

Memories of a Wonderful Life

Jonathan M. Zaley





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Memories of a Wonderful Life
An Audience-Participation Christmas Comedy

by

Jonathan M. Zaley

AUTHOR'S NOTES

This audience-participation comedy puts an audience-friendly twist on a holiday classic. It is recommended that your director or stage manager PRE-SELECT your audience volunteers BEFORE you start the show, and let the cast know who to go to when the time arrives. Explain to your audience volunteers that the cast will feed them their lines and all they have to do is to repeat the lines...putting feeling and over-the-top emotion into their acting skills...in other words, ham it up as best as they can! If the audience sees that the cast is having fun with it, then they in turn feel more comfortable and everyone in the audience gets into the act. Feel free to adlib and improv to whatever the audience throws at you, but always keep it clean and in the spirit of the Christmas season.

The Cast

- ZUZU:** 60's-ish woman from small-town humble beginnings, mild-mannered, somewhat soft-spoken
- CLARENCE:** 200+ year old angel, second class
- GEORGE:** late-30's-ish small town man, looking for adventure but stuck in the same small town
- JOSEPH:** heavenly voice on CD or read from off-stage

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATING CHARACTERS
(in order of appearance)

Mr. Gower
Mary
Mr. Henry Potter
Ernie, the taxi driver
Petey
Janie
Mr. Martini
Mr. Welch
Bert, the cop

Act One

ZUZU: Well, good afternoon (evening) everyone. Merry Christmas to you all (*pause*) and a very blessed New Year as well. Today I must tell you a lovely story. A story of a typical American. It might be you, it might be me. This American dreams of glory. He lives in hope. And only the heavens above put a final value on his service to humanity. My story is about George Bailey...a citizen of Bedford Falls, New York...who wanted more than anything to see the world. The wonderful, exciting world that was just beyond the city limits of his small home town.

Although, my story doesn't begin in Bedford Falls...in fact, it doesn't begin anywhere in this world of ours. It begins (*pause*) in heaven, where the superintendent of the angels has just called for an apprentice angel named Clarence.

CLARENCE: (*looking excited, wearing a red hat with purple sash...a bowler, derby, cowboy hat or some other, and looking to the heavens*) Oh, I'm...I'm really going down to earth, sir? Oh, how splendid!

JOSEPH: (*with lots of heavenly reverb but not so much that the audience cannot understand him*) Yes. There's a very discouraged man down there, Clarence. George Bailey's his name. At exactly 10:45pm, earth time, he'll be thinking seriously about taking his life.

CLARENCE: Oh, dear. Not his life.

JOSEPH: Now, I want you to stop him if you can, but please sit down, sit down. I need to give you George Bailey's case history.

CLARENCE: Sir, if, er...if I should accomplish my mission...may I perhaps get my wings? I've been waiting over 200 years now and, well, people are beginning to talk. Especially about this red hat I have to wear instead of a halo. The wings and the halo come as a package deal, y'know.

JOSEPH: Never mind the red hat. Besides, the ladies in purple and red love you! Now, if you do a good job on George Bailey, we'll see about your wings.

CLARENCE: Oh, thank you, sir!

JOSEPH: Now listen closely Clarence. When George Bailey was a boy, two events occurred that you should keep in mind. One was when his young brother, Harry...

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* His young brother is hairy...*(pause)* odd?...

JOSEPH: No, no, no! Not his young brother is hairy. That's his name... HARRY...not his skin condition! Pay attention! His young brother...*(emphasizing)* NAMED HARRY, fell through the ice and almost drowned. George saved him.

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* brother fell through ice...George saved him...got it!

JOSEPH: Ever since then, George has had a bad ear. All that icy water, you understand?

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* bad ear...can't hear...oh, dear! Yes, sir!

(CLARENCE freezes and ZUZU gets up from rocker and walks out into audience looking for MR. GOWER)

ZUZU: The other event came a few months later. George used to work after school as a delivery boy in Mr. Gower's Drug Store. One day, Mr. Gower's only son died of influenza...that's the flu, y'know...*(pause)*...that's why you're supposed to get your flu shot each year. Don't wanna die now, do ya? *(hands on shoulders of selected MR. GOWER and places white soda jerk hat on his head)* Anyway, it was a terrible blow to poor ole Mr. Gower and he tried to lose his grief in whiskey. Started hittin' the ole bottle....got a little schnockered....plastered...hammered...pickled...blotto... bombed...three sheets to the wind...lit up like a Christmas tree, if you know what I mean. So Mr. Gower drunkenly says to George, "Where you been, George?" *(wait for echo from Mr. Gower)*

(GEORGE enters wearing boyish beanie & propeller cap and knickers or pants pulled up high to look like knickers, waiting for Mr. Gower to get line correct, while ZUZU continues)

ZUZU: I said, Mr. Gower DRUNKENLY says to George, "Where you been, George?" *(wait for echo, then continue)* "Mrs. Blaine's called twice! *(wait for echo)* What happened to her prescription? Ya lost it, didn't ya?" *(wait for echo...may have to spoon feed lines)*

GEORGE: *(approaching MR. GOWER)* Golly gee, Mr. Gower. No, I didn't lose it. Here it is. *(shows prescription)*

ZUZU: Mr. Gower then slurs to George, "Why you good-fer-nuttin!" *(wait for echo)* "Don't you know that Blaine boy is very sick?" *(wait for echo)* Mr. Gower then slaps George on the side of the head *(wait for MR. GOWER to do so...you may have to repeat line until he does slap GEORGE)*

GEORGE: *(in pain)* OW! *(pause)* OW!! Mr. Gower, my ear! You're hurting my sore ear!

ZUZU: Mr. Gower keeps sissy-slapping at George as he says, "I'll teach ya to loaf, ya lazy brat!" *(wait for echo & sissy-slapping)*

GEORGE: Mr.Gower, you don't know what you're doing! You put something wrong in those capsules for the Blaine boy! I know you feel bad about losing your son, but look Mr. Gower! Look! This bottle you used...this bottle to make up those capsules! IT'S VIAGRA! You woulda kept that boy up all night, if you know what I mean. That's why I didn't deliver it, Mr. Gower. I wanted to make sure!

ZUZU: Mr. Gower starts crying and apologizing to young George *(waits for response)* then takes a seat to the thunderous applause of the audience. I said, THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE of the audience *(as ZUZU heads back to her rocker and GEORGE heads off stage)*

(CLARENCE is back in stagelight)

JOSEPH: Well, Clarence, that was George Bailey as a boy. When he grew up, he wanted to go to college, but there just wasn't any money...so he worked for four years in the Building and Loan Association...

CLARENCE: Building and Loan Association?

JOSEPH: Oh, I forgot to tell you. George's father was in the Building and Loan business. He, and George's Uncle Billy. High ideals, but a low bank account...

