

It's A Wonderful Life!

(100-minute version)

Adapted for radio from Frank Capra's 1946 film

By Anthony E. Palermo

It's a Wonderful Life is based on the story,
The Greatest Gift by Philip Van Doren Stern

TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT

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If you wish to secure the performance rights to this script and the pre-recorded sound effects & music tracks, contact Sales@RuyaSonic.com

If you choose NOT to produce my script, please destroy any hard copies and delete all PDF versions of this script from your computers.

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

RuyaSonic

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PRODUCTION SCRIPT

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By Anthony E. Palermo

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NOTE: Musical underscore & sound effects tracks are also part of this play.

All music composed by Jonathan Green

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Billing And Credit Requirements

Producers of *It's a Wonderful Life!* must give credit to Anthony E. Palermo—and Philip Van Doren Stern—in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play, and all instances in which the title of the play appears in advertising or publicizing the production, including websites, posters, programs, and playbills. The name of the Author must also appear on a separate line, immediately following the title of the play, and must be in type size not less than 30% of the size of type used in the title of the play. **Furthermore, credit to Philip Van Doren Stern—worded exactly as specified below—must be at least 75% of the size of Anthony E. Palermo's credit.**

Billing shall be in the following form:

(name of producer) presents

It's a Wonderful Life!

Adapted for radio by ANTHONY E. PALERMO from Frank Capra's 1946 film

It's a Wonderful Life is based on the story, *The Greatest Gift*
by Philip Van Doren Stern

Musical score composed & arranged by Jonathan Green

Troupes may prefer to use the phrase “Adapted for radio-on-stage” in the billing above.

NOTE:

Suggested (free) Google Font for title text is Andada
<https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Andada>

Author's Biography

Pretty long bio:

ANTHONY E. PALERMO (PLAYWRIGHT) is a radio-dramatist, performer, and educator based in Los Angeles. He has done over 2500 shows—heard on NPR and satellite radio, as well as audiobooks and radio-on-stage shows with L.A. Theater Works, California Artists Radio Theater, theater troupes, and on national tours. His holiday-themed plays, *A Christmas Carol*, *It's A Wonderful Life!*, *Auntie Scrooge - a BACKWARDS Christmas Carol*, and *The Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow* have seen hundreds of productions around the world since 1996. His sound effects work on Yuri Rasovsky's *Sherlock Holmes Theater* contributed to its winning an Audie Award--the Oscar of audiobooks. He directed the 60th anniversary production of Norman Corwin's *On a Note of Triumph*—for which he also re-created Bernard Herrmann's orchestral score. He provided live sound effects for shows such as Eric Idle's *What About Dick?* [currently on Netflix as a radio-on-stage film], CART's *Together Tonight*, *Good House for a Killing*, LATW's *Hamlet*, *A Doll House* and *Copenhagen*, as well as performing 65 solo shows at the California State Fair. His *Sonic Storytelling Studio* at San Francisco's Exploratorium is a permanent exhibit that has seen thousands of visitors since 2006. His *Sparx Sound Effects Extravaganza* assembly programs and workshops are popular with schools and colleges across California, the U.S. and the world. He also hosts the RuyaSonic radio-drama website, offering info on writing, directing, scoring, engineering, and sound effects. **www.RuyaSonic.com**

Much shorter bio:

ANTHONY E. PALERMO (PLAYWRIGHT) is an award-winning radio performer, dramatist, and educator who has produced dramas and workshops for broadcast, stage, and schools. Tony hosts the RuyaSonic Radio Drama Resources website, offering info on writing, directing, scoring, engineering, and sound effects. **www.RuyaSonic.com**

NOTE: For up-to-date text of the two bios see the RuyaSonic webpage: Anthony E. Palermo Playwright-Bio For Theater Programs <https://ruyasonic.com/tp-bio-playwright.html>. You can cut & paste the text there into your playbill or program and thus not have to worry about typos. Cuts are permitted to the bio text to fit the space available. Please include the final sentence and website URL, as newcomers to radio-drama attend productions by troupes like yours.

Characters - *'It's a Wonderful Life!'* (100-minute radio version)

Cast size: 30 or 14, plus 5 SFX artists, but can be done by 9 total—with actors doing SFX too. See page 142, in the appendix , for suggestions on doubling of roles.

George Bailey	Dreamer/Loan Officer (m)
Clarence	Angel, Second Grade (m)
Mary Hatch/Bailey	George's Wife/Librarian (f)
Superintendent	Administrator of all Angels (m/f)
Uncle Billy	Scatter-brained clerk (m)
Mr. Potter	Warped, old financier (m)
Ma Bailey	George's mother (f)
Annie	Bailey family cook (f)
Violet Bick	Beautician/Sultry gal (f)
Bert	Local policeman (m)
Ernie	Cab driver (m/f)
Nick	Bartender (m/f)
Pop Bailey	George's father (m)
Sam Wainwright	Successful businessman (m)
Gower	Druggist (m/f)
Mrs. Hatch	Mary's mother (f)
Harry Bailey	George's younger brother
Announcer	Radio announcer (m/f)
Martini	Italian café owner (m/f)
Charlie	Difficult shareholder (m/f)
Cousin Tilly	Loan office clerk (f)
Young George Bailey	Boy, age 10 (m)
Night Watchman	Bridge night watchman (m/f)
Zuzu Bailey	Girl, age 5 (f)
Janie Bailey	Girl, age 8 (f)
Dr. Campbell	Board President (m/f)
Mr. Welch	Irate husband (m)
Bank Teller	Bank clerk (m/f)
Eustace	Loan office clerk (m/f)
Carter	Bank Examiner (m/f)
Petey Bailey	Boy, age 9 (m/f)
Mrs. Davis	Shareholder (f)
Nosey Neighbor	Impatient neighbor (m/f)
Randy	Shareholder (m/f)
Mrs. Thompson	Shareholder (f)
Sheriff	County Sheriff (m/f)
Eddy	Shareholder(m/f)

2-5 sound effects artists for manual and pre-recorded SFX.

A live keyboardist is optional: Organ and piano. Sheet music score available.

Printing Instructions

To print just the script, specify pages 1-128. (pages 10-128 are the dialogue pages)

To print just the appendix, specify pages 129-210 (pages 129-232 is everything but the script itself.)

To print just the scripted extras (warm-up routine, cell silencing, ad-spots, and How to “Work” a Mic lesson), specify pages 211-232

Script Appendix

Section (pages)	Description
DIRECTION (129-139)	Writer/Director’s notes on how to approach the drama.
CASTING (140-148)	Casting list, Doubling roles, Audition list, Casting monologues
SFX LIVE (149-159)	Live Sound Effects Cookbook
SFX TRACKS (160-166)	Pre-recorded sound effects listing and advice
MUSIC (167-173)	Pre-recorded music cue listing and advice, keyboardist tips.
PRODUCTION (174-195)	Production design background and advice, radio-director’s gesture cues
AUDIO (196-210)	Engineering advice, microphone school for cast and crew, Audio setup, technical checklist, mic & stand resources
EXTRAS (211-232)	Scripted audience warm-up routine, cell phone silencing, six commercial ad-spots and “How To ‘Work’ a Mic” lesson.

Handy RuyaSonic production info webpages

- How to Prepare Radio-Play Scripts for Production: https://ruyasonic.com/prd_pre-prod.htm
- Producing Radio Plays, on-air & on-stage: https://ruyasonic.com/rdr_direct.htm
- Sound Effects Rigs for Radio-On-Stage Shows: https://ruyasonic.com/sfx_rig.htm
- How to Do Sound Effects for *It's a Wonderful Life!*: <https://ruyasonic.com/radio-wonderful-life-sound-effects.html>
- For additional how-to information, see <https://ruyasonic.com/>

Other Materials Available For Your Production

Pre-recorded sound effects tracks

RuyaSonic offers 28 pre-recorded sound effects tracks—30 minutes' worth—of the more unusual sounds (crickets, wind, jumping in the river splashes, harp glissandos, the 78 RPM record of "Buffalo Gals", 1940s traffic, period telephones ringing, gym floor retracting, etc.)

