italy, Baghdad, Trinidad, Bombay.....a great big suitcase.

Joe: I see. A flying carpet huh? I don't suppose you would like this old second-hand job, would you? (*lifts up a suitcase from behind the counter.*)

George: Now you're talking. Gee Whiz, I could use that as a raft in case the boat sunk. How much does this cost?

Joe: No charge.

George: That's my trick ear Joe. Sounded like you said, "no charge".

Joe: That's right. (*Points to George's name printed on the case.*)

George: What's my name doing on it?

Joe: A little present from old Man Gauer. Came down and picked it out himself.

George: He did!?? What do you know about that. My old boss. Was that nice of him!

Joe: What boat you sailing on?

George: I'm working across on a Cattle boat.

Joe: A cattle boat!!

George: Ok, I like Cows!

George: (*seeing Mr. Gauer*) Thanks so much for the bag. It's exactly what I wanted.

Mr. Gauer: Forget it.

George: Boss, it's wonderful of you to think of it.

Scene: (George is on the streets walking home with his new suitcase. He meets up with Bert and Ernie)

Violet: Good Afternoon, Mr. Bailey.

George: Hello Violet. Hey, you look good. That's some dress you got on there.

Violet: Why, this old thing? Why, I only wear it when I don't care how I look.

(*Violet goes off. All three men stare after her.*)

Ernie: Well, would you like to.....

George: Yes.

Ernie: Hop along Bert, and we'll show you the town.

Bert: No thanks. I got to go home to see what the wife's doing.

Ernie: Family man. *(They laugh at him as only delightfully free bachelors can.)*

Scene: 3The Baileys, father and son are walking home from work.

George: Boy oh boy, oh boy!! Tonight is going to be my last meal in the old Bailey boarding house.

Mr. Bailey: Hope you have a good trip George. Uncle Billy and I are going to miss you.

George: I'll miss you too pa. What's the matter? You look tired.

Mr. Bailey: Oh, I had another tussle with Potter today.

George: Oh.

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

George: What's eating that old money grubbing buzzard now?

Mr. Bailey: Oh, he's a sick man. Frustrated and sick. His mind's sick and his soul, if he has one. He hates everyone who has something he can't have. He hates us mostly, I guess.

George: *(After a length pause.)* Tonight is Harry's graduation party. He wants me to come over to the school later. I'll probably be bored to death.

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

George: Oh, we have that all figured out. See, Harry will take my job at the Building and Loan. Work there for four years, then he'll go.

Mr. Bailey: Um, Pretty young for that job.

George: No younger than I was.

Mr. Bailey: You were born older George.

George: How's that?

Mr. Bailey: I said you were born older. I suppose you've decided what you want to do when you get out of college.

George: Oh, you know what I've always talked about. I want to build things. Design new buildings, plan modern cities, all that stuff.

Mr. Bailey: Still after the first million before you're thirty? Of course, it's just a hope, but you wouldn't uh.....you wouldn't consider coming back to the Building and Loan, would you?

Mr. Bailey: I know it's soon to talk about it.

George: Oh now Pop, I couldn't. I.....I couldn't face being cooped up for the rest of my life in a shabby little office. TheI'm sorry Pop. I didn't mean that. But I, but I... It's 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, something important.

Mr. Bailey: You know George, I feel that in a small way we are doing something important, satisfying a fundamental need. It's deep in the race for a man to want his own roof, walls, and fireplace. We're helping him get those things in our shabby little office.

George: I know Pop I.....I wish I felt it. I've been hoarding pennies like a miser here in order to..... Most of my friends have already finished college. I just feel like if I didn't get away I'd burst.

Mr. Bailey: Yes, yes, your right son.

George: You see what I mean, don't you Pop?

Mr. Bailey: This town isn't any place for any man unless he's willing to crawl to Potter. Now you've got talent son. I've seen it. You get yourself an education and get out of here.

George: Pop, you want a shock? I think you're a great guy. Father, I think after dinner I'll get dressed and go over to Harry's party.

Mr. Bailey: Have yourself a good time son.

Scene: School Gymnasium

Principal: George, George, welcome back.

George: Well, hello Mr. Barber.

Principal: Sam. Harry have a lot of fun. There's lots to eat and drink, and a lot of pretty girls.

Sam: Don't worry about the girls. I'll take care of them.

(Violet pushes her way in)

Violet: Oh Harry, I can dance the third with yo.... *(sees George and turns around)*

George: Hello Violet.

Violet: What am I bid?

Marty Hatch: (*Interrupting*) George.

George: Marty Hatch, welcome home kid!

Marty Hatch: Sam, Harry, hello.

Harry: Good to see you!

Marty Hatch: Do me a favor will you George?

George: What's that?

Marty Hatch: Will you remember my kid sister Mary?

George: Oh ya, ya. (*Absently*)

Sam: Grandma Marty matchmaker! Ha ha ha ha ha ha.

Marty Hatch: Say Hi to her, will you?

George: Who me? I feel funny enough already with all these kids.....

Marty Hatch: Oh come-on. Be a sport. Just talk with her one time and you'll give her the trill of her life.

George: All right. And, don't be long Marty. I'm not being a wet nurse to a lot of (*sees Mary and stares at her. She sees him too*)

Girl 1:and next thing I know, some girl comes up and trips me. That's the reason I came in fourth. If it hadn't been for that, that race would have been a cinch. I tried to find out who it was later, but I couldn't find out. Nobody would ever tell you who it was 'cause they'd be scared. They know what kind of girl I am.

Marty: You remember George. This is Mary. Well, I'll be seeing you.

George: Well, well, well!!!!

Girl 1: George-e!!!

George: Oh, why don't you stop annoying people?

Girl 1: Well I'm sorry..... Hey!!!

(*George and Mary walk away*)

George: Well, Hello.

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

George: Well, I don't.

Mary: You pass me on the street nearly everyday.

George: Me? Uh, that was a little girl named Mary Hatch. That wasn't you.
(stand and talk)

Girl 2: What's the matter Sue? Jealous? *(pause)* Did you know there's the water from the apple bobbing contest just outside? And did you know that George and Mary are sitting ducks. They are right next to it.

Principal: Enough, enough. Oh well!

Scene: 5 George and Mary Walk Home

George: 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. How old are you anyway?

Mary: Eighteen

George: Eighteen!! That was only last year you were seventeen.

Mary: Too young or too old?

George: Oh no no. Just right. Your age fits you. Look, I'll throw a rock at the old ghost house.

Mary: Oh don't, don't. I love that old house.

George: No. You see, you make a wish and then try and break some glass. And you've got to be a pretty good shot now-a-days. Now watch.

Mary: Oh no George don't. It's full of romance that old place. I'd like to live in it.

George: In that place!? I wouldn't live in it as a ghost. Now watch, right on the second floor there, see. *(Throws and hits. Glass is heard breaking)*

Mary: What did you wish George?

George: Well, not just one wish, but a whole hat full. Mary, I know what I'm going to do tomorrow and the next day, and next year, and the year after that. I'm shaking the dust of this crummy little town off my feet. And, I'm gonna see the world. Italy, Greece, the Parthenon, the Collesium. Then I'm coming back here to go to college to see what they know. And, then I'm

gonna build sky scrapers, a hundred stories high. I'm gonna build a bridge a mile long. What, are you going to throw a rock? (*Mary throws and hits.*) Hey that's pretty good. What did you wish Mary?

Mary: (*sings "Buffalo galls" and starts walking away. George sings along.*)

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

Mary: Oh no, no!

George: Come on tell me.

Mary: If I do, it might not come true.

George: What is it you want Mary? What do you want? You want the moon. Just say the word and I'll throw a lasso around it and pull her down. Hey, that's a pretty good idea. I'll give you the moon Mary.

Mary: I'll take it.

(car drives up)

Uncle Billy: George come on home quick. Your Father's had a stroke.

George: Mary, Mary I'm sorry. I've got to go. Let's hurry! Have you got the doctor?

Uncle Billy: Yes, Kenworth's there now.

Joseph: Unfortunately, Mr. Bailey didn't make the night.

Clarence: Oh dear, oh dear. What happened then?

Joseph: Things at the Building & Loan got pretty bad.

Act 3
Scene: 1 Board meeting.

Dr. Kenworth: I think that's all we'll need you for George. I think you're anxious to make a train.

George: I have a taxi waiting downstairs. (*George stands up and gathers his papers*)

Dr. Kenworth: I want the board to know that George gave up his trip to Europe to help straighten out here these past few months. Good luck to you at school, George.


