

ACT 1**Scene 1*****EXT. HEAVEN - DAY***
(CLARENCE, SUPERINTENDENT)**1. MUSIC: [MUS-01] _____ (OPTIONAL) OVERTURE—FADE AS NEEDED*****SETTING:***

The apron of the stage DOWNSTAGE LEFT will serve as “Heaven” throughout the play. The angels survey the various scenes from there--perhaps a raised pulpit or balcony. Lighting can suggest a special radiance or halo effect for the Heaven scenes.

The apron will also serve as the main street and sidewalk for several scenes. As needed, a desk or bed or bar will be rolled on-stage, occupying the apron area to serve as additional locations.

The area UPSTAGE is bisected into two rooms that will be dressed together and separately as scenes require. The two rooms are connected by a functional door with two more functional doors upstage to allow for entrances. The idea is to allow the play to continue without significant interruption while stagehands redress the two rooms in darkness. The rooms will be described just prior to the opening of scenes.

AT RISE:

Both rooms are dark. In the Pharmacy, GOWER is grieving quietly over a tragic telegram. Later, YOUNG GEORGE will enter from the functional door upstage. No one is in the dining room. The angels are about to begin their survey of George Bailey's life.

2. LIGHTS: _____ WASH AT 1/4 FOR GOWER'S STORE
THE DINNING ROOM IS DARK.
HEAVENLY SPOT – DOWNSTAGE-LEFT.

THE SUPERINTENDENT angel enters from OFF-STAGE LEFT and stands as if proclaiming to an unseen audience—perhaps a congregation or even God.

AUDIO NOTE:

Try using hidden mics for the angels so that when the Superintendent and Clarence are speaking in Heaven, their voices can have a reverb effect applied throughout. The first line of their dialogue in a scene will specify [REVERB]. However, when Clarence is on Earth, his voice will be “dry” (no reverb.)

1. MUSIC: [MUS-02] (BED) “WONDERFUL LIFE INTRO”—UNDER...
2. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] This is the story of George Bailey--an ordinary man who lives in Bedford Falls, New York. But George Bailey--more than anything--wanted to see the world--the exciting world that lay somewhere beyond his home town. George had big dreams. But also big responsibilities. Of course, sometimes the two don't exactly fit together. Sometimes happiness is not over the rainbow, but right under your nose.
However, our story doesn't begin in Bedford Falls. In fact, it doesn't begin anywhere in the world...
3. MUSIC: [MUS-03] MUSIC CROSSFADES TO “HEAVENLY”
4. SUPERINTENDENT: ...It begins... here, in Heaven..., where I, the Superintendent of Angels, am briefing an apprentice angel named Clarence... (Ahem) Clarence...? (Sternly) Clarence!
5. MUSIC: “HEAVENLY”--FADES UNDER...
CLARENCE ENTERS from OFFSTAGE LEFT, while reading an old hardback book—“Tom Sawyer.” He trips as he comes upon the Superintendent.
6. CLARENCE: [REVERB] (TRIPPING) Whoops! Clarence Oddbody--angel, second class--reporting for duty, your honor!
7. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] What? They sent me an Angel--second class? You haven't earned your wings, then, have you?
8. CLARENCE: Um... No, not yet. But I'm hoping this mission will do the trick! Are you really sending me down to Earth? Gosh! I haven't been to Earth since that time I got...
9. SUPERINTENDENT: (Disgusted) Yes! (Changing the subject) Now..., there's a man in trouble down there.
10. CLARENCE: Good!

1. SUPERINTENDENT: No, bad, Clarence! At precisely ten forty-five P.M.--Earth time--a man named George Bailey will be thinking about ending his life.
2. CLARENCE: Oh, my! Ending his life? Well, I know that's bad!
3. SUPERINTENDENT: Good, Clarence!
4. CLARENCE: Huh?
5. SUPERINTENDENT: I'm glad you understand. So, you must stop him--if you can. Now... let me brief you about George Bailey's case history. You see, when George was a boy...
6. CLARENCE: Oh, that's okay, your honor. All I need is a plan!
7. SUPERINTENDENT: A... "plan?"
8. CLARENCE: Y'see, your excellent-ness, I'm reading "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." Mark Twain. (He holds up the book.)
9. SUPERINTENDENT: Yes, I'm familiar with the book.
10. CLARENCE: Well, Tom Sawyer always has a plan.
11. SUPERINTENDENT: (Skeptically) I see... Well, if you can help George Bailey with your "plan," you just may get your wings. Say... how long have you been waiting for your wings?
12. CLARENCE: Over two hundred years.
13. SUPERINTENDENT: Two hundred years? ... Ulp. Well... George Bailey's going to need a miracle.
14. CLARENCE: Yes! Thank you for your confidence in me, Boss. I'll leave immediately...
15. SUPERINTENDENT: Wait, Clarence! (Sighs) "Plan" or no--first, some background... Now... look here....

The SUPERINTENDENT points out into the audience. CLARENCE turns his attention to the "observe" some boys playing on an ice pond. Sound effects convey the action as the SUPERINTENDENT describes it.

1. SUPERINTENDENT: When George Bailey was a boy, he and his friends snuck onto mean Mr. Potter's property... and were sliding over a frozen pond on a shovel...
2. WALLA: (OFF-STAGE) BOYS PLAYING ON ICE. "PRETTY GOOD, GEORGE!" "MY TURN!" "HARRY'S TURN." "HERE I GO..."
3. SUPERINTENDENT: ...but George's younger brother--Harry--fell through the ice...
4. SFX: [FX-01] ICE CRACKS
SPLASH FOLLOWED BY SECOND SPLASH--FADE UNDER
5. WALLA: BOYS PANIC--THEN, IN SYNC WITH DIALOGUE, CHEER
6. CLARENCE: And George jumped in to save Harry...
7. SUPERINTENDENT: Yes. But as a result, George has a bad ear.
8. CLARENCE: Sure! The icy water, infection... I get it.
9. SUPERINTENDENT: Now look, Clarence.

The SUPERINTENDENT points to the still dark set for Gower's drug store. CLARENCE turns his attention to this new scene. GOWER sits glumly reading a telegram with a bottle of whiskey in his hand.
10. SUPERINTENDENT: A few months later, Young George was working after school at Gower's drug store. But on this day, Mr. Gower received a telegram informing him that his only son had just died of influenza. Devastated, Mr. Gower was trying to drown his sorrow in whiskey, when...
11. MUSIC: [MUS-04] (BRIDGE) "GOWER'S SAD DRUG STORE"--FADE UNDER.
12. LIGHTS: FADE UP ON GOWER'S STORE

Scene 2

INT. GOWER'S DRUG STORE - DAY (MAY 1919) **(GOWER, YOUNG GEORGE)**

SETTING:

The room UPSTAGE LEFT is dressed as Gower's pharmacy. A table holds medicine bottles, papers, vials, and other pharmacist gear. A candlestick-style telephone sits on the table. There is a FUNCTIONAL DOOR to outside (UPSTAGE).

AT RISE:

A drunken Gower is reading a telegram and clearly grieving the sad news it contains.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-02] GOWER'S PHONE RINGS (3X)

GOWER answers the phone.

2. GOWER: (Drunkenly) Gower's drugs.... Mrs. Blaine? ... What?... Well, George should have delivered that medicine by now! ... Wait, here he comes. I'll send it right over. ... G'bye!

As YOUNG GEORGE ENTERS through the door UPSTAGE, GOWER hangs up the phone.

3. GOWER: (Angry) George! Did you deliver that prescription?
4. YOUNG GEORGE: Well, uh... no, Mr. Gower. I...
5. GOWER: Why didn't you deliver that right away? The little Blaine girl's sick! You lost it, didn't you?
6. YOUNG GEORGE: No, Mr. Gower, here it is. (Holds up glass vial of pills.)
7. GOWER: Here?! (Angry) Why you... (Slaps YOUNG GEORGE'S face)
8. YOUNG GEORGE: (In pain) Ow! Mr. Gower! My ear! My ear!
9. GOWER: You good for nothing... (Slap) Lazy loafer.. (Slap)
10. YOUNG GEORGE: Ow! You're hurting my sore ear!
11. GOWER: What are you trying to do...? (Slap) Ruin me...? (Slap)
12. YOUNG GEORGE: Ow...! No, Mr. Gower! (In tears, holding out the vial) You put something wrong in these pills. I...

1. GOWER: Shut up! You little...! (Slap)
2. YOUNG GEORGE: (Sobbing) Look! I know you're sad... You're upset about your son dying. You've been drinking! But you put something bad in these capsules. I didn't know what to do...
3. GOWER: Huh?... the... capsules? (He takes the vial and examines it.)
4. YOUNG GEORGE: Look at them, Mr. Gower! You took the powder from this bottle. It's... poison! (Whimpering)
5. GOWER: Poison? Poison? (Realizes) Oh, my God!
6. YOUNG GEORGE: Don't hurt my sore ear again. Please!
7. GOWER: Poison? (Hugging George) Oh, George, George, George...
8. MUSIC: [MUS-05] (BED) "TENDER MOMENT"--UNDER
9. YOUNG GEORGE: (Sobbing) That's why I didn't deliver the medicine, Mr. Gower! I wanted to ask my Pop--to make sure! But he was busy... He couldn't...
10. GOWER: (Sobs) George, George... Forgive me! George...
11. YOUNG GEORGE: I won't ever tell a soul, Mr. Gower. I know you're sad. I won't ever tell anyone... hope to die...
12. GOWER: (Sobs) George, George...
13. MUSIC: [MUS-06] CROSS-FADE INTO "RIP TO HEAVENLY"--UNDER.
14. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON GOWER'S DRUG STORE .
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.

Scene 3

***EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE)***

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

15. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Little Mary Hatch was at the soda fountain. She heard it all, but she, too, never told a soul.

1. CLARENCE: [REVERB] My...! George sure took a beating! But he did the right thing.
2. SUPERINTENDENT: Well, George grew up and he wanted to go to college, but there just wasn't enough money, so he worked four years at the Bailey Building and Loan Association...
3. CLARENCE: "Building and Loan?"
4. SUPERINTENDENT: Yes. George's father was in the building and loan business... He and George's Uncle Billy--but it was a case of high ideals and low bank account.
5. CLARENCE: Those two always seem to go together.
6. SUPERINTENDENT: Err, yes. Anyway... George worked for his father and saved enough to pay for college. But first, he was going to summer in Europe--working his way across on a cattle boat. Full of wanderlust, George wanted to do a little traveling before college...
7. MUSIC: FADE "HEAVENLY" QUICKLY UNDER.
8. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON BAILEY DINING ROOM.

Scene 4

INT. BAILEY DINING ROOM - EVENING (JUNE 1928)
(GEORGE, POP, HARRY)

SETTING:

The room STAGE RIGHT is the Old Bailey House dinning room, with a table and chairs and a mostly-eaten dinner for four set upon it. UPSTAGE, another FUNCTIONAL DOOR leads to the rest of the house.

AT RISE:

Dinner is over. Two chairs are empty. GEORGE and POP are still seated, having desert. HARRY is off-stage, soon to enter from the UPSTAGE door.

9. POP BAILEY: Another piece of apple pie, George?

1. GEORGE: No. Not for me. I've had enough. Gee, it's hard to believe this is my last night at the ol' "Bailey boarding house."
2. POP BAILEY: We're all going to miss you, George.
3. GEORGE: Aw, I'm going to miss you, too, Pop--and Mother. And everyone in Bedford Falls.
4. POP BAILEY: You've certainly earned your chance, son.
5. GEORGE: Oh, and I'm gonna take it! (Notices) But, hey, what's the matter, Pop? You look kinda tired.
6. POP BAILEY: I don't know. (Sigh) I had another run-in with Henry Potter today.
7. GEORGE: Mr. Potter? That ol' money-grubbing buzzard? I thought when you put him on the Board of Directors, he'd ease up on us a little.
8. POP BAILEY: So did I. (Sighs) He's the richest man in town...
9. GEORGE: ...and the most miserable, if you ask me. I don't understand somebody like Mr. Potter. I mean, he can't begin to spend all the money he has...
10. POP BAILEY: Well, Potter is crippled... spent his life in that wheelchair. He's frustrated. Think about it.
11. GEORGE: But Potter owns about everything he wants in town... everything except the Bailey Building and Loan.
12. POP BAILEY: Maybe, that's why he hates us. To him, we're just a bunch of foolish...

HARRY BAILEY ENTERS from the door UPSTAGE, dressed in a tux or fancy suit.

13. HARRY BAILEY: Hey, George! Can I borrow your tuxedo cufflinks for the dance?
14. GEORGE: Sure! Help yourself, Harry!
15. HARRY BAILEY: Well, where are they? (Looks around. See's George's suitcase) Here?--in your suitcase?

1. POP BAILEY: C'mon, Harry! George won't be needing a tuxedo on a cattle boat!
2. HARRY BAILEY: You never know... Say, where'd you get this beat up old suitcase anyway, George?
3. GEORGE: At the Emporium, Harry! Mr. Gower bought it for me.
4. HARRY BAILEY: A going-away present?
5. GEORGE: Yep! Far away! Y'see, one of these days, that bag will be plastered with exotic travel stickers. Y'know... like Rome... Athens... Baghdad... Samarkand...
6. POP BAILEY: (Amused) I guess you're gonna have a pretty full summer, George.
7. GEORGE: Oh....! I'm gonna have a pretty full life!
8. HARRY BAILEY: So, why don't you come to the dance tonight?
9. GEORGE: Your graduation dance? Naw...! I'd be bored to death.
10. HARRY BAILEY: Oh, but what a wonderful death!
11. POP BAILEY: There'll be lots of pretty girls, son.
12. HARRY BAILEY: ...And we're using that new gym floor tonight.
13. POP BAILEY: That was a brilliant idea of yours, George. Putting the pool under the gym saved the high school thousands!
14. GEORGE: Well, Pop, that's just the start--for me. You wait! What I'm gonna do! What I'm gonna see...
15. HARRY BAILEY: Like the tuxedo cufflinks?
16. GEORGE: Oh..., Try upstairs, Harry--my top drawer.
17. HARRY BAILEY: Okay. Yikes! I gotta hurry! Bye! (Exiting through the door-UPSTAGE)
18. GEORGE: (Chuckles) Was I like that when I graduated from high school, Pop?

1. POP BAILEY: Pretty much.... (Sighs) I sure wish we could send Harry to college with you, George.
2. GEORGE: Yeah, but Harry and I've got that all figured out. He'll take over my job at the Building and Loan, work and save for four years like I did, then he'll go.
3. POP BAILEY: He's pretty young for that job.
4. GEORGE: He's no younger than I was.
5. POP BAILEY: You were just born older, George.
6. GEORGE: How's that, Pop? (Turns his head) Y'know, my "trick" ear.
7. POP BAILEY: (LOUDER) I said, "you were born old!"
8. GEORGE: Well then, that's why I've got to hurry now. There's a whole world out there, waiting for me to conquer it.
9. POP BAILEY: Um... George... When you get out of college, you wouldn't consider coming back to the Building and Loan, would you?
10. GEORGE: What...? Come back...? Oh, no. Now, Pop... I just... couldn't! I couldn't face being cooped up for the rest of my life in a shabby little office with all those...
11. POP BAILEY: I see...
12. GEORGE: I... (Catches himself) Oh, I'm sorry, Pop. I didn't mean that... But it's just this... business of nickels and dimes...
13. POP BAILEY: I know... spending your life trying to figure how to save three cents on a length of pipe... I understand, son.
14. GEORGE: Do you, Pop? (Sighs) Staying here, I'd just go crazy. Y'see, I want to do something... big! Something... important!
15. POP BAILEY: But--in a small way--we are doing something important, George. In that... "shabby little office" we help people to get their own homes. We help their dreams come true.

1. GEORGE: I know. I know, Pop, but... (Sighs) But... most of my friends have already finished college. I feel if I didn't get away, I'd... I'd bust!
2. POP BAILEY: (Sigh) I guess you're right.
3. GEORGE: Um... You know what I mean, don't you?
4. POP BAILEY: I know that this town's no place for anybody... unless you crawl to Mr. Potter. You've got talent, George--a gift! So travel! Get yourself that education. Then... do what you want, son!
5. GEORGE: Y'know, Pop? Ready for a shock? I think you're a pretty great guy.
6. POP BAILEY: Well, thank you, George. Look, um, why don't you go on over to Harry's dance? See that new gym floor over the pool. I'm sure you'll have a good time.
7. GEORGE: Well... it is my last night in Bedford Falls. I guess I could drop in... Maybe I will, at that... (Gets up) Ok! See ya later, Pop!
8. MUSIC: [MUS-07] (BRIDGE) GLISS TO "HEAVENLY"--FADES UNDER.
9. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON BAILEY DINING ROOM.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.

Scene 5

EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(CLARENCE, SUPERINTENDENT)

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

10. CLARENCE: [REVERB] So... George Bailey went to a dance. Is that important, Boss?

1. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Why, it was at the dance that he fell in the pool with Mary Hatch--and most of the rest of the class of nineteen-twenty-eight.
2. CLARENCE: (Being "clever") So George and Mary went "overboard" at the dance. Heh-heh.
3. SUPERINTENDENT: Ahem. Later, he was walking her home. They were feeling pretty good, Clarence. (Fading under) As a matter of fact... wonderful...
4. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON SYCAMORE TREET.
5. MUSIC: [MUS-08] (BRIDGE) LAST 2 BARS OF "BUFFALO GALS" AND LET ACTORS TAKE OVER SINGING IT.

Scene 6

EXT. SYCAMORE ST. SIDEWALK - NIGHT ***(GEORGE, MARY, NOSEY NEIGHBOR, UNCLE BILLY)***

SETTING:

The apron STAGE RIGHT is dressed as Sycamore St. A large hydrangea bush is CENTER STAGE. The Old Granville House is far out in the audience. The actors will refer to it and mime throwing stones at it.

AT RISE:

GEORGE and MARY ENTER, singing, from OFF-RIGHT. Due to having fallen into the pool, George is now dressed as a football player—with old-fashioned leather helmet. Mary is in a bath robe.

6. SFX TRACK: [FX-03] CRICKETS #1--UNDER.
7. GEORGE AND MARY: (Singing--in unison)
"Buffalo Gals, can't you come out tonight?
Come out tonight?
Come out tonight?
(MORE...)

1. GEORGE AND MARY: (CONT'D) (Singing--in unison)
Buffalo Gals, can't you come out tonight...
(Harmonizing) aaaaaannnnnnnd dance by the light of
the moooooooooooooon."
2. SFX: (OFF-STAGE) DOG HOWLS ALONG
3. GEORGE: Hot dog! Eh, Mary?
4. MARY: We sound beautiful, George!
5. GEORGE: Well we don't look beautiful. You should have seen me
scramble to get these dry clothes out of the locker room!
6. MARY: (Chuckles) I didn't know you were the "football" type.
7. GEORGE: I didn't know you were the royal robe type.
8. MARY: Didn't you, now? (Mock regal) My train, sir!
9. GEORGE: (Mock chivalrous) Your caboose, milady...
(In awe) Hey, you know something, Mary? I'd almost say
you were the prettiest girl in town. You look wonderful.
10. MARY: Well, why don't you say it?
11. GEORGE: I don't know... Maybe I will. (Pause) But what happened to
you? How'd you get so... "grown up?"
12. MARY: I'm gaining on you, George. Maybe we'll be in the same
class at college.
13. GEORGE: Same class? Hey, how old are you anyway?
14. MARY: Eighteen.
15. GEORGE: Eighteen...! Why it seems only last year you were just...
seven-teen!
16. MARY: What? Am I too young...? Or too old?
17. GEORGE: No, no, no. You're exactly... right. Your age sorta fits you.
I'm just saying you look a little older... without your...
clothes on.

1. MARY: What?
2. GEORGE: I-I mean without your dress on. No! I mean...
3. MARY: What do you mean, George?
4. GEORGE: I... mean... (Changing the subject) Hey... Look where we are!