While your troupe's Sound Designer could assemble such sounds from various SFX collections, here, they are already edited, ambience added and sequenced as in the script. It will cost you more time, trouble and money to create the sound design yourself than to purchase the SFX tracks from me.

To license these auxiliary materials, contact Sales@RuyaSonic.com

NOTE: Sounds generated by the characters, such as doors, footsteps, bells, typing, etc., are NOT included among the pre-recorded tracks. Your sound effects artist(s) will have to produce the sounds in coordination with your actors' pacing and delivery.

Pre-recorded music tracks

We offer 49 pre-recorded music tracks—35 minutes' worth. These tracks cover scene transitions and underscore the drama—often in sync with the scripted dialogue. The instrumentation is primarily a 1940s theater organ, but also in a few places, Italian accordion, piano, and a jazz combo. This authentic musical underscoring adds greatly to the production. They are available as downloadable MP3 tracks or as audio CDs. See the MUSIC section of the appendix to this sample script for a detailed listing of the tracks.

NOTE: These music tracks are NOT 1940s-style orchestral music cues nor are they Broadway-style musical songs. Instead, the tracks function the way 1940s movie music does, but use mostly organ. You could hire a composer to create a score, but that would cost you more time and trouble—and money—than using the tracks I offer.

Sheet music for the original score

RuyaSonic also offers sheet music that matches the above-described original score—to allow a single, live keyboardist to accompany your show. The instrumentation consists of organ and piano. The score is available as a downloadable PDF document.

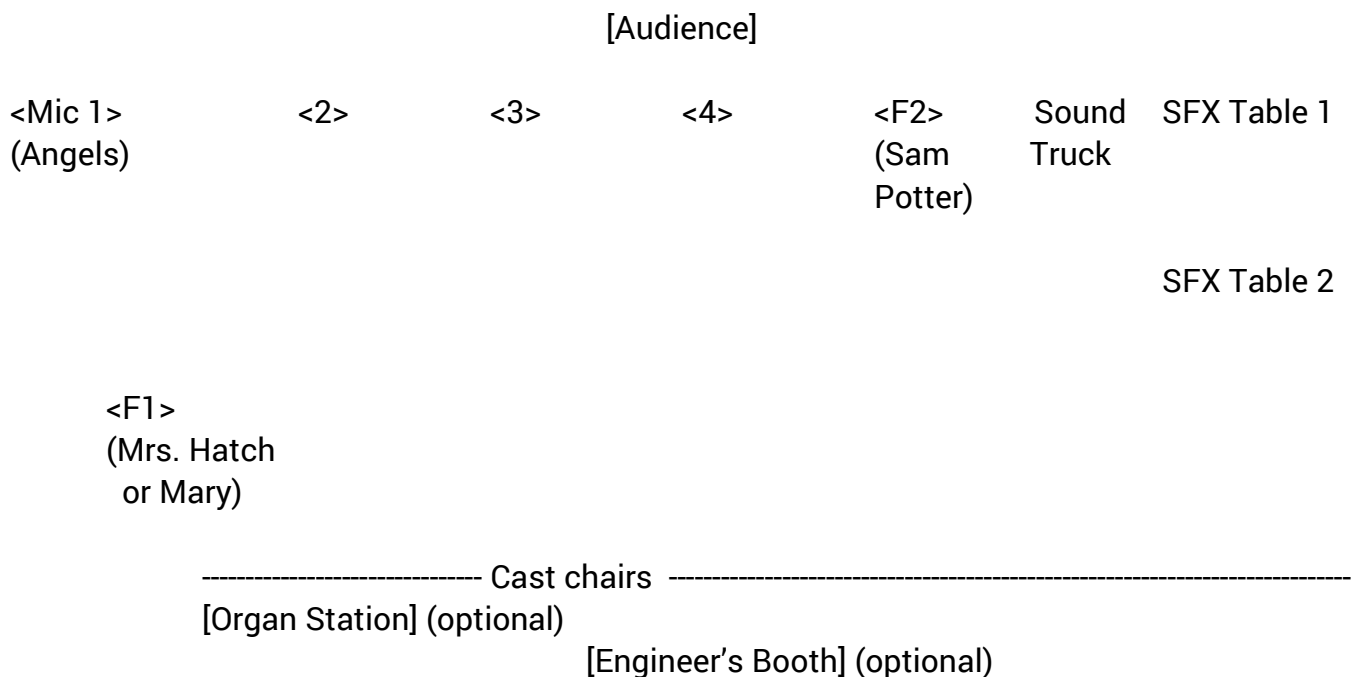
NOTE: The accordion and jazz combo cues would be produced by pre-recorded tracks—included when you purchase the sheet music.

ALSO: Many troupes find it useful to purchase both the sheet music AND the pre-recorded music tracks—since this allows the cast and crew to rehearse the full show without having the accompanist present for every rehearsal.

Radio-play setup and blocking

You can perform *WL!* on-stage, in a recording studio, or via Zoom-styled remote production. All three have performers (actors & sound effects artists) who are alternately ON-MIC or OFF-MIC, and technicians who may be on-stage, but are never at a mic; the Engineer, the “Playback Organist” (or live keyboardist), and the “Sound Trucker” SFX crewmember who triggers pre-recorded sound effects tracks. Troupes can also have a Radio-Director on-stage, to cue the performers, conduct the walla-walla crowd sounds, and cue audience applause.

Troupes can use the following set-up for mics, chairs, booths, and tables (SFX, sound truck, organ). In the script, certain critical mic blocking is indicated beside a character’s cues as <1> or <3> or even <3L> or <3R> for left or right, when multiple actors share a mic.



Mic 1: “**Heaven**” This mic is exclusively for the angels. This mic has a slight reverb effect applied, which makes the angels’ voices stand out as “not there in the scenes with the characters on Earth.” Don’t overdo the reverb or the audience will have difficulty understanding the angels’ important dialogue.

Mics 2, 3, and 4 are used by characters on Earth—including the angel, Clarence, in Act 3. Set these at slightly different heights—to accommodate troupes' taller & shorter actors. Most actors will work solo at their “home” mic, but occasionally pair-up with other actors at one mic. Some mic crosses will occur at dramatic points—outlined in the script.

Mics F1 & F2 are “filter mics”—used to simulate telephone voices. Alternately, you can use a regular mic, but cut frequencies below 300Hz and over 3000Hz, -OR- provide a coffee mug for the actor to hold near their mouth aimed at a regular mic. You may wish to combine both methods as the coffee mug will get some laughs, but could complicate script pages turning.

Each scene's heading specifies which characters need to be at the mics and suggests a mic: <1> <2>, <3>, <4> as well as filter (telephone) mics <F1> and <F2>.

Example:

SCENE 4 - INT. BAILEY DINING ROOM - EVENING (JUNE 1928)
(GEORGE <2>, POP BAILEY <3>, MA BAILEY <4R>, HARRY <4L>)

However, actor heights may require changes. Scenes with four or more characters, the script designates a mic location of Left or Right, as in <3L> <3R>. When many characters need to use the same mic, they can line up a few steps back at their mic and then step forward to speak. Then, tap other actors on the shoulder to signal “let me through.”