Everybody: Good luck George, Good-bye (*etc.*)

Dr. Kenworth: Now we come to the real purpose of this meeting. To appoint a successor to our dear friend Peter Bailey.

Potter: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to get to my real purpose.

Dr. Kenworth: Wait just a minute Mr. Potter.

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 liability over to the receiver.

Uncle Billy: Of all the dirty, unheard of tricks. George, did you hear what this old buzzard.....

~~Mr. Blake:~~ It's too soon after Peter Bailey's death to talk of chloriforming the Building and Loan. (*murmurs of agreement and dissent*)

Mr. Whiltshire: Peter Bailey died there months ago. I second Mr. Potter's motion.

Dr. Kenworth: Very well. In that case I ask the two executive officers to withdraw. But, before you go, I'm sure the whole board wishes to express it's deep sorrow at the passing of Peter Bailey (*murmurs*) 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's fine Potter, coming from you. Considering 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. Ah ha! You see, if you shoot pool with some employee here, you can come and borrow money. He he he. 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: Just a minute, just a minute now, hold on Mr. Potter. You were right when you said my father was no business man. I know that. Why he ever started this cheap Building and Loan, I'll 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, you're all business men, doesn't it make them better citizens, doesn't it make them better customers? You said that they, -what did you say just a minute ago?- that they had to wait and save their money before they ever thought of a decent home. Wait for what? Until their children grow up and leave them? Until they're old and broken down? 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, living and dying in this community. Well, is it too much to have them work and pay, live and die in a couple of decent rooms and a bath? Anyways, 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 finger on, and it's galling you, that's what you're talking about. I know. Well I., I., I've said too much. You're the board here. You do what you want with this thing. There's just one thing more. This town needs this measly one-horse institution, if only to have someplace where people can come to without crawling to Potter. Come on. *(He and Uncle Billy leave.)*

Potter: Sentimental Hogwash! I want my motion in action. *(Everybody talks at once.)*

Scene: Outside in the bank

Uncle Billy: Boy, oh boy! That was telling him George. You shut his big mouth. You should have heard him.

Eustace: 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: *(Holding up a newspaper)* Here it is "Help wanted", "Female".

Ernie: *(coming in)* You still want me to hang around George?

George: Ya, I'll be right down.

Uncle Billy: Hey, you'll miss your train. You're a week late for school already. Go on.

George: 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, you gave up your boat trip. Now you don't want to miss College too, do you?

Dr. Kenworth: *(Coming out deeply excited)* George, George, they voted Potter down. They want to keep it going. *(Eustace, Tilly and Billy cheer.)*

Dr. Kenworth: You did it George, you did it. They've got one condition. Only one condition.

George: And what's that.

Dr. Kenworth: And that's the best part of it. They've appointed George here as Executive Secretary to take his father's place.

George: Well no, Uncle Billy here is.....

Dr. Kenworth: You can keep him on. That's all right. As Secretary you can hire anyone you like.

George: Dr. Kenworth, lets get one thing straight. I'm leaving! I'm leaving right now. I'm going to school. This is my last chance. Uncle Billy here; he's your man.

Dr. Kenworth: But George, they'll vote with Potter otherwise.
(*music*)

End of Act 2
Angelic Interlude

Clarence: I know. I know. He didn't go.

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

Clarence: Ya, but what happened to George?

Joseph: George got four years older waiting for ^{his brother} Harry to come back and take over the Building and Loan.

Act 4
Scene: 1 Train Station.

George: There's plenty of jobs around for someone who likes to travel. Look at this. Vensuela Oil Fields. Wanted: man with construction experience. The Yukon. There's one right here. Wanted: man with Engineering experience. (*Train whistles*) There she blows! You know what the three most exciting sounds in the world are?

Uncle Billy: Ah huh! Breakfast is served, lunch is served, dinner is.....

George: Oh no, no, no. Anchor chains, airplane motors and train whistles.

Uncle Billy: Peanuts? (*Offering bag*)

George: (*Harry gets off the train*) There's the professor now. Old professor five star Harry Bailey.

Harry: (*speaking at the same time*) Old George, geographic explorer Bailey. Uncle Billy, you haven't changed a bit!

Uncle Billy: Nobody ever changes here. You know that.

George: I'm glad to see you!

Harry: Say, where's mother?

George: She's home cooking the fatted calf. Come on, let's go.

Harry: Wait, wait, wait a minute. George, Uncle Billy, I'd like you to meet Ruth.

George: Oh oh!

Uncle Billy: How do you do?

Harry: Ruth Daiken.

Ruth: Ruth Daiken Bailey, if you don't mind.

George: Huh?

Harry: Well, I warned you I have a surprise. Here she is. Meet the wife.

Uncle Billy: What do you know? A wife! Ha Ha!

George: How do you do? Congratulations...what am I doing (*hugs her*) congratulations.

Uncle Billy: Long live Harry. You should be....

George: Why didn't you tell somebody. Hey, what's a pretty girl like you doing marrying this two-headed brother of mine?

Ruth: My father offered him a job.

Uncle Billy: Oh, he's got you and the job. Well! Harry's cup is running over.

Harry: George, about that job. Ruth spoke out of turn. I never said I'd take it. You've been holding the bank here for four years. Well, I won't let you down, George. I would like to..... Oh, wait a minute. I forgot the bags. I'll be right back.

(George stands alone, very thoughtful. George ends up standing a little aside with Ruth)

Ruth: George, George, George. That's all Harry ever talks about.

George: Uh... aoh... Ruth this ... what about this job?

Ruth: Oh well, my father owns a glass factory in Buffalo. He wants to get Harry in the research business.

George: Is it a good job?

Ruth: Oh yes, very! Not much money, but good future, you know.

George: (*quietly*) Ahuh.

Ruth: Harry's a genius at research you know.

George: Ahuh. (*quietly*)

Ruth: My father just fell in love with him.

George: And you did too.

Ruth: (*Smiles and nods*)

Scene: Bailey House

(*George is alone on the porch, thinking. He hears a train whistle.*)

George: Hello Ma.

Mrs. Bailey: (*kissing him*) That's for nothing. How do you like Ruth?

George: She's swell.

Mrs. Bailey: Looks like she can keep Harry on his toes.

George: Keep him out of Bedford Falls anyways. (*said with a trace of bitterness*)

Mrs. Bailey: Did you know that Mary Hatch is back from school?

George: (*grunts*) Uhuh.

Mrs. Bailey: Came back three days ago.

George: (*grunts*) Uhuh.

Mrs. Bailey: Nice girl, Mary.

George: (*grunts*) Uhuh.

Mrs. Bailey: The kind who will help you find the answers, George.

George: (*grunts*) Uhuh.

Mrs. Bailey: Oh, stop that grunting.

George: (*grunts*) Uhuh.

Mrs. Bailey: Can you give me one good reason why you shouldn't call on Mary?

George: Sure. Sam Wainright.

Mrs. Bailey: Huh?

George: Ya, Sam's crazy about Mary.

Mrs. Bailey: Well, she's not crazy about him.

George: Well, how do you know? Now... what... did she discuss it with you?

Mrs. Bailey: No.

George: Well, then how do you know?

Mrs. Bailey: Well, I've got eyes, haven't I? She lights up like a firefly whenever you're around.

George: Ohhh. (*disbelieving*)

Mrs. Bailey: Besides, Sam Wainright is away in New York, and you're here in Bedford Falls.

George: And all's fair in love and war, huh?

Mrs. Bailey: Oh, I don't know about war. (*George laughs*)

George: Mother, I can see right through you. Right to your back collar button. Trying to get rid of me, huh?

Mrs. Bailey: Uh-huh. (*George kisses her and she slaps his hat on his head.*)

George: Here's your hat and what's your hurry? All right mother, I think I'll go out and find a girl and do a little passionate necking. Now if you'll just point me in the right direction. (*she turns him*) This direction? (*He walks a few paces and then turns and walks away on the opposite direction.*) Goodnight Mrs. Bailey.

Scene: George is on the street.

(*Violet stand with two young men and sees George*)

Violet: Excuse me!

Boy 1: Wait a minute!

Violet: I think I got a date. But stick around fellows, just in case. Huh?

Boy 2: We'll wait for you baby.

Violet: Hello Georgie Porgie.

George: Hello Vi.

Violet: Um, what gives?

George: Nothing.

Violet: Where you going?

George: Uh, I'll probably end up down at the library.

Violet: George-e, don't you ever get tired just reading about things?

George: Yes. What are you doing tonight?

Violet: Nothing.

George: Are you game Vi, lets make a night of it?

Violet: I'd love it George. What d' we do?

George: Let's go out into the fields and take off our shoes and walk through the grass.

