

FREDDIE FILMORE/ANNOUNCER. (Receives a signal from the STAGE MANAGER). I'm getting a signal from our stage manager that we will be on the air in twenty seconds. Thank you all for coming this evening and enjoy the broadcast.

STAGE MANAGER. We are lives in 5-4-3 (On The Air sign and music).

ALL. W-B-F-R in New York City...

ANNOUNCER. This is WBFR Playhouse Of The Air! (Applause sign and applause) Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen, boys, girls, young and old and new. Greetings from WBFR Studio A in Manhattan, New York, right here in the US of A. I'm your host, Freddie Filmore, and it is my pleasure to bring you your favorite stories this and every week on WBFR Playhouse Of The Air. Tonight we bring you a real feel-good heart warmer perfect for this or any Christmas Eve, It's A Wonderful Life. We begin our story in the little town of Bedford Falls, New York, US of A, where a number of people in the town are praying for their dear friend, a typical American dreamer named George Bailey...

MARY. Dear God, please look over my husband George.

ROSE. (These lines all come quickly one upon the other) George is a good boy, you know that. My son has always gone out of his way to give others a hand. Now it's him who needs the help.

HARRY. Help my big brother George. He's done so much for all of us. More for me than I remember.

GOWER. I remember all the times he would stay late after work and not ask a cent. The world needs more like George Bailey.

BERT. George Bailey never thinks about himself. I wouldn't have a roof over my head if it wasn't for him.

VIOLET. If it wasn't for him I would have given up long ago. All I think about is myself. I must have taken the last cent he had.

POTTER. He had no sense of business, that George Bailey. Just like his father. None of the Baileys were ever businessmen. It's his own fault if he wasn't prepared for times like these.

BILLY. At times like these, I can't help but think it'd all my fault. Help him, Father, it's me who's putting him through all this.

PETE. Something's the matter with Daddy.

ZUZU. Should we pray for him, Mommy?

MARY. Yes, Zuzu. Pray. Pray very hard.

FREDDIE FILMORE/ANNOUNCER. The voices carry heavenward, and Joseph, the superintendent of angels, summons Clarence, an apprentice angel...

CLARENCE. You sent for me, Sir?

JOSEPH. Yes, Clarence. A man down on Earth needs your help.

CLARENCE. Splendid! Is he sick?

JOSEPH. No, worse. He's discouraged. At exactly 10:45pm tonight, Earth time, that man will be thinking seriously of throwing away God's greatest gift.

CLARENCE. Oh, dear, dear! His life! Then I've only an hour to dress. What are they wearing now?

JOSEPH. You will spend that hour getting acquainted with George Bailey.

CLARENCE. Sir, if ai should accomplish this mission—I mean—might I perhaps win my wings? I've been waiting over two-hundred years now—and people are beginning to talk.

JOSEPH. What's that book you've got there?

CLARENCE. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, sir. I was reading it when you sent for me.

JOSEPH. Oh, fine book, excellent. Well, you do a good job with George Bailey, and we'll see about your wings.

CLARENCE. Thank you, thank,you!

JOSEPH. Now, if you're going to help George, you'll want to know a little something about him. Look: See the town?

CLARENCE. Why, yes. A group of young boys, sledding down a snow-covered hill and onto the ice... This is amazing!

YOUNG GEORGE. Yippee!

CLARENCE. Who's that?

JOSEPH. That's your problem, George Bailey.

CLARENCE. A boy?

JOSEPH. That's him when he was twelve, back in 1919. Something happens here you'll have to remember later on.

YOUNG GEORGE. And here comes the scare-baby, my kid brother, Harry Bailey.

YOUNG HARRY. I'm not scared.

ALL. Come on, Harry! Attaboy, Harry!

YOUNG HARRY. Yippee! (Ice cracks, followed by water sloshing).

YOUNG GEORGE. Help! Help!

CLARENCE. Oh dear—Harry's fallen through the ice.

YOUNG GEORGE. I'm coming, Harry. Make a chain, gang. A chain.

CLARENCE. So his brother fell through the ice. But George saved him.

JOSEPH. Yes, Clarence. And ever since George has had a bad ear. All that icy water, you understand...

CLARENCE. Bad ear, yes sir.

JOSEPH. The other event came a few months later. George took an after school job at Old Man Gower's drug store.

(Door with bell opens and shuts)

YOUNG GEORGE. It's me, Mr. Gower. George Bailey.

GOWER. You're late.

YOUNG GEORGE. Yes, sir.

YOUNG VIOLET. Hello, George. 'Lo, Mary.

YOUNG MARY. Hello, Violet.

YOUNG GEORGE. Two cents worth of shoelaces, Violet?

YOUNG VIOLET. Mary was here first.

YOUNG MARY. I'm still thinking.

YOUNG GEORGE. Shoelaces?

YOUNG VIOLET. Please, Georgie. (To Mary) I like him.

YOUNG MARY. You like every boy.

YOUNG VIOLET. What's wrong with that?

YOUNG GEORGE. Jere you are.

YOUNG VIOLET. Bye, Georgie. See ya later, Mary.

(Door with bell opens and shuts)

YOUNG GEORGE. Made up your mind yet, Mary?

YOUNG MARY. I'll take chocolate.

YOUNG GEORGE. With coconuts?

YOUNG MARY. I don't like coconuts.

YOUNG GEORGE. You don't like coconuts! Say, brainless, don't you know where coconuts come from? Lookit here—from Tahiti—Fiji Islands, the Coral Sea!

YOUNG MARY. What's that you've got there? A new magazine! I never saw it before.

YOUNG GEORGE. Of course you never. Only us explorers can get it. I've been nominated for membership in the National Geographic Society. Let me get your ice cream.

YOUNG MARY. Is this the ear you can't hear on? George Bailey, I'll love you till the day I die.

YOUNG GEORGE. I'm going out exploring someday, you watch. And I'm going to have a couple of harems, and maybe three or four wives. Wait and see.

(Young George whistles tune)

GOWER. George! George!

YOUNG GEORGE. Yes, sir.

GOWER. You're not paid to be a canary.

YOUNG MARY. Goodbye, George.

YOUNG GEORGE. Goodbye, Mary.