NOTE: This information is expanded in the script appendix, page 180

[AUDIENCE WARM-UP ROUTINE (See pg 211) GOES BEFORE THIS]

-- ON-AIR START --

START - INT. RADIO STUDIO/THEATER
(ANNOUNCER AT MIC <3>)

1. MUSIC: [MUS-01] "WONDERFUL OVERTURE"--ESTABLISH AND UNDER.

2* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] And now, it's time for
the _____ Radio Theater...
Starring _____, _____,
_____, and _____,
Along with _____, _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____,
and _____ on the organ.
And sound effects artists, _____,
_____, _____,
_____, _____,
and myself, _____,
in "It's a Wonderful Life!"

3. LIVE SFX: [CUE THE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE]

[NOTE: (OPTIONAL) AD-SPOTS GO HERE]

- IF NO ADS, GO DIRECT TO PAGE 11, CUE 3]

4. ANNOUNCER: But first, a word from our sponsors...

_____ and

[IF THERE ARE ADS, BEGIN AT CUE #1. IF NO ADS, BEGIN AT CUE #3]

1* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] And now, the _____ Radio
Theater... presents "It's a Wonderful Life!"

2. LIVE SFX: [CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM]

-- ACT ONE --

INTRO - INT. RADIO STUDIO/THEATER
(ANNOUNCER AT MIC <3>)

3. MUSIC: [MUS-02] (BED) "WONDERFUL LIFE INTRO"--UNDER.
--WILL CROSSFADE TO "HEAVENLY".

4* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] This is the story of George Bailey--an ordinary man who lives in Bedford Falls, New York. For his whole life, George Bailey wanted to see the world--the world laying beyond his small town. (PAUSE) But, our story doesn't begin in Bedford Falls. Indeed, it doesn't begin anywhere in this world...

5* MUSIC: [MUS-03] [CUE] DO MANUAL CROSSFADE TO "HEAVENLY #1"

6. ANNOUNCER: ...It begins... in the Heaven..., where the Superintendent of angels is briefing an angel-apprentice named Clarence...

7. MUSIC: "HEAVENLY"--UNDER...

SCENE 1 - EXT. HEAVEN - NIGHT
(CLARENCE <1R>, SUPERINTENDENT <1L>
KID-WALLA REMAIN SEATED)

ENGINEER'S NOTE:

When the Superintendent and Clarence are speaking in Heaven, their voices have a reverb applied throughout. When Clarence is on Earth, he will be "dry."

8. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

- 1* CLARENCE: [REVERB] [CUE] Clarence Oddbody--angel, second class--reporting for duty, your honor!
2. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] What? They've sent me an angel--second class? You mean you haven't earned your wings, yet?
3. CLARENCE: Errr.... No, not yet. But I'm hoping this mission will do the trick! Are you really sending me down to Earth? Gee! I haven't been to Earth since that time I got--
4. SUPERINTENDENT: (CUTTING HIM OFF) --Yes! You see, there's a man in trouble down there.
5. CLARENCE: Good!
6. SUPERINTENDENT: No! Bad, Clarence! At precisely ten forty-five PM--Earth time--a man named George Bailey will be thinking about taking his life.
7. CLARENCE: Oh, no! Suicide? Well, I know that's bad!
8. SUPERINTENDENT: Good, Clarence! 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--
9. CLARENCE: --Oh, that's alright, your honor. All I need is a plan!
10. SUPERINTENDENT: (DESPARING) A... "plan"?
11. CLARENCE: Of course! I'm reading "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer"--Mark Twain, you know?
12. SUPERINTENDENT: (IMPATIENT) I'm familiar with the book--if not Mr. Twain himself... up here.
13. CLARENCE: Well, Tom Sawyer always had a plan.

1. SUPERINTENDENT: (SKEPTICALLY) Ah. Well... if you can help George Bailey with your... "plan", you just may get your wings. Speaking of which, how long have you been waiting for your wings?
2. CLARENCE: Just two-hundred years.
3. SUPERINTENDENT: Two-hundred years? (ULP) George Bailey's going to need a miracle.
4. CLARENCE: Yes! Thanks--your honor--for your confidence in me. I'll leave immediately and--
5. SUPERINTENDENT: --Wait, Clarence! (SIGHS) "Plan" or no--
first, some background...

RADIO-ON-STAGE BLOCKING NOTE:

Young George, Harry, Sam, Mary, & Violet stand at their upstage chairs. They will do the walla-walla below. Once the icy splash SFX track is done, they all quietly sit.

6. SUPERINTENDENT: Now... when George Bailey was just a lad, he and his friends snuck onto Mr. Potter's property...
7. WALLA-WALLA: KIDS PLAYING ON ICE. "PRETTY GOOD, GEORGE!"
"MY TURN!" "HARRY'S TURN." "HEE-HAW!"
- 8* SUPERINTENDENT: ...They were sliding over a frozen pond on a shovel... when Harry--George's younger brother--fell through the a crack in the ice...
9. LIVE SFX: ICE CRACKS
- 10* WALLA-WALLA: KIDS PANIC--THEN, IN SYNC WITH DIALOGUE,
CHEER. FADE AS SPLASHING SFX FADE.
- 11* CLARENCE: And George jumped in to save Harry?...

1. TRACK SFX: [FX-01] ICY SPLASH IN ICE POND, FOLLOWED BY SECOND SPLASH--FADE UNDER
2. SUPERINTENDENT: Yes, he saved his brother that day, but--as a result--George lost his hearing in one ear.
3. CLARENCE: Ohhh! Yes, icy water, infection... I got it. "Bad ear" Go on.
4. SUPERINTENDENT: (PERTURBED) Ahem! A few months later, young George was working at Gower's pharmacy. But Mr. Gower had just received a telegram informing him that his only son had died. It was The Great Pandemic... errr.... the influenza pandemic of 1919, you understand. Devastated, Mr. Gower was trying to drown his sorrows in whiskey, when the... (AD-LIB)
5. MUSIC: [MUS-04] (BRIDGE) "GOWER'S SAD DRUGSTORE"--FADE UNDER.

SCENE 2 - INT. GOWER'S DRUGSTORE - DAY (MAY 1919)
(GOWER <2>, YOUNG GEORGE <LATE TO 3>,
MARY--AT HER UPSTAGE SEAT)

RADIO-ON-STAGE BLOCKING NOTE:

- (1) (Adult) Mary stands at her upstage chair, witnessing.
(2) As Gower mimes the slaps with his left hand, SFX artist syncs sound to Gower's motion, and George turns his head as if slapped on his right ear. Practice to get this coordinated. Make the audience wince with each slap.

6* TRACK SFX: [FX-02] GOWER'S PHONE RINGS (3X) [SFX TRACK OR LIVE]

7. LIVE SFX: GOWER PICKS UP HANDSET.

8* GOWER: [CUE] (DRUNKEN-SLOWLY) Gower's pharmacy.
...Mrs. Blaine? ...What? [YOUNG GEORGE ENTERS] Well, George should have delivered that medicine by now. Wait, here he comes. I'll send it right over... Yes, g'bye.