Violet: Huh!?

George: And, then we can go up to the falls. It's beautiful up there in the moonlight. There's a green pool up there, and we can..... swim in it. And, then we can climb Mount Bedford and smell the pines, and watch the sun rise against the peaks. And, we'll stay up there the whole night and everybody will be talking. There'd be a terrific scandal.....

Violet: (upset) Georgie, have you gone crazy, walk in the grass in my bare feet!??

(observers standing around them laugh.)

Violet: It's miles up to Mount Bedford...

George: Oh, ok, just forget about the whole thing.

Scene: 4 In front of Mary's House

(George is idly and irritably banging a stick on the fence.)

Mary: *(calling from a window)* What are you doing? Picketing?

George: Hello Mary. I just happened to be passing by here.

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

George: What's that?

Mary: Have you made up your mind?

George: About what?

Mary: About coming in. Your mother just phoned and said you were on your way to pay me a visit.

George: My mother just called you? Well how did she know?

Mary: Didn't you tell her?

George: I didn't tell anybody, just went for a walk, and happened to be passing by here, that's all. What do ya.... just went for a walk, that's all.

Inside:

Mary: I'll be downstairs mother.

Mrs. Hatch: All right dear.

Mary: *(she has set out in view a painting of George lass toing the moon and opens the door)*
Well, are you coming in or aren't you?

George: Ah! I'll come in for a minute. *(Can't open the gate, Finally kicks it open. Comes in)*
I didn't tell anybody I was coming over you know. When did you get back?

Mary: Tuesday.

George: I thought you'd go back to New York like Sam and Angie and the rest of them.

Mary: Oh I worked there a couple of vacations, but, I don't know. I guess I was home sick.

George: Homesick!?! For Bedford Falls!?!

Mary: Yes. My Family and ... Oh everything. Wouldn't you like to sit down.

George: All right, for a minute. I... I still can't understand. Ya know I didn't tell anyone I was coming here.

Mary: Would you rather leave?

George: Na, na I don't wanna be rude.

Mary: Well, then sit down.

Mrs. Hatch: Who's down there with you?

Mary: George Bailey

Mrs. Hatch: George Bailey. What does he want?

Mary: I don't know. What do you want?

George: Me? Not a thing. I just came in to get warm.

Mrs. Hatch: You tell him to go right back home. And don't you leave the house either. Sam Wainright promised to call you from New York tonight.

George: What's your mother mean? You know I didn't come here to.....

Mary: What did you come here for then?

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

Mary: 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-bye!

Mary: Good-night! *(Phone starts ringing)*

Mrs. Hatch: Mary, Mary the telephone. It's Sam.

Mary: I'll get it.

Mrs. Hatch: Whatever were you doing screaming in there?

(Mary breaks the record on the player.)

Mrs. Hatch: Mary, he's waiting.

Mary: *(picks up the phone)* Hello. *(George knocks and comes back in)*

George: Forgot my hat.

Mary: Hee haw. Hello Sam! How are you? *(Falsely bright voice)*

Sam: *(Quiet)* Oh it's great to hear your voice again.

Mary: Oh, that's awfully sweet of you Sam.. There's an old friend of yours here, George Bailey.

Sam: You mean old moss-backed George?

Mary: Yes, old moss-backed George!

Sam: Hee haw! Put him on.

Mary: W...wait just a minute. I'll call him. George, George, Sam wants to speak to you.

George: Hi Sam.

Sam: Well, a fine pal you are. What you trying to do, steal my girl?

George: What do you mean? Nobody's trying to steal anybody's girl. Here... here's Mary.

Sam: Wait a minute, wait a minute! I want to talk with both of ya.

Mary: We can both hear. Come here. We're listening Sam.

Sam: Well look. I've got 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'd read some place about making plastics out of soybeans or chilibeans? You remember out of soybeans?

George: I ah.... ya... ya.

Sam: Well, this man snapped up the idea. He's going to build a factory outside of Rockchester. How do you like that?

George: Rockchester? Why Rockchester?

Sam: Well, why not. Can you think of any place better?

George: Well, I don't know. Why not right here? You remember that old tool and machinery works. And all the labor he wants too. Half the town was thrown out of work when they closed down. The town people could use the work.

Sam: Is that so? Well, I'll tell him. Hey, that sounds great. Oh Mary, Mary.

Mary: Well... I... I'm here.

George: *(George drops the phone and grabs Mary's shoulders and shakes her.)* Now you listen to me. I don't want any plastics and I don't want any ground-floors, and I don't want to get married ever to anyone. Do you understand that? I wanna do what I want to do. And you're... and you're..... MaryMary. *(hugs her)*

Mary: Oh George, George, George.

George: Oh, Mary forgive me. *(whispers)*

Mary: I forgive you. *(whispers)*

George: Mary, I love you. *(whispers)*

Act 5, Scene 1
Scene: Honeymoon

Angelic interlude.

Clarence: So they were finally married?

Joseph: Yes. They were married. But things didn't go as planned even then.

Ernie: By the way, where are you two going, on this here honey-moon?

George: Where're we going? Look at this. Here's the kitty, Ernie. Here hold it Mary.

Mary: Oh, I feel like a bootlegger's wife. Look.....

George: You know what were going to do? We're 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, and the hottest music, and the prettiest wife.

Ernie: Wow! That does it. Then what?

George: Then what, honey?

Mary: After that who cares?

Ernie: Don't look now, but there's something going on over there at the bank, George. I never really seen one, but that's got all the ear-marks of being a run.

Tom: Hey Ernie, if you've got any money in the Bank you'd better hurry.

Mary: George, let's not stop. Let's go.

George: Just a minute dear. (*Gets out of the taxi and looks towards the Building and Loan. There is also a crowd there.*) Oh Oh.

Mary: Please let's not stop, George.

George: I'll be back in a minute Mary. (*he walks towards the crowd*) Well hello everybody. Mrs. Tompson how are you? Arnie, what's the matter here? Can't you get in? (*He unlocks the door*) *Everybody piles in after him.*) What is this Uncle Billy? A holiday?

Uncle Billy: George come here. (*Gesturing*)

George: Come in everybody, that's right. Just come on in. Look, why don't you all sit down? There are a lot of seats over there. Make yourself at home.

Uncle Billy: George, can I see you a minute?

George: Why didn't you call?

Uncle Billy: I just did. But, they said you'd left. This is a pickle George. This is a pickle.

George: All right, now what happened?

Uncle Billy: How does a thing like this ever start? All I know is the bank called our loan.

George: When?

Uncle Billy: About an hour ago. I handed over all our cash.

George: All of it!?

Uncle Billy: Every cent of it and it still is less than we owed. And, then I got scared, George, and closed the doors. I (*phone rings,*)

Uncle Billy: (*picks up the phone*) Hello. George, it's Potter.

George: Hello.

Potter: George, there is a rumour 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? (*falsely concerned*)

George: Police, what for?

Potter: Well, mobs get pretty nasty sometimes, you know- George, I'm going all out to help in this crisis. I have just guaranteed the Bank sufficient funds to meet their needs. They'll close up for a week and then reopen.

George: (*Covers the phone and says 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 fifty cents on the dollar.

George: My, you never miss a trick do you, Mr. Potter? Well, you're going to miss this one. (*angry tone*)

Potter: (*Also angry*) If you close your doors before six PM, you will never reopen. (*notice that George has hung up on him*)

Uncle Billy: George, was it a nice wedding? Gosh, I wanted to be there.

(*they both go out to the crowd.*)

George: Just remember, that this thing isn't as bad as it appears. I have some news for you folks. I've just talked to old man Potter, and he's guaranteed cash payments to the Bank. The Bank's going to reopen next week.

Tom: But George, I got my money here.

Charlie: Did he guarantee this place?

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

Charlie: I'll take mine now.

(Ernie and Mary come in)

George: No but..... you're, you're thinking of this place all wrong. As if I had the money back in a safe. The money's not here. Well, your money's in Joe's house, that's right next to yours. And in the Kennedy house, and in the Mrs. Maitland house and a hundred others. You're lending them the money to build and they're going to pay it back to you as best they can. What are you going to do, foreclose on them?

Tom: I got two-hundred and forty-two dollars here. And, two- hundred and forty-two dollars isn't going to break anybody.

George: Ok Tom. All right. Sign this and you'll get your money in sixty days.

Tom: Sixty days!

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

Randell: Tom, Tom. *(pushes through the crowd)* Did you get your money?

Tom: No.

Randell: Well, I did. Old man Potter will pay fifty cents on the dollar for every share you've got.

Everybody: Fifty cents on the dollar?

Randell: Yes, CASH!