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* All goal...no dough...

JOSEPH: Anyway, George worked for his father and saved enough to send himself off to the university. That summer though, he was going to Europe...to see the world he has always dreamed about. Got a job on a cattle boat...gonna do a little traveling before college.

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* moo's lips...stink ships...*(pause)*...see the world.

JOSEPH: The night before George was to leave, he had a talk with his father. It seems George's father had a tussle with old Henry Potter, who was on the Board of Directors of the Building & Loan, but was looking to own everything in Bedford Falls.

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets...wants all.

JOSEPH: Not Harry Potter! Not Harry Potter! HENRY Potter!

CLARENCE: *(mumbling while erasing his notes)* Of course, Henry Potter. Who would want a hairy potter, anyway? I mean, he would sweat up a storm gardening with all that hair in the heat of the summer. But then again, I did hear of a Pete Moss once before...

JOSEPH: *(clearing throat)* Ahemmmm! It was that night that George's father asked him to re-consider about coming back to the Building & Loan after college, but George...

GEORGE: *(from backstage...not on stage)* Oh, no, now, Pop. I...I...I...I just couldn't. I...I couldn't face being cooped up the rest of my life in a shabby little office. I...oh, I'm sorry, Pop. Now I...I didn't mean that, but it's just this business of nickels and dimes. I'd go crazy. I...I want to do something big! Something important!

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* Fly the coop...can't handle poop...

GEORGE: Oh, oh, I know Pop. You ARE doing something important, in a small way. You help people figure out how they can own their own homes. But, but in that shabby little office, I just wish that I felt that I... I...but I just feel like if I didn't get away, I'd bust!

ZUZU: *(steps in to continue story)* And can you believe that ole Mr. Bailey sympathized with George and told him to do his traveling, then get his education, then get on out of Bedford Falls to conquer the world. *(pauses)* He was a great man. But the most important part of my story is what happens next! George's brother Harry asks George to come to the dance that night...

CLARENCE: *(taking notes)* George's brother is hairy and wants to dance...

ZUZU: *(stares at CLARENCE in disdain...long pause)*

CLARENCE: *(looks up from note-taking and looks at ZUZU)* Whaaat??

ZUZU: *(heading into audience to pre-selected full-figured, old MARY)* As I was saying, George did indeed decide to go to the dance that night and that's where he ran into Mary Hatch. Mary was a young, svelte, girl of eighteen...*(pause...look at chosen MARY)*. Eighteen? Um, 28? Maybe 48? *(walk MARY to stage and pretend whisper)* How old are you, dearie? Well, at least you do have a svelte figure! *(GEORGE enters and ZUZU hooks them up on stage holding hands)* As I was saying, George and Mary hooked up that night at the dance and three hours later, he was walking her home. They were feeling pretty good...as a matter of fact, wonderful...and as they walked together, they sang TOGETHER...

GEORGE: *(leading MARY in song...if MARY doesn't sing, GEORGE prods her along with lines like, "What's the matter, Mary, forgot the words?", "Cat got your tongue?", "Frog in your throat?" until she joins him in song)* "Buffalo gals can't you come out tonight? Can't you come out tonight? Can't you come out tonight? Buffalo gals can't you come out tonight.....aaaaannnnnnnd dance by the light of da moon?" Hot dog! That was beautiful! Just like an organ! At least, maybe, a monkey grinder's organ and his monkey! *(pause)* Gee whiz, Mary. Hey, you know...you know somethin'? If it wasn't me talkin' I'd say you were the prettiest girl in town...or at least here at the *(name of theatre)*!

ZUZU: It was then that George and Mary stopped in front of the old, run-down, Granville house.

GEORGE: *(looking out into the audience)* Hey, look where we are, Mary! I gotta throw a rock!

ZUZU: Mary, loving that old house and wanting to live there someday, tries to talk George out of throwing his rock *(wait for MARY to state her case)* I said, Mary tries to talk George out of throwing his rock *(wait for debate from MARY)*.

GEORGE: Well, don't you know about deserted, old houses? You...you make a wish and then throw a rock. (*picking up pretend rock*) Now, watch. Watch this. Here we go. (*GEORGE throws into audience and glass shattering SFX is heard*) How 'bout it, huh? Pretty good shot, huh? Broke a window, huh?

ZUZU: Mary then asks George what he wished for (*wait for MARY to ask GEORGE and repeat line if necessary*)

GEORGE: Oh...I don't know. Not just one wish. A whole hatful of' em. Mary, I'm shakin' the dust of this crummy little town off my feet and I'm gonna see the world! Italy, Greece. The Parthenon. The Coliseum. And then I'm comin' back here and go to college and see what they know. And then I'm gonna build things. I'm gonna build air fields and skyscrapers a hundred stories high and bridges a mile long and then I'm gonna...gonna...

ZUZU: Just then, Mary, getting caught up in George's excitement, picks up a rock to throw at the ole Granville house to make a wish of her own...(*wait for MARY to throw pretend rock into audience...nothing happens*)

GEORGE: (*handing MARY a foam packing peanut as a rock*) Here, maybe you oughta try this. (*MARY throws and SFX of whistle going down and splat*)

GEORGE: (*handing MARY a foam brick*) Here, maybe something bigger will do the trick. (*MARY throws foam brick into audience and same whistle/splat SFX is heard*)

GEORGE: (*pulling out a foam bowling ball and handing to MARY*) Okay...okay...Now, try this then. (*MARY throws foam bowling ball into audience and bowling pin strike with shattered glass SFX is heard*) Now, that's the ticket! Hey...hey, Mary? What is it you want? What do you want, huh? You want the moon? All you gotta do is just say the word and I'll...(*wait for MARY to say the moon or prod her to say it with lines like, "y'know that great big white thing in the sky...made of cheese"*) Oh, great, Mary! The moon it is! I'll lasso the moon for ya and pull 'er on in so you can swallow it...and...and it's dissolve like an aspirin, you know? And moonbeams will shoot out of your fingers and the ends of your hair and the...the, uh...you...you think I'm talkin' too much?

ZUZU: YES! Why don't you just kiss her instead of talking her to death??!

GEORGE: How's that? (*GEORGE grabs MARY getting ready for a big smooch*) Well, I...I...uh, I'll show you some kissing that'll...(*as GEORGE sprays some Binaca Blast or some other breath spray into his mouth smacking his lips and getting ready to give MARY a great big pucker when JOSEPH interrupts*)

JOSEPH: But just then, a car pulls up next to George and Mary. It's Uncle Billy informing George that his father has just had a stroke! George quickly leaves (*leaves stage*) as Mary leaves the stage to the thunderous applause of the audience.

(*pause*)

CLARENCE: So what happens next, Joseph? Is Mr. Bailey all right?