1. LIVE SFX: GOWER SLAMS DOWN HANDSET.
- 2* GOWER: George! Did you deliver that prescription?
3. YOUNG GEORGE: (ENTERING) Errr... uh... no, Mr. Gower. I--
4. GOWER: --Why didn't you deliver it right away? The little Blaine girl's sick! You lost that medicine, right?
5. YOUNG GEORGE: Errr... No, Mr. Gower. Here it is.
6. GOWER: "Here?!" (ANGRY) I'll teach you to--
7. LIVE SFX: GOWER SLAPS GEORGE'S FACE (1X)
- 8* YOUNG GEORGE: (IN PAIN) --Ow! Mr. Gower! My ear! My ear!
9. GOWER: You good for nothing-- (SFX: SLAP)
Lazy loafer-- (SFX: SLAP)
10. YOUNG GEORGE: Ow! You're hurting my sore ear!
11. GOWER: What are you trying to do-- (SFX: SLAP)
Ruin me?-- (SFX: SLAP)
12. YOUNG GEORGE: Ow...! No, Mr. Gower! (IN TEARS) Wait! You put something wrong in those pills. I--
13. GOWER: --Shut up! You little-- (SFX: SLAP)
14. YOUNG GEORGE: (SOBBING) Look! You're sad... You're upset about your son dying. You've been drinking! But... you put something wrong in the capsules. I didn't know what to do.
15. GOWER: (ABOUT TO SLAP) Huh?... the... capsules?
16. YOUNG GEORGE: You took the powder from the wrong bottle. That's... poison! (WHIMPERING)

1. GOWER: "Poison"? (REALIZES) Oh, ...my God! Poison!

RADIO-ON-STAGE BLOCKING NOTE:

Gower crosses to <3L> sharing George's mic.
In fear, George shifts a bit to <3R>.

2. YOUNG GEORGE: (FEARFUL) No! Don't hurt my sore ear again!

3. GOWER: Ohhhh! (HUGGING GEORGE) Oh, George, George, George...

4* MUSIC: [MUS-05] (BED) "TENDER MOMENT"--UNDER

5. 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... and couldn't--

6. GOWER: (SOBS) --George, George...

7. YOUNG GEORGE: I won't tell, Mr. Gower. I know you're sad. I won't ever tell anyone... hope to die!

8. GOWER: (SOBS) George, George...

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING NOTE:

Mary remains standing--mouth open, deer-in-the-headlights look. After the Superintendent's next line, she quietly sits.

9. MUSIC: [MUS-06] CROSS-FADE INTO "RIP TO HEAVENLY #2"--UNDER.

SCENE 3 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #2
(SUPERINTENDENT <1L>, CLARENCE <1R>)

10. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

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

12. CLARENCE: [REVERB] My, my. George sure took a beating! But he did the right thing.

1. SUPERINTENDENT: Well, George grew up and wanted to go off to college--but the Bailey's didn't have enough money, so he worked at the Bailey Building and Loan Association and--
2. CLARENCE: --"Building and Loan"?
3. SUPERINTENDENT: Yes. George's father--and uncle, Billy--were in the building and loan business. Alas, theirs was a case of... high ideals and low bank account.
4. CLARENCE: Those two seem to go together, don't they?
5. SUPERINTENDENT: (SIGH) Err, yes. Anyway... George slaved away four years, saving enough to pay for college. But first, he was going to summer in Europe--working his way across on a cattle boat.
(FADING UNDER) Full of wanderlust, George wanted to do a little traveling before college...

SCENE 4 - INT. BAILEY DINING ROOM - EVENING (JUNE 1928)

(GEORGE <2>, POP BAILEY <3>, MA BAILEY <4R>, ANNIE <3L DISTANT>, HARRY <LATE-4L>)

6. LIVE SFX: DINNER PLATES/FORKS--UNDER FOR A WHILE.
- 7* GEORGE: [CUE] (EATING) Ya know, Pop. As good as Annie's apple pie is--and it's... "peachy"--for an apple pie, Annie--I've had enough.
(SIGHS) Gee, I can't believe this is my final meal at the ol' "Bailey boarding house."
8. POP BAILEY: We'll all miss you, son.
9. GEORGE: And, I'm going to miss you, Pop--and Ma, and Annie. And, well, everyone in Bedford Falls.
10. MA BAILEY: You've certainly earned your chance, son.

1. GEORGE: Oh, and I'm gonna take it, Ma! (NOTICES) But--
-Hey, what's the matter, Pop? You look tired.
2. POP BAILEY: I don't know. (SIGH) One more run-in with
Potter, today.
3. ANNIE: (DISTANT) Mr. Potter? That ol' money-grubbing
buzzard?
- X. GEORGE: Annie's right. I thought when you put him on
the Board of Directors, he'd ease up some.
4. POP BAILEY: So did I. (SIGHS) He may be the richest man
in Bedford Falls, but--
5. GEORGE: --the most miserable, if you ask me. I mean,
he'll never spend all the money he has. I
don't understand somebody like that.
6. MA BAILEY: Well, Potter is bitter... spent his life in
that wheelchair. He's frustrated. Think about
it, George. What if you--
7. GEORGE: --C'mon, Ma! Potter owns just about
everything in town... everything but the
Bailey Building and Loan.
8. POP BAILEY: Well, maybe that's why he's so hard on us. To
him, we're just a bunch of foolish--
9. HARRY BAILEY: (DISTANT--ENTERING) --Hey, big brother! I
need to borrow your tuxedo cufflinks for
tonight's dance.
10. GEORGE: Sure! Help yourself, Harry!
11. HARRY BAILEY: Well, where are they? Here?--in your
suitcase?
12. ANNIE: (SCOLDS--DISTANT) Harry Bailey! George won't
be needing a tuxedo on a cattle boat!

1. HARRY BAILEY: You never know, Annie (TO GEORGE) But George!
What's with this beat-up old satchel?
2. GEORGE: It's from the Emporium, Harry! Mr. Gower
bought it for me.
3. HARRY BAILEY: A going-away gift, eh?
4. GEORGE: Yep. Far away! Y'see, soon, that bag will be
plastered with exotic destination stickers.
Y'know, Rome... Cairo... Yox-pock-petl!
5. ANNIE: (DISTANT) Maybe find me a husband there?
6. POP BAILEY: (AMUSED) May-be, Annie, but George is gonna
have a pretty full summer. Eh, son?
7. GEORGE: Oh, nooo, Pop! I'm going to have a pretty
full life!
8. HARRY BAILEY: So, why don't you come to the dance tonight?
Start there--then the cattle boat!
9. GEORGE: Come to your high-school graduation dance?
And get bored to death?
10. HARRY BAILEY: Oh, but what a wonderful death!
11. MA BAILEY: (SCOLDS) Harry! (TO GEORGE) There'll be lots
of pretty girls there.
12. HARRY BAILEY: ...Plus, we'll be dancing on that new gym
floor.
13. POP BAILEY: That was a brilliant idea of yours, George.
Putting a retractable floor over the pool
saved the high school thousands!
14. GEORGE: No, Pop, that's just the start--for me. Oh...
what I'm gonna do! What I'm gonna see...
15. HARRY BAILEY: --like your tuxedo cufflinks?