Tom: Well, what do you say?

George: Ah Tom, you've got to stick to your original agreement. Now give us sixty days on this thing.

Tom: *(Turning)* Ok Randell.

Woman: Are you going to Potter's?

Tom: Better to get half than nothing.

(the crowd becomes noisy)

George: Tom, Tom, Randell, wait, wait. *(He catapults over counter and stops them before they get out.)* Now listen. Now listen to me. I beg of you not to do this. If Potter gets a hold of this Building and Loan, there'll never be another decent house built in this town. He's already got charge of the Bank; he's got the bus line, he's got the department store, and now he's after us. Why? Well, it's very simple, because we were 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. Joe, you had one of these Potter houses, didn't you. Have you forgotten. Have you forgotten what he

charged you for that broken down shack? Here Ed, you remember last year when things weren't going so well and you couldn't make payments. Well, you didn't lose your house, did you? D'you think Potter would have let you keep it? Can't you understand what's happening here? Don't you see what's happening? Potter isn't selling. Potter's buying. And why? Because we're panicking and he's not, that's why! He's picking up the bargains. Now we can get through this thing all right. We, we've got to stick together, though. We've got to have faith in each other.

Women: But my husband hasn't worked in over a year and I need money.

Man 1: How are we going to live until the Bank opens?

Man 2: I've got Doctor's bills to pay. I need cash!

Man 3: I can't even buy a paper.

Mary: (*Holding up the Honey-moon-money*) How much do you need?

George: Hey! (*Going over to Mary for the money*) I've got two thousand dollars! Here's two thousand dollars. This will tide us over until the Bank reopens. All right Tom, how much do you need?

Tom: Two-hundred and forty-two dollars.

George: Oh Tom, just enough to tide you over until the bank re....

Tom: I'll take \$242 dollars.

George: Ok, There you are.

Tom: That'll close my account.

George: Your account's still here, that's a loan. Ok. All right, Ed.

Ed: I've got three-hundred dollars here, George.

George: Ah now Ed, what'll it take until the Bank reopens? What do you need?

Ed: Well, I suppose twenty-dollars.

George: Twenty dollars. Now you're talking. Thanks, that's fine. All right 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 dollars. (*Gives her*)

Mrs. Thompson: And, I'll sign the papers.

George: You don't have to sign anything. I know you'll repay it when you can. Ok, Mrs. Davis?

Mrs. Davis: Could I have seventeen fifty?

(Everybody laughs with mirth. George gives Mrs. Davis a hug.)

George: Of course you can have it. And, here you've got fifty cents.

(Lights out. Everybody leaves. Only George, Eustace and Tilly are left in the Building and Loan.)

Eustace: Ok folks, folks, wedding cigars!

George: Oh oh wedding. Wait a minute, I'm Married. Where's Mary? Mary? Mary... poor Mary. I've got a train to.... well the train's gone. What if Ernie's still here with his taxicab?

Tilly: George. I've got a call for you.

George: Will you get my wife on the phone? She's probably over at her mother's

Tilly: Mrs. Bailey is on the phone.

George: I don't want Mrs. Bailey, I want my wife. Mrs. Bailey! That's my wife. I'll take it in here. Mary.... hello. Listen dear, I'm sorry.... huh? Come home? What home? 320 Sycamore? Who's home is that? Not the old Ghost House.

²
Scene: 320 Sycamore

(Bert and helper are cleaning up...mops, buckets, trash cans)

Ernie: Hey Bert. Here he comes.

Bert: C'mon we've got to get out of here. He's coming.

Helper: Who?

Bert: The groom, you idiot. This is their honeymoon- c'mon get that ladder.

→ **Burt:** Hurry up, hurry up, hurry up!

Helper: I'm hurrying!

(George goes to the door. Ernie dressed as a butler opens.)

Ernie: Hiya Geor..... Good Evening Sir. Entre Monsieur. Entre.

(George walks in. The other guys walk away.)

Mary: Welcome home Mr. Bailey.

George: Mary, where did you.....

Mary: Remember that night we broke the windows in this old house? This is what I wished for.

George: You look wonderful! Everything's WONDERFUL!!!!!!!!!!

Joseph: Well, George and Mary gave up their honeymoon to help out the town. George went on working at the Building & Loan helping people build better homes.

Scene: Mr. Potter's office.

Rent Collector: Look Mr. Potter, it's no skin off my nose. I'm just your little rent collector. You can't laugh off this Bailey park anymore. Look at it.

Mr. Potter: Go on.

Rent Collector: *showing a map* Fifteen years ago, a half dozen stock here and there... Here's the old cemetery. Squirrels, buttercups, daisies...I used to hunt rabbits 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, my dear Mr. Employer, field is becoming just that. And are the local Yokels making with those David and Goliath wisecracks?

Mr. Potter: Oh they are, are they? Even though they know that Bailey never made a dime out of it.

Rent Collector: You know very well why. The Baileys were all chumps. Every one of these homes is worth twice what it cost the Building and Loan to build. If I were you Mr. Potter.....

Mr. Potter : *Interrupting* You are not me.

Rent Collector: As I say, It's no skin of my nose, but one of these days this bright young man will be asking George Bailey for a job.

Mr. Potter: The Bailey family has been a boil on my back long enough.

Scene: Mr. Potters Office.

George enters Mr. Potters office. Is given a purposely low chair to sit in. Is given a cigar.

George: Thankyou, Sir. Quite a cigar Mr. Potter.

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

George: Well, I suppose I'll find out sooner or later, but what exactly do you want to see me about?

Mr. Potter: Ha ha ha, well, ha ha George. That's just what I like so much about you. **George:** I am an old man and most people hate me, but I don't like them either, so that makes it all even. You know just as well as I know, that I run practically everything in this town, but the Bailey Building & Loan. You know also 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 instants. You and I were the only ones that kept our heads. You saved the building and loan; I saved all the rest.

George: Yes, well, most people say you stole all the rest.

Mr. 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,.. 27, 28,.. married,.. making say 40 a week...

George: Forty-five.

Mr. Potter: Forty-five. Forty-five. Out of which, after supporting your mother and paying your bills, you're able to keep ten if you skimp. A child or two comes along and you won't even be able to save the ten. Now, if this young men 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 is an intelligent, smart, ambitious young man who hates his job, who hates the old 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 *interrupting himself* the smartest one of the crowd, mind you, a young man who has to sit by and watch his friends go places because he's trapped. Yes sir, trapped into frittering his life away playing nursemaid to a bunch of sissies. (*smug*) Do I paint a grim picture or do I exaggerate?

George: What's your point Mr. Potter?

Mr. Potter: My point? My Point is I want to hire you.

George: Hire me?

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

George: Twenty thousand!?! Twenty thousand dollars a year?

Mr. 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 every year, maybe once in a while Europe, you wouldn't mind that, would you George?

George: Would I? You're not talking to somebody else around here? This is me, remember me, George Bailey.

Mr. Potter: George Bailey. Ha, George Bailey whose ship has just come in, provided he has enough brains to climb aboard.

George: (*Unbelievable*) Hah Huh (*letting out breath*) Wow!!! How about the Building and Loan?

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

Mr. Potter: Sure, sure, sure you go home and talk about it with your wife.

George: I'd like to do that.

Mr. Potter: Ya, in the meantime, I'll draw up the papers.

George: All right sir.

Mr. Potter: Ok, George?

George: Ha, Ok Mr. Potter! (*stands up*) Ah, ah, no, wait a minute here. I don't need twenty-four hours. I don't want to talk to anybody. I know right now, and the answer is no! No! Dog-gone-it! You sit around here and spin your little webs and think' the whole world will revolve around you and your money. Well it doesn't Mr. Potter. In the whole configuration of things, I'd say you're nothing but a scurry little spider. (*to Potter's body guard*) And that goes for you too. (*starts to leave, shouting*) and that goes for you too. (*To secretary. He goes.*)

As George walk home. He hears echoes from the past:

Mr. Potter: "You wouldn't mind living in the nicest house in town, would you; buying your wife a lot of fine clothes; going to New York on business trips a couple times a year, maybe once in a while to Europe."

George: "I know what I'm going to do tomorrow, and the next day, and the next year, and the year after that. I'm shaking the dust of this crummy little town off my feet. I'm gonna see the world and I'm gonna build things. I'm gonna build airfields. I'm gonna build sky-scrapers a hundred stories high. I'm gonna build a bridge a mile long."

George: What is it you want Mary? You want the moon. If you just say the word, I'll throw a lasso around it and pull 'er down for you.

George's house, Mary curled up in rocking chair with a book..