JOSEPH: Well, no, George's father died that night, Clarence. So, of course, George couldn't go to Europe. But, that fall, just as he was ready to leave for college, the Board of Directors of the Building & Loan had a meeting. They were going to appoint a successor to Mr. Bailey.

CLARENCE: Let me guess...that dirty, little sorcerer, Harry Potter.

ZUZU: (*heading into the audience to the pre-selected HENRY POTTER*) It's HENRY Potter!! Not Harry Potter. Geez, get it straight already, will ya?

CLARENCE: (*taking notes*) H...E...N...R...Y...HENRY Potter....okay, got it.

ZUZU: Actually, that scum-of-the-earth Mr. (*emphasizing*) HENRY Potter didn't want to be successor to Mr. Bailey. He wanted to dissolve the Building & Loan. (*with hands on shoulders of selected MR. POTTER*) He grumpily said, "The town of Bedford Falls don't need the Building & Loan." (*wait for echo or repeat line to get POTTER to talk*) But the ornery Mr. Potter continued saying, "Peter Bailey was not a businessman!" (*wait for echo*) He said, "Ideals without common sense can ruin a town." (*wait for echo*) Mr. Potter then said, "And what do you get? Discontented, lazy rabble instead of a thrifty working class." (*wait for echo which more than likely they will botch line so encourage them with...*) Just say, What you get is lotsa good-fer-nothings!" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: (*steps in with MR. POTTER*) Now hold on, Mr. Potter! Now wait a minute there! Why my father ever started this cheap, penny-ante Building & Loan, I'll never know. But just remember this, Mr. Potter....this rabble you're talking about...well, they do most of the working and paying and living and dying in this community. Well, is it too much to have them work and play and live and die in a couple of decent rooms and

a bath? My father didn't think so! People were human beings to him! But to you...a warped, frustrated, old man...they're just like cattle! Well, if you ask me, in my book, Mr. Potter, my father died a much richer man than you'll ever be!

ZUZU: But Mr. Potter fired back at George by saying, "I'm not interested in your book George! I'm talking about the Building & Loan!" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: You're talking about something you can't get your grubby little fingers on and it's driving you crazy...that's what you're talking about! Well this town needs this measly one-horse institution, if only to have some place where people can borrow a few dollars without having to crawl to you!

ZUZU: Then George stormed out of the meeting and our Mr. Potter took his bow to the thunderous applause of the audience...with a few boos and hisses thrown in because Mr. Potter was, after all, such a mean individual. Well, as you can guess, the Board of Directors voted down Mr. Potter, but on one condition...George would have to stay and run the Building & Loan.

CLARENCE: (*looking up from note taking*) So George Bailey didn't get to go to college then?

ZUZU: That's right, Clarence. He gave his college money to Harry. Harry went instead.

CLARENCE: (*taking notes again*) Harry wet the bed...(pause)...huh??

ZUZU: No...(pause)...Harry WENT INSTEAD...to college...instead of George.

CLARENCE: Ohhhh. (*pause*) But what happened to that svelte, good-looking, hot mama, foxy-lady-of-a-gal? You know, Mary??

ZUZU: Oh, George saw her now and then. Not very often, though, because Mary went away to school, too. Four years without Mary, and four years he waited on Harry to come back.

CLARENCE: (*interrupts with his note taking*) Mary has a hairy back...

ZUZU: No, no, no. Four years George waited for Harry to come back to Bedford Falls to take over running the Building & Loan. George still wants to see the world. To get out of Bedford Falls... maybe work the oil fields in Venezuela. Except, (*pause*) when

Harry finally came home from college, he wasn't alone. There was a girl with him...his wife, Ruth. And Ruth's father had a wonderful job waiting for him up in Buffalo. *(pause)* Which means, George had to stay in Bedford Falls once again.

CLARENCE: Ohhh, poor George.

ZUZU: But that's actually a good thing.

CLARENCE: What do you mean?

(Buffalo Gals instrumental in background)

ZUZU: Had George been able to go off to Venezuela, he probably would have never stopped in on Mary once she got back from college.

CLARENCE: And that's important?

ZUZU: Yes! Because that's when George Bailey and Mary Hatch finally realized that they were in love. *(awwww pause)*

CLARENCE: Well, well. So George and Mary were...

ZUZU: Yes, George and Mary were married. And they started off on their honeymoon in Ernie Bishop's taxicab. *(GEORGE re-enters and brings MARY to the stage)* Will my Ernie Bishop please come forward and drive the newlyweds to their honeymoon? Let's give our Ernie a round of applause. *(Three chairs are set on stage to simulate a taxi...one chair facing the audience with two behind it...ZUZU can adlib if need to kill time as everyone works their way to the stage: "Boy, you're a good-looking taxi driver, Ernie...do you DRIVE all the women crazy?" or "Did you know that Ernie and Bert on Sesame Street were named after the Ernie and Bert in my story?" ZUZU places an oversized bright orange or yellow clown taxi cap on ERNIE as GEORGE and MARY are seated in the two rear chairs with Ernie up front)* Now, here comes the turning point of my story where Ernie, as he's driving the two lovebirds through town, says, "Hey, where were you two going on this here honeymoon?" *(wait for echo...repeat line if necessary to get ERNIE to echo)*

GEORGE: Were gonna shoot the works, Ernie! A whole week in New York, a whole week in Bermuda. The highest hotel, the oldest champagne, the hottest music and the prettiest wife!

ZUZU: And Ernie says, "So you're finally getting' out of Bedford Falls, eh? Then what?" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: Then what? (*turning to MARY*) Hey, you know Mrs. Bailey, I haven't even kissed you yet! (*GEORGE pulls out the Binaca Blast once again and gets ready for a big pucker smacking his lips when ZUZU inetrupts*)

ZUZU: Just as George was about to make his move on his new bride, Ernie points across the street and says, "Hey George. There's something funny going on over there!" (*wait for echo*) "It looks like a run on the bank!" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: Pull over there a minute, will ya Ernie? (*wait for pretend taxi to come to a stop...ERNIE stepping on brake...if no indication from ERNIE that he's stopping feed him lines like, "Well, ya gonna stop Ernie?" or "Do you want me to jump as you drive by?"*) Now wait a minute. Better see what it is. I'll be right back. (*GEORGE exits stage*)

ZUZU: And Mary and Ernie go back to their seats to the thunderous applause of the audience (*as ZUZU helps them off stage*)

CLARENCE: Poor George Bailey. Oh, he's certainly in desperate trouble, Joseph. I'll go to him at once.

JOSEPH: Now, you just sit down, Clarence...sit down. We're nowhere near the point where George Bailey is thinking of taking his life.

CLARENCE: We're not?