1. GEORGE: No... Try upstairs, Harry--my top drawer.
2. HARRY BAILEY: Okay. Better hurry up and decide, though. Yikes! The time. (EXITING) I gotta scam!
3. GEORGE: (TO POPS) "Scram"???(CHUCKLES) Was I like that when I graduated high school?
4. ANNIE: (DISTANT) Pretty much...
- X. POP BAILEY: I sure wish we could send Harry to college with you, George.
5. GEORGE: Yeah, but Harry and I worked that out. He'll take my job at the Building and Loan--saving up--and, go, four years later.
6. MA BAILEY: Harry's pretty young for that job.
7. GEORGE: Noooo! He's the same age I was.
8. POP BAILEY: It just seems you were born old, George.
9. GEORGE: How's that, Pop? Y'know, my "trick" ear.
10. MA BAILEY: (TO GEORGE) He said, "You were born old!"
11. GEORGE: Well then, that's why I've got to hurry now. There's a whole world out there--waiting for ol' George Bailey to conquer it.
12. POP BAILEY: Er... George... Now, after college, you wouldn't consider coming back to the--
13. GEORGE: --What? Come back? No... I couldn't face being cooped up for the rest of my life in a shabby little loan office with all those--
14. MA BAILEY: (SCOLDS) --George!
15. GEORGE: B-- (CATCHES HIMSELF) Oh, I'm sorry, Pop. I didn't mean that. It's just... (SIGHS) staying here, chasing nickels and dimes--

1. POP BAILEY: --I know... spending your life trying to figure how to save three cents on a length of pipe... I understand, son.
2. GEORGE: Do you, Pop? (SIGHS) Staying here..., I'd just go crazy. Y'see, I need to do something... big! Something... important!
3. POP BAILEY: But--in a way--the Building and Loan is important, George. In that "shabby little office" we help people buy their own homes.
4. MA BAILEY: Your father helps people's dreams come true.
5. GEORGE: 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!
6. POP BAILEY: (SIGHS) I guess you're right.
7. GEORGE: Errr... You know what I mean, don't you, Pop?
8. POP BAILEY: Well, I know this town's no place for anybody--
9. MA BAILEY: --unless you bow down to Henry Potter.
10. GEORGE: And that's not for me. Not that kinda life.
11. POP BAILEY: Yeah. You've got talent, George--a gift! So travel! Go to college. Do what you want, son!
12. GEORGE: Y'know what, Pop? Ready for a shock? I think you're a pretty swell guy. (TO ANNIE) Hear that. Annie?
- X. ANNIE: (DISTANT) It's about time one of you lunkheads said it.
13. POP BAILEY: Well, thank you, George. Look, errr... why don't you go to Harry's dance? ...See that new gym floor over the pool. You'll have fun.

1. MA BAILEY: And maybe see Harry's classmate--that cute Mary Hatch.
2. GEORGE: Well... it is my last night in Bedford Falls. I guess I could drop in... (THINKS) Inspect the retracting floor... Say goodbye to friends... Dance a bit... (THINKS) Hmmm, maybe I will at that! (EXITING) See ya later!
3. MUSIC: [MUS-07] (BRIDGE) "RIP TO HEAVENLY #3"--

UNDER/CROSSFADES

SCENE 5 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #3
 (CLARENCE <1R>, SUPERINTENDENT <1L>
 WALLA-DANCERS--RISE AND SIT AS NOTED BELOW)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George, Mary, and actors seated upstage all stand and do the Charleston dance--under the dialogue. The Track SFX has several "clanks" to cue the SFX artist and actors.

4. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER
- 5* CLARENCE: [REVERB] [CUE] So... George Bailey went to a dance. Is that important, your honor?
6. TRACK-SFX: [FX-03] DANCE BAND-FLOOR RETRACTING-SPLASHES--UNDER
7. WALLA-WALLA: PARTY CHATTER--FADING IN AND--UNDER
8. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Patience, Clarence. That night, George danced "the Charleston" with Mary Hatch. The whole gang was dancing away on the retracting gymnasium floor, over the pool...
9. LIVE SFX: [WAIT FOR CLANK #1]CRANK RATCHET RETRACTING--
COORDINATE WITH TRACK SFX WINCH & RUMBLE.
10. SUPERINTENDENT: ... but due to some scamp, that retracting floor suddenly started... retracting!

1. WALLA-WALLA: [WAIT FOR CLANK #2] (DANCERS PANIC--UNDER)

"WHAT?" "HEY!"

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Dancers are jolted. Then--in sync with walla on track SFX, teeter backwards... then forward. The SFX artist "conducts" them to keep them aligned.

2. WALLA-WALLA: (DANCERS REACT) "WHOA..." "WHOA..."

3. SUPERINTENDENT: [WAIT FOR CLANK #3] You might say the graduating class of 1928 were making...
"whoopsie."

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Starting with George & Mary, dancers individually "fall in the pool"--landing seated on their upstage chairs. SFX artist doubles SFX track splashes with X-shaped-plunger repeatedly pulled OUT of a 5-gallon bucket of water. See appendix page 161 for more about this "visual" SFX trick.

4. WALLA-WALLA: (DANCERS FALL IN POOL, SOME DIVE IN) "YAAW"
"WHOOPS", "YIPPEE!" (CHATTER AFTERWARD)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

SFX Artist cues cast to cut all walla--abruptly!

5* CLARENCE: So, George and Mary were "head over heels"?

6. SUPERINTENDENT: Ahem. Not yet. Later--as they were walking home--it was quite a night, Clarence. (FADING UNDER) As a matter of fact... wonderful...

7. MUSIC: [MUS-08] (BRIDGE) LAST 2 BARS OF "BUFFALO GALS" AND
LET ACTORS TAKE OVER SINGING IT.

SCENE 6 - EXT. SYCAMORE SIDEWALK/GRANVILLE HOUSE - NIGHT
(GEORGE <3>, MARY <2> THEN <DISTANT-4>,
IMPATIENT NEIGHBOR RISES/SITS AS NOTED BELOW)
UNCLE BILLY <VERY LATE, DISTANT 2>

8* TRACK SFX: [FX-04] CRICKETS #1--UNDER.

1. LIVE SFX: GEORGE & MARY WALK ON SIDEWALK--UNDER.
DISTANT DOG BARKS (2X)
- 2* GEORGE AND MARY: [CUE] (SINGING--IN UNISON)
"Buffalo Gals, won't you come out tonight?
Come out tonight?
Come out tonight?
Buffalo Gals, won't you come out tonight...
(HARMONIZING) aaaaaaannnnnnnd dance by the
light of the moooooooooooooon." (SFX: 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, Duch-oose!
(IN AWE) Hey, you know something, Mary? I'd
almost say you were the prettiest girl in
Bedford Falls--the way you look!
10. MARY: So... go ahead--say it.
11. GEORGE: (TAKEN ABACK) Noooo! (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.

1. GEORGE: "Same class"? How old are you?
2. MARY: Eighteen.
3. GEORGE: That old! Why, it seems only last year you were just errr... seven-teen!
4. MARY: (OFFENDED) So, am I too young or too old?
5. GEORGE: No, no, no. You're exactly... right. Your age sorta fits you. I'm just saying you look a little older... without your... er clothes... on.
6. MARY: (MOCK MEAN) What?
7. GEORGE: I-I mean... er... without your dress... on.
No! I mean...
8. MARY: Ahem! What do you mean, George?
9. GEORGE: I... mean-- (CHANGING THE SUBJECT) Err.. Well looky there!
10. LIVE SFX: GEORGE AND MARY STOP WALKING.

RADIO-ON-STAGE BLOCKING NOTE:

Both George and Mary will mime throwing their rocks at the windows. They should reach down to grab their "rocks" before they throw them.

11. MARY: (SIGHS) Ah! The old Granville house...
12. GEORGE: Yeah! I gotta throw a rock! Bust a window!
[GEORGE REACHES FOR A ROCK]
13. MARY: Don't, George! Even though it's deserted, I love this old place. It's full of romance.
14. GEORGE: "Romance"? Naw! With deserted houses, you make a wish and then try to bust a window.
15. MARY: But it's such a lovely old house. I want to live there someday.

