

BILLY. Oh yes... there's some folk who try to make a profit out of anything. Shocking, isn't it?

POTTER. Mr William Bailey...

BILLY. Yes, Mr Potter?

POTTER. Enjoy your celebrations.

He folds up the newspaper and heads for his office or, anyway, away from **UNCLE BILLY**.

BILLY. And Merry Christmas to you too!

GEORGE now enters and goes to the Building and Loan. Perhaps he comes on singing. VIOLET enters and stands hesitantly at the door.

GEORGE. Oh, hello Vi. Have you seen this? (*Shows her the newspaper.*)

VIOLET. I've seen it. You must be proud, George. You got a lot to be proud of.

GEORGE. He's quite a kid, eh?

VIOLET. Can I see you for a second?

We see GEORGE and VIOLET talking but the sound transfers to the bank where **UNCLE BILLY** *is frantically searching for the money. BERT joins him. The sound will transfer between two scenes throughout this section.*

BILLY. Oh shucks... I know I had it...

BERT. Retrace your steps.

BILLY. And the Bank Examiner's due today. He'll want the accounts payable...

BERT. Now look, did you buy anything?

BILLY. Nothing. Not even a stick of gum.

BERT. We'll go over every step since you left the house.

BILLY. George is gonna be so mad at me...

GEORGE (*signs something and slips it into an envelope*). Here you are.

VIOLET. Character reference? If I had any character, I'd...

GEORGE. It takes a lot of character to leave your hometown and start all over again.

He pulls some money from his pocket and offers it to her.

VIOLET. No, George, don't...

GEORGE. Here, now, you're broke, aren't you?

VIOLET. I know but...

GEORGE. What do you want to do, hock your furs? Want to walk to New York? You know they charge for meals and rent up there just the same as they do in Bedford Falls.

VIOLET (*taking money*). Yeah, sure...

GEORGE. It's a loan. That's my business. Building and Loan. Besides you'll get a job. Good luck to you.

VIOLET. I'm glad I know you, George Bailey.

She kisses him on the cheek.

GEORGE. Say hello to New York for me.

VIOLET. Yeah, yeah... sure I will.

GEORGE. Now be sure and keep in touch, Violet.

VIOLET (*wiping lipstick from GEORGE's cheek*). Merry Christmas, George.

GEORGE (*as she exits*). Merry Christmas, Vi.

UNCLE BILLY *enters greatly flustered. He searches desperately, unsystematically. GEORGE watches in bewilderment.*

GEORGE. Uncle Bill...

BILLY. I should have my head examined...

GEORGE. Little late for that... What's up? What's the matter, Uncle Billy?