George: Hi

Mary: Hi

George: I wonder why in the world you ever married a guy like me?

Mary: To keep from being an old maid.

George: You could have married Sam Wainright and anybody else in town.

Mary: I don't want to marry anybody else in town. I want our children to look like you.

George: We didn't ever have the honeymoon, I promised you.....what..... you what?.

End Of Act 3
Angelic Interlude

Joseph: Now you've probably already guessed it. George never leaves Bedford Falls.

Clarence: No.

Joseph: Mary had a baby: a boy. Then she had another one: a girl. Day after day she worked away making that old house into a home. Night after night George came back later from his office. Potter was bearing down hard on him. (*Martial Music*) Then came a war. Mary and Mrs. Hatch joined the Red Cross and sewed. Mary had two more babies but still found time to run the USO. Sam Wainright made a fortune in plastic hoods for planes. Potter became head of the draft-board. Gauer and Uncle Billy sold war Bonds, but the cop was wounded in North Africa and won a silver star. Ernie the Taxi driver parachuted into France. Martini helped capture the Ramagen bridge. Harry, Harry Bailey topped them all. A Navy flier, he shot down fifteen planes. Two of them as they were about to crash into a transport of all the soldiers.

Clarence: (*Inpatient*) Yes, but George?

Joseph: George, on account of his ear, fought the battle of Bedford Falls.

Joseph: Air raid warder. (*Whistles sounds*) Paper driver, draft driver, rubber driver. Like everybody else on VJ day he wept and prayed. On DD day, he wept and prayed again.

The Angel: Now Joseph, show him what happened today.

Joseph: Yes Sir. This morning, day before Christmas, about 10 am. Bedford Falls Time...

~~Act 4~~
Scene: |Bedford Falls Main Street in the Present

People on the street looking at newspaper in groups.

Ernie: Its gonna snow again.

George: What do you mean it's going to snow? Look at the headlines.

Ernie: Ha, ha, I know. I know, George. Amen to Harry Bailey.

George: Look Mr. Gauer, look at this. _____? _____ Now look. This is for you, this is for you, that's for you. (*handing out paper*)

Ernie: Right! (*Noise and rejoicing*)

George goes on to his office.

George: Extra, extra read all about it.

Eustace: George, George, it's Harry on long distance from Washington!!!

George: Harry, what do you know about that!

Eustace: He reversed the charges. Come quickly

George: Reverse the charges for the hero. (*Taking the phone and talking into it*) Harry you old son of a gun. Congratulation! How's mother standing it? Should you..... what do you know about that.....(*Speaking to Eustace and cousin Tilly*) Mother had lunch with the President's wife!

Cousin Tilly: Wait till Martha hears about this.

Eustace: What did they have to eat?

George: What did they have to eat? Ah, Harry you should see what they're cooking up in the town for ya..... Well, they are *to the others* The Navy's gonna fly mother home this afternoon.

Eustace: In a plane?

George: (*Harry asks for uncle Billy*) Why, uncle Billy? (*To others*) Has uncle Billy come in yet?

Tilly: Oh, he stopped in at the bank first.

George: He's not here right now Harry, but look, tell me about it.

Eustace: (*interrupting*) George, George, that man is here again.

George: What man?

Eustace: The B-Bank Ex-Examiner. (*stutters*)

George: Oh, oh, Harry talk to Eustace for a minute. Will ya? I'll be right back.

Eustace: Wow, Harry.

George goes over to bank examiner.

George: Good morning, Sir.

Carter: Bank Examiner.

George: (*Shaking hands*) Mr. Carter. Merry Christmas.

Carter: Merry Christmas.

George: We're all excited around here. My brother just got the congressional medal of honor. The President just decorated him.

Carter: Well, I guess they do these things. Ah, I trust you had a good year.

George: Good year! Ah, between yu and me Mr. Carter, we're broke.

Carter: Yah, very funny.

George: Well, come right in here Mr. Carter. (*leading into his office*)

Carter: Well, I shouldn't wonder if you OK reverse charges on personal long distance calls.

Tilly: (*interrupting*) George, should we hang up?

George: No, no, he wants to talk to uncle Billy.

Carter: If you'll cooperate, I'd like to finish with you before tonight. I want to spend Christmas with my family.

George: I don't blame you Mr. Carter. Just step right in here. We'll fix you up.

Scene: Bank

In the Bank, Uncle Bill, filling a deposit slip.

Uncle Billy: (*Writing*) December 24, Eight-thousand.

Potter and Bodyguard enter. Billy notices them. He picks up his envelope. Accidentally putting envelope of cash into Potter's folded newspaper.

Uncle Billy: Well, good morning Mr. Potter. What's the news? (*takes Mr. Potters paper*) Well, well, well. (*Reads*) **Harry Bailey Wins Congressional Medal.** That couldn't be one of the Bailey boys. You just can't keep those Baileys down, now can you Mr. Potter?

Potter: How does slacker George feel about that?

Uncle Billy: Very jealous, very jealous. He only lost three buttons off his vest. Of course, slacker George would have gotten two of these if he had gone.

Potter: (*Tauntingly*) Bad ears. (*Potter grabs his paper back plus the money envelope*)

Uncle Billy: Yes, after all Potter, some people like George had to stay at home. Not every heel was in Germany and Japan. *(Laughs gleefully as Mr. Potter is wheeled into his office.)*

Uncle Billy goes towards teller's booth.

Horace: Well good morning Mr. Bailey.

Uncle Billy: Good morning Horace. *(Gives him deposit slip)*

Horace: Well I guess you forgot something.

Uncle Billy: Hah?

Horace: I guess you forgot something.

Uncle Billy: What?

Horace: Aren't you going to make a deposit?

Uncle Billy: Oh sure, sure.

Horace: It's usually customary to bring the money with you.

Uncle Billy: Huh? *(Searching his pocket)* Oh shucks! I, uh, I!...

Meanwhile Mr. Potter unfolds the newspaper he snatched from Uncle Billy. He finds the envelope of money. With a look of triumph and malevolence on his face, he smiles.

Mr. Potter: Bailey! *(To bodyguard)* Take me back there. Hurry up! *(After looking)* Back!

Scene: Back at Saving and Loan Office

George: You make yourself at home Mr. Carter. I'll get those books for you.
(Violet comes in.)

George: Well hello Violet!

Violet: George can I see you for a second?

George: Well of course you can.
(Uncle Billy comes in) Uncle Billy speak to Harry. He's on the telephone.

Cousin Tilly: Come here Uncle Billy, it's Harry long distance from Washington.

Eustace: Here's Harry on the phone.

Uncle Tilly: Harry, your nephew, remember him?

Eustace: Here he is.

Cousin Tilly: Hurry up!

Uncle Billy: Hallo, Hul....yes everything , everything's fine. (*hangs up telephone*). I have my headaches. 7000, 8000 dollars it got to be somewhere.

George with Violet

George: Oh boy! (*Takes bills out pocket*) Here you are.

Violet: Charity, if I had any character, I'd.....

George: It takes a lot of character to leave your home town and start all over again. (*Gives her money.*)

Violet: I know George. Don't.....

George: No, here now, you're broke aren't you?

Violet: I know but.....

George: What are you going to do, hawk your furs and that hat? Wanna walk to New York. You know they charge for meals and rent up there? Just the same as in Bedford Fall.

Violet: I'm sure.

George: It's a loan. It's my business building and loan. Besides you'll get a job. Good luck to you!

Violet: I'm glad I know you George Bailey. Good-bye.

George: Say Hello to New York for me.

Violet: Yup. Sure I will.

George: Let's hear from you once in a while. Good-bye now. Merry Christmas Violet.

Violet: Merry Christmas George. (*Leaves.*)

Mr. Carter: Mr. Bailey

George: Oh, Mr. Carter. I'm sorry. I'll be right with you. (*To cousin Tilly*) Is Uncle Billy here?

Cousin Tilly: Yes, he's in there.

George goes in to other office. Uncle Billy is frantically searching the desk.

George: What's going on? Uncle, the bank examiner is here.

Uncle Billy: He's here?

George: Well yes. He wants the accounts payable to..... What's the matter with you?

Uncle Billy: I can't find the 8000 dollars. *George helps him search*

George: Eustace come here a minute.

Eustace: Ya.

George: Did you see Uncle Billy with any cash last night?

Eustace: He had it on his desk counting it before we closed up. *(George goes back to Uncle Billy)*

George: All right. Did you buy anything?

Uncle Billy: Nothing, not even a stick of gum.

George: All right, all right, we'll go over every step you took since you left the house. This way.

They go into the streets and then to Billy's house.