1. GEORGE: In there? Go on! I wouldn't live there if I were a ghost! Here, watch that window on the second floor. I'm Babe Ruth, see? (RADIO SPORTSCASTER VOICE) "Here's the wind-up... and"--
- 2* TRACK SFX: [FX-05] (PAUSE) DISTANT WINDOW SHATTERED BY ROCK #1.
- 3* GEORGE: How about that? Pretty good shot, eh? Broke that window--easy as pie.
4. MARY: What'd you wish for, George?
5. GEORGE: My "wish"? Oh... (THINKS) Hmmm... It's not one wish, Mary. I made a whole hatful of 'em. Y'see... I'm leaving this one-horse town. I'm gonna travel. Italy!--the Coliseum. And then Greece!--the Parthenon! And that's just this summer!
6. MARY: (HUMORING HIM) That's a good start, George.
7. GEORGE: Yeah... And then, back for college--to see what they know, of course...
8. MARY: Of course... [MARY REACHES FOR A ROCK]
9. GEORGE: And then.. I'm gonna build things--big things!--air fields, sky-scrappers, bridges--you name it. And then I'm gonna-I'm gonna... Uhh... Uhh... Whatcha doing, Mary?
10. MARY: [MARY MIMES THROWING HER ROCK] Wee!
- 11* TRACK SFX: [FX-06] (PAUSE) DISTANT WINDOW SHATTERED BY ROCK #2.
- 12* GEORGE: Hey...! You're a pretty good shot yourself! (LAUGHS) So uh... What was your wish?
- 1* MARY: (COYLY SINGING)
"Buffalo Gals, won't you come out tonight..."

aaaaannnnnd dance by the light of the
mooooooooooon."

2. GEORGE: Is that it, Mary? You want the moon? All you gotta do is say the word! I'll throw a lasso around it and--

3. MARY: --Okay! The moon! I'll take it! Then what?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

During George's next line, the impatient neighbor quietly rises from their upstage chair and watches.

4. GEORGE: "Then what"? Well... well, then... errr... you swallow that moon...! And... errr...it dissolves... with moonbeams shooting out of your fingers and hair! And then--then... (CATCHES HIMSELF) Uh... er... (THINKS) Oh... Maybe I'm talking too much.

5. NOSEY NEIGHBOR: [DISTANT] That's for sure! Why don't you just kiss her?

6. GEORGE: (CALLING OUT) How's that? Say what?

7. NOSEY NEIGHBOR: [DISTANT] I said, "Kiss her!" Don't just stand there and talk her to death!

8. GEORGE: (CALLING OUT) Kiss her, huh?

9. MARY: (WORRIED) George?

10. NOSEY NEIGHBOR: [DISTANT] (EXASPERATED) For crying out loud! Youth is wasted on people like you! (SITS)

11* GEORGE: (CALLING OUT) Hey! Hey! Come back here! If you want to see some kissing, I'll show you a whole-- (TO MARY) No, wait, Mary! Don't back away. I'm just funnin' with old--

1. LIVE SFX: MARY'S ROBE RIPS--COMES OFF.

2. MARY: (DISTRESSED SCREAM) --Oh!

RADIO-ON-STAGE BLOCKING NOTE:

Mary steps back and crosses to <4>--but back a few feet. She mimes covering her body for the rest of the scene.

3. GEORGE: Mary? Where'd you go? You're... You're--

4. MARY: (WHISPERING) --Over here... in the hydrangeas!

5. LIVE SFX: SHAKING FLOWER BUSH--UNDER.

6. GEORGE: (LOOKS AROUND) "In the hydrangeas"? Where?

7. MARY: (WHISPERING) Toss me my robe, George.

8. GEORGE: "Toss you your robe"? Oh. Sure... I'll just toss you the errr... (GETS IDEA) Now, wait a minute...!

9. MARY: (WHISPERING) What?!

10. GEORGE: Well... this is a very interesting situation.

11. MARY: (WHISPERING) Oh...! Give me my robe! Please!

12. 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...

13. MARY: (WHISPERING SCOLDING) George Bailey!

14. GEORGE: ...especially in Bedford Falls!

15. MARY: (WHISPERING) I'll--I'll tell your mother on you!

16. GEORGE: Oh, but she lives way up the street from here...

17. MARY: (WHISPERING) George!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Uncle Billy rises from his upstage chair and steps towards <2>--stopping just a few feet back from it.

1. GEORGE: (TO HIMSELF) Hmmm, I could sell tickets! Make a little spending money for my trip.
2. MARY: (SCREAMS) George!
3. GEORGE: I tell you what, Mary... I'll make a deal with you. I'll trade you your robe for--
4. TRACK SFX: [FX-07] UNCLE BILLY'S CAR PULLS UP--IDLES--UNDER.
- 5* UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] --George! There you are!
6. GEORGE: Uncle Billy! You're just in time to see me kiss Mary Hatch!
7. UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] Not now, George! C'mon. Jump in the car. It's your father!
8. GEORGE: My father?!
9. UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] A stroke! He's had a stroke!
10. GEORGE: What? He's had a--
11. UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] --We gotta go, George. C'mon!
12. GEORGE: (EXITING) Here, Mary. (TOSSES ROBE) Sorry!
- 13* MUSIC: [MUS-09] (BRIDGE) "TRAGIC INTO HEAVENLY #4"--UNDER.

SCENE 7 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #4
(SUPERINTENDENT <1L>, CLARENCE <1R>)

14. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

1* SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] [CUE] Well, George's father died that night, Clarence. And there was no European trip for George that summer. Come Fall--as George was about head to college-- there was a meeting of the board of directors at the Building and Loan office...

2. WALLA-WALLA: BOARD OF DIRECTORS--CLAMOR--GETTING LOUDER

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Have the SFX artist "conduct" the Walla "mumble chorus"-- cueing them with one arm while pounding the gavel with the other. They should watch the SFX artist.

3. CLARENCE: "Board of directors"?

4. SUPERINTENDENT: (FADING) They had to appoint a successor to Mr. Bailey...

5. MUSIC: QUICKLY FADE "HEAVENLY" UNDER...

SCENE 8 - INT. B&L BOARDROOM - DAY (OCTOBER 1928)
(GEORGE <2>, DR. CAMPBELL <3L>, UNCLE BILLY <3R>,
MR. POTTER <4>, WALLA-BOARDMEMBERS REMAIN SEATED)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC-BLOCKING:

Uncle Billy and Dr. Campbell are between George and Potter--a "no man's land" in a battle.

6* WALLA-WALLA: BOARD OF DIRECTORS ARGUING--HUSH UNDER.

7* GEORGE: [CUE]...these are good, sound loans.
Furthermore, they mean... (AD-LIB UNTIL...)

8. LIVE SFX: DR. CAMPBELL POUNDS GAVEL (2X-2X)

9* DR. CAMPBELL: Enough discussion, please. All those in favor of approving these last loans made by our deceased president say "Aye."

10. WALLA-WALLA: "AYE"

1. DR. CAMPBELL: All opposed?
2. MR. POTTER: No!
3. DR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Potter's dissent is noted, but the motion carries. The loans are approved.
4. LIVE SFX: DR. CAMPBELL POUNDS GAVEL (1X)
5. WALLA-WALLA: AD LIB DISCUSSION, QUIETLY--UNDER
- 6* DR. CAMPBELL: (TO GEORGE) Well, thank you, George. That's all we'll needed you for. I know you've got a train to catch.
7. GEORGE: Really, Dr. Campbell. Ernie's taxi's waiting outside. (TO BILLY) Right, Uncle Billy?
8. UNCLE BILLY: (TO EVERYONE) Yes! Waiting to take George to the train--and college. (TO GEORGE) Hurry, George!
9. DR. CAMPBELL: Ahem! I'd like the Board to know that George, here, gave up his trip to Europe to run things these past months. Good luck to you at college, George.
10. WALLA-WALLA: AD LIB "GOOD LUCK" "TAKE CARE, GEORGE" ETC.
11. GEORGE: Thank you, Doctor. So long, everybody!
12. LIVE SFX: DR. CAMPBELL POUNDS GAVEL (1X)
- 13* DR. CAMPBELL: Now... Proceeding with our agenda, we come to the real purpose of this meeting. We must--
14. MR. POTTER: --No! Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman!
15. DR. CAMPBELL: (SIGHS) Mr. Potter?
16. MR. POTTER: I've waited long enough! Now, get to my real purpose--the dissolution of this--