GEORGE points at the Old Granville House (in the audience.) Mary sees it too.

5. MARY: (Sighs) Ah! The old Granville house...
6. GEORGE: Yeah...! (Reaching for a rock) I gotta throw a rock! Bust a window!
7. MARY: Oh, no, George! Even though it's deserted, I love this old place. It's full of romance.
8. GEORGE: Romance? Naw! With deserted houses, you make a wish and then try to bust a window.
9. MARY: But it's such a lovely old house. I want to live there someday.
10. GEORGE: In there? Go on! I wouldn't live there if I were a ghost! Now, watch... That window on the second floor... Watch this. Here we go...

GEORGE mimes throwing a rock over the audience's heads to break a window. MARY looks on.

11. ~~SFX TRACK: [FX-04] (PAUSE) DISTANT WINDOW SHATTERED BY ROCK #1.~~
12. GEORGE: How about that, huh? Pretty good shot, eh? Broke that window!
13. MARY: What'd you wish for, George?
14. GEORGE: Wish? Oh... I don't know... Hmmm... Not just one wish, Mary--a whole hatful of 'em. Y'see... I'm leaving this crummy little town. I want to see the world! Italy! Greece! The Parthenon! The Colosseum! And that's just this summer!

1. MARY: (Humoring him) That's a good start, George.
2. GEORGE: Yeah... And then I'm coming back and going to college--to see what they know, of course...
3. MARY: Of course... (Mary secretly grabs her own rock.)
4. GEORGE: And--and then, then I'm gonna build things! I'm gonna build... air fields! And sky-scrappers--a hundred stories high! And bridges--a mile long! And then I'm gonna-I'm gonna... Uhh... Uhh... Whatcha doing, Mary?

MARY mimes throwing a rock over the audience's heads to break a window. GEORGE looks on.

5. SFX TRACK: [FX-05] (PAUSE) DISTANT WINDOW SHATTERED BY ROCK #2.
6. GEORGE: Hey...! You're a pretty good shot yourself! (LAUGHS) So uh... What's your wish?
7. MARY: (Coyly singing)
"Buffalo Gals, can't you come out tonight...
aaaaannnnnd dance by the light of the moon."
8. GEORGE: C'mon, Mary! What is it you want? Do you want the moon...? All you gotta do is just say the word, and I'll throw a lasso around it and...
9. MARY: Okay! The moon! I'll take it! Then what?
10. GEORGE: Then what? Well... well, then... then you swallow it...! And--and it dissolves and moonbeams shoot out your fingers and the ends of your hair! And then--then, uh... um... Do you think I'm.... uh... talking too much?
11. NOSEY NEIGHBOR: (Off-stage Right) Yes...! Why don't you kiss her?
12. GEORGE: (Calling out) How's that? Say what?
13. NOSEY NEIGHBOR: I said, "Why don't you just kiss her?" ...instead of talking her to death!
14. GEORGE: (Calling out) Kiss her, huh?

1. NOSEY NEIGHBOR: Aw... youth is wasted on the wrong people.
2. GEORGE: (Calling out) Well, hey! Hey, just a minute! Hey, you...!
Come on back here! I'll show you some kissing that'll...
MARY realizes he's about to grab her and backs away. GEORGE advances, stepping on the tail of Mary's robe.
3. GEORGE: Oh, wait, Mary! Don't run off, I'm just funnin' with...
MARY bolts, but her robe slips off—because George is standing on the tail..
4. MARY: (Distressed scream) Oh!
GEORGE spins around while MARY—in her underwear—scrambles into the nearby bush, trying to cover herself. GEORGE has lost sight of her.
5. GEORGE: Mary? Mary??? Where'd you go?
6. MARY: (Whispering) Over here... in the hydrangeas!
MARY shakes the bush to signal where she's hiding.
7. GEORGE: In the hydrangeas?
8. MARY: (Whispering) Toss me my robe, George.
9. GEORGE: “Toss you your robe?” Oh. Sure... I'll just toss you your...
(Reconsiders) Now, wait a minute...!
10. MARY: What?!
11. GEORGE: Well... this is a very interesting... situation...
12. MARY: Oh...! Give me my robe! Please!
13. GEORGE: (Toying with her) Now, hold on! I've got to think this through... It isn't every day that a guy has an opportunity like this...
14. MARY: (Scolding) George Bailey!
15. GEORGE: ...especially in Bedford Falls!
16. MARY: I'll--I'll tell your mother on you!
17. GEORGE: Oh, but she lives way up the street from here...

1. MARY: George!
2. GEORGE: (To himself) Maybe I could sell tickets! Make a little more spending money for the trip...
3. MARY: (Screams) George!
4. GEORGE: I tell you what... I'll make a deal with you, Mary. If you just let me...

UNCLE BILLY runs in from STAGE RIGHT and stops.

5. UNCLE BILLY: (Out of breath) George! George!
6. GEORGE: Hey, Uncle Billy! Look here! I'm gonna kiss Mary! Watch!
7. UNCLE BILLY: George! Come home! Quick! It's your father!
8. GEORGE: Father?
9. UNCLE BILLY: He's had a stroke!
10. GEORGE: What? What? My father's had a...?
11. UNCLE BILLY: C'mon, George! Hurry!
12. GEORGE: (Tossing her the robe) Here, Mary. I've gotta go...!

GEORGE and UNCLE BILLY run off, STAGE RIGHT. MARY grabs her robe and stands up.

13. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON SYCAMORE ST.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.
14. MUSIC: [MUS-09] (BRIDGE) "TRAGIC" INTO "HEAVENLY"--UNDER.

Scene 7

***EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE)***

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

15. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Well, George's father died that night, Clarence. And George didn't go to Europe. But, that Fall--just as he was ready to leave for college--the directors of the Building and Loan had a meeting...

1. LIGHTS: BEGIN FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
BEGIN FADE UP ON BOARD ROOM.
2. CLARENCE: A meeting?
3. SUPERINTENDENT: They had to appoint a successor to Mr. Bailey...
4. MUSIC: FADE "HEAVENLY" UNDER...

Scene 8

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY (OCTOBER 1928)

(DR. CAMPBELL, MR. POTTER, UNCLE BILLY, GEORGE, OTHER MEMBERS)

SETTING:

The room STAGE RIGHT has been redressed as the Bailey Building and Loan's Board Room. A large table sits in the center with chairs all around it. Dr. Campbell's gavel and reports and papers sit on the table.

The room STAGE LEFT is dark.

AT RISE:

The Board Members—Dr. Campbell, Mr. Potter (in his wheel chair) and several others—are seated, arguing. GEORGE hovers tentatively, looking at his watch. UNCLE BILLY stands by the door. DR. CAMPBELL gavels repeatedly, quelling the arguing—for now.

5. DR. CAMPBELL: Enough discussion, gentlemen. All those in favor of approving these last loans made by our deceased president say "aye."
6. ALL BUT MR. POTTER: (Ad-lib: "Aye")
7. DR. CAMPBELL: All opposed?
8. MR. POTTER: No!
9. DR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Potter's dissent is noted. But the motion carries. The loans are approved. (Gavels 1X)

The BOARD MEMBERS chatter amongst themselves while GEORGE sidles up to Dr. Campbell to say goodbye.

10. DR. CAMPBELL: (To George) Thank you, George. That's all we'll need you for. I know you've got a train to catch.

1. GEORGE: Yes. (To Uncle Billy) Is Ernie's taxi out there, Uncle Billy?
2. UNCLE BILLY: (To everyone) Yes! A taxi is waiting to take George to the train--and college. (To George) Hurry, George!
3. DR. CAMPBELL: I'd like the Board to know that George, here, gave up his trip to Europe to oversee things these past months. Good luck to you at college, George.
4. BOARD MEMBERS: (ad lib "Good luck" "Take care, George" etc._
5. GEORGE: Thank you. So long, gentlemen! (Makes for the door)
6. DR. CAMPBELL: (Gavels 1X) Now... Proceeding with our agenda, we now come to the real purpose of this meeting... We must...
7. MR. POTTER: No...! Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman.
8. DR. CAMPBELL: (Sighs) Mr. Potter?
9. MR. POTTER: I've waited long enough! I want to get to my real purpose, the dissolution of this...
10. BOARD MEMBERS: (Ad lib: arguing)
They are hushed by Dr. Campbell's gavel (2x)
11. MR. POTTER: I said I've waited long enough! Now... This institution isn't needed in this town. It competes with the bank and is a general nuisance to sound business practices, therefore...
12. BOARD MEMBERS: (Ad lib arguing)
They are hushed by Dr. Campbell's gavel (3x)
13. DR. CAMPBELL: That is your opinion, Mr. Potter.
14. MR. POTTER: It's not opinion. It is fact! Now that Peter Bailey is dead, I move that we dissolve the Building and Loan and turn its assets and liabilities over to a receiver.
15. BOARD MEMBERS: (Ad lib arguing)
They are hushed by UNCLE BILLY.
16. UNCLE BILLY: Now wait a minute, Potter...

1. MR. POTTER: No, you wait a minute! ...Peter Bailey was not a businessman. He was a man of high ideals--so-called--but ideals without common sense can ruin this town.
2. UNCLE BILLY: Ruin?
3. MR. POTTER: Of course! It isn't fair to the little people to encourage them to live beyond their means! Like this... Ernie Bishop..., the taxi driver! I happen to know he was turned down for a home loan by the bank, but here...
4. GEORGE: Now, wait a minute, Mr. Potter. I handled Ernie Bishop's loan. You've got the papers in front of you--his income, insurance, his collateral. And I can personally vouch for his character.
5. MR. POTTER: Ah! A friend of yours, George? Humph! (To Board) You see, gentlemen? If you shoot pool with an employee here, you can borrow money. And what's that getting us?: A discontented, lazy rabble, instead of a thrifty working class. All because starry-eyed dreamers like Peter Bailey stirred them up and put impossible ideas into their heads. Now... who'll second my motion to dissolve?
6. BOARD MEMBERS: (Ad lib arguing)
They are hushed by GEORGE, taking control.
7. GEORGE: Hold on, Mr. Potter!
8. MR. POTTER: Oh, I meant no disrespect, George, but your father...
9. GEORGE: (Cuts him off) Now, wait a minute! Why my father ever started this penny-ante Building and Loan, I'll never know. But just remember this, Mr. Potter! That... "rabble"... you're talking about... Well, they do most of the working and paying... and living and dying in this community.
10. MR. POTTER: So..?

1. GEORGE: Well, is it too much to have them work and pay and live and die in a couple of decent rooms with 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!

The BOARD MEMBERS gasp at George's frankness.

2. GEORGE: In my book--Mr. Potter--my father died a richer man than you'll ever be!
3. MR. POTTER: I'm not interested in your "book," George. I'm talking about the Building and Loan.
4. GEORGE: No! You're talking about something you can't get your greedy hands on! And it's galling you--that's what you're talking about! ... (catching himself) Well, I've-I've said too much. I have to leave.
5. UNCLE BILLY: That's okay, George. C'mon.
6. MR. POTTER: That's quite enough, actually.
7. GEORGE: I apologize, gentlemen. Well, you're the Board. You can do what you want. But let me just say that this town needs this measly one-horse institution, if only to have some place where people can borrow a few dollars without crawling to Mr. Potter! (To Billy) Come on, Uncle Billy! Let's get out of here.
8. BOARD MEMBERS: (Ad lib arguing)

GEORGE AND UNCLE BILLY EXIT into the main Building and Loan office/lobby. As the door closes, the arguing is suddenly cut-off. The Board members "freeze" in mid argue.

9. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN TO 1/2 IN BOARD ROOM.
FADE UP TO FULL IN BUILDING AND LOAN OFFICE.

Scene 9

INT. LOAN OFFICE - IMMEDIATELY

(TILLY, EUSTACE, UNCLE BILLY, GEORGE, DR. CAMPBELL)

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT is now dressed as the Building and Loan's main office and lobby. It connects to the Board Room via the functional door at CENTER STAGE. Fanning out from that door are some desks and chairs, a candlestick phone, a counter—with the birdcage and Jimmy, the bird—and the lobby. Jimmy, the bird is a puppet or dummy—with a “talking” beak. A hidden actor can control the bird and speak for him. A large clock on the wall shows 10:10. The public's entryway is a functional door, OFF-LEFT.

AT RISE:

No customers are here now, but the office staff, TILLY and EUSTACE were listening with their ears to the Board Room door. As GEORGE and UNCLE BILLY enter, the eavesdroppers scatter back from the door, but are eager to find out what the commotion is about.

1. TILLY: (Steps up) So, what happened, George?
2. EUSTACE: (Entering) Yeah, all Tilly and I heard was a lot of yelling!
3. UNCLE BILLY: You won't believe it, Eustace! Boy, oh, boy! You should've heard George!
4. GEORGE: (Skeptical) Oh yeah...? Right now, they're voting us out of business!
5. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawks) Aawck! “Out of business!” “Out of business!”
6. TILLY: Shut up, Jimmy.
7. UNCLE BILLY: Well, after twenty-five years, easy come, easy go! Of course, I don't know what's going to happen to us now...
8. TILLY: ...and your mother, poor thing...
9. EUSTACE: ...and no job for Harry...
10. UNCLE BILLY: ...but I don't care, George, because it was worth it! It was worth it to see you shut Potter's big mouth! (Chortles) Ha-ha-ha!
11. TILLY: Yeah, who cares? I can get another job. I'm only fifty-one.
12. EUSTACE: (Correcting her) Fifty-six.

1. UNCLE BILLY: Will you get out of here, George? You already missed your boat trip to Europe. Do you want to miss college too? Ernie's waiting down...

Suddenly DR. CAMPBELL ENTERS via the Board Room door. As he opens the door, the BOARD MEMBERS un-freeze and argue at full volume, but when he shuts the door they are silenced—and frozen again.

Lights on the Board Room may be quickly faded up and down to further this quick transition.

2. DR. CAMPBELL: George! George! They just voted Potter down!
3. UNCLE BILLY: Whoopee! We're still in business! We're still in business!
4. EUSTACE: What a relief!
5. TILLY: There goes my new career!
6. DR. CAMPBELL: But there's one condition, George. They've appointed you to take your father's place.
7. GEORGE: Appoint me?! No! Uncle Billy's your man!
8. DR. CAMPBELL: Sure! You can keep him on--you can hire anyone you like.
9. GEORGE: No! Wait, Dr. Campbell. Get this straight! Don't you people realize? I've got plans! I'm leaving! Leaving for college... Right now!
10. DR. CAMPBELL: George, you've got to take it! They'll vote with Potter otherwise. They said so! Without you here, Potter would be able to persuade them to dissolve the whole...
11. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON BOTH ROOMS.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.
12. MUSIC: [MUS-10] (BRIDGE) "OH WELL" SEGUES TO "HEAVENLY"--
FADES UNDER.

Scene 10

EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(CLARENCE, SUPERINTENDENT)

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

1. CLARENCE: [REVERB] (Sighs) Wait, Boss, don't tell me... George Bailey didn't make it to college?
2. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] No, he didn't, Clarence. George gave his college money to his brother, Harry. Harry went instead.
3. CLARENCE: But what about that girl? The cute one stuck in the hydrangea bush? You know... Mary?
4. SUPERINTENDENT: Oh, George saw her now and again, but Mary also went away to college. And George worked four more years at the Building and Loan, waiting for Harry to finish school, come back and take over. George still hoped to see the world, though. He planned to work in the oil fields of Venezuela... except... when Harry came back, he wasn't alone. There was a girl with him--his wife...
5. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON BAILEY KITCHEN.
6. MUSIC: FADE "HEAVENLY" UNDER...

Scene 11

INT. BAILEY DINING ROOM - NIGHT (JUNE 1932)
(MA BAILEY, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT is again dressed as the Bailey dining room. A laundry basket full of air-dried laundry sits on the table.

AT RISE:

MA BAILEY is folding laundry as GEORGE ENTERS from the back door (UPSTAGE.)

1. MA BAILEY: George? Is that you, Dear?
2. GEORGE: (Wistful) Oh... Yes, Mother. I just thought I'd... get some air.
3. MA BAILEY: So, how do you like your new sister-in-law?
4. GEORGE: Ruth? Oh, she's swell. Harry's got all the luck.
5. MA BAILEY: She'll keep him on his toes.
6. GEORGE: Well... (Sighs) Keep him out of Bedford Falls, anyway.
7. MA BAILEY: Now, now! Ruth's father has a good job for Harry--up in Buffalo.
8. GEORGE: Yeah... Buffalo... (Sighs) And that means...
9. MA BAILEY: Oh... (Realizes) Then you can't...
10. GEORGE: Yep... Again.
11. MA BAILEY: (Pause) I'm sorry, George...
12. GEORGE: (Sighs) Yeah...
13. MA BAILEY: (Brightening) Well... Did you know... Mary Hatch is back from college too?
14. GEORGE: (Reluctant) Hmm? Oh... yeah. Yeah.
15. MA BAILEY: She's been back three whole days.
16. GEORGE: (Shrugs) Mmmmm.
17. MA BAILEY: Nice girl, that Mary.
18. GEORGE: (Shrugs) Mmmmm. I suppose...
19. MA BAILEY: (Impatient) Oh! Stop this moping, George Bailey! It's not like you.
20. GEORGE: Well... What do you want me to do, Mother?
21. MA BAILEY: Give me one reason why you shouldn't go see Mary!
22. GEORGE: Well... how about Sam Wainwright--for one!

1. MA BAILEY: (Scoffs) Sam Wainwright? Hee-Haw?
2. GEORGE: Sam's crazy about Mary.
3. MA BAILEY: Well, she's not crazy about him!
4. GEORGE: Not? (Sarcastic) Now, how do you know that? Was it in the newspaper? Did I miss it?
5. MA BAILEY: Mary's got her eye on you, George! She lights up like a firefly whenever she's around you.
6. GEORGE: Firefly?
7. MA BAILEY: You don't want her to be an old maid, do you? Plus... Sam Wainwright is in New York.
8. GEORGE: Oh, is he, now? So "all's fair in love and war?" Is that it?
9. MA BAILEY: Don't be difficult! The right girl can help you find the answers, George.
10. GEORGE: Okay. Okay, Mother. Trying to get rid of me, eh? (Mock Lothario) Well, I think I'll go find a girl and do some passionate necking! (Growls)
11. MA BAILEY: (Shocked) Oh! George!
GEORGE puts on his hat as he heads for the back door—UPSTAGE.
12. GEORGE: (Exiting) Goodnight, Mrs. Bailey. By the way, do you need any books from the library?
13. MA BAILEY: Library?!
GEORGE EXITS, closing the door.
14. MA BAILEY: (Calling after him) George! George, you go and see Mary! Do you hear?...
15. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON DOWNTOWN BEDFORD FALLS.
16. MUSIC: [MUS-11] (BRIDGE) "DOWNTOWN BEDFORD FALLS"--FADE UNDER.

Scene 12**EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER - JUNE 1932)
(ERNIE, GEORGE, VIOLET, LASCIVIOUS MALE BYSTANDERS)****SETTING:**

The apron *DOWNSTAGE* will serve as a downtown sidewalk. This can be set with street signs, street lights, fireplugs, shrub planters, etc. A flat can depict a city block with a bank (*STAGE RIGHT*), shops, a theater, a tavern, etc. Pedestrians walk by occasionally. Ernie's taxi-cab can be a rolled flat or carried—propelled by Ernie.