George: Did you put the envelope into your pocket?

Uncle Billy: Yes, no, maybe, maybe, maybe.....maybe.....

George: Maybe, maybe. I don't want any maybe. We've got to find that money!

Uncle Billy: I've no good idea.

George: Uncle Billy, do you realize what's going to happen if we don't find it?

Uncle Billy: Uh. *(Sobs)*

George: Listen to me. Do you have any secret hiding place in the house? Someplace you would have put it?

Uncle Billy: No I've looked over the whole house, even places that have been locked and empty for years.

George: Listen to me. Think. Think!

Uncle Billy: I can't think anymore, George. I can't think anymore. It hurts.

George: *(Shouting and shaking him)* Where is that money you silly stupid old fool? Where is that money? Do you realize what this means? It means bankruptcy, scandal and prison. That's

what it means. One of us is going to jail. Well its not going to be me. (*Leaves in a temper, Uncle Billy sits and sobs.*)

Scene: Bailey House

Janey playing piano: Hark The Herald.

Mary: Hello darling.

Children: Hello Daddy.

Mary: How do you like it?

George sneezes.

Mary and the children: Bless you!

Mary: Did you bring the wreathe?

Peter: Yes, Daddy did you bring the wreathe?

George: What wreathe?

Mary: The Merry Christmas wreathe. For the window.

George: No, I left it at the office.

Mary: Is it snowing?

George: Yes, it just started.

Mary: But where's your coat and hat?

George: Left them at the office.

Mary: What's the matter?

George: Nothing's the matter. Everything's all right. (*Sits down.*)

Mary: Here we'll get this star up way on the top. And that there.... fill in that little bare spot right there. Isn't it wonderful about Harry? To think, George, that I had fifty goals today about the parade, the banquet. Your mother is so excited she..... (*notices George is not responding. He's crying. Music keeps playing*)

George: Must she keep playing that?

Jane: I have to practice it for the party tonight Daddy.

Peter: Mom said we could stay up till midnight and sing Christmas carols.

Mary: You'd better hurry and shave, the families will be here soon.

George: *(Gets up)* Families, I don't want the families over here.

Mary: *(To George)* Come out into the kitchen while I finish dinner. Had a hectic day?

George: Oh yeah. Another red letter day for the Baileys.

Peter: Daddy, the Browns next door have a new car. You should see it.

George: What's the matter with our car? Isn't it good enough for you?

Peter: Yes daddy.

Mary: All right Tommy, you're excused. Now go upstairs and see if little Zuzu wants anything.

George: Zuzu. Well, what's the matter with Zuzu?

Mary: All ^{horse}worse. She's got a cold; she's in bed. Caught it coming home from school. She won a flower for a prize, and she didn't want to crush it, so she didn't button up her coat.

George: What is it? Sore throat or what?

Mary: Just a cold, the Doctor said.....

George: The Doctor! Was the Doctor here?

Mary: Yes, I called him right away. He said there's nothing to worry about.

George: Is she running a temperature? What is this?

Mary: Just a teeny one. 99.6 she'll be all right.

George: Of course, in this old house. I don't know why we don't all have pneumonia. This drafty old barn. We're living in a refrigerator. Why do we have to live here in the first place? And stay around this measly, crummy, old town.

Mary: George what's wrong?

George: Wrong? Everything's wrong. You call this a happy family. Why do we have to have all these kids?

Mary: Where are you going?

George: Up to see Zuzu.

5
Scene: Zuzu's Room

Zuzu: Hi Daddy.

George: What happened to you?

Zuzu: I won a flower. *(Starts getting out of bed.)*

George: Wait, now where do you think you're going?

Zuzu: Going to give my flower a drink.

George: All right, give daddy the flower. I'll give it a drink. We'll put it in here.
Some Petals fall off from the flower.

Zuzu: Look daddy. Paste it.

George takes rose and pretends to attach the petals. He slips them into his pocket.

George: I will paste this together here. All right..... good as new. Now we'll give the flower a drink. Now will you do something for me?

Zuzu: *(Whispers)* What?

George: Try and get some sleep.

Zuzu: I'm not sleepy. I want to look at my flower.

George: I know, I know, but you just go to sleep and then you can dream about it. And then it will be a whole garden.

Zuzu: It will?

George: Uh-Huh.

George kisses Zuzu good-night, tucks her in. He goes downstairs. Mary is on the phone.

Mary: Yes, this is Mrs. Bailey..... Oh hello Mrs. Welsh. Oh, Thank-you Mrs. Welsh. I'm sure she'll be all right. The doctor said she should be out of bed in time to eat her Christmas dinner.

George: Is that Zuzu's teacher?

Mary: Yes.

George: Let me talk to her. Hello, hello, Mrs. Walsh? This is George Bailey. I'm Zuzu's father. So what kind of teacher are you anyway? What do you mean sending her home like that, half-naked? Do you realize she'll end up with Pneumonia on account of you?

Mary: George!!!

George: Is this the sort of think we pay taxes for to have teachers..... to have teachers like you stupid, silly, careless, people to send our kids home without any clothes on? You know, maybe my kids aren't the best dressed kids, and maybe they don't have any decent clothes..... Ah, the stupid!

Mary: (*Taking the phone*) Hello Mrs. Welsh, I - I want to apologize. Hello Hello, she's hung up!

George: I'll hang her up!

Mr. Welsh: Hey you.... I've not hung up! (*voice coming over phone.*)

George: Hello. Who is this? Ah, Mr. Welsh. Ok, that's fine Mr. Welsh. Give me a chance to tell you what I really think of your wife.

Mary: George! Stop it!!

George: Get out and let me handle this. Hello....hello. What Oh, you will, will you. Ok, Mr. Welsh. Anything you think you're man enough you... Hello... and time. (*Hangs up the phone. Grrrrrrr*)

Peter: Dad, how do you spell hallelujah?

George: How should I know? What do you think I am, a dictionary? ~~Tommy stop that, stop that!~~ Jane haven't you learned that silly tune yet? You have played it over and over again. Stop it, stop it!!! (*Everything becomes quiet.*)

George knocks over furniture.

George: I'm sorry Mary. Jane, I'm sorry, I didn't mean that. You go on and practice. Peter I owe you an apology too. What do you want to know?

Peter: Nothing daddy.

George: What's the matter with everybody? Jane go on, I told you to practices. Now go on. Now go on playing.

Jane: Oh daddy. (*She cries.*)

Mary: George, why must you talk to the children that way? Why don't you.....

George: Mary. (*He Leaves.*)

Mary: (*Picks up the phone.*) Bedford 247, please.

Peter: Is daddy in trouble?

Mary: Yes Peter.

Jane: Shall I pray for him?

Mary: Yes Janey, pray very hard.

Mary: Hello Uncle Billy.....

Scene: In Potter's Office.

George: I'm in trouble Mr. Potter. I need help. Through some sort of accident my company shortened their account. The bank examiner got there today. I've got to raise eight thousand dollars immediately.

Potter: Oh, that's what the reporters wanted to talk to you about.

George: The Reporters?!

Potter: Yes, they called me up from your building and loan. Oh, there's a man over there from the DA's office. He's looking for you.

George: Please help me Mr. Potter. Help me, won't you please? Can't you see what it means to my family? I'll pay any sort of bonus on the loan, any interest. If you still want the Building and Loan...

Potter: George, could it possibly be there's a slight discrepancy in the books?

George: No sir, there's nothing wrong with the books. I've just misplaced eight thousand dollars. I can't find it anywhere.

Potter: YOU misplaced eight thousand dollars?

George: Yes sir.

Potter: Have you notified the police?

George: No sir, I didn't want the publicity. Harry's coming home tomorrow.

Potter: Nobody's going to believe that one. What have you been doing George? Playing the market with the company's money?

George: No sir, I haven't.

Potter: A woman then? It's all over town that you've been giving money to Violet Beck.

George: What?

Potter: Not that it makes any difference to me. Why do you come to me? Why don't you go to Sam Wainright and ask him for the money?

George: I can't get a hold of him. He's in Europe.

Potter: What about your other friends?

George: They don't have that kind of money. You know that. You're the only one in town that can help me.

Potter: I've suddenly become quite important. What kind of security would I have George? You got any stocks?

George: No sir.

Potter: ^{Bonds} Banks, Real Estate, a Collateral of any kind?

George: I have some life insurance. fifteen-thousand dollar policy.

Potter: Yes, how much is your equity?

George: Five-hundred dollars.