1. WALLA-WALLA: BOARD ARGUES--THEN HUSHED BY...
2. LIVE SFX: DR. CAMPBELL POUNDS GAVEL (2X)
3. MR. POTTER: [CUE] Ahem! 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--
4. WALLA-WALLA: --BOARD ARGUES--THEN HUSHED BY...
5. LIVE SFX: DR. CAMPBELL POUNDS GAVEL (2X)
- 6* DR. CAMPBELL: That is your opinion, Mr. Potter. You--
7. MR. POTTER: --It is 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 to--
8. WALLA-WALLA: --BOARD ARGUES--THEN HUSHED BY...
9. UNCLE BILLY: Listen, here, Henry Potter. We--
10. MR. POTTER: --No! You listen, "Uncle" Billy! Your brother--Peter Bailey--was no businessman. He was a man of high ideals--so-called--but ideals without common sense! That's a recipe for disaster.
11. UNCLE BILLY: Is it, now?
12. MR. POTTER: Of course! And unfair to the little people--encouraging them to live beyond their means! Like this... errr... Ernie Bishop..., the taxi driver! I happen to know he was turned down for a home loan by the bank, but here--

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC-BLOCKING:

Uncle Billy steps back from <3> as does Dr. Campbell, but further back. When George and Potter spar, Billy turns to watch George, then Potter--as if at a tennis match.

1. GEORGE: --Now, hold on, Mr. Potter. I handled Ernie Bishop's loan. You've got the papers in front of you--income, insurance, collateral. And I can personally vouch for Ernie's character.
2. MR. POTTER: Ah! A friend of yours, George? Humph! (TO BOARD) You see? If someone shoots pool with an employee here, they can borrow money. And what's that get us?--a discontented, lazy rabble, instead of a thrifty working class. All because starry-eyed dreamers like Peter Bailey put impossible dreams into their heads. Now... who'll second my motion to dissolve?
3. WALLA-WALLA: BOARD ARGUES--THEN HUSHED BY...
- 4* GEORGE: Now, wait a minute, Mr. Potter! I--
5. MR. POTTER: --Pardon my honesty, George, but your father--
6. GEORGE: --Why my father ever started this penny-ante Building and Loan, I'll never know. But remember this, Potter! That... "rabble"... you're talking about... Well, they do most of the working and paying... and living and dying in this town.
7. MR. POTTER: ...So?

1. GEORGE: So, is it too much to have them work and pay and live and die in some 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!
2. WALLA-WALLA: GASPS.
3. GEORGE: ...In my book--Mr. Potter--my father died a richer man than you'll ever be!
4. MR. POTTER: I'm not interested in your "book", George. I'm talking about the Building and Loan.
5. 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! And-- (CATCHING HIMSELF) Well, I've-- I've said too much.
6. UNCLE BILLY: [STEPS UP TO MIC] That's okay, George. C'mon.
7. MR. POTTER: Actually, that's quite enough!
8. GEORGE: I apologize--members of the board. You can do what you want. But let me just say that Bedford Falls needs this measly Building and Loan, if only to have somewhere folks can borrow money without crawling to Potter! (TO BILLY) Come on, Uncle Billy! (EXITING) I have a train to catch.

PRODUCTION NOTE:

Have the SFX artist "conduct" the Walla "mumble chorus"-- cueing them to abrupt silence with one arm while the other hand shuts the SFX door.

[MORE...]

Then, in the next scene, cueing them to erupt when the SFX door is opened and to abrupt silence when the door is immediately shut. Practice these moves.

2. WALLA-WALLA: ERUPTS, BUT STOPS ABRUPTLY WHEN DOOR SHUTS.

3. LIVE SFX: GEORGE AND BILLY EXIT, OPENING BAORDROOM DOOR. THEY WALK THRU--CLOSE DOOR STRONGLY, CUTTING OFF THE WALLA.

SCENE 9 - INT. LOAN OFFICE - IMMEDIATELY

(TILLY <4L>, EUSTACE <LATE-4R>, UNCLE BILLY <2R>, GEORGE <3>, CAMPBELL <LATE-2L>, WALLA-BOARD REMAIN SEATED)

- 1* TILLY: [CUE] (STEPS UP) What's the ruckus in there, George?
2. EUSTACE: (ENTERING) Tilly? Why all the yelling?
3. UNCLE BILLY: You won't believe it, Eustace! George took on Henry Potter! That'll show him!
4. GEORGE: (SKEPTICAL) Oh yeah...? In a minute, they'll vote to dissolve the Building and Loan.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

14. DR. CAMPBELL: (URGENT) George, you've got to take it! They'll vote with Potter otherwise. They said so! Without you... (AD LIB UNDER)
15. ALL OF THEM: (--AD-LIB ARGUING--FADE UNDER)
- 1* MUSIC: [MUS-10] (BRIDGE) "OH WELL INTO "HEAVENLY #5"--
CONTINUE UNDER.

SCENE 10 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #5

(CLARENCE <1R>, SUPERINTENDENT <1L>)

2. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER
- 3* CLARENCE: [REVERB] [CUE] So... George Bailey didn't go to college, your honor?
4. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] No, he didn't, Clarence. George's gave his college money to his brother, Harry. Harry went instead.
5. CLARENCE: But what about that girl? The cute one--stuck in the hydrangea bush, you know.
6. SUPERINTENDENT: Mary went away to college, too. 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.
7. CLARENCE: Well, that sounds exotic! Good for George.
8. SUPERINTENDENT: Except, when Harry came back, there was a girl with him--his wife. (FADING UNDER) Of course, the one who best understood all this was Ma Bailey...
- 9* MUSIC: FADE "HEAVENLY" UNDER...

SCENE 11 - INT. BAILEY KITCHEN - NIGHT (JUNE 1932)
(MA BAILEY <3>, GEORGE <2>)

10. LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--GEORGE ENTERS--DOOR CLOSES.
- 11* MA BAILEY: [CUE] Is that you, George?
1. GEORGE: (ENTERING) (WISTFUL) Yes, Mother. I was just out on the porch, listening to the train whistle... (SIGHS) heading out of town.
2. MA BAILEY: Well, that train brought back Harry--and your new sister-in-law. Don't you like her?

3. GEORGE: Ruth? Oh, she's swell. Harry's got all the luck.
4. MA BAILEY: She'll keep him on his toes.
5. GEORGE: Well... (SIGHS) Keep him out of Bedford Falls, anyway.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

2. LIVE SFX: GEORGE EXITS--CLOSES DOOR.
3. MA BAILEY: (CALLING AFTER HIM) George! George, you go and see Mary! Do you hear?...
4. MUSIC: [MUS-11] (BRIDGE) "DOWNTOWN BEDFORD FALLS"--FADE UNDER.
- SCENE 12 - EXT. DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK - NIGHT (MINUTES LATER - JUNE 1932)
(ERNIE <2>, GEORGE <3>, VIOLET <LATE-2>,
WALLA-LASCIVIOUS MALE BYSTANDERS STAND AT SEATS)
- 5* TRACK SFX: [FX-08] DOWNTOWN BEDFORD FALLS TRAFFIC --CONTINUE UNDER.
6. LIVE SFX: GEORGE'S FOOTSTEPS ON SIDEWALK.
7. ERNIE: [CUE] Hiya, George! Need a lift?
8. GEORGE: Er..., naw, Ernie. I wouldn't want to rob you of a fare.
9. ERNIE: (CHORTLES) Oh, you wouldn't be robbing me of any fares. The taxi business is on the skids.
10. GEORGE: Ah... just like the Building and Loan business. Wanna swap?