AT RISE:

GEORGE is walking along, amongst passers-by. *VIOLET* and several *FELLAS* are chatting *UPSTAGE CENTER*—in the dark. *ERNIE*, in his taxi, pulls up alongside George.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-06] DOWNTOWN BEDFORD FALLS (TRAFFIC)
--CONTINUE UNDER.
2. ERNIE: Hiya, George! Need a lift?
3. GEORGE: Oh, no, Ernie. I wouldn't want to rob you of a fare.
4. ERNIE: You wouldn't be robbing me of any fares, George. The taxi business is on the skids.
5. GEORGE: Well then, it's just like the Building and Loan business. Wanna swap?
6. ERNIE: Actually, George. I need to talk to you. I... (Sighs) I'm gonna have to turn the deed back to you.
7. GEORGE: Deed? The deed to your house? You've only been there two years, Ernie.
8. ERNIE: Yeah, but with business being so bad, I can't make the payments right now. Me and the missus will just have to move back in with her folks.
9. GEORGE: Oh, Ernie... No, no! I-I'll tell you what. Uh.... Can you just pay the interest?

1. ERNIE: The interest? Well, sure! I could do that, but...
2. GEORGE: Okay, So keep the house. Forget the principal--for a while. You're just hitting a rough patch. That's all.
3. ERNIE: Gosh, George! I-I don't know how to thank you. This means so...
4. VOICE: (Off-stage left) Taxi!
5. GEORGE: Hear that? You're back in business, Ernie!
6. ERNIE: I am? I am! (Calls out) Coming right up!
ERNIE'S TAXI pulls away—and exits STAGE LEFT.
7. GEORGE: (Calls after Ernie) Atta-boy, Ernie!
GEORGE walks a few steps to DOWNSTAGE CENTER. VIOLET and several FELLAS walk DOWNSTAGE. GEORGE walks right by them, but VIOLET notices him.
8. FELLAS: (Ad lib: "C'mon, Violet!" "How about it?" etc.)
9. VIOLET: (To George) Hey! ...Going somewhere, Georgie-Porgie?
10. GEORGE: Oh, hello, Violet. Hi, fellas. (Startled) Gosh! You look great, Vi!
11. VIOLET: In this old thing? Oh, I only wear this when I don't care how I look... Right, guys?
12. FELLAS: (Ad lib: Hoots of agreement.)
13. VIOLET: (To men) Excuse me, fellas. I think I got a date.
VIOLET steps up, leaving the FELLAS UPSTAGE, to chat—and listen—quietly.
14. VIOLET: (To George) So, Georgie, what's goin' on? Where are you headin'?
15. GEORGE: Oh, I was just going down to the library, I suppose.
16. VIOLET: C'mon, Georgie! Don't you ever get tired of just readin' about stuff?
17. GEORGE: (Gasp) Well... Come to think of it... Yes! Okay... Um... What are doing tonight, Vi?

1. VIOLET: Me? Not a thing...
2. GEORGE: Okay. Well, if you're game, Vi, we can make a night of it! I've got to talk to somebody. What d'ya say?
3. VIOLET: Sure, George. It's about time! What'll we do?
4. GEORGE: What'll we do? Well... we'll go out... to the fields... Yeah. Take off our shoes, and walk through the grass...
5. VIOLET: The fields...?
6. GEORGE: (Possessed) Then we can go up to the Falls... You've got to see them in the moonlight! And there's a green pool up there, Vi. We can swim in it!
7. VIOLET: Swim....?
8. GEORGE: Sure...! And then we can.... climb Mount Bedford. And smell the pines. And watch the sunrise on the peaks! Come with me! We'll stay up there the whole night and be the talk of the town... and there'll be a terrific scandal! How about it, Vi?
9. FELLAS: (Ad lib: Chuckles—under)
10. VIOLET: George Bailey... Have you lost your mind? (Louder) "Walk through the grass?" In my bare feet?
11. FELLAS: (Ad lib: Laughter--continue under)
12. VIOLET: It must be ten miles to the falls! And this is the only thing I have to wear. You expect me to go swimming in this?
13. GEORGE: (Embarrassed) Shhhhhhh, Violet. Shhhhh. Okay. Okay.
14. VIOLET: What's with you, George? For a guy who wanted to sail around the world, you don't seem to have been around the block!
15. GEORGE: (Exiting) Fine! Fine! Just forget the whole thing! Forget it...
16. FELLAS: (Ad lib: Laughter)

GEORGE stalks angrily OFF LEFT. VIOLET and the FELLAS EXIT—arm in arm--RIGHT.

1. SFX TRACKS: FADE DOWNTOWN BEDFORD FALLS
(TRAFFIC)—UNDER
2. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON DOWNTOWN STREET.
FADE UP ON MARY'S FRONT WALK.
3. MUSIC: [MUS-12] (BRIDGE) "FROM VIOLET TO MARY"--FADE UNDER...

Scene 13

EXT. MARY'S FRONT WALK - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER - JUNE 1932)
(MARY, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The room STAGE RIGHT is dressed as Mary's porch, with a rail or gate.

The functional door at CENTER STAGE leads into the room STAGE LEFT, which is dressed as Mary's parlor.

AT RISE:

GEORGE ENTERS from STAGE LEFT, pacing outside Mary's house. MARY stands UPSTAGE on the porch, watching him.

4. SFX TRACK: [FX-07] CRICKETS #2--UNDER.
5. MARY: George? What are you doing out there?
6. GEORGE: Nothing. Hmmm? Oh! Is that you, Mary?
7. MARY: I think so... Well...?
8. GEORGE: Well what...? Oh! Me? I was just... passing by.
9. MARY: Yes, several times! I wondered if you were picketing! ...Or haunting me...
10. GEORGE: (Perturbed) Now, why would I be...
11. MARY: ...but your mother phoned, saying you were coming over.
12. GEORGE: My... mother...? Phoned...? The nerve of... Well... I just happened to be passing by, that's all! I didn't have any firm kinda...

1. MARY: So? Are you coming in--or aren't you?
2. GEORGE: Well.... all right. If you insist! I'll come in... (Steps up) for a minute. (Difficult) But I didn't tell anybody I was coming here.
3. MARY: Right! You're your own man.
4. GEORGE: Um... So... So, when did you get back?
5. MARY: Tuesday.
6. GEORGE: Ah... Where'd you get that dress?
7. MARY: New York. Do you like it?
8. GEORGE: Well... (Evasive) It's all right, I guess. I thought you'd take up in New York... like Sam and the rest.
9. MARY: Oh, I worked there on a few vacations, but I don't know... I got... homesick.
10. GEORGE: (Ornery) Homesick? You got homesick... for Bedford Falls?
11. MARY: Well, it is home, after all. (Sighs) No point just standing here on the porch. Come on in.

GEORGE and MARY ENTER the house and parlor.

12. SFX TRACK: CUT CRICKETS--WHEN DOOR CLOSSES.

Scene 14

***INT. MARY'S PARLOR - IMMEDIATELY
(MARY, GEORGE, MRS. HATCH, SAM)***

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT is dressed as Mary's parlor, with a small couch, a few chairs, a Victrola/phonograph, a candlestick or model 202-style telephone. A cross-stitch pillow or frame, depicting a cowboy George lassoing a moon sits conspicuously on the couch.

Mrs. Hatch is "upstairs"—all her lines are delivered from off-stage. When Sam calls on the phone, his voice is heard through a speaker—simulating a telephone voice. (See Sound Design section in the appendix for ways to produce this telephone voice effect.)

AT RISE:

MARY leads the way into the parlor. As GEORGE ENTERS, he puts his hat down on a chair.

1. GEORGE: I don't understand this. I didn't tell anybody I was coming over here.
2. MARY: So you're leaving?
3. GEORGE: No, no. I wouldn't want to be rude. I'll stay a while. Since I'm here...
4. MARY: So... it's nice about your brother and his new wife, isn't it?
5. GEORGE: Yeah, yeah... Ruth. It's okay.
6. MARY: What's the matter? You don't like her?
6. GEORGE: (Testy) Well, of course I do. Ruth's a peach!
7. MARY: Oh...! It's just marriage in general you're down on, huh?
8. GEORGE: No, no. Marriage is all right... for some people.... I mean... it's fine for Harry... for Sam Wainwright... And you.
9. MARY: For Sam...?
10. MRS. HATCH: (Off-stage) Mary?! Who's down there?
11. MARY: (Calls out) It's George Bailey, Mother!
12. MRS. HATCH: George Bailey?! (Gasps) What's he want?
13. MARY: (Calls out) I don't know! (To George) What do you want, George?
14. GEORGE: Me? Nothing! (Calls out) Not a thing! I was just passing by!
15. MARY: (Whispers) Coward! (Calls out) He's making violent love to me, Mother!
16. MRS. HATCH: He is?! You tell him to go right back home! Sam Wainwright said he'd call tonight--from New York.
17. MARY: (Calls out) I guess so, Mother. (To George) So, George. How about a little music here?

MARY turns on the phonograph.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-08] (SOURCE) "BUFFALO GAL'S" INST'L 78 RPM--UNDER.

2. GEORGE: You know, your mother shouldn't... (Notices tune). Oh... that. Now, I didn't over come here just to...

3. MARY: (Impatient) Well, what did you come here for?

4. GEORGE: (Annoyed) Well, I don't know! You're supposed to be the girl with all the answers! How about you tell me why!

5. MARY: (Matching him) Oh...! Why don't you go home!

6. SFX TRACK: [FX-09] PHONE RINGS--(LIVE OR SFX TRACK)
--CONTINUE UNTIL MARY ANSWERS, BELOW

7. GEORGE: Okay! Maybe I will go home.

8. MRS. HATCH: Mary! The telephone!

9. GEORGE: (Angry) Sheesh! I still don't know why I even came here!

10. MRS. HATCH: Mary!

11. GEORGE: (Nasty) Good night!

GEORGE looks for his hat.

12. MARY: (Angry) Good night!

13. MRS. HATCH: Mary! The phone!

14. GEORGE: Y'know, with all this shouting, you'd think that maybe somebody could...

15. MRS. HATCH: Mary! It's Sam! Answer it!

16. MARY: (To George) You'd think what, George?

17. MRS. HATCH: Mary! Get the phone!

18. MARY: (Calls out) All right, already! I'll get it, Mother! (Angry) Oooh! (To George) George! On your way out, could you turn off the phonograph?

19. GEORGE: (Sarcastically) Sure! I'd be glad to!

GEORGE angrily pulls the phonograph needle across the record.

1. SFX: PHONOGRAPH NEEDLE SCRATCHES ACROSS RECORD--SAVAGELY.

2. SFX TRACK: ABRUPT CUT-OFF OF "BUFFALO GAL'S"

3. GEORGE: (Seething) Dog-gone crazy song! (Exiting) Let me out of here...

GEORGE stalks out the front door. MARY picks up ringing phone now.

4. MARY: Hello... Hatch residence.... Oh... Sam!

NOTE: Sam delivers his lines live—off-stage—into a microphone, to simulate the telephone call. See the Sound Design section of the appendix for techniques to render this effect. At one point, Mrs. Hatch will deliver a line using the same effect. In the script, this telephone effect is indicated by the use of [FILTERED] preceding the line.

5. SAM: [FILTERED] Hey, Mary! So good to hear your voice!

6. MARY: Is it?

7. GEORGE: (Stepping back in) Excuse me, Mary! Seems I forgot my hat!

GEORGE grabs his hat and heads out the door again.

8. MARY: (To Sam) Oh, Saaaam! How nice of you to call! All the way from New York! (to George--taunting) Hee-haw!

9. SAM: What, Mary? Oh, oh yeah... Hee-haw!

10. MARY: You know, Sam, an old friend of yours is here... George Bailey!

11. SAM: What? Old moss-back George? In person?

12. MARY: Yep! Old "moss-back" George.

13. SAM: Hee-haw! Well, put old George on! I wanna say hi!

14. MARY: Wait a minute, Sam. (Calls out) George?

15. MRS. HATCH: Mary! Sam doesn't want to talk to George!

16. MARY: (Calls out) He does too! He even asked for George.

1. GEORGE: (Stepping back in) What is it, Mary? Y'see, I'm in a hurry, I've got to get...
2. MARY: Wait! It's Sam Wainwright! He wants to talk to you.
3. GEORGE: Sam Wainwright...? Oh...
4. MARY: (To Sam) Sam? Here's George!
5. GEORGE: (To Sam on phone) Um... Hi, Sam. (Half-hearted) Hee-Haw!
6. SAM: Hee-Haw! Some pal you are! What are you doing there? Trying to steal my girl?
7. GEORGE: (Lashing out) Steal your girl? Hey...! Nobody's trying to steal any girl. (To Mary) Um... Mary, here's Sam again...
8. SAM: No! Wait a minute, George. Wait! I want to speak to both of you! Put Mary on the extension upstairs.
9. GEORGE: (To Mary) Um... He wants you to get on the extension upstairs.
10. MARY: I can't. Mother's on the extension.
11. MRS. HATCH: [FILTERED] (Gasp) I am not!
12. MARY: (To George) George, just put your head a little closer. We can both hear.
13. GEORGE: Both? (Sigh) Um... Okay. (They cozy up)
14. MARY: There! Alright. (To Sam) Sam? We're both on the line.
15. SAM: Good! Now... I have a plan that's going to make us all rich! George--remember one time in Martini's Tavern, you told me about making plastics out of uh... chili beans?
16. GEORGE: Chili beans?
17. SAM: Soybeans! I mean soybeans!
18. GEORGE: Oh, yeah, yeah... soybeans. Okay.

1. SAM: Well... my father's investing in it, George. We're going to open a factory--outside Rochester. What do you think of that?
2. GEORGE: Rochester...? A factory...? Wait, why don't you put it here, in Bedford Falls. The old tool machinery works closed down. You could get that building for a song! Plus, there's lots of labor here, too!
3. SAM: Now you're talking, George! But here's the point... Mary, you listen to this too. If you've got any money... put every dime into our stock.
4. GEORGE: Stock?
5. SAM: C'mon, George! We might even have a job for you! That is-- if you're not still married to that broken-down old Building and Loan. Here's your chance to get in on the ground floor!
6. MARY: (To George) Ground floor!? That's wonderful.
7. GEORGE: Um... We'll have to see, Sam.
8. SAM: (To Mary) Oh, Mary...? Are you still listening?
9. MARY: Yes, Sam. I'm here.
10. SAM: Tell George this is the chance of a lifetime, you hear? The chance of a lifetime!
11. MARY: (To George) He--he says... it's the chance of a lifetime...
12. GEORGE: Give me that phone!
13. MARY: (To Sam) Here's George again...
GEORGE slams down phone handset--angrily.
14. MARY: George!
15. GEORGE: (Intense) Now you listen to me, Mary! I don't want any plastics! Any job! Any "ground floors!" And I don't want to get married! Ever! To anyone! Do you understand me?

1. MUSIC: [MUS-13] (BED) "WRENCHING" ENTERS--UNDER.
2. MARY: (Sobs) Oh, George....
3. GEORGE: I want to do what I want to do! And--and you're not gonna trick me into any...! (Upset) Any....
4. MARY: (Upset) George...
5. GEORGE: Mary... Oh, Mary! (Whisper) I... (Sigh) I...
6. MARY: (Whisper) I know...
7. MUSIC: [MUS-14] (BRIDGE) "HEAVENLY"--FADE UNDER.
8. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON MARY'S PARLOR.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.

Scene 15

***EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(CLARENCE, SUPERINTENDENT)***

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

9. CLARENCE: [REVERB] So George and Mary got... what do they say... "hitched?"
10. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Ahem. Yes, Clarence. They were married that October.
11. CLARENCE: (Tearing up) I-I always cry at weddings.
12. SUPERINTENDENT: And the two headed off for their honeymoon in Ernie Bishop's taxicab...
13. MUSIC: [MUS-15] (BRIDGE) "WEDDING MARCH TAXI"--FADE UNDER.

Scene 16

INT. ERNIE'S CAB - SECONDS LATER (OCTOBER 1932) *(ERNIE, GEORGE, MARY)*

SETTING:

The apron of the stage again serves as the downtown Bedford Falls street. A flat can depict a city block with a bank (STAGE RIGHT), shops, a theater, a tavern, etc.

AT RISE:

Ernie's taxicab, now with George and Mary aboard, enters from behind the angels— STAGE LEFT and slowly works its way toward STAGE RIGHT.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-10] INTERIOR OF CAB DRIVING--UNDER

2. ERNIE: Here, ya go, newlyweds! Bert, the cop, sent this bottle of bubbly. But don't tell anyone. Prohibition's still on!

3. MARY: (Joking) "Mumm's" the word, Ernie!

4. ERNIE: (Laughs) So... Where are you two heading on this deluxe honeymoon?

GEORGE pulls out an envelope of cash.

5. GEORGE: See this fat wad of cash? (To Mary) Count it, Mary. (To Ernie) It's our kitty.

6. ERNIE: So....?

7. GEORGE: So.... We're shooting the works, Ernie! A week in New York! A week in Bermuda! It'll be the highest hotels... richest caviar... the hottest music... and... the prettiest wife!

8. ERNIE: (Laughs) Congratulations, George! You're finally getting out of Bedford Falls! Then what?

9. GEORGE: (To Mary) Gee... I don't know. Um... Then what, dear?

10. MARY: The moon! Who cares!?

11. GEORGE: That's right! Hey, you know what, Mrs. Bailey? I haven't kissed you nearly enough!

1. MARY: Well then, c'mere, you... (They kiss)
2. ERNIE: Slow down, lovebirds...! Hey! Any fond farewells, George? Here's Genesee Street...
3. GEORGE: So long, Bedford Falls! So long, old Building and Loan! So long, Uncle Billy! And Mr. Potter! And-and everyone else! We're sneaking out and we won't be coming back! ...Ever!

At STAGE RIGHT, an unruly crowd of panicking bank customers begins to grow.

Customers run in from STAGE LEFT to join the throng.

4. BANK CROWD: (Ad-libbed clamor and worry.)
5. ERNIE: (Pause) Hey... George! There's something going on here! Look at that crowd! Over there--in front of the bank! Looks like the door's locked!
6. GEORGE: What? What?... Pull over, Ernie.

ERNIE "pulls over" the taxi and stops.

7. SFX TRACK: [FX-11] CAB PULLS OVER.

8. MARY: What is it, George?
9. ERNIE: That's what you call a bank run!
10. MARY: A bank run?
11. ERNIE: Yeah! If you've got any money in the bank, you'd better pull it out in a hurry!
12. MARY: Oh, George! No! Let's not stop. Please!
(To Ernie) Ernie! Just go straight to the train station. (To George) George!

GEORGE gets out of the taxi.

13. GEORGE: Wait a minute, honey. I gotta see what this is... I'll be back in a second... (He heads into the crowd)
14. MARY: (Calls after him) No! No! George, please! George! Don't go!
(To Ernie) Ernie! Stop him!

1. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON STREET.
FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
 2. MUSIC: [MUS-16] “ACT 1 OUTRO”--UNDER AND...
 3. MUSIC: LET “ACT 1 OUTRO” FINISH.
- END OF ACT ONE --

NOTE: AN OPTIONAL INTERMISSION GOES HERE

ACT 2

Scene 1

EXT. HEAVEN - DAY
(CLARENCE, SUPERINTENDENT)

SETTING:

Again, "Heaven" is *DOWNSTAGE LEFT*.

The rooms *UPSTAGE* are dressed as the Bailey Building & Loan offices, with George's office in the room *STAGE RIGHT* and the main office and lobby in the room *STAGE LEFT*. The lobby clock is set at 1 p.m. George's office features a desk, a chair, a typewriter and other office items. Jimmy, the bird is here too—in his cage.

AT RISE:

Both rooms are dark, but a crowd of *BUILDING & LOAN SHAREHOLDERS* are "frozen" in the lobby. Tilly and Eustace are behind the counter.

In George's office, George and Uncle Billy are similarly "frozen" in time—awaiting their cue to continue the story. George, is about to shut the office door—but he's frozen.

In "Heaven," *THE SUPERINTENDENT* angel and *CLARENCE* are still reviewing George Bailey's case.