Potter: Five-hundred dollars. And you ask me to lend you eight-thousand? Look at you. You used to be so cocky. You were going to go out and conquer the world. You once called me a warped frustrated old man. What are you but a warped frustrated young man. A miserable little clerk crawling in here on your hands and knees begging for help. No securities, no stocks, no bonds, nothing but a miserable little five-hundred dollar equity on a life insurance policy. Hee Hee..... you're worth more dead then alive. Why don't you go to the riff-raff you love so much and ask them to help you out? You know why? Well, they'd run you out of town on the rail. I'll tell you what I'm going to do George. Since the state examiner is still here, as a stockholder of the Building and Loan, I'm going to swear out a warrant for your arrest. Mrssappropriation of funds, manipulation, (*George gets up*) All right George, go ahead. You can't hide in a little town like this. Ya, Bill, this is Potter.....*talks into the telephone.*

Scene: Wandering in street

George: (staggering around streets.) God help me, I'm drunk. Dear Father in heaven, I'm not a praying man, but if you're up there, and you can hear me, show me the way. I'm at the end of my rope. Show me the way, God. Where's my insurance policy? Here it is.

George ends up standing on the bridge looking down at the rough water. Clarence jumps in.

George: Hey, what's up?

Clarence: Help! Help! Help! Help!

George jumps in to save him. They both scream for help..

Scene: In Boat House.

Clarence: I didn't have time to get some stylish underwear. My wife gave me this on my last birthday. Ha, I passed away in it. Oh Tom Sawyer is drying out too. You should read the new book Mark Twain is writing right now.

George: How did you happen to fall in?

Clarence: I didn't fall in. I jumped in to save George.

George: You what? You..... to save me?!

Clarence: Well I did, didn't I? You didn't go through with it, did you?

George: Go through with what?

Clarence: Suicide.

George : It's against the law to commit suicide around here.

Clarence: It's against the law where I come from too.

George: Oh, where do you come from?

Clarence: Heaven. I had to act quickly. That's why I jumped in. I knew if I were drowning, you would try to save me. See you did, and that's how I saved you.

George: Very Funny!

Clarence: George. I'm the answer to your prayer. That's why I was sent down here.

George: How do you know my name?

Clarence: Oh, I know all about you. I've watched you grow up from a boy.

George: What are you, a mind reader or something?

Clarence: Noooooo.

George: Well, who are you then?

Clarence: Clarence Oddbody A.S.2.

George: Oddbody! What's the A. S. 2 stand for?

Clarence: Angel Second class.

George: What's that you said a minute ago? Why do you want to save me?

Clarence: That's what I was sent down here for. I'm your guardian angel.

George: I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

Clarence: Ridiculous of you to think of killing yourself for eight-thousand dollars. For money.

George: Hey it's just things like that. How do you know that?

Clarence: I told you. I'm your guardian angel. I know everything about you.

George: Well, you look about like the kind of angel I'd get. A sort of fallen angel, aren't you? What happened to your wings?

Clarence: I haven't won my wings yet. That's why I'm an Angel Second Class.

George: I don't know whether I like it very much being seen around an angel without any wings.

Clarence: Oh, I've got to earn them. And you'll help me, won't you?

George: Sure, Sure! How?

Clarence: Letting me help you.

George: There's only one way you can help me. You don't happen to have eight-thousand bucks on you?

Clarence: Oh no, no. We don't use money in heaven.

George: Oh yes, I keep forgetting. It comes in pretty handy down here.

Clarence: Tat tat ta.

George: I found it out a little late. I'm worth more dead than alive.

Clarence: Now look, you mustn't talk like that. I won't get my wings with that attitude. You just don't know all that you've done. If it hadn't been for you.....

George: Ya Ya. If it hadn't been for me everybody would be a lot better off. My wife and my kids and my friends. Look, look little fellow, why don't you go off and haunt somebody else.

Clarence: No, no, you don't understand. I've got my job.....

George: Shut up, will you?!

Clarence: Ah, this isn't going to be so easy. (*Pauses*) So you still think killing yourself would make everybody happier?

George: I don't know. I guess you're right. I suppose it would be better if I'd never been born at all.

Clarence: What did you say?

George: I said, "I wish I'd never been born."

Clarence: Oh, you mustn't say things like that. You m..... Wait a minute, wait a minute, that's an idea. (*Looking up towards heaven*) What do you think? Ya, I'll do it. (*To George*) All right, you've got your wish. You've never been born.

George: What did you say?

Clarence: You've never been born. You don't exist. You haven't a care in the world. No worries, no obligations, no eight-thousand dollars to get, no Potter looking for you with the sheriff.

George: Say something else into that ear.

Clarence: Sure, you can hear out of it.

George: That's the dog-gonest think I've ever heard. I haven't heard anything out of that ear since I was a kid. Must be that jump into that cold water.

George: What's happened here? What I need is a couple of good stiff drinks. How about you angel, you want a drink?

Clarence: Ha ha ha

George: Well, as soon as these clothes are dry.....

Clarence: The clothes are dry.

George: What do you know about that! Stove's hotter than I thought. Come on, get your clothes on. We'll stroll up to my car, Uh oh. I'm sorry, I'll stroll, you fly.

Clarence: I can't fly. I haven't got my wings yet.

George: You haven't got your wings yet!

They go outside

Clarence: What's the matter?

George: Pottersville?! (sees sign)

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Scene: Inside Nicks

George: Come on inside. Hello... hey Nick!

Nick: You want a drink or don't you?

George: All right. Double Bourbon, will you, quick.

Nick: Ok. (*brings a drink*) What's yours? (*to Clarence*)

Clarence: I was just thinking. Ha ha ha. It's been so long since Iha ha.

Nick: Look mister..... I'm standing here waiting for you to make up your mind.

Clarence: That's a good man. I was just thinking of a flaming rum punch. No, it's not called that around here. Wait a minute, I've got it! Mulled Wine. Heavy on the cinnamon and light on the cloves. Off with you and be lively.

Nick: Hey Mister. We serve hard drinks in here for men who want to get drunk fast. And we don't need any characters around to give the joint atmosphere. Is that clear? Or do I have to slip you my lip for a convincer?

George: Leave him alone Nick. Just give him the same as mine. He's Ok.

Nick: Ok.

George: What's the matter with him? I've never seen Nick act like that.

Clarence: You'll see a lot of strange things from now on.

George: Oh yeah. Hey little feller, you worry me. You know, you got some place to sleep?

Clarence: Nope.

George: You don't uh? You got any money?

Clarence: No oh.

George: No wonder you jumped into the river.

Clarence: I jumped in the river to save you, so I could get my wings. (*Cashier bell rings*) Oh, oh. Somebody has just made it.

George: Made what?

Clarence: Every time you hear a bell ring, it means that some angel's just got his wings.

George: Um, um..... I think you'd better not mention about getting your wings in here.

Clarence: Why, don't they believe in Angels?

George: They believe in them.

Clarence: Then why should they be surprised when they see one.

Nick: That does it! Out you two pixies go. Through the door or out the window.

George: Wait Nick, what's wrong?

Nick: That's another thing. When do you come off calling me Nick?

George: Well Nick, that's your name.

Nick: What's that got to do with it. I don't know you! Hey you Rummy over there come here, come here. (*Gauer comes shuffling up*) Didn't I tell you never to come panhandling around here. (*Squirts whisky in his face. The crowd laughs.*)

George: Mr. Gauer! What is.....Mr. Gauer..... this is George Bailey, don't you know me?

Mr. Gauer: No...no....no!

Nick: Throw him out.

George: Mr. Gauer. Hey Nick, Nick. Isn't that Mr. Gauer the druggist?

Nick: You know, that's another reason for me not to like you. That rum-head spent twenty years in jail for poisoning a kid. If you know him, you must be a jailbird yourself. Would you show these gentlemen to the door?

Bouncer: Sure. This way gentleman. (*Laughter accompanies their exit*) And stay out.

Clarence: You see, George. You were not there to stop Gauer from putting that poison in the capsules.

George: What do you mean, I wasn't there? I remember distinctly.....I what's going on around here. Look, who are you?

Clarence: I told you George, I'm your guardian Angel.

George: Then why am I seeing all these strange things?

Clarence: Don't you understand George, it's because you were not born!

George: If I wasn't born, then who am I?

Clarence: You're nobody. You have no identity.

George: What do you mean I have no identify? My name is George Bailey.

Clarence: There is no George Bailey. You have no paper, no car, no driver's license, no 4F card, no life insurance policy. (*George reaches into his pocket where he put Zuzu's petals.*) They're not there either.

George: What?

Clarence: Zuzu's petals. You've been given a great gift, George: a chance to see what the world would be like without you.

George: No, this is some sort of funny dream I'm having. So long Mister, I'm going home.