JOSEPH: You see, George and Mary had just started out on their honeymoon when they ran smack dab into the financial panic of 1932. In the waiting room of the Building & Loan, a hundred frantic people were clamoring for their savings and George held them off with his and Mary's honeymoon money.

CLARENCE: How's that? Their honeymoon money?

JOSEPH: Yes, George reminded his customers that each of their own money was tied up in the houses of the customers around them. That if they wanted their money withdrawn, they'd have to foreclose on their own neighbors.

CLARENCE: Ohhh, that wouldn't be good.

JOSEPH: George even convinced them not to give in to Mr. Potter's offer to buy their shares for 50-cents on the dollar. He begged them not to do that. He said if Potter got a hold of each others shares, he'd own the Building & Loan. He already owned the bank, the bus line, and the department stores; and, by owning the Building & Loan, Mr. Potter would keep all of George's customers living in shacks and paying the kind of rent that Potter decides to charge! George knew that if they all stuck together and had faith in each other, they could get through this panic all right. With George's encouraging words, each customer took just a little money to help tie them over until it passed.

CLARENCE: And did they make through?

JOSEPH: George and Uncle Billy made it to six o'clock that night with two dollars left in their pocket out of all that honeymoon money. They were still in business. And, at six o'clock, Mary called George on the phone and told him to come home.

CLARENCE: What home? I thought they just got married and were heading out on their honeymoon? They livin' with the mother-in-law? Ohhh, that wouldn't be so good.

JOSEPH: No, not the mother-in-law. The old Granville house. You know, the one George threw rocks at and made wishes. Yes sir, that's where they spent their honeymoon. That's where they started housekeeping.

ZUZU: *(taking over story and heading into audience to MR. POTTER)* That's right. George and Mary fixed that old house up as best they could. Sure, it was drafty in the winter and something always needed to be fixed, but they made it a home...full of love. *(GEORGE enters)* And a couple of years later, old man Potter asked George to stop over at his office. When he arrived, Mr. Potter asked George to sit down and have a cigar *(wait for echo or encourage POTTER to say line and hand him a cigar to hand to GEORGE)*

GEORGE: *(sitting on someone's lap if no empty chair is nearby POTTER)* Well, thank you, sir. You're not trying to seduce me with that cigar like that Clinton fella now are ya? *(to person GEORGE is sitting on lap)* Pardon, my little lap dance here, will ya?

ZUZU: *(shocked)* GEORGE BAILEY! Please, can we continue with my story...*(pause)* Well, Mr. Potter then commented that George was a fine, young man...married...making, say, \$40 a week at the Building & Loan...

GEORGE: *(proud as a peacock, sucking on his cigar, interrupts)* \$45 a week.

ZUZU: But Mr. Potter then painted a picture of the true George Bailey where \$45 a week would be fine for some ordinary local yokel, but not George Bailey. Intelligent. Ambitious. Hates the Building & Loan almost as much as Potter does. He's been dying to get out of town ever since he was born. But he's trapped. Trapped into frittering his life away playing nursemaid to the riff-raff of society. But then Mr. Potter says to George, "George, you're the only one that's licked me." (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: (*with a look of 'did he just say what I think he said'*) Ewwwww!

ZUZU: No, not licked as in tongue-licking...licked as in beat. Mr. Potter says, "You're the only one that beat me, George." (*wait for echo*) Mr. Potter says, "I want to hire you. (*wait for echo*). I'll start you off at \$20,000 per year." (*wait for echo...help if POTTER struggles*)

GEORGE: (*stunned*) Twenty thou...? \$20,000 a year?? Are you sure you're talking to me? I'm George Bailey. Don't you remember me? The Building & Loan, remember?

ZUZU: And Potter says, "Yes, George Bailey. Whose ship has just come in providing he has sense enough to climb aboard." (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: Well, well...but...but...what about the Building & Loan?

ZUZU: Potter gets steaming mad at George...ready to blow his top...and says, "Confound it man!" (*wait for echo*) "I'm offering you \$20,000 a year!" (*wait for echo*) "Deal or no deal?" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: (*pauses to think*) No! No! The answer is NO! Doggone it! If you offered me a million dollars to stay around this crummy little town and play stooge to you, the answer would soitenly still be NO! Now, lemme alone! Don't bother me! (*exit as frustrated stooge, Curly, doing hand movements and sounding off with a Curly mmmppphhh bark then head towards MARY*)

ZUZU: George was frustrated and headed home to Mary while Mr. Potter accepts the thunderous applause of the audience! (*heading to GEORGE and MARY*) Once George arrived home, Mary asked George what Mr. Potter wanted. (*wait for response from MARY*)

GEORGE: *(tired)* Oh, it was nothing, Mary. He just...talk...talk...I don't know; it was nothin'. *(sighs deeply)* Aw gee...Mary Hatch...Mary, why in the world did you ever marry a guy like me anyway? I was gonna see the world. I was gonna build things. I was gonna give you the moon. What have I given you? Not even a new dress. Not even a honeymoon. Not even a decent house. I...gee whiz... I feel awful.

ZUZU: But then Mary says, "So do I. Mornings especially." *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: You could've married Sam Wainwright...anybody else in town.

ZUZU: But Mary says, "I didn't want to marry anybody else." *(wait for echo)* "I want my baby to look like you!" *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: You...you...you...you what? You're...? You mean...hey...Mary...Mary, you mean you're on the nest?

ZUZU: And the audience applauded loudly for the news of George and Mary's little one to be!

JOSEPH: Well, Mary had her baby, Clarence. A boy.

CLARENCE: You don't say.

JOSEPH: Then, she had another one. A girl.

CLARENCE: Well, whaddya know?

JOSEPH: Night after night, George would come home late from the office. Things weren't good with the Building & Loan. Potter was really bearing down on him. Then came the war. Mary had another baby by then.

CLARENCE: Ohhhhh.

JOSEPH: But she still had time to help out in the USO. Uncle Billy sold war bonds. And George's brother Harry became a real hero...shot down fifteen planes!

CLARENCE: But George. What about George?

JOSEPH: Well, George was 4F due to his bad ear. He was an air raid warden. On VE Day he wept and prayed. On VJ Day he wept and prayed again.

CLARENCE: We're, uh, we're getting pretty close to present day, aren't we sir?

JOSEPH: Yes, Clarence. You know almost everything you have to know about George Bailey. Except what happened that finds him down there at this moment, wanting to die.

CLARENCE: Well sir? Well?

JOSEPH: Well, today's the day before Christmas...earth time that is. George is pretty excited! On the front page of the newspaper is the headline, "Commander Harry Bailey Decorated by the President." George's kid brother was to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor!

CLARENCE: Gosh! That's wonderful!

JOSEPH: Yes! That last plane he shot down was ready to dive into a transport loaded with soldiers. You know what that means, don't you? It means he saved lives...hundreds of lives.