1. MUSIC: [MUS-17] "ACT 2 INTRO" – CROSSFADE INTO...
2. MUSIC: [MUS-18] "HEAVENLY—HOLD UNDER"
2. LIGHTS: FADE UP ON HEAVEN—AS "HEAVENLY" BEGINS PLAYING.
3. CLARENCE: [REVERB] Goodness, Boss! I've heard enough background. If George Bailey's contemplating suicide, I'd better head down to Earth right away... (Begins exiting.)
4. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Hold it, Clarence! We're not anywhere near the point where George Bailey is thinking of taking his life.
5. CLARENCE: What...? Why not?
6. SUPERINTENDENT: (Sighs) You'll never get your wings unless you can be patient! Now..., where were we...?

1. CLARENCE: Um... (Speedily) George and Mary were heading out of town on their honeymoon when they ran into a run. A bank run, I mean.
2. SUPERINTENDENT: Ah, yes... It was the financial panic of Nineteen-Thirty-Two... You see, bank troubles were very prevalent then...
The worried BUILDING & LOAN SHAREHOLDERS in the lobby begin to clamor.
3. LIGHTS: BEGIN FADING UP ON LOBBY.
4. CLARENCE: Whoa! What's going on, Boss?
5. SUPERINTENDENT: In the lobby of the Building and Loan, dozens of worried shareholders were clamoring for their savings.
6. LIGHTS: BEGIN FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON GEORGE'S OFFICE
7. SUPERINTENDENT: Meanwhile, Uncle Billy was in George's office...

Scene 2

INT. UNCLE BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY (OCTOBER 1932) (GEORGE, UNCLE BILLY, JIMMY THE BIRD, MR. POTTER)

GEORGE shuts the connecting door—cutting off...

9. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Crowd noises cease—abruptly—by the door.)
The B& L SHAREHOLDERS freeze into silence.
10. LIGHTS: FADE TO 1/2 IN LOBBY.
11. GEORGE: What is this, Uncle Billy? I saw a line of people outside the bank, but what's with the angry crowd in our lobby?
12. UNCLE BILLY: (Nervous) It's a panic, George. They want to withdraw their shares.
13. GEORGE: Ah! They want their money.
14. UNCLE BILLY: But we're in a pickle! The bank called in our loan this morning!

1. GEORGE: Our-our loan?
2. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawk) Aawck! "Uh oh!" Aawck!
3. UNCLE BILLY: Shut up, Jimmy!
4. GEORGE: Forget the bird! The bank called in our loan?
5. UNCLE BILLY: Well, they've got a run! They need cash, so they demanded we pay off our loan... immediately! I handed over all our cash. I had to!
6. GEORGE: You handed over all our cash? But that means...
7. UNCLE BILLY: The whole town's gone nuts, George! Now, we're in the same pickle as the bank! Who'd have thought you couldn't trust the American banking system of all...
8. SFX TRACK: [FX-12] PHONE RINGS (1-1/2 X) [LIVE OR SFX TRACK]

UNCLE BILLY answers the phone.

Mr. Potter delivers his lines live—off-stage—into a microphone, to simulate the telephone call. (See the Sound Design section of the appendix for techniques to render this effect.)

9. UNCLE BILLY: Hello, this is Billy....
10. MR. POTTER: [FILTERED] This is Henry Potter. Let me speak to George.
11. UNCLE BILLY: (To George) George, it's Henry Potter...
12. GEORGE: For me? (Picking up the phone) Uh, George Bailey here...
13. MR. POTTER: George, are you okay? Have you called the police to quell that unruly crowd in your lobby?
14. GEORGE: The police...? Now, why would we need...
15. MR. POTTER: I just want you to know that in this financial crisis, I'm here to help.
16. GEORGE: Help?
17. MR. POTTER: Yes! I've just guaranteed sufficient funds to the bank. They will close down for a week's "bank holiday," then re-open.

1. GEORGE: (Whispers to Uncle Billy) Potter just took over the bank. (To Potter) I see. And they'll re-open under "new" management, of course.
2. MR. POTTER: Of course! Now... this may cost me a fortune, but I'm willing to help out your shareholders too! If they need cash, they can sell their shares to me. I'm paying fifty cents on the dollar!
3. GEORGE: Oh no they won't! There'll be no "fire sale" here. We don't need your "bailout!"
4. MR. POTTER: Ha! You don't have any cash and you know it! That means bankruptcy! And your "working" people will lose everything. Am I wrong?
5. GEORGE: Um... Um....
6. MR. POTTER: I know your charter, George! If you close your doors before six p.m.--you'll never re-open.
7. GEORGE: (Peeved) You don't miss a trick, do you, Potter! Well, here's one you will!

GEORGE slams down the phone handset--angrily.

8. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawk) Aawck!
9. GEORGE: Shut up, Jimmy!
10. UNCLE BILLY: Well, George, I guess you told him!
11. GEORGE: Yeah..., but he's right! Our charter requires we stay open until six p.m. If we don't, the state can take our license away!
12. UNCLE BILLY: Stay open until six? Without any money? It'll take a miracle!
13. GEORGE: Well, C'mon. Let's see about that crowd out there...

GEORGE walks to the connecting door and opens it. As he does, the B & L SHAREHOLDERS come to life, with a loud clamoring.

1. LIGHTS: FADE UP ON LOBBY.

Scene 3

INT. MAIN LOAN OFFICE - SECONDS LATER (OCTOBER 1932)

(GEORGE, CHARLIE, UNCLE BILLY, EDDY, RANDY,

MRS. DAVIS, MRS. THOMPSON, MARY, OTHERS)

2. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Clamoring crowd ad lib “George!,” “Money” etc. --with frequent outbursts in reply to upcoming dialogue.)
3. GEORGE: Okay. Okay. Hold on, now! Please! Now, now, please, everybody! Don't panic! I know you want your money.
4. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Outburst--“Yeah” “What are we gonna do?”)
5. GEORGE: Look! I just talked with Mr. Potter on the phone! He says the bank will re-open next week. Next week.
7. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Outburst--“Next week?” “My money's here!”)
8. CHARLIE: We want our money, George? Where's our money?
8. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Outburst--“Yeah!” “Where is it?”--Subsides under.)
9. GEORGE: Oh, come on! C'mon, everybody! Wait! Just a minute, now! Listen here! C'mon! You've got it all wrong. Your money isn't here!
10. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Crowd ad-libs “What?” “What do you mean not here?”)
11. GEORGE: Just a minute! Let me explain! Your money's not here! It's not in the safe! No! The money you've invested in this Building and Loan was put into people's houses! It's... in Ernie's house! And the Grimaldi's house! And your house... And a hundred other houses!
12. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-libs: “What?” “Their houses!?”)
13. UNCLE BILLY: That's how the Building and Loan works! If you all want your money now, what do you want us to do? Foreclose on them? Throw them out of their homes?

MARY ENTERS, discreetly, and begins working her way—UPSTAGE--towards the counter.

1. B& L Shareholders: (Ad-libs: Outburst--Arguing.)
2. CHARLIE: (Topping them.) I don't care! I got two hundred and forty-two dollars in shares here. Two hundred and forty-two dollars won't break you! Close my account! I want my money... now!
3. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Outburst—"Yeah" "Mine too"--Subside under.)
4. GEORGE: Okay... Okay! Sign this form and you'll get your money in sixty days.
5. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Outburst—"Sixty days?")
6. CHARLIE: What do you mean "sixty days?!"
7. GEORGE: Well... that's what you all agreed to when you bought your shares.
8. RANDY: (From back of crowd) Ha! I got my money!
9. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: "Randy" "Where?" "How?")
10. RANDY: (Steps up) Old Man Potter will pay you fifty cents on the dollar for your shares!
11. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Outburst—"Yeah?" "Really?" --Subsides Under.)
12. MRS. THOMPSON: Now what do you say, George?
13. GEORGE: Well, now, we have to stick to the agreement.
14. CHARLIE: Oh yeah...? (To crowd) C'mon, everybody! Let's take our shares to Potter! Half is better than nothing!
15. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Outburst—"Yeah!" "Let's go!")

The crowd turns away from the George and heads for the door. GEORGE scrambles in front of them and barricades the door.

16. GEORGE: Wait! C'mon! Please! Please, folks! Don't do this! (Yells)
Stop!

1. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Crowd hushes a bit)
2. GEORGE: Listen! If Potter gets a hold of the Building and Loan, there won't be a decent house built in this town again! Can't you see? He's just taken over the bank. He's already got the bus line, the department store... And now he's after us! You know why? We're cutting into his business! He wants to keep you living in his shacks and paying the rent he decides.
3. EDDY: But George...
4. GEORGE: Eddy! Last year, things were tough for you. You couldn't always pay, right? Do you think Potter would have let you keep your house?
5. EDDY: Well...
6. GEORGE: (To all) Listen, everybody! Potter is buying because you're panicking and he's not! To him, you're just a bunch of... bargains! Now, we can get through this, but only if we stick together! We've got to believe in one other! Have faith!
7. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Crowd mulls it over.)
8. CHARLIE: That's a lot of fine talk, George, but I've got doctor bills to pay!
9. MRS. DAVIS: My husband got laid off. We need our money.
10. EDDY: Yeah! What do we live on until the bank re-opens?
11. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Outburst—"Right!" "How?" --Subsides under.)
12. MRS. THOMPSON: You can't feed your kids on "faith!"
13. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: "That's right" "What about that, George?!" "Yeah!" -Clamor under.)
14. MARY: (Steps up) George! George, darling!
15. GEORGE: (Startled) Hey! Mary!

1. MARY: How much do they need? (Waving the money envelope in the air.) We've still got some money!

GEORGE begins working his way to the counter. There, MARY gives GEORGE the envelope of honeymoon money.

2. GEORGE: We do...? (Gasps) Oh! Yes! We do!

3. MARY: The honeymoon money!

GEORGE is now behind the counter, UNCLE BILLY beside him.

4. GEORGE: (To all) Wait, folks! I've got two-thousand dollars here! My own money! (Hands envelope to Uncle Billy)

5. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Calms a bit--but still raucous)

6. UNCLE BILLY: (To George) Well..., this could last us until the bank re-opens...

7. GEORGE: I hope so, Uncle Billy. Sure would have made a nice honeymoon...

8. MARY: ...bought some furniture, too.

9. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Right over them, the crowd urgently clamors. Ad-lib: "I want mine!" "Give me my money!")

10. GEORGE: (Struggling) Okay! So we've got some cash! All right, Charlie! How much do you need?

11. CHARLIE: Two hundred and forty-two dollars!

11. GEORGE: (Pleading) C'mon, Charlie! How about just enough to tide you over!

12. CHARLIE: I want my two hundred and forty-two dollars!

13. GEORGE: Okay, okay. (To Billy) Uncle Billy, give Charlie, here, two hundred and forty-two dollars.

UNCLE BILLY counts out \$242, gives it to Charlie and writes the sum in a ledger book.

14. CHARLIE: That closes my account then...

15. GEORGE: No, that doesn't close your account.

1. UNCLE BILLY: It's just a loan, Charlie! Just a loan...

NOTE: As each SHAREHOLDER gets their money, they depart out the front—STAGE-LEFT door.

2. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Clamors for money—under)

3. GEORGE: Okay! All right... Eddy, now...

4. EDDY: Well, I got three-hundred dollars in here.

5. GEORGE: Oh, but c'mon, Eddy! How much do you need?

6. EDDY: Um... well.... uh... Twenty dollars, then.

UNCLE BILLY counts out \$20, gives it to Eddy and writes the sum in a ledger book.

7. GEORGE: Thank you, Eddy! Thank you! Okay... Mrs. Davis, how about you?

8. MRS. DAVIS: But this is your own money, George.

9. GEORGE: That's okay. That's okay. What do you need?

10. MRS. DAVIS: Well... would seven-teen dollars and forty cents be too much?

11. GEORGE: Seventeen dollars and forty cents? Bless you, dear! (He kisses her on the forehead) Pay it back when you can, now. When you can.

UNCLE BILLY counts out \$17.40, gives it to Mrs. Davis and writes the sum in a ledger book.

12. GEORGE: (To all) Okay! Okay! Who's next? Who's next, now? Let's try to spread it out. Spread it out... (Ad lib)

13. MUSIC: [MUS-19] (BRIDGE) "TIME PASSING"--FADES UNDER.

14. LIGHTS: BEGIN FADE DOWN ON LOBBY AND OFFICE.

Various SHAREHOLDERS get their money and exit—MARY among them.

15. B& L SHAREHOLDERS: (Ad-lib: Clamors then fades under to silence.)

16. LIGHTS: SPECIAL FOCUSED ON LOBBY CLOCK.
FADE WASH TO BLACK ON LOBBY AND OFFICE

Scene 4

INT. MAIN LOAN OFFICE - FIVE HOURS LATER (OCTOBER 1932) (GEORGE, UNCLE BILLY, EUSTACE, TILLY, MARY)

SETTING:

The lobby is a bit messier than it was. The clock is set to just seconds before 6 p.m. Jimmy the bird—in his cage—is now on the counter.

AT RISE:

The crowd is gone. Only George, Uncle Billy, Eustace, Tilly and Jimmy, the bird remain. Eustace stands by the front door—STAGE LEFT—ready to lock it.

1. **LIGHTS:** FADE UP ON LOBBY.
2. **UNCLE BILLY:** Look at the clock, George! Look!
3. **GEORGE:** I'm looking, Uncle Billy. I'm looking. (Counts) Five seconds... four seconds...
4. **ALL:** Three... two... one...
5. **UNCLE BILLY:** Six o'clock! Whew! We made it!
6. **GEORGE:** Lock the door, Eustace! Lock that door!
7. **EUSTACE:** Right, George!

EUSTACE locks the lobby door. Everybody celebrates!

8. **ALL:** (Cheer) Yay!
9. **SFX TRACK: [FX-13]** PHONE RINGS (1-1/4X) [LIVE OR SFX TRACK]
—DURING THE “YAY”.

TILLY answers the phone quietly and chats a bit.

10. **GEORGE:** Ha! Still in business! Even if we only got two bucks left!
11. **EUSTACE:** Maybe they'll breed in the safe!
12. **UNCLE BILLY:** Yeah! Like bunnies!
13. **GEORGE:** They'd better!
14. **TILLY:** George! Telephone!

1. GEORGE: Okay, Tilly! Oh, by the way... call my wife, will you? I forgot all about...

2. TILLY: Mrs. Bailey's on the line...

PRODUCTION NOTE:

For Mary's side of the phone conversation below, she is off-stage speaking into a microphone. (See the Sound Design section in the appendix for information on telephone vocal effects.) Mary will babble in response to George's dialogue. She should vocalize while flicking her finger across her lips--as if talking underwater. Even though the content of her lines is listed, she is NOT to be intelligible through words--only through inflection. She "converses" with George, but only via babble. He--in turn--echoes her inflections of "Our home?" "I love you" etc.

3. GEORGE: (Distracted) No! I don't want Mrs. Bailey! I want Mrs. Bailey! Wait! Mrs... Bail..? Oh! Right! That is my wife! Give me the phone, already, will you? (To Mary) Hello... is this Mrs. Bailey?

4. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] "Yes, this is Mrs. Bailey!"

5. GEORGE: Well, Mary! We survived...! I'm sorry, I...

6. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] "Now that you're done saving things, come home!"

7. GEORGE: I... Huh...?

8. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] "Come home."

9. GEORGE: Come home? Well, what home?....

10. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] "Our home!"

11. GEORGE: What?

12. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] "Our home, George! At three-twenty Sycamore."

13. GEORGE: Three-twenty Sycamore? Huh? Whose home is that?

14. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] "Our home!"

15. GEORGE: ...Huh?

1. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] “Our home, sap-head!”
2. GEORGE: ...But, Mary, how can we have a....?
3. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] “Right now!”
4. GEORGE: Right now. OK.... sure, all right, sure....
5. MARY: [FILTERED BABBLING] “I love you!”
6. GEORGE: I love you too, honey. I’m coming home.
7. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON LOBBY AND CLOCK.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.
8. MUSIC: [MUS-20] (BRIDGE) “BRIDE” TO “HEAVENLY”--FADES UNDER.

Scene 5

EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE)

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

9. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Clarence? Do you know where three-twenty Sycamore was?
10. CLARENCE: [REVERB] His mother-in-law's house?
11. SUPERINTENDENT: No! It was the old Granville house--where George and Mary threw rocks and made wishes! You see, her wish was to marry George and live in the Granville house. And that's where they honeymooned. That's where they set up house. And that's where they were still living, two years later... when Mr. Potter asked George to drop by his office...
12. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON POTTER'S OFFICE.

Scene 6

INT. POTTER'S PRIVATE OFFICE – NIGHT (JUNE 1934)

(MR. POTTER, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The apron STAGE RIGHT is dressed as Mr. Potter's office, with a desk, an impressive desk set, a fancy cigar box, a bust of Napoleon, and an imposing mantel clock. A chair opposite the desk is deliberately low, so Potter's visitors are at a disadvantage.

AT RISE:

MR. POTTER sits at his desk—in his wheelchair. GEORGE sits opposite him, in the low chair. (Some cigar action between the two would be nice, but it is optional.)

1. MR. POTTER: Now, George, I suppose you're wondering why you're here.
2. GEORGE: I have no idea, Mr. Potter, but I'm sure you do.
3. MR. POTTER: That's what I admire about you, George. You're like me--
you get right to the point. OK... Well, George... (Sighs) I'm
giving up.
4. GEORGE: What? "Giving up?"
5. MR. POTTER: Yes. As you know, I run nearly everything in this town--
everything except the Bailey Building and Loan, of course.
I've tried to get control of it for years, but you've outwitted
me, evaded me, defeated me. Am I right?
6. GEORGE: (Proud) Well... actually, yes.
7. MR. POTTER: That's because you're a smart man, George. Two years ago--
during the bank panic--you and I were the only ones who
kept our heads. You saved the Building and Loan... and I...
saved everything else.
8. GEORGE: Most would say you stole everything else.
9. MR. POTTER: Envious people might say that, George--the suckers might
stay that. But we both know that I was just being a smart
businessman. And that's what I'm being right now...

1. GEORGE: So you're-you're giving up?
2. MR. POTTER: Well... "if you can't beat'em... join'em!"
3. GEORGE: (Alarmed) What...? If you're suggesting we... (Starts getting up from his chair.)
4. MR. POTTER: Wait, George. Don't get up. Don't leave. Take it easy, now. I've told you my side of the story, but let's look at your side.
5. GEORGE: What?
6. MR. POTTER: Your side. Now... You're a young man--twenty-seven, twenty-eight--married, making... what?... forty dollars a week?
7. GEORGE: Forty-five.
8. MR. POTTER: OK. Forty-five. And... if you were a common, ordinary yokel, I'd say you were doing well. However, you're no common, ordinary yokel, son. You're an intelligent, resourceful, ambitious young man... who hates his job.
9. GEORGE: (Clears throat uncomfortably) Mmm.
10. MR. POTTER: Yes! You hate the Building and Loan almost as much as I do, George. You've been dying to get out of this town ever since you were born. You see your friends, your brother, go places.... while you're trapped here! Trapped into frittering away your life, playing nursemaid to a lot of garlic-eaters! Is this a correct picture, George, or do I exaggerate?
11. GEORGE: (Swallows) So... um... what's your... point, Mr. Potter?
12. MR. POTTER: My point is that I want to hire you, George.
13. GEORGE: Hire me...? Uh.... to do.... what?
14. MR. POTTER: To manage my affairs! Oversee my properties! And... I can start you off at twenty thousand dollars a year.
15. GEORGE: (Stunned) Twenty thous...? Twenty thousand dollars a year?

1. MR. POTTER: Of course! And you're worth it too! Wouldn't you like to live in the best house in town? Get your wife some fine clothes? A trip to Europe... every year....?
2. GEORGE: Europe...? Uh... Are you sure you're talking to me? I'm... George Bailey. Remember me? The Building and Loan George Bailey?
3. MR. POTTER: Yes, the George Bailey--whose ship has just come in! ...Providing he has the brains to climb aboard.
4. GEORGE: Yes, but... but... what about the Building and Loan?
5. MR. POTTER: (Angry) Forget the Building and Loan! I'm offering you a three-year contract at twenty thousand a year! Do we have a deal or not?
6. GEORGE: Um... well twenty thousand dollars... a nice home... Europe.... Can-can you give me twenty-four hours to think about it? Ask my wife?
7. MR. POTTER: Of course! Of course, George. Meanwhile, I'll draw up the papers. Let's shake on it, my boy.

