

SAM. What, for you?

GEORGE. Got my name right here on it! This isn't just for one night. It's for a thousand and one nights, with plenty of room for labels from Italy and Baghdad, Samarkand...

SAM. A regular flying carpet.

GEORGE. Gee whiz, I can use it as a raft in case the boat sinks.

BERT (*as recalling a happy memory*). Yeah, that day he was set to go to college. All dressed up and his face shining like someone had polished it, like it used to when he was a kid... only bigger now...

GEORGE. Hey, Bert!

BERT. What boat you sailing on?

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

BERT. A cattle boat?

GEORGE. I like cows.

SAM. You're finally off to seek your fortune!

GEORGE. Fortune, fame, high-life, low-life – I'm seeking it all, Sam.

SAM. Well, freshman, looks like you're going to make it after all.

BERT. You deserve it. You earned your college money and your travelling money...

GEORGE. I sure did. Hoarding pennies like a miser in that crummy old Building and Loan office, while old college men like Mr Wainwright here have been living it up.

SAM. Slaving over my studies.

GEORGE. Slaving over all those cute little college girls, more like.

SAM. Aw, there were no girls cuter than we've got in Bedford Falls.

GEORGE. Are you nuts?

SAM. I ain't nuts! You forget, I'm an educated man while you, George Bailey, you are...

He is stopped in mid-sentence by something that he and the other two have seen heading towards them. We cannot yet see it.

GEORGE. I take it all back, Sam. You're not as dumb as you look.

The three men watch in awe as VIOLET appears. She isn't a little girl any more.

VIOLET. Good afternoon, Mr Bailey.

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

VIOLET. Oh, this old thing! Why, I only wear it when I don't care how I look.

VIOLET swings down the sidewalk.

SAM. How do you like...

GEORGE. Yes.

BERT. Think I'll go home and see what the wife's doing.

Still in a Violet-coma, BERT leaves.

GEORGE. Family man.

SAM. Going to Harry's prom tonight?

GEORGE. I don't know. I'll feel kind of funny with all those kids. You're not going, are you?

SAM. Sure am.

GEORGE. Now why would such an educated man go to a silly little high-school prom?

SAM. Mary Hatch is graduating.

GEORGE. Who?

SAM. Mary... Marty's kid sister.

GEORGE. Oh, Mary Hatch... yeah... (*Mimicking her as a child.*) Momma wants you, Marty, Momma wants you, Marty... remember?

During this impersonation MARY has entered, waved to SAM, and walked up to them. She is no longer an annoying little girl.

MARY. Hello Sam.

SAM. You remember George? This is Mary.

GEORGE. Well... well... well...

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

GEORGE. Well, I don't.

MARY. You've passed me on the street almost every day.

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

SAM (*whisking MARY away*). See you at the prom, George!

GEORGE. You bet.

BERT (*narration over action*). So he said his goodbyes to Bedford Falls.

GEORGE (*going to each location in the street*). Bye, Joe...so long, Mr Gower, and thanks again! (*Indicating bag.*)

BERT. Folk didn't want him to go but then they did too because it's what he'd always dreamed of.

GEORGE. Send you a picture postcard, Ernie!

BERT. Don't take any plugged nickels, George!

GEORGE goes to the Building and Loan as UNCLE BILLY emerges.

GEORGE. Hi, Uncle Billy!

BILLY. Avast there, Captain Cook. You got your sea legs yet?

GEORGE. Aw, Uncle Billy. I'd like to say how much I'll miss working in the office with you...