CLARENCE: Wow! But didn't you say George was excited about that? Why would that make him want to take his life?

JOSEPH: It doesn't. It's what happened next, you see. Uncle Billy was heading to the bank to deposit \$8,000 when he ran into Mr. Potter. Uncle Billy was excited about Harry being in the newspaper as well, and bragged to Mr. Potter that you can't keep those Bailey boys down. Mr. Potter grabbed the newspaper out of Uncle Billy's hand as Uncle Billy skipped off to make his deposit. Little did Uncle Billy know that his deposit money was wrapped up in that newspaper.

CLARENCE: Oh dear.

JOSEPH: Uncle Billy searched high and low for that deposit money, but couldn't find it anywhere. He finally headed back to the Building & Loan where he was confronted by George.

GEORGE: *(heard off stage)* Eight Thousand Dollars! Uncle Billy, the bank examiner's here right now and it's not our money...it belongs to the depositors. *(snaps)* Where's that money, you silly old fool! You know what this means? It means bankruptcy and scandal and prison! One of us is going to jail! Well, it's not gonna be me! Now get out of my way! I'm going home! *(GEORGE enters from offstage and heads to MARY)*

ZUZU: *(heads into audience to MARY, PETE and JANIE carrying a mini Christmas tree and small battery-operated piano)* Mary and her two oldest kids were getting ready for Christmas the next day. Mary and Pete were decorating the tree *(places tree in front of MARY and PETE and waits for them to begin decorating...if not, repeat line)*, while little Janie was practicing on the piano for the Christmas party playing the same song over and over *(places piano in front of JANIE and waits for her to begin playing...repeat line if not playing...tell her to continue playing if she stops at any time before told to do so)* Just then, George walked in and moped around the house silently. Finally Mary asked him, "George, dear, what's wrong? *(wait for echo)* You haven't said a word since you got home" *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: With all that banging on the piano? Does she have to keep playing that same song over and over and over again?

ZUZU: But Janie just kept on playing because she wanted to get her song just right...*(pause and listen to piano playing)*...she was practicing to make it perfect...*(pause again)*...at this rate she'll be practicing all night! Then Mary asked George, "What's wrong, my little pookie bear? *(wait for echo)* Another hectic day?" *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: *(angrily)* Yeah, yeah. Another red letter day for the Baileys.

ZUZU: Not realizing that he was adding to his father's frustration, Petey chimed in, "Dad, the Murphy's got a brand new car! *(wait for echo)* You should see it!" *(wait for echo)*

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

ZUZU: Mary, sensing George's frustration, asked Petey, "Would you run upstairs and see if Zuzu's all right, Petey?" *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: Now what? What do you mean, "see if Zuzu's all right?"

ZUZU: Mary explained that Zuzu caught a little cold coming home from school. Didn't button up her coat, but the doctor said it was nothing serious.

GEORGE: The doctor? Was the doctor here? It's this drafty, old house. It's no wonder we don't all have pneumonia! Might as well be living in a refrigerator. Why'd we have to live here in the first place and stay around this measly, crummy old town?

ZUZU: But Mary sees that George is on the verge of snapping...forgot to take his Prozac or something, I guess...and she worriedly asks him, "George, what's happened?" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: What's happened? Everything's happened! You call this a happy family? Why did we have to have all these kids?

ZUZU: Just then the phone rings (*wait for ring SFX and pull toy phone from P.J.s*) and Mary answers. It's Zuzu's schoolteacher calling to check up and see if Zuzu's okay. Mary reassures her that the doctor says she'll be fine for Christmas Day. But George overhearing the conversation and realizing who it is, takes matters into his own hands...

GEORGE: Here, give me that phone! Hello? Mrs. Welch? This is Mr. Bailey! Say, what kind of teacher are you anyway? What do you mean sending Zuzu home like that, half-naked? Do you realize she'll probably end up with pneumonia just because of your stupidity? You know, maybe my kids aren't the best-dressed kids in town, but at least...hello? Hello? (*throws phone up on stage then screams at JANIE*) Janie! Will you please stop playing that lousy piano? Now cut it out! Stop it! Aaaggggh! I've got to get out of here! (*GEORGE frantically wanders around audience*)

ZUZU: So George left his home with Janie loudly crying (*wait for JANIE to bawl*) and Mary wondering what to do for her husband. Desperate, George headed to old man Potter's to ask for help with the \$8,000 shortage.

GEORGE: (*begging POTTER*) Please, Mr. Potter. I'll pay any sort of bonus. I'll do anything. If you want the Building & Loan, I...

ZUZU: But Mr. Potter knew he had George right where he wanted him. His friend, Sam Wainwright couldn't help him because he was in Europe and difficult to get a hold of. George didn't want to go to the police, with Harry's homecoming planned for tomorrow and all. So Mr. Potter asked George, "What kind of security would I have George? (*wait for echo*) What collateral?" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: I have some life insurance here. \$15,000 policy...but I only have \$500 equity in it so far...

ZUZU: Mr. Potter was bitter with George for once calling him a warped, frustrated old man and having the nerve to come crawling to him on his knees, so he said, "I'm calling the District Attorney, George." (*wait for echo*) Then he added in one last zinger by saying, "You're worth more dead than you are alive, George" (*wait for echo*)

(*GEORGE runs through audience heading to MARTINI & WELCH*)

JOSEPH: And all the time, Potter had the \$8,000 in his desk drawer. It's still there, Clarence.

CLARENCE: But where is George, sir? Where?

JOSEPH: Well, he went over to Martini's Tavern. He's had a couple of drinks, Clarence. Got a little schnockered...loaded...blotto...three sheets to the wind. He's just standing there...sort of in a daze...

GEORGE: Oh God...God...Dear Father in heaven. I...I...I'm not a praying man, but if...if you're up there and...and you can hear me, please show me the way. I'm at the end of my rope. Show me the way, God.

ZUZU: (*now with GEORGE, MARTINI & WELCH then places large clown bow-tie around MARTINI's neck*) Mr. Martini noticed George seemed a bit distraught so he asked him, "Mr. Bailey, you all right?" (*wait for echo*) "Don't drink no more, Mr. Bailey, please?" (*wait for echo*) But Mr. Welch (*placing child's construction hat on WELCH's head*)...little Zuzu's teacher's husband...overheard Mr. Martini talking to a Mr. Bailey so Mr. Welch asks, Which Bailey? George Bailey?" (*wait for echo*) Then Mr. Welch slugs George right in the kisser (*pause and repeat if necessary*), saying, "And the next time you talk to my wife like that, you'll get worse!" (*wait for echo*)

(*GEORGE checks mouth for bleeding and heads off-stage*)

ZUZU: And Martini and Welch....hmmm, sounds like a vineyard or a law firm...take their bows to the thunderous applause of the audience.