GEORGE rises from his seat and shakes Potter's hand.
8. GEORGE: (While shaking hands) Okay. Okay, Mr. Potter! Gee, I never would have thought I'd... (Realizes something awful.)
9. MR. POTTER: What? Is there something wrong, George? We're just shaking hands over a business...
10. GEORGE: (Suddenly repulsed) No! No! I can't do it! I don't need twenty-four hours. I know right now! The answer's "no"! No!
11. MR. POTTER: What?
12. GEORGE: If you offered me a million dollars to stay in Bedford Falls... to be your stooge..., the answer would still be "No"!
13. MR. POTTER: But why?

1. GEORGE: (Getting angry) Because the whole world shouldn't revolve around you and your money! Some things can't be bought-- or bought off--and I'm one of them! I don't need you or your money! (Exiting) Now, let me out of here!

GEORGE storms out of the office, EXITING STAGE RIGHT.

2. MR. POTTER: (Calling after him) You'll eat those worlds, George Bailey! You're a failure--just like your father! You just don't know it yet!
3. MUSIC: [MUS-21] (BRIDGE) "INDIGNANT" TO "SLEEPY"--FADE UNDER.
4. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON POTTER'S OFFICE
FADE UP ON GRANVILLE LIVING ROOM.

Scene 7

INT. GRANVILLE HOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (JUNE 1934)

(MARY, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT is dressed as a modest, but homey living room. A sofa, coffee table, an easy chair, etc. A functional "front" door-- STAGE LEFT--leads "outside."

AT RISE:

GEORGE ENTERS through STAGE LEFT door--gently. MARY sits in the easy chair knitting quietly.

5. GEORGE: Sorry, I'm so late, Mary. I took a walk. What? Are you bored, waiting up for me?
6. MARY: Just knitting, George. So... What did Mr. Potter want to see you about?
7. GEORGE: Oh, nothing, really. Just... talk.. You know... (Sighs deeply) But jeez... Why... why did you marry a guy like me, anyway?
8. MARY: (Chuckles) Well, I didn't want to be an "old maid."

1. GEORGE: (Dejected) But I was going to see the world! Go places! Build things! I was going to give you the moon... But, instead, what have I given you? Huh? No nice house, no fine clothes, no trip to Europe.... Some husband I am! I feel terrible...
2. MARY: (Coyly) Me too... Mornings, especially.
3. GEORGE: (Not catching her drift) I mean... you could have married somebody successful. Somebody like Sam Wainwright... Anybody else...
4. MARY: But I didn't want “anybody else”... I wanted my baby to look like you.
5. GEORGE: You didn't even get a honeymoon. No fancy... (Puzzled) You--you--you... What do you want to look like me?
6. MARY: ...My baby.
7. GEORGE: (Stunned) Baby? What?! You mean...? Hey.... Mary... Mary! You mean you're... you're on the nest?
8. MARY: (Chicken squawk) Be-gawk!
- MARY holds up knitting needles dangling a--previously hidden—baby booty.*
9. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON GRANVILLE LIVING ROOM.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.
11. MUSIC: [MUS-22] (BRIDGE) “BABY” TO “HEAVENLY”--FADES UNDER.

Scene 8

EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE)

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

12. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Well, Clarence, Mary had her baby... a boy they named Petey.

1. CLARENCE: [REVERB] Ahhh! That's nice!
2. SUPERINTENDENT: Then, another one--a girl... Janie!
3. CLARENCE: Good for them!
4. SUPERINTENDENT: But, of course, George never got out of Bedford Falls.
5. CLARENCE: He didn't?
6. SUPERINTENDENT: No. Year after year, George slaved away at the Building and Loan. Potter made things quite tough for him, but George kept on dreaming... and hoping. Mary had another baby... Susan, who they nicknamed, Zuzu.
7. CLARENCE: How charming!
8. MUSIC: [MUS-23] "WAR MONTAGE"--UNDER
9. SUPERINTENDENT: Then came the war...! Mary ran the U.S.O. and had another boy... Tommy. Uncle Billy and Gower sold war bonds... Old Mr. Potter headed the draft board, of course... Violet joined the Waves... until they found out her way of raising morale would sink the Navy.
10. CLARENCE: Oh! Oh my...
11. SUPERINTENDENT: Bert--the Cop--got wounded in Tunisia and received the Silver Star. Ernie--the cabdriver--was captured by the Nazis, but escaped from a prison camp. And George's brother, Harry... remember him?
12. CLARENCE: Yes! He moved to Buffalo!
13. SUPERINTENDENT: Yes, he did, but Harry became a real hero! As a Navy flier, he shot down fifteen planes--two of them just as they were about to crash into a ship full of soldiers!
14. CLARENCE: And George... What did George do in the war?

1. SUPERINTENDENT: Well, George fought “the battle of Bedford Falls.” He was designated 4-F ...due to his bad ear. So he served as an air raid warden, ran the scrap drives, rubber drives, plastic drives. Like the rest of the country, on V-E Day, he wept and prayed. And on V-J Day, he wept and prayed again.
2. MUSIC: BEGIN FADING “WAR MONTAGE” UNDER...
3. CLARENCE: Well then... We're just about up to today, aren't we, Boss?
4. SUPERINTENDENT: Yes! The only thing you don't know about George Bailey is what happened that has him-- down there at this moment-- wanting to die.
5. CLARENCE: Well? What is it, Boss?
6. SUPERINTENDENT: Alright... Today is the day before Christmas. ...And in addition to holiday preparations, George is very excited...
7. MUSIC: “WAR MONTAGE”—IS COMPLETELY OUT.

Scene 9

INT. LOAN OFFICE/LOBBY - DAY (12/24/1945)

(GEORGE, TILLY, JIMMY THE BIRD, EUSTACE, CARTER, VIOLET)

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT, is again dressed as the loan office, much as it was in 1932. The counter, desk and chairs are as they were. A coat rack holds winter coats. Christmas decorations are up. Some chairs line the walls. A 1945 calendar hangs by the desk.

The room STAGE RIGHT, is George's office with his desk, chairs and typewriter—with a letter half-typed still in it. His old suitcase is also there. AT RISE:

TILLY and EUSTACE are at work behind the counter. CARTER, the bank examiner sits impatiently in one of the wall chairs. Jimmy, the bird—in his cage—sits on the counter. GEORGE hurriedly ENTERS via the main door—STAGE LEFT. He has a newspaper in his hands.

1. GEORGE: (Entering) Tilly! Eustace! Did you see this in the newspaper? (Reads) "Commander Harry Bailey, Famous Navy Ace, decorated by President"! My brother! The Medal of Honor!
2. TILLY: Gosh, George! That's just swell!
3. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawks) Awwwk! "Gosh, George!"
4. TILLY: Shut up, Jimmy.
5. GEORGE: (Reads) "Commander Bailey downed fifteen enemy planes. The last, a kamikaze, just as it was about to dive into a troop transport!" Think of it! Harry saved hundreds of lives! Hey... where's Uncle Billy...? Shopping?
6. EUSTACE: He's at the bank, George.
7. TILLY: (Whispers) But, the bank examiner's here, waiting for him.
8. GEORGE: (To Carter) Well... Good afternoon... uh...
9. CARTER: Carter. Bank examiner.
10. GEORGE: Yes, of course. Hey, you know what? My brother's picture's here in the paper! The President is decorating him today!
11. CARTER: (Unimpressed) Yes. Well, I suppose they do that sort of thing. Now, about the books.

VIOLET ENTERS via the main door—stage left.

12. VIOLET: (Entering) George?
13. GEORGE: Violet! How are ya? Did you see the paper? All about Harry's homecoming and...
14. VIOLET: Um... Can I see you a minute, George? ... Privately?
15. GEORGE: Privately? Okay. Okay, Vi. We can just go to my...
16. CARTER: (Reminding George) Ahem! Mr. Bailey. I'd like to finish your audit... tonight, so I can get home to Elmira... and spend Christmas with my family.

1. GEORGE: Oh, yes. That's right! I just have to... (To Tilly) Um... Tilly! Show the books to um... um...
2. CARTER: (A bit perturbed) Carter.... Bank examiner?
3. GEORGE: Of course, of course.... (To Tilly) Can you, Tilly?
4. TILLY: Sure, George. (To Carter) Come right this way, uh....
5. CARTER: (Sighs) Carter...
6. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawks) Aawck! "Bank examiner" Aawck!
7. EUSTACE: Shut up, Jimmy.

TILLY shows CARTER the books and a stack of papers. CARTER begins his work.

8. GEORGE: Violet? Step into my office...
9. VIOLET: Thanks, George.

GEORGE and VIOLET go into George's office via the connecting door, which he closes.

10. GEORGE: So, what can I do for you, Vi?
11. VIOLET: The letter you promised...?
12. GEORGE: Letter? (Thinks) Oh. Yes! The letter of recommendation. I was right in the middle of typing it when all this stuff about Harry came up. (Sits down at typewriter.)
13. VIOLET: (Sighs) Like I told you on the phone, George, I'm leaving for New York. I gotta make a fresh start.
14. GEORGE: Here! How's this...?

GEORGE begins typing away.

15. GEORGE: (Typing) "To whom it may concern," (carriage return/bell) "The bearer--Miss Violet Bick--has been employed here at Bailey Building and Loan (carriage return/bell) for the past two years.
16. VIOLET: That's lying, George!
17. GEORGE: Now, now, Vi. (Typing) "She demonstrated... intelligence..."

1. VIOLET: A lie.
2. GEORGE: (Typing) "...ability..."
3. VIOLET: A lie.
4. GEORGE: (Typing) "...and good character." (carriage return/bell)
5. VIOLET: Character? If I had any character, I'd...
6. GEORGE: (Typing) "I'm happy to give her my whole-hearted endorsement."

GEORGE pulls the paper from the platen, signs and folds it. He hands the letter to Violet.

7. VIOLET: Gee...! Thanks, George.
8. GEORGE: C'mon, now. It takes a lot of character to leave your hometown and start somewhere new. (He pulls out his wallet) And here... Here's something to help you get started.

GEORGE gives Violet thirty dollars. She's reluctant.

9. VIOLET: No! Oh, no, George. I can't take that.
10. GEORGE: C'mon! You're broke, aren't you? D'you want to hock your furs and that hat...? Walk to New York...? It's a loan, Violet! That's all! I'm in the loan business. Besides, you'll get a job.
11. VIOLET: (Brightens) Yeah... sure!

GEORGE walks VIOLET out the connecting door, into the lobby area.

12. GEORGE: Good luck, Vi.
13. VIOLET: I'm glad to know you, George Bailey.
(Kisses George) Merry Christmas, Georgie.
14. GEORGE: The same to you, Vi. Say "Hello, New York" for me.

As Carter watches, VIOLET EXITS via the main door—STAGE LEFT.

15. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawks) "Aaawck!" "Hello, New York!" Aawck!
16. GEORGE: Shut up, Jimmy.
17. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawks) Aawck! "Shut up, Jimmy." Aawck!

1. GEORGE: Eustace! Where's that Uncle Billy?"
2. EUSTACE: He's making a deposit--at the bank.
3. JIMMY, THE BIRD: (Squawks) Aawck! "At the bank." "At the bank." Aawck!
"Shut up, Jimmy." Aawck!
4. LIGHTS: BEGIN FADE DOWN ON OFFICES.
BEGIN FADE UP ON BANK.
5. MUSIC: [MUS-24] (BRIDGE) "GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN" WITH
SOUR ENDING CHORD--LET IT FINISH.

SCENE 10

INT. BANK LOBBY - AT SAME TIME

(UNCLE BILLY, MR. POTTER, AIDE, BANK CUSTOMERS, BANK TELLER)

SETTING:

A bank counter and teller window sits STAGE RIGHT.

AT RISE:

The BANK TELLER attends a CUSTOMER at the window. Other customers wait in line. UNCLE BILLY strolls in from STAGE LEFT, with a newspaper under his arm and an envelope full of money in his hand. He has strings tied around his fingers—as reminders. As he approaches the teller line, MR. POTTER ENTERS from STAGE RIGHT—pushed in his wheelchair by an AIDE.

6. UNCLE BILLY: Well, well! Mr. Potter! Here to personally guard your money? Your vault not strong enough?
7. MR. POTTER: Look out, Bailey, you old fool! My wheelchair!
UNCLE BILLY pulls out his newspaper, and using both hands, shows the headline to Mr. Potter.
8. UNCLE BILLY: Did you see the news? (Reads) "Harry Bailey Gets Medal of Honor!" What'll those Bailey boys do next?
9. MR. POTTER: Huh? Let me see that newspaper!
10. UNCLE BILLY: Sure. (Gives Potter the paper—and inadvertently, the envelope too.) Here.

MR. POTTER reads a bit of the article, folds the paper in disgust and puts it in his lap.

1. MR. POTTER: Hmmpf! What does that slacker, George think? About Harry being decorated.
2. UNCLE BILLY: Well, if that “slacker, George” had gone, he’d have earned two medals of honor.
3. MR. POTTER: Oh, but George didn’t go! “Bad” ear... He heard everything but the call to arms!
4. UNCLE BILLY: Well... Make sure to read the part about the parade for Harry tomorrow. Sorry I can't chat more, you old thief. I gotta go make a deposit.

MR. POTTER picks up the paper again and reads. UNCLE BILLY gets into the teller line, just as the last customer has finished his business there.

5. BANK TELLER: Next customer, please...

As Potter reads—and casually listens—UNCLE BILLY steps up to the teller window and begins digging items out of his pockets.

6. UNCLE BILLY: (To Teller) Hello! Let see here. Um... Here you are... Bank book... deposit slip... And a “Merry Christmas” to you.
7. BANK TELLER: And to you too, Mr. Bailey. But... uh... haven’t you forgotten something?
8. UNCLE BILLY: Hmmm? (Looks at strings on fingers) I forget things all the time.
9. BANK TELLER: So, Mr. Bailey, where's the money?!
10. UNCLE BILLY: Wha--what?
11. BANK TELLER: You want to make a deposit, don’t you?
12. UNCLE BILLY: Of course! I want to deposit eight thousand dollars.
13. BANK TELLER: Well then... it's customary to bring the money with you.
14. MR. POTTER: (To Aide) Wheel me out of here...

The AIDE quickly pushes Mr. Potter’s wheelchair off—STAGE RIGHT.

1. UNCLE BILLY: (Puzzled) The money? (Looks around) The money! It's gone! Where'd I...? Where'd I put that money?! I... I...
2. MUSIC: [MUS-25] (BRIDGE) "LOST" TO "HEAVENLY"--FADES UNDER.
3. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON BANK.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.

Scene 11

**EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE)**

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

4. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Take note, Clarence. Uncle Billy couldn't find the deposit money because the envelope with the eight thousand dollars was folded up in that newspaper he gave to Mr. Potter.
5. CLARENCE: [REVERB] The money was in the newspaper? He'd given it to Mr. Potter? (Getting it.) Oh! So that's why George and Uncle Billy are scouring the street outside the bank.

Scene 12

**EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE BANK - MINUTES LATER (12/24/1945)
(UNCLE BILLY, GEORGE)**

SETTING:

The apron serves as the sidewalk in front of the bank. Some street signs, a mailbox, trash can, fireplug, etc.

AT RISE:

Pedestrians walk by as GEORGE and UNCLE BILLY search for the missing deposit envelope. They think it was dropped on the ground.

6. GEORGE: Look by the curb, Uncle Billy! I'll look by the mailbox.
7. UNCLE BILLY: (Distraught) I just don't know what happened to it, George! I just don't know!

1. GEORGE: (Worried) Eight thousand dollars! Not our money! The depositors' money! (Sighs) And the bank examiner's here!
2. UNCLE BILLY: But, George! We've traced every step I took.
3. GEORGE: Well, if you didn't drop it, maybe you never put the envelope in your pocket in the first place.
4. UNCLE BILLY: (Searching his pockets) Maybe... Maybe... But oh... I'm no good to you, George. No good!
5. GEORGE: (Desperate) C'mon! You've got to think! Think!
6. UNCLE BILLY: (Sobs) I can't think! I just can't...
7. GEORGE: (Lashing Out) Now, where's that money, you old fool?! This means... bankruptcy! Scandal! Prison...! One of us is going to jail... Well, it won't be me! You keep looking, you hear?
(Exiting) I'm going home!

GEORGE storms off—STAGE LEFT. UNCLE BILLY sinks to his knees.

8. UNCLE BILLY: (Sobs) George...!
9. MUSIC: [MUS-26] (BRIDGE) "DESPERATE"--LET IT FINISH.
10. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON STREET.
FADE UP ON LIVING ROOM.
FADE UP 1/2 ON ZUZU'S BEDROOM.

Scene 13

INT. GRANVILLE HOUSE LIVING ROOM (12/24/1945 AT 6 P.M.)

(MARY, GEORGE, JANIE, PETEY, TOMMY, ZUZU)

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT is the same Granville House living room we saw before, but 12 years later. Sofa, chairs, coffee table. Model 202 or 300-style telephone. etc. A modest upright piano sits against the wall UPSTAGE. A partially finished architectural model of a bridge sits on a table. There are Christmas decorations and a tree—partially decorated.

The room STAGE RIGHT is set as Zuzu's bedroom. It has a bed, a lamp, a night table with a single flower in a glass, a pitcher of water. A plate of half-finished food sits on a tray.

AT RISE:

In the bedroom, ZUZU is sitting in bed, quietly talking to PETEY. Soon, Petey will bring Zuzu's plate to Mary.

In the living room, JANIE is (miming) practicing piano. TOMMY—a small child—colors nearby. MARY is stringing popcorn for the tree. GEORGE sits in the easy chair, but he's in a foul mood.

1. MUSIC: [MUS-27] (SOURCE) JANIE'S PIANO PRACTICE #1--"HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"--UNDER--IT ENDS QUICKLY.
2. MARY: What's the matter, George? You haven't said a word since you came home!
3. GEORGE: How can I?--with Janie banging on the piano? Does she have to keep playing that--over and over again?
4. JANIE BAILEY: I gotta practice for the Christmas party, Daddy.
5. MUSIC: [MUS-28] (SOURCE) JANIE'S PIANO PRACTICING #2--"HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"--SHE RESTARTS--UNDER.
7. MARY: (To George) What is it, dear? Another hectic day?
8. GEORGE: (Sarcastic) Oh, yeah... A "red letter" day for the Baileys.
PETEY enters from Zuzu's room—with the tray holding Zuzu's half-eaten supper.
9. PETEY BAILEY: (Putting down the plate) Mom! Here's Zuzu's plate. (To George) Hey... Dad!
10. MARY: Not now, Petey.
11. PETEY BAILEY: The Browns--next door--got a brand new car! You should see it!
12. GEORGE: (Savagely) Well, what's the matter with our car? Not good enough for you?
13. PETEY BAILEY: (Taken aback) Sorry, Dad. I only...

1. MARY: (Diverting) Thanks for bringing Zuzu's plate, dear. All right. Run along, now.
2. PETEY BAILEY: OK. I'll finish on the decorations.
PETEY goes by the Christmas tree, picks up a pad of paper and starts writing.
3. GEORGE: Zuzu's eating in her room? What's the matter with her?
4. MARY: Oh, she caught a little cold. Coming home from school. Didn't button up her coat. She got a flower as a prize and didn't want to crush it, so she...
5. GEORGE: What do you mean "a little cold"?
6. MARY: It's okay, Dear. The doctor said it was nothing serious.
7. GEORGE: The doctor? The doctor came?
8. MARY: Zuzu's got a little temperature, just ninety-nine point...
9. GEORGE: (Angrily) It's this drafty old house! It's a wonder we don't all have pneumonia!
10. MARY: (Concerned) George!
11. GEORGE: I mean... why do we live here in the first place? Why in this crummy little town?
12. MARY: (Worried) What's wrong, dear?
13. GEORGE: Everything's wrong! Oh...! Why did we have to have all these kids anyway?
14. PETEY BAILEY: Daddy, how do you spell "frankincense"?
15. MUSIC: JANIE HAS STOPPED PLAYING PIANO BY NOW.
16. GEORGE: (Shouts) I don't know! Ask your mother! (Heads for Zuzu's room.)
17. MARY: Where are you going, George?
18. GEORGE: To see Zuzu!