Clarence: Oh, what home?

George: Ah, shut up! Cut it out. You're-you're crazy! That's what I think. You're screwy. You're driving me crazy too. I'm seeing things here. I'm going home to see my wife and family. You understand that? Now go have a walk.

They walk through the streets, people are partying.

George: *(To a passerby)* Where did the old Building & Loan move to?

Passerby: The Building & what?

George: The Bailey Building & Loan that was there.

Passerby: They went out of business years ago.

Police come by dragging a drunk and violent Violet. They stop at old house.

George: Hey that's my house. Mary, Mary, Peter, Jamey, Zuzu. Where are you? *(He goes inside.)*

George: Where are you? Where are they?

Clarence: George you were never born. You have no children.

Scene: At George's Mother's House.

George knocks.

Mrs. Bailey: Well?

George: Mother!

Mrs. Bailey: Mother? What do you want?

George: Mother, this is George. II thought for sure you'd remember me.

Mrs. Bailey: George who? If you're looking for a room, there's no vacancy.

George: Please help me. Something terrible has happened to me. I don't know what it is. Something has happened to everybody. Please let me come in, and keep me here till I get over it.

Mrs. Bailey: Get over what? I don't take in strangers unless they're sent over by someone I know.

George: I know everybody you know. Your brother-in-law, Uncle Bailey.

Mrs. Bailey: You know him?

George: Well, sure I do.

Mrs. Bailey: When did you see him last?

George: Today over at his house.

Mrs. Bailey: It's a lie. He's been in the insane asylum ever since he lost his business. If you ask me, that's where you belong. *(Slams the door shut.)*

Clarence: Strange isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around, he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?

George: I've heard of things like that. You've got me in some kind of spell. Well I'm going to get out of it. I'll get out of it. I know how too. I'm going to see Bert.

Clarence: Do you know where he lives?

George: Sure I know where he lives. He lives in Bailey Park.

Scene: Bailey Park

They go to Bailey park.

Clarence: Are you sure this is Bailey Park?

George: No, I'm not sure of anything anymore. All I know is, this should be Bailey Park. Where are the houses?

Clarence: You weren't here to build them. This is just a cemetery. Your brother Harry Bailey broke through the ice and was drowned at the age of nine.

George: That's a lie. Harry Bailey went to war. He got the Congressional Medal of Honor. He saved the lives of every man on that ship.

Clarence: Every man on that ship died. Harry wasn't there to save them, because you weren't there to save Harry. You see George, you really had a wonderful life. Don't you see what a mistake it would be to throw it away.

George: Clarence?

Clarence: Yes George.

George: Where's Mary?

Clarence: Oh well, I..... I I can't.....

George: I don't know how you know these things, but tell me, where is she?

Clarence: I'm not

George: If you know where she is... tell me where my wife is.

Clarence: I'm not supposed to tell.

George: Please Clarence, tell me where she lives.

Clarence: You're not going to like it.

George: (*Picks up Clarence and shakes him*) Where is she?

Clarence: She's an old maid. She never married.

George: Where's Mary? Where is she?

Clarence: She's....

George: Where is she?

Clarence: She's just about to close up the library.

George runs off.

Clarence: (*Picks himself up*) Ah, there must be some easy way for me to get my wings.

In front of the Library. Mary just coming out.

George: Mary... Mary... Mary. It's George. You know me. What's happened to us?

Mary: I don't know you, let me go!

George: Mary please don't do this to me. Please don't do this to me. Please Mary. Where's our kids? I need you Mary.

Mary: (*Screams and runs into crowd.*)

George: Mary! (*Runs after her*)

Man: No you don't. (*Catches George*) Somebody call the police. You need a strait jacket. (*George struggles wildly.*)

Bert: Stop right there (*shoots,*)

George: Clarence... Clarence... Clarence. (*He runs off towards the river.*)

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Scene: At river

George: Clarence, Clarence, help me Clarence! Get me back. Get me back, I don't care what happens to me. Get me back to my wife and kids. Help me Clarence please. Please, I want to live again. I want to live again. I want to live again. Please God, I want to live again. Let me live again. (*He cries.*)

Bert comes up.

Bert: Hey George, George, you all right? Hey what's the matter?

George: Get out of here Bert, or I'll hit you again. Get out of here.

Bert: What the sam-hill you yelling for George?

George: George? Bert, you know me?

Bert: Know you, huh?! You're kidding. I've been looking all over town trying to find you. Are you sure you're all right?

George: Zuzu's petals? Zuzu... there they are. Bert, Bert, what do you know about that! Merry Christmas.

Bert: Well, Merry Christmas.

George: Mary, Mary, yeah, yeah!. Hello Bedford Falls. (sees sign) Merry Christmas.

People on street: Merry Christmas George.

George: Merry Christmas movie house. Merry Christmas Emporium, Merry Christmas you wonderful old Building & Loan. (sees *Mr. Potter.*) Merry Christmas to you Mr. Potter.

Potter: Happy New Year to you in ... in jail. Go on home, they're waiting for you. Huh!

George's house. From off stage one can hear George's voice.

George: Mary! Mary! (*He comes through the door.*)

George: Well hello Mr. Bank Examiner. Howdy!

Mr. Carter: Mr. Bailey, there's a deficit.

George: I know, eight-thousand dollars.

Sheriff: George, I've got a little paper...

George: I bet it's a warrant for my arrest. Isn't it wonderful. I'm going to jail. Merry Christmas Reporters. Mary... Where's Mary. Mary! Oh look at this wonderful old drafty house. Mary, Mary, Mary. Have you seen my wife?

Kids in unison: Merry Christmas Daddy!

George: Kids, Peter, kids, Janey, Janey, I could eat you up! Where's your mother?

Peter: She's looking for you.

Jane: With Uncle Billy.

Zuzu: (*Coming from the Bedroom*) Daddy.

George: Zuzu, Zuzu! My little gingersnap. How do you feel?

Zuzu: Fine.

Jane: Not a smidge of temperature.

George: Not a smidge of temperature, ha, ha, ha, Hallelujah!

Mary: (*Coming in, sees men waiting.*) Hello. George! George darling, George darling, where have you been? Oh George, George.

George: You've no idea what's happened to me. Let me touch you. Are you real?

Mary: You've no idea what's happened. Come on George, come on downstairs. I think they are on their way. Come in here now. Stand right here by the tree. And don't move, don't move.

Peter: What's happening?

Jenny: They're coming.

Mary: Yes, they're coming now. George it's a miracle! It's a miracle!

Zuzu: Look what's happening. Look daddy.

Jenny: Look who's coming daddy.

Mary: Come in Uncle Billy. Everybody in here.

Everybody comes in and shouts hello.

Uncle Billy: Isn't it wonderful, so many friends. Mary did it George. She told some people you were in trouble. They scattered all over town collecting money. They didn't ask any questions just, "George is in trouble and his family" It spread like wildfire.

They pour out baskets of money on the table in front of George. Then everybody lines up to give money.

Giver: Don't push.

Giver: There's more coming, George.

Giver: God Bless you.

Giver: Here's Mr. Gauer.

Gauer: Hello Mary. I'd pay any ransom for George.

Violet: I'm not going to go George. I changed my mind.

Giver: I wouldn't have a roof over my head if it wasn't for you, George.

Ernie: Just a minute. Quiet, quiet everybody, now get this. It's from London. Mr. Gauer called you need cash. Stop. My office instructed to advance you up to twenty-five thousand dollars. Stop. Hee-haw and Merry Christmas. Sam Wainwright.

Jane plays "Hark the Herald" Everybody sings. Bank Examiner, Sheriff and reporters come up and all make donations. Sheriff rips up warrant. Harry comes in.

Giver: Harry Bailey!

Giver: Harry.

George: Harry! Harry!

Bert: Mary, I got him from the Airport just as soon as I could. The fool flew up here all the way in a blizzard.

Mrs. Bailey: How about your Banquet in New York.

Harry: Oh, I left right in the middle of it. As soon as I got Mary's telegram. (*Ernie gives him a glass of wine*) Good idea, Ernie. A toast! To my big brother George. The richest man in town.

Everybody cheers and sing "Auld Lang Sien" George picks up a book that is lying in the middle of the money pile. Reads the inscription.

George: Remember, no man is a failure who has friends. Thanks for the wings. Clarence.

Mary: Who's that?

George: That's a Christmas present from a very dear friend of mine.

A tiny bell rings.

Zuzu: Look daddy, teacher says ^every time a bell rings an angel gets ^e wings.

George: That's right! That's right! (*Looks up and winks.*) That-a-boy Clarence!

The End