JOSEPH: Well, George left Martini's Tavern five minutes ago, Clarence. He's at the river now, on the bridge, looking at the water. Are you ready, Clarence?

CLARENCE: All ready, sir.

JOSEPH: Very well. Save George Bailey's life and you'll get your wings!

CLARENCE: My wings! Oh, thank you, Joseph! Oh, and...uh...sir? Will I...will I get a halo too, instead of this red hat?? (*CLARENCE leaves stage...pause*)

ZUZU: Well, I think this would be a good time for a little intermission. I don't know about you, but I have to go...it's a bummer getting older, isn't it? Make sure to be back in your seats though in ten minutes. The rest of my story is the best part! See you then. (*ZUZU heads off stage*)

10 Minute Intermission

Act Two

ZUZU: (*in rocker addressing audience*) So what do you think of my story so far? Sitting on the edge of your seat in anticipation? Or, are you sitting on the edge of your seat because the restroom lines are still too long? Well, let me continue my story...Numb with despair...convinced, as Mr. Potter said, that he's worth more dead than alive, George Bailey stands on a bridge staring at the dark and frigid waters below. Suddenly, there's a splash.

(*Toilet Flush SFX*)

CLARENCE: (*from backstage*) Help! Help! I'm drowning! Oh! Help!

ZUZU: No, that's not George. It's Clarence, the apprentice angel. And there goes George in after him. (*GEORGE and CLARENCE enter carrying their shoes and start taking off their "soaked" socks*) It took a few minutes, but George finally was able to get Clarence up to the bridgekeepers shack where they could dry off.

GEORGE: Are you all right, mister?

CLARENCE: Oh, I'm fine. These socks though...I didn't have time to get anything more stylish. You know what your mother always said to you as a child..."put on clean socks because you never know if you'll get in an accident." Y'know, my wife gave these socks to me on my last birthday. I passed away wearing them.

GEORGE: You....you what, mister? (*pause*) Hey, how'd you happen to fall in?

CLARENCE: Oh, I didn't fall in. I jumped in. I jumped in to save you.

GEORGE: Jumped in to save me?

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

GEORGE: Go through with what?

CLARENCE: Suicide.

GEORGE: Hey, I wasn't...I mean...I...you know, it's against the law to commit suicide around here.

CLARENCE: Yeah, it's against the law where I come from, too.

GEORGE: Where do you come from?

CLARENCE: Heaven.

GEORGE: Oh, that's very funny. Very funny.

CLARENCE: Your...your lip's bleeding.

GEORGE: Yeah, yeah, I got a bust in the jaw in answer to a prayer.

CLARENCE: Oh, no, George. I'm the answer to your prayer.

GEORGE: Hey, how...how'd you know my name?

CLARENCE: Oh, I know all about you.

GEORGE: Well, who are you supposed to be, anyway?

CLARENCE: Clarence Oddbody, A-S-2.

GEORGE: Clarence Oddbody. What's,,,what's the A-S-2 for?

CLARENCE: Angel, Second Class.

GEORGE: Hey, look here, why'd you want to save me?

CLARENCE: Because I'm your guardian angel, George.

GEORGE: Oh, I see, uh huh. Well, you look like about the kind of angel I'd get. What...what...uh...what happened to your wings?

CLARENCE: I haven't won my wings yet. That's why I'm an angel, second class.

GEORGE: Oh, I see.

CLARENCE: But you can help me earn them, George, by letting me help you.

GEORGE: Oh, uh huh. Don't happen to have eight thousand bucks on you, do you?

CLARENCE: Oh, no, no. We don't use money in Heaven.

GEORGE: Oh, that's right, yeah, I keep forgetting. I see. Comes in pretty handy down here, bub. Of course, I found out a little late. You know, I'm worth more dead than alive.

CLARENCE: You musn't talk like that. Joseph will never give me my wings if you keep feeling that way. You just don't realize what you've done for your folks. Why, if it hadn't been for you...

GEORGE: Yeah, if it hadn't been for me, everybody'd be better off! My wife, and my kids and my friends...

CLARENCE: Ohhhh, this is not going to be easy.

GEORGE: They'd all be better off if I hadn't been born.

CLARENCE: What did you say?

GEORGE: I said, I wish I'd never been born.

CLARENCE: George, that's wonderful.

GEORGE: Wonderful, what?

CLARENCE: The idea you just gave me. (*looks to the heavens and snaps his fingers*) Well, you've got your wish. You've never been born.

GEORGE: I've never been born?

CLARENCE: Exactly. No worries, no eight thousand dollars to get, nothing. You simply don't exist. George, I can do things. Strange things. I can show you the world, George, the way it would be if you hadn't been born.

GEORGE: Hey wait. Say, wait a minute! This ear of mine. Say something else in that bad ear.

CLARENCE: You don't have a bad ear any more. Oh, I don't think you're concentrating. Don't you see? You're not the George Bailey you think you are. You're...well, uh, you're nobody.

GEORGE: Well, that's the doggonedest thing I ever...that...that ear...

CLARENCE: Your lip's stopped bleeding, too.

GEORGE: Yeah, yeah...hey, what's...what's happenin' around here? What is this, anyway? I need a drink, that's what I need! What about you, angel, you want a drink?

CLARENCE: Well, I...I don't know.

GEORGE: C'mon, c'mon' we'll go as soon as our clothes and socks are dry.

CLARENCE: Clothes and socks ARE dry, George.

GEORGE: Hey, so they are, that's funny. Well, look, let's get dressed and we'll stroll over to Martini's and then...oh, oh, excuse me...I mean, I'll stroll, you fly.

CLARENCE: Ha, no, no, I don't have my wings.

GEORGE: You don't have your wings yet. That's right, I forgot that again. Couple of drinks and we'll both fly, huh?

ZUZU: Well, the two of them took a walk up the road, back to, what George thought was, Martini's Tavern. As they got closer, George noticed the sign outside said, "Nick's Place."

GEORGE: Hey, what's with this place? It's all changed.

CLARENCE: All of Bedford Falls has changed. You're having your wish, George. You've never been born. Oh, there'll be lots of things you've never seen before.

ZUZU: (*ZUZU makes her way to MR. GOWER*) Just then, an old, worn-down man drunkenly stumbles out of the bar door. Thrown out is more like it.

CLARENCE: George, look! (*pointing to MR. GOWER*)

GEORGE: Hey! It's Mr. Gower! Mr. Gower! Listen, Mr. Gower, don't you know me? This is George Bailey.

ZUZU: Bur Mr. Gower didn't know of a George Bailey...George never existed before, so Mr. Gower says to George in a drunken manner, "You...you buy me a drink, mister? (*wait for echo*) "Just one drink, will ya mister?" (*wait for echo*) Then Mr. Gower passed out in a drunken stupor...faced down in the snow...to the thunderous applause of the audience.