GEORGE walks to Zuzu's door, knocks—and enters. He closes the door.

1. ZUZU: Daddy!
2. GEORGE: Are you okay, Zuzu? I heard you got a cold.
3. ZUZU: (Sniffles) I won a flower at school, Daddy. Can you give it a drink of water?
4. GEORGE: Drink of...? (Sighs) Okay. Okay. I'll...
GEORGE waters the flower, but brushes it, causing some petals to fall off.
5. ZUZU: (Gasps) Daddy! You crushed it!
6. GEORGE: Oh! I didn't mean to. I was just...
7. ZUZU: (Upset) Fix it, Daddy. Paste it.
8. GEORGE: Umm... There.... (hiding the fallen petals in pocket) See? It's all "pasted." Good as new.
9. ZUZU: Thank you, Daddy. You can do anything.
10. GEORGE: Anything? (Hugs/sobs)Now, try to get some sleep, darling. You'll get better.
11. ZUZU: (Sniffles) Merry Christmas, Daddy.
GEORGE leaves Zuzu, re-entering the living room—via the connecting door. He closes it..
12. GEORGE: Mary...? Zuzu felt a...
13. ~~SFX TRACK: [FX-14] BAILEY'S PHONE RINGS (2X) [LIVE OR SFX TRACK]~~
14. GEORGE: Zuzu felt a bit hot to me. Maybe we'd...
MARY answers the phone.
15. MARY: (Into phone) Hello....? Oh..., Thank you, Mrs. Welch.... Oh, she'll be all right...
16. GEORGE: (Steps over) Who is it, Mary?
17. MARY: (To George) It's Mrs. Welch--Zuzu's teacher. (Into phone) What....? Oh..... Well, the doctor says she should be out of bed in time for...

1. GEORGE: Mary! Give me that phone...! (Grabs phone out of her hand.)
2. MARY: George! Please!
3. MUSIC: [MUS-29] JANIE PLAYS PIANO #3--“HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING”--UNDER--IT WILL END DURING DIALOGUE.
4. GEORGE: (Upset, into phone) Is this Mrs. Welch?... Well, this is Mr. Bailey! Now, what kind of teacher are you? Do you realize she could get pneumonia because of you?
5. MARY: George!
6. GEORGE: (Into phone) Silly, careless people like you! Sending kids home half-naked! You know, maybe my kids aren't the best-dressed kids in town, but at least... Hello....? Hello...?
- GEORGE slams phone handset down--angrily.*
7. GEORGE: (Hollers) Janie! Enough with the piano! Cut it out! Stop!
8. MUSIC: ABRUPTLY KILL JANIE'S PIANO PRACTICE #3.
9. JANIE BAILEY: (Sobbing) Oh, Daddy....
- Petey and Tommy are afraid. Mary is thunderstruck!*
10. MARY: George! Whatever's wrong with you? Must you torture the children too?
11. GEORGE: (Surlly) Okay... Then how about this?
- GEORGE angrily destroys the model bridge.*
12. MARY: You worked for months on that model!
13. GEORGE: (Sarcastic) Happy now?
- JANIE, PETEY and TOMMY run to MARY—out of fear.*
14. MARY: (Angry) What's come over you? You're acting like a wild...
15. GEORGE: (Gets a grip on himself) I'm-I'm sorry, Janie. I'm sorry, Mary... I...
16. MARY: George...!

GEORGE steps to front door—opens it.

1. GEORGE: (Exiting) I... I've just got to get out of here!

GEORGE runs out—slamming the door after him.

2. MUSIC: [MUS-30] (BRIDGE) "TROUBLED"--FADES UNDER.

3. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON THE GRANVILLE HOUSE.
FADE UP ON MR. POTTER'S OFFICE.

Scene 14

**INT. POTTER'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER (12/24/1945)
(MR. POTTER, GEORGE)**

SETTING:

The apron STAGE RIGHT is again dressed as Mr. Potter's office, with his desk, impressive desk set, fancy cigar box, bust of Napoleon, Model 300-style phone, and imposing clock. The seat opposite the desk is still deliberately low, so Potter's visitors are at a disadvantage.

AT RISE:

MR. POTTER sits at his desk—in his wheelchair. GEORGE sits opposite him, in the low chair. GEORGE is distraught. POTTER is smugly satisfied.

4. MR. POTTER: So that's what this sudden visit is about, George... You're eight thousand dollars "short" in your accounts.
5. GEORGE: (Dejected) That's right, Mr. Potter. But you gotta help me! I'll pay any sort of interest. If...if you still want the Bailey Building and Loan, I guess we could arrange some...
6. MR. POTTER: (Toying with him) But you say the money was... "lost?" What if it was... stolen? Maybe you should notify the police...
7. GEORGE: No... no, sir. Y'see, Harry's homecoming is tomorrow and well, the publicity would...
8. MR. POTTER: I see... You didn't "lose" the money playing the market, did you, George? ...Horses?

1. GEORGE: Of course not, Mr. Potter! The money's just...
2. MR. POTTER: A woman, then...! Half the town's talking about you giving money to Violet Bick.
3. GEORGE: No...! That has nothing to do with the...
4. MR. POTTER: (Rhetorically) So you've come to me...? Why not your "buddy," Sam Wainwright?
5. GEORGE: Well, I uh... I tried to get a hold of Sam, but um... he's in Europe right now and...
6. MR. POTTER: So you want a loan from me... for eight-thousand dollars. Hmmm.... What do you have as collateral, George?
7. GEORGE: Well..., I have some life insurance here...
GEORGE pulls an insurance policy out of his jacket pocket and gives it to Mr. Potter.
8. MR. POTTER: Life insurance...? For how much?
9. GEORGE: A fifteen thousand dollar policy. It's...
10. MR. POTTER: (Inspecting) Hmm... Fifteen thousand...? But what's your equity in it?
11. GEORGE: Uh.... five hundred.
12. MR. POTTER: Five hundred dollars...? And you want an emergency loan... on Christmas Eve... for eight thousand?
13. GEORGE: (Meekly) Um... um.... yes.
14. MR. POTTER: Hah! You're pathetic, George Bailey....! For years, you opposed my plans and derided my character. You said you didn't need me or my money. Did you not?
15. GEORGE: (Sheepishly) Um... yes... sir...
16. MR. POTTER: And now... suddenly, I'm very important to you. Well.... do I look like... (Chortles) Santa Claus? (Chuckles) Hm-m-m-m.
17. GEORGE: No, Mr. Potter, I...

1. MR. POTTER: You once called me a “warped, frustrated old man.” Well... George Bailey... what are you... but a warped, frustrated young man? (Laughs) Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha.
2. GEORGE: I... I...
3. MR. POTTER: You dreamed of “conquering the world!” Look at you now... crawling to me for help! Ha!... Go to the “riff-raff” you love so well! Go beg them for help!
4. GEORGE: Please, Mr. Potter. I don’t know what I’m going to do!
5. MR. POTTER: I’ll tell you what I’m going to do. I’m going to swear out a warrant for your arrest!
6. GEORGE: Wait a minute, Mr. Potter! I thought we...
7. MR. POTTER: I'm calling the District Attorney, then the Sheriff, and then the newspaper!
8. GEORGE: The Sheriff? The newspaper? What about a loan on my insurance policy?
9. MR. POTTER: (Contemptuous) For five hundred dollars in equity? Ha! George... You're worth more dead than you are alive!
- POTTER dials phone—under--timed to the Sheriff answering. Dial five digit # - 3-1-2-2-1.*
10. GEORGE: No. no. I’ve-I’ve got to get out of here...
- GEORGE jumps out of his chair and runs out of the office—EXITING STAGE RIGHT.*
11. MR. POTTER: (Calling out after him) Where are you going, George? You can’t hide in a small town like this. (Into phone) Hello, Sheriff Baxter? This is Henry Potter. I want to swear out a warrant against... (Ad lib fading under)
12. MUSIC: [MUS-31] (BRIDGE) “CRUEL” TO “HEAVENLY”--FADES UNDER.
13. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON MR. POTTER’S OFFICE.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.

Scene 15

EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER (SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE)

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

1. CLARENCE: [REVERB] Oh, Boss! The nerve of that Henry Potter!
2. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Yes, Clarence. He had George's eight thousand dollars sitting in his desk drawer.
3. CLARENCE: What will George do now, Boss? Where is he?
4. SUPERINTENDENT: Well, he's at Martini's Tavern. George has had a couple of drinks. He's dazed. Just standing there...
5. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON MARTINI'S CAFÉ.
6. MUSIC: [MUS-32] (SOURCE) "SANTA LUCIA" ON ACCORDION--UNDER

Scene 16

INT. MARTINI'S CAFE - SECONDS LATER (DECEMBER 24, 1945) (GEORGE, NICK, MARTINI, WELCH)

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT is now a small Italian café/tavern, with a bar, some tables, an accordion player in the back. The front door is STAGE LEFT.

AT RISE:

A BAR CROWD is drinking and talking—quietly—under the scene, MR. WELCH among them—but mixed in, UPSTAGE.. NICK is behind the bar. GEORGE is seated at the bar. He's had a few drinks. MARTINI stands near George. He's worried for his friend.

7. GEORGE: (Praying, quietly) Our Father who art in Heaven... Oh, God... I've never been a praying man, but if--if you are listening..., show me the way. Please... I'm lost, God. Lost! Please...

1. NICK: (Steps up) Mr. Bailey, you all right? (To martini) Martini! George, here, don't look so good.
2. MARTINI: (Italian accent) (To Nick) You right, Nick. (To George) Mr. Bailey! You drinking too much! Too much! You had enough... Please!
3. MR. WELCH: (Walking up) Bailey? Which Bailey are you talkin' about?
4. MARTINI: This Mr. Bailey--Mr. George Bailey!
5. MR. WELCH: (Steps up) George Bailey? Why you....

WELCH punches George. GEORGE falls to floor. BAR CROWD reacts with alarm--then murmurs under.
6. MUSIC: ABRUPTLY CUT "SANTA LUCIA"—DUE TO THE FIGHT.
7. MR. WELCH: Serves you right, Bailey! If you ever talk to my wife that way again, you'll get even worse!
8. GEORGE: Huh?
9. MR. WELCH: Ain't it enough she slaves away... teaching your stupid kids how to read and write...? Then you gotta bawl her out on the phone? She cried for over an hour, you louse!
10. MARTINI: (Confronting Welch) Hey! Beat it, Mr. Welch! You punch my best friend! He help me buy my house! Outta here! Go! (To Nick) Throw him out, Nick!
11. NICK: Go on, Welch! ...Never mind the tab!
12. MR. WELCH: (Exiting) All right...! I'm goin'...!

WELCH stomps out the door—STAGE LEFT. GEORGE—his lip bloodied—is struggling to get up from the floor. The BAR CROWD resumes its chatter.
13. MARTINI: (To George) Mr. Bailey! How you doin'?
14. GEORGE: (Getting up) Ohhhh! Martini! Who-who was that?
15. MARTINI: That's Mr. Welch—his wife teaches at school.

1. GEORGE: Oh.... (Realizes) That's what I get for praying... (Muttering) Where? (Searching his coat.) Now, where is my policy?
2. NICK: Huh?
3. GEORGE: My-my insurance policy!
4. MARTINI: Don't you worry, Mr. Bailey! Welch don't come here no-more! ...Wait, Mr. Bailey! I get something cold for your face... Look! The blood!
5. GEORGE: (Staggering for the door) No, that's alright.
6. MARTINI: Please! Don't go... Mr. Bailey! Stay!
7. GEORGE: Go-on! Just let me... be.
8. MARTINI: Stay here, Mr. Bailey. It's snowing! (To Nick) Nick! Take Mr. Bailey home!
9. GEORGE: (Drunk) No...! Let me alone! ...Alone, ya hear...!

GEORGE staggers out the main door—STAGE LEFT.

10. MUSIC: [MUS-33] (BRIDGE) "ALONE TO "HEAVENLY"--FADES UNDER.
11. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON MARTINI'S CAFÉ.
FADE UP ON HEAVEN.

Scene 17

***EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE)***

The SUPERINTENDENT and CLARENCE have been watching the scene just past.

12. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Well, Clarence, George left Martini's tavern a few minutes ago. He's standing on the toll-bridge... looking down at the river...! He's about to jump! Do you have your "plan" ready?
13. CLARENCE: [REVERB] I-I don't know, Boss.

1. SUPERINTENDENT: Well... if you can save George Bailey's life, you'll get your wings!
2. CLARENCE: My wings? Oh, yes! My wings! I won't let you down, Boss!
(Exiting) (Calling out) George...! George Bailey!
(Fading under) Don't jump, George! Get away from that bridge! George! George? Stop!
3. MUSIC: [MUS-34] (BRIDGE) "ACT 2 OUTRO"--ENDS IN SUPENSE CHORD
4. MUSIC: LET "ACT 2 OUTRO" FINISH (NO FADE OUT)

-- END OF ACT TWO --

NOTE: AN OPTIONAL INTERMISSION GOES HERE

ACT 3

Scene 1

EXT. TOLL BRIDGE - NIGHT (12-24-1945)
(SUPERINTENDENT, CLARENCE, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The apron STAGE RIGHT has a raised “bridge” deck, with a guard rail. The “river” is OFF-RIGHT.

Fog pours across the stage.

AT RISE:

THE SUPERINTENDENT stands at “Heaven” GEORGE stands on the bridge, looking at the water below. CLARENCE is UPSTAGE of the bridge, in the dark, but close enough to quickly mount the rail and “jump”—RIGHT—into the wings, where the river is located.

1. MUSIC: [MUS-35] (BED) “ACT 3 INTRO” TO “DIRE BRIDGE”--UNDER.
 2. LIGHTS: FADE UP ON HEAVEN.
FADE UP ON TOLL BRIDGE. MOONLIGHT.
PERHAPS SOME LIGHT FROM BELOW.
 3. SUPERINTENDENT: A troubled George Bailey stands on the Bedford Falls toll-bridge... convinced that he's worth more dead than alive. Deep in despair, George stares at the freezing waters below--poised to end it all... when suddenly...

CLARENCE “jumps” into the river—OFF-RIGHT—and “splashes” about, OFF-STAGE.
 4. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON HEAVEN
- PRODUCTION NOTE:*
The “Heaven” set is no longer needed. THE SUPERINTENDENT will have no more lines.
5. SFX TRACK: [FX-15] SPLASH--CLARENCE JUMPS IN RIVER. SPLASHING.
 6. CLARENCE: (Off-stage) Help! Help me! I'm drowning! Drowning! Help!
(Glub) (Ad lib under)
 7. GEORGE: Oh, my God! Wait, mister! H-here I come...

GEORGE “jumps” into the river—and “splashes” about, OFF-STAGE.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-16] SPLASH--GEORGE JUMPS IN RIVER. SPLASHING.--
FADES
2. MUSIC: FADE “DIRE BRIDGE” UNDER—IN COORDINATION
WITH TOLL BRIDGE LIGHTING FADE.
3. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON TOLL BRIDGE.
FADE UP ON TOLL-TAKER’S SHACK

Scene 2

INT. TOLL-TAKER’S SHACK - MINUTES LATER (12/24/1945)
(CLARENCE, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The room STAGE RIGHT is dressed as the Tol- Taker’s shack, with a stove, a desk, some chairs, perhaps a cot and pot of coffee. A FUNCTIONAL DOOR—UPSTAGE—is the entry. George and Clarence’s outer clothes are hanging near the stove, drying out. Clarence’s clothes are not modern—they date from about 1810. His “Tom Sawyer” book is also drying out.

AT RISE:

GEORGE and CLARENCE are in their underwear, keeping warm by the stove. The TOLL-TAKER is sitting at the desk, reading the newspaper (optionally with the headline about Harry Bailey’s upcoming parade.)

4. TOLL-TAKER: You two are sure lucky my toll booth is open tonight.
Otherwise, you’d have froze to death... (Disdainfully)
Jumping in the river like that! Are you warming up now?
5. GEORGE: Well, I’m okay. And you, mister...?
6. CLARENCE: Clarence! I’m fine... although my underwear’s a bit out of
fashion... I passed away in it.
7. TOLL-TAKER: You...? You passed what...?
8. CLARENCE: And “Tom Sawyer’s” drying out, too.
9. GEORGE: (Misunderstanding) Um... The name’s “George”...

1. CLARENCE: No, my book! I still had “Tom Sawyer” with me. But... you know..., there is a “Tom Sawyer” quality to you, George. Lots of ideas... wanderlust... y’know...
2. GEORGE: (Doubtful) uh-huh... So how'd you fall in the river?
3. CLARENCE: Fall in? I didn't fall in! I jumped in! Jumped in... to save you, George!
4. GEORGE: Jumped in to save me...?
5. CLARENCE: Well, it worked, right? You didn't go through with your plan, did you?
6. GEORGE: Go through with what... “plan?”
7. CLARENCE: (Quietly) Y’know... suicide.
8. TOLL-TAKER: (Putting down the newspaper) Hey...! You can't commit suicide ‘round here! I think it's against the law!
9. CLARENCE: Well, it is where I come from.
10. TOLL-TAKER: Where do you come from, mister?
11. CLARENCE: Oh... y’know... Heaven.
12. TOLL-TAKER: What?
13. GEORGE: (Sarcastic) Right...
14. CLARENCE: Um... George... you're bleeding. Your lip.
15. GEORGE: Oh, that. Well, I got punched in the face in answer to a prayer.
16. CLARENCE: No, George. I'm the answer to your prayer. I was sent down from Heaven to help you.
17. GEORGE: Oh, come on...
18. CLARENCE: I'm Clarence Oddbody, “A-S-Two.”
19. GEORGE: “A-S-Two?...?”
20. CLARENCE: Y’know... Angel, Second Class.

1. TOLL-TAKER: Angel? (Sarcastic) Right! (Getting up) Well... I'm going to see if any other angels just "saved" somebody! (Exiting)
When your clothes are dry, feel free to leave...
- The TOLL-TAKER EXITS via the door--UPSTAGE.*
2. CLARENCE: (Calls out to Toll-Taker) Thank you so much for the warm stove...
3. GEORGE: Wait a minute! Now... Why did you... "save" me?
4. CLARENCE: Because killing yourself is a sin. Especially for eight thousand dollars!
5. GEORGE: Eight... thousand dollars...? How in the...?
6. CLARENCE: I know all about you, George Bailey. Remember...? "Guardian angel"...?
7. GEORGE: (Sighs) Uh-huh... (To himself) Just the kind of angel I'd get. (To Clarence) Angel, huh...? Where are your wings then?
8. CLARENCE: I'm an Angel, Second Class, George. I haven't won my wings yet. But you can help me earn them--by letting me help you!
9. GEORGE: Help me...? Okay... You couldn't "help" me with, say.... eight thousand dollars, could ya.
10. CLARENCE: Oh... but we don't use money in Heaven.
11. GEORGE: Oh... (Sarcastic) Well, it sure comes in handy down here, bub!
12. CLARENCE: Well... (Chuckles) Some may think so, but...
13. GEORGE: I just found out a little late! But since you know so much, did you know... I'm worth more dead than alive?
14. CLARENCE: Oh... Don't talk that way, George! I'll never get my wings if you keep that up. You just don't realize what you've done for people. I mean, if it hadn't been for you...

1. GEORGE: If it hadn't been for me, they'd all be better off! My wife.... kids... my friends...
2. CLARENCE: But killing yourself wouldn't make them happier!
3. GEORGE: Hmm... (Sighs) I suppose you're right... (Thinks) I guess it would be better if I hadn't been born in the first place!
4. CLARENCE: What?
5. GEORGE: Yeah... (Hmmp) I wish I'd never been born!
6. CLARENCE: Oh.... That's a good one, George.
7. GEORGE: Good "what" ...?
8. CLARENCE: The plan you just gave me--it reminds me of "Tom Sawyer."
Well... Let me see here...
(He snaps his fingers)
9. GEORGE: Hey...! What the....?
10. ~~SFX TRACK: [FX-17] "MAGICAL HARP GLISSANDO--UP"--LET IT FINISH.~~
11. CLARENCE: Okay, George! You've got your wish! You were never born!
12. GEORGE: (Skeptical) Never born?
13. CLARENCE: That's right! You have no worries, no missing eight thousand dollars, no sheriff or Mr. Potter on your trail. You don't exist!
14. GEORGE: (Puzzled) Hey, wait. Wait! My ear! Say something in my bad ear.
15. CLARENCE: You hear me alright! You don't have a bad ear. That's because you're not the George Bailey you used to be. Now, you're... well, uh... you're... "nobody."
16. GEORGE: That's nuts... (Notices) But... I can hear!
17. CLARENCE: And your lip stopped bleeding.

1. GEORGE: Hey...! It did! What's happening? I... I need a drink. Yeah, that's what! How about you, “angel?” Want to join me for a drink?
2. CLARENCE: A drink? Well... I'm on duty, you know...
3. GEORGE: Join me! As soon as our clothes are dry, we can just...
4. CLARENCE: The clothes are dry, George. They never got wet, you see.
5. GEORGE: (Unsure) Okay... Okay... So let's dress and walk over to Martini's Tavern... And have a... Oh, oh, sorry... I mean, I'll walk, you can fly.
6. CLARENCE: Fly...? But I don't have my...
7. GEORGE: (Over him) Wings, right. You don't have your wings! Well... after a few drinks we'll both be flying. C'mon...

GEORGE and CLARENCE EXIT via the main door—UPSTAGE.

8. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON TOLL-TAKER'S SHACK.
FADE UP ON NICK'S BAR.
9. MUSIC: [MUS-36] (SOURCE) “JUKE JOINT JINGLE BELLS”—PLAYS
UNDER ENTIRE SCENE.

Scene 3

INT. NICK'S BAR – NIGHT - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(NICK, GEORGE, CLARENCE, GOWER, BOUNCER, BAR CROWD, PIANIST)

SETTING:

The room(STAGE LEFT is now a dirtier, nastier bar than Martini's Café. There's a piano in the corner and a cash register on a counter behind the bar. Perhaps also, a neon sign saying “Nick's Bar.” The front door is STAGE LEFT.

AT RISE:

A PIANIST is banging away at a barrelhouse version of “Jingle Bells.” A large, rowdy BAR CROWD is drinking and talking—rudely, with nasty laughter—under the scene. NICK—now a sour tough—is behind the bar. THE BOUNCER stands in the back. GEORGE and CLARENCE ENTER via the main door—STAGE LEFT—and step up to the bar.

1. NICK: (Steps up) What'll it be, fellas?
2. GEORGE: Ummm, Nick! Is Martini still here? I want to apologize for earlier...
3. NICK: You want a Martini? Or are you a wise guy?
4. GEORGE: No. Okay! Just give me a double bourbon then.
5. NICK: (To Clarence) And for you...?
6. CLARENCE: (To Nick) Clarence is the name. I'd just love... (Thinks) a flaming rum... (Reconsiders) No!.... hmmm... maybe mulled wine...
7. NICK: Mulled "what?"
8. CLARENCE: Yes! Mulled wine, with a dollop of nutmeg and just a dash of cloves. Hop to it, my lively lad.
9. NICK: (Fed up) Listen, "Clarence." We serve hard liquor here for men who want to get drunk quick. If that's not good enough for you, perhaps I could "convince" you otherwise!
10. GEORGE: (To Nick) That's okay, Nick. Just give him the same as me.
11. NICK: Ehh. Two double bourbons.
NICK steps away to prepare the cocktails.
12. GEORGE: Why is Nick acting that way? What's going on here? The tavern's all changed.
13. CLARENCE: Bedford Falls has changed. You got your wish, George. You were never born. It's a different world--without you.
14. GEORGE: Different world....?
NICK rings up a sale on the cash register.
15. SFX: CASH REGISTER DRAWER AND BELL.
16. CLARENCE: Ah! (Sighs) Good! At least somebody just made it.
17. GEORGE: Huh? Just made what, Clarence?

1. NICK: (Entering) Here are your drinks...
- NICK steps up and sets their two cocktails down on the bar.*
2. CLARENCE: (To George) Well, "Every time a bell rings...
an angel just got-his-wings."
3. NICK: What'd you say...? "Angel...?"
4. CLARENCE: Angel, second class.
5. GEORGE: (Confides) Uh... Clarence... You don't want to talk about
"angels" in here.
6. CLARENCE: Why? They don't believe in angels?
7. GEORGE: Sure they believe in them, but...
8. CLARENCE: So they're surprised to actually see one...?
9. NICK: (Sarcastic) In a bar...? Yeah!
10. GEORGE: (To Nick) Sorry, Nick. He just never grew up.
11. CLARENCE: Sure I did! Next September, I'll be... two hundred and
ninety-three!

NICK slams a bottle down on the bar in disgust.

*During the following exchange, MR. GOWER sneaks into the bar via the front door—
STAGE LEFT.*

12. NICK: Two "pixies," eh? I'll bet you don't got any money either.
13. CLARENCE: Of course not! We don't use money in Heaven.
14. NICK: (Fed up) That's enough! Out! Out! Get outta my bar!
15. GEORGE: Your bar? Where's Martini, Nick?
16. NICK: You ain't gettin' no Martini! ...And how do you know my
name, anyway? I don't know you from Adam... (Sees
Gower) Hey! You again?
17. GOWER: (Staggers up) (Drunken) Spare some change, sir? Spare
some...

1. NICK: (Fed up.) Oh no, Rummy! I told you to never to come in here panhandling!
2. GEORGE: (Gasps) Mr. Gower? (To Gower) Mr. Gower! Listen! You know me! I'm George Bailey! George Bailey!
3. GOWER: (Drunkenly) Buy me a drink, mister. Just one. Huh, mister?
4. NICK: Get out, Gower! (Calls out) Bill! Throw that rummy out!
5. GOWER: (Backing away) Oh, no... No! Please...

BOUNCER scuffles with/hustles GOWER out the front door—STAGE LEFT.

BOUNCER returns.

6. GEORGE: But that's Mr. Gower! From the pharmacy!
7. NICK: Yeah! That rum-head did twenty years in prison for poisoning a kid. If you know him, maybe you're a jail-bird too! (Calls out) Bill! Get these two outta here! Out! Out! Out!

BOUNCER hustles GEORGE and CLARENCE out the front door—STAGE LEFT.

8. CLARENCE: (Exiting) You don't have to be so brusque...
NICK repeatedly rings cash register--under...
9. SFX: CASH REGISTER DRAWER AND BELL—REPEATEDLY, IN COORDINATION WITH NICK'S ACTIONS.
10. NICK: (Sarcastically) Hey, everybody! Get me! I'm handing out wings! (Nasty laugh) Ha-ha-ha-ha!

BAR CROWD erupts in nasty laughter.

11. MUSIC: FADE OUT "JUKE JOINT JINGLE BELLS"
12. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON NICK'S BAR.
FADE UP ON STREET OUTSIDE NICK'S.

Scene 4

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE NICK'S - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(CLARENCE, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The apron STAGE LEFT is now the street outside Nick's Bar. Perhaps a street sign, maybe even some piles of snow or a tree.

AT RISE:

GEORGE and CLARENCE are recovering from being ousted.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-18] WIND #1--UNDER.
2. GEORGE: What happened to Mr. Gower? How could that be?
 "Poisoning a kid"?"
3. CLARENCE: Don't you see, George? You weren't there to stop Gower
 from putting the poison into...
4. GEORGE: I "wasn't there?" Sure I was there!
5. CLARENCE: No...! Because you were not born.
6. GEORGE: "Not born?" Well, who am I then?
7. CLARENCE: Nobody! You have no identity.
8. GEORGE: What do you mean? I'm George Bailey!
9. CLARENCE: No, you're not! No papers. No driver's license. No 4-F
 card... No insurance policy.
10. GEORGE: (Thinks) Zuzu's petals!

 GEORGE digs through his pants pocket looking for the flower petals he'd put there earlier.
11. CLARENCE: They aren't there either, George. You may have put those
 flower petals in your pocket--before--but now, you don't
 exist!
12. GEORGE: They're gone. Gone! What...? Am I a... ghost?

1. CLARENCE: You've been given a gift, George: To see the world without you.
2. GEORGE: You're nuts! And you're driving me nuts, too! I'm going home to my wife and family--do you hear? (Exiting) Leave me alone!

GEORGE runs off--STAGE RIGHT.
3. SFX TRACK: FADE OUT WIND.
4. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON STREET OUTSIDE NICK'S.
FADE UP ON POTTERSVILLE MAIN STREET.
5. MUSIC: [MUS-37] (SOURCE) "POTTERSVILLE STREETSCENE"--UNDER

Scene 5

EXT. POTTERSVILLE MAIN ST. - SECONDS LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE, OFFICER BERT, VIOLET, STREET CROWD)

SETTING:

The apron serves as Downtown Pottersville--a bigger, badder version of Bedford Falls. A flat features nightclubs, casinos, boxing rings, pawnshops, liquor stores, a strip joint, a jail, etc. A beat up trash can sits at STAGE LEFT. A sign says, "Welcome to Pottersville." A Jazz combo's music spills out of nearby strip joint.

AT RISE:

OFFICER BERT is standing CENTER STAGE, looking mean. A STREET CROWD--some are sailors--is hanging around at LEFT. Shady pedestrians hurry by. GEORGE wanders in from STAGE RIGHT.

6. SFX TRACK: [FX-19] DOWNTOWN POTTERSVILLE (TRAFFIC)--UNDER.
7. GEORGE: (Entering) Hey, officer! Officer! (Recognizes) Bert! Bert! What's with this sign... "Welcome to Pottersville"?
8. OFFICER BERT: What about it? You're in downtown Pottersville.
9. GEORGE: Pottersville...? But where's the Building and Loan...? The Bailey Building and Loan.

1. OFFICER BERT: (Puzzled) Wha? That joint closed down years ago. As you can see, it's a pawnshop now.
2. GEORGE: But what about the...
- Arguing toughs tussle—STAGE LEFT. Someone kicks over the trash can. A drunken VIOLET staggers out of the crowd. She's dressed as a hooker. VIOLET stalks past Officer Bert. BERT stops VIOLET.*
3. OFFICER BERT: (To Violet) Hey! Where do you think you're going, Violet?
4. VIOLET: (Drunk) Get your filthy hands offa me, copper! I didn't jack-roll nobody! That sailor had it comin'.
5. OFFICER BERT: He did, eh? (Grabbing her.) Well, you're coming with me...
6. VIOLET: I said, lay offa me! I know the mayor, the judge, and the chief! And I'll have ya bounced off the force! You can't touch me...

The rowdy toughs tussle again. BERT scuffles with VIOLET

7. OFFICER BERT: That's enough, outta you. I'm running you in.
- OFFICER BERT begins to drag VIOLET off LEFT.*
8. VIOLET: (Crying) No! No! No!
9. GEORGE: Wait! Violet! Hey, I know that girl...
10. OFFICER BERT: Yeah! You and every other wolf in town! Now, move along! ...before I run you in too!

OFFICER BERT leads VIOLET off LEFT, passing ERNIE'S TAXI, headed RIGHT. The crowd thins out.

11. MUSIC: FADE OUT "POTTERSVILLE STREETSCENE"
12. SFX TRACK: FADE OUT DOWNTOWN POTTERSVILLE (TRAFFIC)
13. MUSIC: [MUS-38] (BRIDGE) "I KNOW THAT GIRL"--FADE UNDER

Scene 6

INT. ERNIE'S CAB - NIGHT - SECONDS LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE, ERNIE)

SETTING:

The same street.

AT RISE:

GEORGE flags down ERNIE'S TAXI and gets in. They drive towards STAGE RIGHT.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-20] INTERIOR OF CAB DRIVING--UNDER
2. GEORGE: Step on it, Ernie? You gotta get me home. I'm losing my mind!
3. ERNIE: (Tough) Uh-huh... So where do you live, bub?
4. GEORGE: Now, cut it out, Ernie! Don't pull that act on me. I live at three-twenty Sycamore!
5. ERNIE: (Skeptical) Three-twenty Sycamore...?
6. GEORGE: Yeah! And hurry! Zuzu's sick.
7. ERNIE: Whatever you say...
8. GEORGE: Listen, Ernie, I... I don't know what's going on here. I'm crazy or something. Maybe had some bad liquor. I... (Sigh) Tell me now. Your name's Ernie Bishop, right? You live with your wife and son over in Bailey Park...
9. ERNIE: (Nastily) What? Have you seen my wife?
10. GEORGE: "Seen your wife?" Of course I have! At your house--a hundred times! I built it for you, didn't I?
11. ERNIE: My wife took the kid and ran away five years ago! And I rent one of Potter's shacks! I've never seen you before, so what are you calling me "Ernie" for?
12. GEORGE: Okay, Ern..., I mean... okay. (Sighs) Just keep driving.
ERNIE'S TAXI "drives" OFF-STAGE RIGHT.
13. SFX TRACK: FADE OUT INTERIOR OF CAB DRIVING.
14. MUSIC: [MUS-39] (BRIDGE) "EMPTY GRANVILLE HOUSE"--PLAYS UNDER SCENE---FADES AT "IN THERE, OFFICER!"

Scene 7

INT. EMPTY GRANVILLE HOUSE - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945) (GEORGE, CLARENCE, ERNIE, OFFICER BERT)

SETTING:

The room(STAGE LEFT is now a “ghost” of George and Mary’s comfy home. Nobody has lived here since the Granville family moved out in the 1920s. Perhaps furniture stacked and covered with sheets. Cobwebs, peeling wallpaper, vandalized walls, water damage, etc. The functional front door is STAGE LEFT.

AT RISE:

GEORGE is offstage, just outside the front door—STAGE LEFT. CLARENCE stands in the dark in a corner. OFFICER BERT and ERNIE are offstage (outside) awaiting their cues.

1. LIGHTS: JUST MOONLIGHT COMING THROUGH A WINDOW.

GEORGE ENTERS tentatively, via the front door. He leaves it open.

2. GEORGE: (Calls out) Mary...! Kids...! Where is everybody? Petey! Janie! Zuzu! Tommy! Where are you?
3. CLARENCE: (Steps up) This is just an abandoned house, George. You don't have a wife. Or children.
4. GEORGE: What's happened to them?
5. CLARENCE: Well, if you don't exist then your children wouldn't have even...
6. ERNIE: (Off-stage) (To Bert) In there, officer! That's him! He's off his rocker!
7. OFFICER BERT: (Off-stage) (Calling out) Hold it, you two! This is the police! Put your hands up!
8. GEORGE: (Calling out) Bert! Wait! It's me...
- OFFICER BERT—with his gun drawn—enters via the front door. ERNIE follows him.*
9. OFFICER BERT: Take it easy, mister! Come along, quiet-like, and we'll get you some help.

1. GEORGE: Bert! What's happened to you? (Frantic) Look! It's this guy here! (Indicating Clarence) He-he's an angel! He hypnotized me!
2. CLARENCE: Well, I am an angel, but I don't hypnotize. We prefer to en...
3. OFFICER BERT: Whatever... I'm taking the both of you...
- Suddenly, CLARENCE grabs OFFICER BERT and begins tussling with him—grabbing his gun hand.*
4. OFFICER BERT: (Startled) Ow! Let go of me, you...
5. CLARENCE: Now's your chance, George! Run!
- GEORGE runs out the front door—STAGE LEFT. ERNIE, cowardly backs away.*
6. OFFICER BERT: Owwww! Bite me, will ya...! (Struggles under) (To Ernie) Hey, Cabbie! Give me a hand here!
7. ERNIE: Yes, sir! (He joins the fray.)
8. CLARENCE: Hey! You wouldn't beat an old angel, would you? Wait...! (Calls out) Boss! Help! Boss! Help me!
9. MUSIC: [MUS-40] (GLISSANDO UP) "MAGICAL HELP"—QUICK CUE
- CLARENCE "disintegrates"—slips away—while OFFICER BERT and ERNIE struggle into each others arms.*
10. OFFICER BERT: What the...? Hey! Where'd the old guy go?
11. ERNIE: I--I don't know! He just disappeared!
12. OFFICER BERT: What about the other one?
13. ERNIE: He ran south--down Sycamore! C'mon...
- OFFICER BERT and ERNIE run out the front door—STAGE LEFT.*
14. MUSIC: [MUS-41] (BRIDGE) "ESCAPE" TO "MEAN MOTHER"--FADE UNDER...
15. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON GRANVILLE HOUSE.
FADE UP ON MA BAILEY'S PORCH EXTERIOR.

Scene 8

EXT. MA BAILEY'S PORCH - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945) **(MA BAILEY, GEORGE)**

SETTING:

The room STAGE RIGHT is dressed as the front porch of the Old Bailey Boarding House. A flat will serve. On the porch, there's no rocking chair, nothing. A light is on in a window—perhaps there's a porch light. The front door—UPSTAGE—is closed, and locked. When it opens, a chain holds it from being opened much— just enough to see her face.

AT RISE:

GEORGE runs up, from OFF RIGHT. MA BAILEY is inside her house.

1. LIGHTS: VERY DARK. MOONLIGHT AT BEST.

GEORGE pounds frantically on the front door—3 knocks, then another 3 knocks. After a pause, MA BAILEY opens the door—but just a crack. She's a secretive, tough-shelled old woman—full of scorn and mistrust.

- 2.. MA BAILEY: (Sourly) Yeah...?
3. GEORGE: Mother!
4. MA BAILEY: (Reviled) Mother....? Who are you?
5. GEORGE: I'm George! Surely, you remember me! George!
7. MA BAILEY: George who...?
8. GEORGE: Mother, listen... You gotta help me! Something terrible's happened. Something's happened to everybody! If I can just come in and stay until I get over it, maybe then...
9. MA BAILEY: Get over what? There are no vacancies. Scram!
10. GEORGE: But we're family! You know... me, your brother-in-law-- Uncle Billy, and...
11. MA BAILEY: (Suspicious) You know Billy?
12. GEORGE: Sure! I saw him today at the...

1. MA BAILEY: “Today?” Ha! Billy’s locked away in the nut house! ...Ever since he lost his business.
2. GEORGE: Uncle Billy? The nut house? What....?
3. MA BAILEY: The Pottersville nut house! And that’s where you belong too! Now, beat it!

MA BAILEY slams the door and locks it. GEORGE pounds on the door—5X--under...

4. GEORGE: Mother! Open up. It’s me!
5. MA BAILEY: (From other side of door) Beat it, you! I’m calling the cops! So, you better run!
6. LIGHTS: BEGIN FADE ON OLD BAILEY BOARDING HOUSE.

GEORGE staggers back from the door—stunned by the rejection. He exits—STAGE RIGHT.

7. MUSIC: [MUS-42] (BED) “SHATTERED” TO “THE CEMETERY”—PLAYS UNDER SCENE. FADES AT “TELL ME WHERE SHE IS.”
8. LIGHTS: FADE TO BLACK ON ENTIRE STAGE.

A fog wafts in from STAGE LEFT—the Cemetery.