GEORGE: But that's Mr. Gower...the druggist!

CLARENCE: George, Mr. Gower spent twenty years in jail for poisoning the Blaine boy with an overdose of Viagra. They had a real HARD time closing the lid on that boy's coffin too, if you know what I mean. Mr. Gower doesn't know you, George. You see, you weren't there to stop him from putting Viagra in that prescription.

GEORGE: What do you mean, I wasn't there? Look, now, tell me, what are you? Are you a hypnotist? Look, why am I seeing all these strange things here?

CLARENCE: Don't you understand? It's because you were not born.

GEORGE: Well, if I wasn't born, then who am I?

CLARENCE: Nobody. You have no identity.

GEORGE: What do you mean, I have no identity?

CLARENCE: No papers, no driver's license, no 4-F card, no insurance policy.

GEORGE: Zuzu's bell!

CLARENCE: What?

GEORGE: Zuzu's bell. I bought my little girl a bell to hang on the Christmas tree and I forgot to give it to her. I've got it in...*(searches for it)*...it's...it's gone! It's gone, too. Everything's gone.

CLARENCE: But you've been given a great gift, George. A chance to see what the world would look like if you've never been born.

GEORGE: You're crazy. You're crazy as a bedbug and you're drivin' me crazy, too! Now, look, I'm going home to my wife and family, do you understand that? And I'm going home alone! *(GEORGE frantically runs through audience and ends up by ERNIE)*

JOSEPH: Better not leave him alone, Clarence. Keep following him.

CLARENCE: Joseph! Oh, I'll stay near him, sir. Poor, George, he's seeing Main Street now, the way it'd be if he hadn't lived. The thing that's really shocked him, sir, is the Building & Loan office...it's a pawnshop! Oh, now he's talking to Ernie Bishop, the taxi driver. He wants to go home. *(GEORGE brings ERNIE up on stage by chairs for taxi)*

JOSEPH: You better tag along, Clarence.

CLARENCE: Oh, I will, sir. I will.

ZUZU: *(talks while GEORGE gets ERNIE in seat and hat on ERNIE)* You see, George was having a difficult time believing that he didn't exist. All the people from his past did not know him because, well, he had no past. As Clarence said, George has no identity.

GEORGE: *(in taxi)* C'mon, step on it, will ya Ernie? Get me home. I'm off my nut.

ZUZU: But, if George didn't exist before, then where was home? So Ernie says, "Where do you live, buddy?" *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: Aw, now doggone it, Ernie, don't start pullin' that stuff on me. Three-twenty-three Sycamore. And hurry up, will ya? Zuzu's sick.

ZUZU: Ernie drove off to three-twenty-three Sycamore, but he knew this George fellow was not quite right since no one has lived at that address for years...since old Granville passed away.

GEORGE: Hey, look Ernie, I...I don't know what's happening. I'm going crazy or something. Maybe I got some bad liquor. I...now, look, tell me this now. You're Ernie Bishop, right? And you live with your wife and kid down in...

ZUZU: Ernie comes to a screeching stop (*wait for response which probably won't be a screeching stop*). I said, Ernie comes to a SCREECHING stop (*wait for response*) and sharply says, "You've seen my wife?" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: What do you mean? Seen your wife? I've been in your house a hundred times! We built it for you, didn't we?

ZUZU: But Ernie's wife took their child and ran away over five years ago, so Ernie angrily says, "I ain't never seen you before in my life, mister!" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: Okay, Ernie, Okay. Just step on it. Get me home, please.

ZUZU: Ernie drives on and stops at three-twenty-three Sycamore where he let's George off. George runs toward the empty house screaming...

GEORGE: Mary! Mary! Where are you? Janie! Petey! Zuzu! Where are you?

CLARENCE: This is just an old abandoned house, George. You have no wife. No children.

GEORGE: Where are they? What have you done with them?

ZUZU: (*bringing BERT to stage and putting an oversized clown cop hat on him*) Just then, Bert the cop pulled up in his police car and walked towards George and Clarence saying, "All right...up with your hands!" (*wait for echo*)

GEORGE: Oh, Bert! Bert...thank heaven, you're here! Bert..now, Bert, listen to me. What's the matter with you guys? Now listen to me Bert...it's that fellow there (*pointing to Clarence*). He says he's an angel. He tried to hypnotize me!

ZUZU: But instead, Bert pulled out his nightstick to get these two hooligans under control (*pause to see if BERT acts this out*).

CLARENCE: Run, George, run! He can't hit you while I'm biting him! (*try to bite BERT*) Run, George! My teeth aren't what they used to be! Joseph, help! Joseph! Joseph! (*GEORGE and CLARENCE exit*)

ZUZU: Just then, Joseph zapped George and Clarence out of that predicament...they completely disappeared...then Bert turned to Ernie and asked him where they went...and Ernie said, I think they went to Sesame Street (*snicker*) Ooh, sorry...I couldn't resist. Actually, Bert and Ernie took their bows and returned to their seats to the thunderous applause of the audience.

JOSEPH: Clarence?!

CLARENCE: (*returning to stage*) Oh, Joseph, I hope you don't mind my calling on you like I did.

JOSEPH: It was very irregular, Clarence. You're by yourself again. Where's George?

CLARENCE: He's at his mother's house, sir.

JOSEPH: Well, if George hasn't been born, he has no mother.

CLARENCE: Oh, he's being very stubborn, sir. He'll just have to find these things out for himself.

JOSEPH: But his mother! That's a terribly bitter blow to a man...his own mother not knowing him.

CLARENCE: You mean I shouldn't have let him...?

JOSEPH: I mean, you'd better find him right away. Oh, and stop biting policemen, Clarence!

CLARENCE: I'm here again, George.

GEORGE: (*enters*) My mother...my own mother didn't know me! If only Harry were here...if only my brother were back from Washington.

CLARENCE: Your brother fell through the ice and was drowned at the age of nine.

GEORGE: That's a lie! He got the Congressional Medal of Honor! He saved the lives of every man on that transport!

CLARENCE: Every man on that transport died. Strange, isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other lives. Harry wasn't there to save them because you weren't there to save Harry. Don't you see, George? You really had a wonderful life. Don't you see what a mistake it would be to throw it away?

GEORGE: Clarence...

CLARENCE: Yes?

GEORGE: Where's Mary? Please, where's my wife?

CLARENCE: I, uh, I'm not supposed to tell.

GEORGE: (*desperate*) Tell me where she is.

CLARENCE: You're not going to like it, George.

GEORGE: Where is she?? I'll choke it out of you if I have to! Where's my wife??