9. LIGHTS: AS “THE CEMETERY” MUSIC BEGINS, FADE UP ON CEMETERY. EERIE MOONLIGHT.

Scene 9

EXT. CEMETERY - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(CLARENCE, GEORGE)

SETTING:

The apron STAGE LEFT—where “Heaven” used to be—is now a graveyard. Tombstones dot the stage. Fog drifts across the stage. (Think: Haunted, but Sad.)

AT RISE:

GEORGE wanders in from OFF-RIGHT. CLARENCE ENTERS from OFF-LEFT.

10. SFX TRACK: [FX-21] WIND #2 (CEMETERY)--UNDER.
11. CLARENCE: (Steps up) (Sighs) Looking for “Bailey Park,” George?

1. GEORGE: You again! Well... where's the housing development?
...Bailey Park! My dad and I built it... right... (Unsure)
right... here...!
 2. CLARENCE: As you can see... It's a cemetery, George.
 3. GEORGE: Cemetery? Where are the houses...? Where are the people I
knew...?
 4. CLARENCE: Oh... (Sighs) They're here, George.... They're here.
 5. GEORGE: What?
 6. CLARENCE: Amidst these tombstones... (Indicating the graves)
Martini's buried here.... the little Blaine girl... your father...
and... right next to him...
- GEORGE bends down to read a tombstone. Upon it is inscribed "Harry Bailey (1909-1919)"*
7. GEORGE: (Uncomprehendingly) Ha-Harry? Harry Bailey? Dead...?
 8. CLARENCE: Your little brother fell through the ice... and was drowned at
the age of nine!
 9. GEORGE: (Angry) No! No! Harry got the Medal of Honor! Harry
saved the lives of every man on that transport!
 10. CLARENCE: Every man on that transport died, George!
 11. GEORGE: How....?
 12. CLARENCE: Harry wasn't there to save them... because you weren't
there to save Harry.
 13. GEORGE: Me....?
 14. CLARENCE: Strange, isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other
lives. Y'know, George... You really had a wonderful life.
 15. GEORGE: Wonderful?

1. CLARENCE: (Quoting) "The Kingdom of Heaven is spread upon the Earth... but men do not see it." Don't you see...? See what a mistake it would be to throw your life away, George?
2. GEORGE: (Suddenly broken) I... uh...
3. CLARENCE: Life is the greatest gift.
4. GEORGE: But... all the things I wanted to do...
5. CLARENCE: It's easier to want what you get... than to get... what you want, George.
6. GEORGE: (Pause) But... But... Clarence...
7. CLARENCE: Yes?
8. GEORGE: (Broken) What about Mary...? Please! Where is my wife?
9. CLARENCE: But you don't have a...

GEORGE suddenly—and angrily--grabs CLARENCE by the collar. He's unhinged.

10. MUSIC: FADE OUT "THE CEMETERY"—UNDER.
11. GEORGE: (Urgently) Tell me where she is!
12. CLARENCE: You won't like it, George.
13. GEORGE: (Desperately) What's become of her? (Threatening) Where's my wife?!
14. CLARENCE: Haven't you seen enough, George?
15. GEORGE: (Angry) Where is she? Tell me!
16. CLARENCE: (Fearfully) Uh... uh... Sh-she never married. She's an "old maid!"
17. GEORGE: An old maid? Where is she? Right now! ...Or do I have to choke it out of you?

GEORGE begins choking CLARENCE—really!

18. CLARENCE: (Gasps) Okay! Okay, George! The library! She works there! She's just closing up for the night, but she won't...

GEORGE runs off—STAGE LEFT.

1. CLARENCE: George! George! Come back! (Exiting—STAGE LEFT) Oh...
(Sighs) There must be an easier way to get my wings...
2. SFX TRACK: FADE OUT WIND--UNDER.
3. MUSIC: [MUS-43] (BRIDGE) "LIGHTLY" INTO "OLD MAID"--FADE UNDER
4. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON CEMETERY.
FADE UP ON LIBRARY SIDEWALK.

Scene 10

EXT. LIBRARY SIDEWALK - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE, MARY, PEDESTRIANS, OFFICER BERT)

SETTING:

The apron is again the Pottersville street. Signs, fireplugs, trash cans. The library—perhaps a flat—is CENTER STAGE. And features the Henry Potter Library—with an imposing (non-functional) door.

AT RISE:

PEDESTRIANS walk by. MARY—now a spinster—has just locked the library door. GEORGE runs in from STAGE LEFT. GEORGE accosts MARY.

5. GEORGE: (Entering) Mary! Mary! I...
 6. MARY: I'm sorry, sir--the library's closed.
 7. GEORGE: No! Mary! It's me! George...! George....! C'mon... You know me!
 8. MARY: No, I don't know you. Excuse me.
 9. GEORGE: (Grabbing her) Mary!
 10. MARY: (Shocked) Let me go!
- GEORGE and MARY scuffle. He won't let her go. He's frantic.*
11. GEORGE: Mary! I got you! I want you! Please!
 12. MARY: (Struggling) No! Stop! Let me go!

PEDESTRIANS begin to notice the scuffle.

1. GEORGE: Mary, please! Please...! Where are the kids--our kids? I need you, Mary! Please!
2. MARY: (Struggling) Let go! Get away from me! (Calls out) Help! Help!

PEDESTRIANS converge on the tussle. More run in from OFF-LEFT.

3. GEORGE: No! No, Mary! I'm George! George...!
4. MARY: Help! Somebody help me! He's mad! (Screams) Ahhhhhh!
5. GEORGE: Mary! It's me! Your husband!
6. MARY: (Screams) Ahhhhhh!

SEVERAL PEDESTRIANS restrain GEORGE.

7. PEDESTRIANS: Ad-lib: "Hold it now, you!" , "That's enough, bub!" , etc.

GEORGE tries to free himself from the crowd. MARY backs away—LEFT--from the spectacle.

8. GEORGE: (Struggling) Hey! Hey! Get out of my way! That's Mary! My wife! Let me go!
9. MARY: (Backing away) No...! No...!
10. GEORGE: Mary! Wait! Wait! Don't run away!
11. MARY: Help! Help! There's a madman after me! (Exiting—STAGE LEFT) Stop him! Help!
12. GEORGE: (Breaking free) I've got to see her! (Exiting—STAGE LEFT) Mary! Mary! Please! Please...!

OFFICER BERT runs in from STAGE RIGHT. He has his revolver drawn and a police whistle in his mouth.

13. PEDESTRIANS: (Ad-lib: Uproar--"There he goes, officer!" "Get him!" Continue this chatter under...)

The PEDESTRIANS and OFFICER BERT chase after George—EXITING STAGE LEFT.

1. SFX TRACK: [FX-22] POLICE GUNSHOTS (2X)—OFF-STAGE.
2. MUSIC: [MUS-44] (BED) “LYNCH MOB” TO “REDEMPTION” THEME--
HOLD UNDER, UNTIL HARP GLISSANDO, THEN FADE.
3. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON LIBRARY SIDEWALK.
FADE UP ON BRIDGE--MOONLIGHT.

Scene 11

EXT. TOLL BRIDGE - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE, CLARENCE)

SETTING:

The bridge—on the apron STAGE RIGHT—is as it was previously: a raised “bridge” deck, with a guard rail. Fog pours across the stage.

AT RISE:

GEORGE wanders in from STAGE LEFT—exhausted from running. He mounts the bridge and peers into the waters below. CLARENCE is UPSTAGE of the bridge, in the dark.

4. SFX TRACK: [FX-23] WIND #3--FADE OUT BY “THAT’S THE SPIRIT”
5. GEORGE: (Calls out) Clarence...! Clarence...! Are you here...?
Clarence...! Where are you?
6. CLARENCE: (Entering) Here I am, George. (Steps up) So... are you going to jump off this bridge... again?
7. GEORGE: No! No! Clarence... I want things back the way they were. Put me back into the world. I want to have been born! I do!
8. CLARENCE: But you’ll face scandal and prison again! The newspapers... bankruptcy... disgrace!
9. GEORGE: (Humbled) Anything! I’ll do it! Gladly! I don't care! ...Just get me back to my wife and kids, Clarence! I want to live, again!
10. CLARENCE: (Relieved) Ah! That’s the spirit, George! Don’t despair... Always be willing!

1. GEORGE: (Sobbing) Oh... yes! Can you do it? Can you do it for me, Clarence? (Praying) I want to live, again! God! Let me live again...! Yes! Let me live again...!
2. SFX TRACK: [FX-24] "MAGICAL HARP GLISSANDO--DOWN"--UNDER GEORGE.
3. GEORGE: (Praying) Yes, God, I want to live, again! Yes, God, please...!
CLARENCE "disappears" into the fog.
OFFICER BERT—searching for George—calls out from OFF-LEFT.
4. OFFICER BERT: (Calling out) George...? What are you doing here?
OFFICER BERT enters from OFF-LEFT. His flashlight illuminates George on the bridge.
5. GEORGE: (Dazed) Huh...? Bert!? (Fearful) No! Stay away! Stay away, officer! (Angry) Come any closer and I'll... I'll... (Calls out) Clarence! Clarence! Save me!
6. OFFICER BERT: What in Sam Hill are you yelling about, George?
7. GEORGE: What...?! (Puzzled) George...? George...? (Elated) Bert! Do you... do you know me?
8. OFFICER BERT: Know you? I've been looking all over town for you, George! Where have you been?
9. GEORGE: Where've I been...? Say it again. I can't hear you.
10. OFFICER BERT: I'll try the good ear. (Speaks into George's other ear.) I said, "where have you been."
11. GEORGE: Why, Bert...! (Realizes) I'm alive! Alive again!
12. OFFICER BERT: (Puzzled) Alive "again?" Are you all right, George? Y'know... your mouth's bleeding!
13. GEORGE: My mouth...? (Amazed) Hey...! My mouth is bleeding! Look at the blood oozing out of there! What do you know?
14. OFFICER BERT: Well, it's not that bad, George.

1. GEORGE: Oh and... Hey...! Zuzu's petals! I had them in my right pocket over...

GEORGE searches in his pants pockets. He finds the flower petals.

2. GEORGE: Zuzu's petals! They're here! Here in my pocket! Hey...., Merry Christmas, Bert!
3. OFFICER BERT: (Unsure) Well... Merry Christmas. Get in my squad car, George. I'll drive you home--right after I get back from...
4. GEORGE: Can't wait, Bert! (Running off--LEFT) I'm going home...! I know the way home! Boy, do I know the way home! ...Merry Christmas, Bert! (Exits—STAGE LEFT)
5. OFFICER BERT: (Bemused) Merry Christmas, George...
6. MUSIC: [MUS-45] (BED) "ORGAN: HARK THE HERALD ANGELS"--
UNDER--THEN FADES
7. LIGHTS: FADE DOWN ON BRIDGE.

Fog floods the stage. Snow falls. GEORGE ENTERS—running—from STAGE LEFT, heading RIGHT. He's humble and blissful as he walks through town now—with the audience serving as the townscape. GEORGE waves to the buildings and the people as he proceeds RIGHT.

8. GEORGE: (Waving) Merry Christmas, Bedford Falls!... Oh! How I love this town!.... Hey! Merry Christmas, old Building and Loan...! Hurray!.... Merry Christmas, Mr. Potter!... Yippee! (Laughs) Ha-ha-ha-ha! (Ad lib) (EXITS—STAGE RIGHT)

Scene 12

EXT. OLD GRANVILLE HOUSE - MINUTES LATER. (12/24/1945)
(GEORGE, REPORTERS, CARTER, SHERIFF, PETEY, JANIE, TOMMY, ZUZU, MARY, UNCLE BILLY, ERNIE, VIOLET, HARRY, MA BAILEY, EVERYBODY)

SETTING:

The room STAGE LEFT is once again George and Mary's beloved home--as it was when he stormed out earlier. The bridge model is gone—the table it was on is empty. The room STAGE RIGHT is again Zuzu's bedroom.

AT RISE:

Several REPORTERS, CARTER and THE SHERIFF stand in the living room, chatting. The 4 Bailey kids—PETEY, JANIE, TOMMY and ZUZU are in Zuzu's room, reading a story.

1. LIGHTS: FADE UP ON LIVING ROOM AND BEDROOM.

GEORGE ENTERS from the front door—OFF LEFT.

- 2. GEORGE:** Mary, I...? (Notices the crowd) What's with all the...?
 (Realizes) Oh. Reporters! The Sheriff ... Yes! (Laughs)
 Well...! Merry Christmas... reporters! Sheriff! (Sees Carter)
 And you...
- 3. MR. CARTER:** (Steps up) Carter. Bank Examiner... Mr. Bailey... your books show a deficit and...
- 4. GEORGE:** Yes! I-I know. Eight-thousand dollars. Right?
- 5. CARTER:** Precisely! And your disappearance has kept me...
- 6. SHERIFF:** (Steps up) (To Carter) Uh... Excuse me. (To George) Mr. Bailey... I've--I've got a warrant for your arrest here...
- 7. GEORGE:** Yes! A warrant, Sheriff! Jail? (Chortles) Isn't that wonderful? Merry Christmas!
- 8. SHERIFF:** (Taken aback) Well, actually it's not so...
- 9. REPORTERS: (Ad-lib: "Mr. Bailey..." "Is it true the Building and Loan...")**

1. GEORGE: Yes. In a minute, folks. (Calls out) Mary...? Kids? I'm home! I'm home! (To reporters) Oh, look at this marvelous, drafty, old house! Isn't it wonderful? (Calls out) Mary?! Kids!

The BAILEY KIDS hear George's voice. PETEY, JANIE and TOMMY jump off the bed, and run into the living room. ZUZU is slower in getting out of bed.

2. BAILEY KIDS: (Entering) (Ad lib: "Daddy! Daddy! You're home. Merry Christmas, Daddy! Merry Christmas!" etc.)
3. GEORGE: Yes! (Kissing each) Janie! Petey! Tommy! Oh, I love you so! Where's your mother?
4. JANIE BAILEY: Out looking for you, Daddy... with Uncle Billy.
5. ZUZU BAILEY: (Entering) Daddy!
6. GEORGE: Zuzu! Merry Christmas, my little ginger-snap! (Picking her up.) How are you feeling?
7. ZUZU BAILEY: Fine, Daddy! Not a smidge of temperature!
8. GEORGE: Not a smidge.... Hallelujah!

MARY ENTERS via the front door.

9. MARY: (Calls out) George...? George!
10. JANIE BAILEY: Mommy's home! Mommy!
11. GEORGE: Mary...!
12. MARY: (Runs up) George, where did you go?
13. GEORGE: Mary! (Hugs her)
14. MARY: Oh, George! (She kisses George)
15. GEORGE: Mary! I have to touch you! Hold you! (Hugs her) You're real, Mary! Real! Oh..., you've no idea what happened.
16. MARY: You have no idea what's happened!

The front door opens and a crowd rushes in—CHARLIE, MRS. DAVIS, MARTINI, MR. GOWER, MRS. THOMPSON, ERNIE. They have baskets filled with dollar bill—and party foods, liquor, gifts. Throughout the scene, people keep entering—joining the party.

1. CROWD: (Ad-lib: "Hooray!" "George!" "Merry Christmas!"--continued happy buzz--under.)
2. UNCLE BILLY: (Entering with a basket of cash) George! Look what I've got!
3. GEORGE: Uncle Billy...!
4. UNCLE BILLY: Money, George! Bushels... of money!
UNCLE BILLY dumps the basket of dollars on the table.
5. GEORGE: You found the eight thousand dollars?
6. UNCLE BILLY: No, George. Mary worked a miracle! Didn't you, Mary!
7. MARY: People heard you were in trouble, Dear. Your friends!
They've pitched in to help you!
Members of the crowd step up and contribute money to the pile.
8. CROWD: (Ad-lib: "Here's more, George!" "Here's my share!" "Merry Christmas, George!" etc.--continued bustle under...)
9. GEORGE: (Elated) Charlie! Mrs. Davis! Martini! -- and Mr. Gower!
Mr. Gower...! Thank you! Mrs. Thompson! Thank you!
Eddy! Tom! Thank you. I can't believe it!
10. ERNIE: (Steps up) Well, none of us would have a roof over our heads if it wasn't for you, George!
11. CROWD: (Ad-lib: Clamors of approval--continued buzz under...)
MARTINI and ERNIE begin pouring drinks for everybody.
12. VIOLET: (Entering) Here, Georgie. A "loan"...! (She contributes some money to the pile.)
13. GEORGE: Violet! You didn't go...?
14. VIOLET: Naw... I decided to stick around.

MARY steps up—waving a telegram that was just delivered to the door.

1. MARY: Wait, everybody! Here's a cable from Sam Wainwright! It reads... "Mr. Gower notified me you needed cash. Stop. My office will advance you up to twenty-five thousand dollars. Stop. Hee-haw and Merry Christmas. Sam."
2. CROWD: (Ad-Lib: Cheers--continued buzz under...)
3. GEORGE: I don't know what to say...!

OFFICER BERT, MA BAILEY, and HARRY ENTER—via the front door.

4. GEORGE: (Gasps) Mother! And Harry!
5. HARRY BAILEY: (Steps up) Mary called us in Washington, George! I flew in as fast as I could.
6. ERNIE: (To the crowd) C'mon! C'mon, everybody! A toast! A toast! Harry!

The CROWD raises their glasses.

JANIE sits at the piano—eager to play. (Or—optionally--an adult prepares to play.)

7. HARRY BAILEY: Yes...! A toast... to my brother, George...! The richest man in town! (Conducting the toast) To George!
8. CROWD: (Ad-lib: "To George!")

The CROWD clinks their glasses and drinks and cheers.

PRODUCTION NOTE:

OPTION: Either JANIE begins to play "Auld Lang Syne"—badly, but passably.

OR an adult begins to play "Auld Lang Syne"—decently. [Run Cue 44 OR 45.]

9. MUSIC: [MUS-46] (BED) JANIE AT PIANO BEGINS "AULD LANG SYNE" -- UNDER.

-- OR--

10. MUSIC: [MUS-47] (BED) ADULT AT PIANO BEGINS "AULD LANG SYNE." -- UNDER.

11. CROWD: (Begins singing "Auld Lang Syne"--up at first, then quietly under.)

GEORGE, holding ZUZU in his arms, stands beside the Christmas tree. MARY stands nearby.

1. ZUZU BAILEY: Daddy, look! See my little bell hanging on the Christmas tree? Way up high?
2. GEORGE: I see it, Zuzu.
3. ZUZU BAILEY: I hung it up there all by myself! Can you ring it for me, Daddy?

4. GEORGE: If I can reach it, dear... (To Mary) Excuse me, Mary.

MARY picks up a hardback book from under the tree.

5. MARY: George, somebody left a book here under the tree. See?
6. GEORGE: (Chuckles) Why, it's "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer...!"

MARY opens the book to the title page.

7. MARY: And there's an inscription. (She holds the book up to George.) What's it say?
8. GEORGE: (Reads quietly) "Dear George. Remember... no man is a failure... who has friends. Thanks for the wings... Love, Clarence."
9. MARY: "Clarence?"
10. GEORGE: Yeah. A very dear friend of mine.

GEORGE Reaches up and rings Zuzu's bell on the tree.

11. ZUZU BAILEY: Daddy! Teacher says, "Every time a bell rings..., some angel gets-their-wings!"
12. GEORGE: (Joyous) That's right, Zuzu. That's right! That's right. (Looking Heaven-ward) Thank you, Clarence. Thank you! Yes... It truly is a wonderful life! Happy landings!

1. ALL: (Sings "Auld Lang Syne" chorus)
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll take a cup of kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!

2. LIGHTS: FADE TO BLACK.
PAUSE
FADE UP TO FULL—FOR CURTAIN CALL.

PRODUCTION NOTE:

As applause begins to subside, have the cast lead the audience in a reprise of "Auld Lang Syne."

3: MUSIC: [MUS-48] ORGAN--"AULD LANG SYNE" TO A FINISH.

Auld Lang Syne:

CHORUS:
For auld lang syne, my dear,
for auld lang syne,
we'll take a cup o' kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

-- THE END --