CLARENCE: The library. She works there. She's just about to lock up for the night. (*GEORGE goes to MARY*) So, I, uh...George! George! Come back! (*sadly, to himself*) Oh, there must be some easier way for me to get my wings.

GEORGE: Mary! Mary! Mary, it's George! Don't you know me?

ZUZU: But Mary didn't know George.

GEORGE: Mary, please don't do this to me! Mary, please, help me! Help me! Where are our kids, Mary? I need you, Mary! Please! I'm George! Mary!

ZUZU: Mary let's out a loud scream and then faints (*wait for response*)

(*GEORGE exits*)

JOSEPH: Clarence?

CLARENCE: Oh, where is he, Joseph? Where's George? I'm afraid I've lost him, sir!

JOSEPH: You knew you shouldn't have let him try to see Mary. Now, they're after him...a mob! They think he was trying to hurt her!

CLARENCE: Joseph, I won't even get one wing, will I?

JOSEPH: You have one more chance, Clarence. Get over to the bridge by the river. I think George has seen just about enough.

CLARENCE: But...but the mob?!

JOSEPH: Don't worry...they've lost him too. Now, hurry up!

CLARENCE: Oh, thank you, Joseph! Thank you!

GEORGE: Clarence?...*(yells)* CLARENCE! Clarence, where are you?

CLARENCE: I'm here, George.

GEORGE: Help me, Clarence. Get me back. I don't care what happens to me. Only get me back to my wife and kids, please. I want to live again.

CLARENCE: Oh, thank you, George. Thank you, Lord! *(throws red hat off head and exits)*

GEORGE: I want to live again, please. Oh God, please, let me live again.

ZUZU: *(getting BERT on stage)* Just then, Bert the cop was searching the streets of Bedford Falls...desperately looking for George when he finally spotted him by the bridge and yelled out to him, "George, is that you, George?" *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: Now, get away from here, Bert! Get outta here! You come any closer and I'll let you have it! C'mon...George? George? Bert! Bert, do you know me?

ZUZU: And Bert says, "Know you? I've been looking all over town for you!" *(wait for echo)*

GEORGE: Hey Bert! Bert! I'm alive again, Bert! *(touches lip)* And look, my mouth's bleedin'! Bert, lookit! Look at the blood! Oh! Hey! Where's....*(searching)*? Zuzu's Christmas bell, Bert...I had it right in my pocket *(rings bell)* Here it is! Hey, it's in my pocket! What do you know about that? Hey, Merry Christmas Bert! *(GEORGE happily runs through audience)*

ZUZU: As Bert exited the stage to the thunderous applause of the audience, George rushed off through the streets of Bedford Falls wishing a Merry Christmas to everyone and everything he ran into. He even wished a Merry Christmas to the crummy old Building & Loan. He finally made it back to his house where he was greeted by a crowd of people...

GEORGE: *(shaking hands, touching shoulders, hugging audience members)* Wha...? What's with all these people? These reporters? Wha....? Hey, Merry Christmas, reporters! Hey, Mr. Bank Examiner...Merry Christmas! I bet you want your \$8,000, huh? Oh, and here's the sheriff...I bet that's a warrant for my arrest...isn't that wonderful? Well, Merry Christmas, Sheriff! Merry Christmas! Oh, and my kid brother Harry! You made it home, Mister War Hero! Merry Christmas! And look...it's Sam Wainwright! Hee Haw! You're not in Europe afterall! Merry Christmas, you ole son-of-a-gun! And Mr. Gower! Glad to see you're fine and well! Merry Christmas to you! Bert! Ernie! How's life over on Sesame Street! Uncle Billy! Oh, Uncle Billy...please forgive me for mouthing off like that to you. I know it wasn't your fault. Merry Christmas! Oh, look...and there're my kids! Janie! Petey! Merry Christmas to you, my precious darlings! Mary! Mary! Oh, just let me touch you! *(taking out his Binaca Blast and spraying in his mouth)* Let me give you that big smooch I've been trying to give you. Oh, you're so real Mary! Oh, you have no idea what happened to me.

ZUZU: But Mary had a very good idea what happened to George. In fact, she got the whole town to pitch in and collected over \$8,000. For if it wasn't for George Bailey, the whole town of Bedford Falls wouldn't have had roofs over their heads. I think George's brother Harry summed it up best when he said in a toast, "To my big brother George...the richest man in town." *(pause with hands on heart)* But the greatest gift came to me when George said...

GEORGE: Zuzu? Where's my little Zuzu? I have your Christmas bell for you.

ZUZU: *(joining hands with GEORGE)* that's right...I'm little Zuzu...all grown up now...and this story is close to my heart. For my dear father came alive that Christmas. He realized that all the riches and adventures he was seeking in the world were right there in Bedford Falls. And as for Clarence? *(rings bell)* You know what they say...

(CLARENCE enters with wings on and a silver halo, joining GEORGE and ZUZU holding hands in line, and ALL say together encouraging the audience to join in)

ZUZU, GEORGE & CLARENCE: Every time a bell rings an angel gets his wings!

ZUZU: Thank you all for sharing in my story! And a special thanks to all our audience cast members! Let's join together in singing, Auld Lang Syne... (*if an actor was used backstage to play JOSEPH then he should on stage as song starts and join in*)

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne?*

*For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll take a cup of kindness yet,
For auld lang syne*

ZUZU, GEORGE, CLARENCE & JOSEPH: Merry Christmas everyone!

Curtain

- PROP LIST-

Red Hat with purple trim
Flip Notebook & Pencil
Paper soda jerk hat for Mr. Gower
Pill Bottle
Child's beanie hat with propeller
Packing Peanut (rock)
Red Rectangular Sponge (brick)
Foam Ball (bowling ball)
Long big and bright clown tie for Mr. Potter
Large plastic clown cigar
Mini Christmas tree partially decorated
Mini Battery-Operated Piano
Toy Phone (ear/mouth-piece only)
Large clown bow tie for Mr. Martini
Child's construction hat for Mr. Welch
Small Jingle Bell on Ribbon (Zuzu's Bell)
Wings
Halo

- ON STAGE -

Rocker
Afgan (Christmas theme?)
End Table with Lamp OR Magazine Table with Pole Lamp
Fireplace behind rocker with Xmas decorations on Mantle?
3 chairs (for taxi)
Signs on rear wall:
Welcome To Bedford Falls
Bailey Building & Loan
Bedford Falls Bank & Trust
Martini's Tavern
Gower's Drug Store

- SFX/MUSIC -

Glass Shattering Window Crash
Whistle/Splat
Bowling Strike/Glass Crash
Telephone Ring
Toilet Flush
Buffalo Gals (Instrumental)
Auld Lang Syne
Various Christmas Music Selections for Pre-Show, Intermission, and Exit Music