11. ERNIE: Er... Actually, George. I need to talk to you. I-- (SIGHS) I'm gonna have to turn the deed back over to you.
12. GEORGE: "Deed"? The deed to your house? You've only been there two years, Ernie.
13. ERNIE: Yeah, but with business so crummy, I can't make the payments right now. Me and the missus will just have to move back in with her folks.
1. GEORGE: (GASPS) "Her folks"!?
2. ERNIE: Maybe share a flat with Bert. As a cop on the night beat, that might work.
3. GEORGE: Aw, Ernie... (THINKS) No, no! I-I'll tell you what... Can you just pay the interest?
4. ERNIE: "The interest"? Well, sure! I could do that, but then you're--
5. GEORGE: --No. Keep your house. Forget the principal-- for a little while. You're just hitting a rough patch, that's all.
6. ERNIE: Gosh, George! I-I don't know how to thank you. This means so--
7. WALLA-WALLA: (SINGLE VOICE) "TAXI!"
8. GEORGE: --Hey! Hear that? You're back in business, Ernie!
9. ERNIE: I am? Wait! I am! (CALLS OUT) Taxi coming right up!
10. TRACK SFX: [FX-09] ERNIE'S CAB PULLS AWAY FROM CURB.
- 11* GEORGE: (CALLS AFTER HIM) Atta-boy, Ernie!

12* . LIVE SFX: GEORGE WALKS A FEW STEPS.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Lascivious Male Walla rise at their upstage chairs. Violet walks up to mic <2>, but will briefly join George at mic --at <3L>--before returning to <2>. See below.

13* WALLA-WALLA: AD LIB "C'MON, VIOLET!" "HOW ABOUT IT?" ETC.

14* VIOLET: [CUE] Hey! (ENTERING) Going somewhere, Georgie-Porgie?

1. GEORGE: Oh, hello, Violet. Hiya, fellas.
(STARTLED) Gosh! You look great, Vi!

2. VIOLET: In this old thing? Aw, I only wear this when I don't care how I look... Right, guys?

3. WALLA-WALLA: MALE HOOTS OF AGREEMENT.

4* VIOLET: (TO MEN) Excuse me, fellas. I think I got a date. (TO GEORGE) So, Georgie, what's goin' on? Where are you headin'?

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

1. GEORGE: --No. I get it. (EXITING) No. Fine! Fine!
Just forget the whole thing!
2. WALLA-WALLA: MALE LAUGHTER--FADE UNDER
3. TRACK SFX: FADE DOWNTOWN BEDFORD FALLS TRAFFIC--UNDER
- 4* MUSIC: [MUS-12] (BRIDGE) "FROM VIOLET TO MARY"--FADE UNDER...

SCENE 13 - EXT. HATCH'S FRONT YARD - NIGHT (LATER - JUNE 1932)
(MARY <2>, GEORGE <DISTANT-4> THEN <4>)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George starts a few feet back from <4>--to make him sound far away. Later, he'll step closer while speaking.

- 5* TRACK SFX: [FX-10] CRICKETS #2--UNDER.
6. LIVE SFX: GEORGE'S FOOTSTEPS PACING OUTSIDE--UNDER.
- 7* MARY: [CUE] George? What are you doing on our sidewalk?
8. GEORGE: [DISTANT] Nothing. Hmmm? Oh! Is that you, Mary?
9. MARY: Err... I think so... Well...?
10. GEORGE: [DISTANT] "Well" what? Oh! Me? I'm just... passing by.
11. MARY: Yes, several times! I wondered if you were picketing! ...Or haunting me...
12. GEORGE: [DISTANT] (PERTURBED) Now, why would I be--
13. MARY: --your mother phoned, saying you were coming over.
14. GEORGE: [DISTANT] My-- She-- phoned? The nerve of-- Well... I just happen to be on a stroll, see. I didn't have any firm, kinda--

1. MARY: [DISTANT] --So, are you coming in--or aren't you?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
George advances to <4>--while speaking.

2. GEORGE: [DISTANT] Well.... all right. If you insist! I can come in. ... (ON MIC) for a minute. Er... I never told anyone I was coming here. Certainly not my Mother.

3. MARY: Right! You're your own man.

4. GEORGE: Er... So... So, back from college, huh?

5. MARY: Tuesday.

6. GEORGE: Ah... Where'd you get that dress?

7. MARY: New York. What do you think?

9. GEORGE: Well... (EVASIVE) It's okay--I guess. But I thought you'd take up in New York... like Sam Wainwright and everybody.

9. MARY: Oh, I worked there--summers--but I don't know... I got... er... homesick.

10. GEORGE: (INCREDULOUS) You got "homesick"??? What? ...for Bedford Falls?

11. MARY: Well, it is home, after all. (SIGHS) Why don't you just come into the parlor, George?

12. LIVE SFX: GEORGE AND MARY ENTER HOUSE. DOOR CLOSES.

13. TRACK SFX: CUT CRICKETS--WHEN DOOR CLOSES.

SCENE 14 - INT. THE HATCH'S PARLOR - IMMEDIATELY
(GEORGE <3> THEN <4>, MARY <2> THEN <3>,
MRS. HATCH <LATE-F1>, SAM/PHONE <LATE-F2>)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <3> and mimes putting his hat down.
Mrs. Hatch rises from her upstage chair and listens in.
Sam is seated with upstage cast--for now.

- 1* GEORGE: I don't get this. Nobody knew I was on my way here--even me!
2. MARY: So, you're leaving?
3. GEORGE: No, I'm not rude. I'll stay a while--since I'm here...
4. MARY: Say, it's nice about your brother and his new wife, isn't it?
5. GEORGE: Oh... er... Ruth. Ummm... she's okay.
6. MARY: What's the matter? Don't you like her?
7. GEORGE: (TESTY) Well, sure I like her. Ruth's... a-- a-- "peach!"
8. MARY: Oh...! It's just marriage in general you're down on.
9. GEORGE: No! I didn't say that. Marriage is fine... for some people.... I mean-- I suppose it works for... Harry, or... Sam, or... you.
10. MARY: "Works for Sam"???
11. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] Mary Hatch! Who's down there?
12. MARY: (CALLS OUT) It's George Bailey, Mother!
13. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] "George Bailey"?! (GASPS) What does he want?
14. MARY: (CALLS OUT) We're not sure--either of us.
(TO GEORGE) What do you want, George?
15. GEORGE: Me? No a thing! (CALLS OUT) I was just strolling by, Mrs. Hatch.

1. MARY: (WHISPERS) Coward! (CALLS OUT) He's making violent love to me, Mother!
2. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] He is?! You tell him to "stroll" right back home! Remember, Sam Wainwright said he'd call tonight--from New York.
3. MARY: (CALLS OUT) I know, Mother. (TO GEORGE) So, George, let me put on an old record, here.
4. LIVE SFX: PHONOGRAPH CLICKED ON.
5. TRACK SFX: [FX-11] (SOURCE) "BUFFALO GAL'S" 78 RPM RECORD--UNDER.
- 6* GEORGE: [CUE] Mary, that mother of yours is kinda-- (NOTICES TUNE) Oh... that song. (PERTURBED) Listen, I'm not here for--
- RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
Sam steps to the filter/phone mic <F2> and mimes dialing an operator and talking, then waiting for the long distance call to be connected and for Mary to answer.
7. MARY: (IMPATIENT) --then why are you here?
8. GEORGE: (ANNOYED) How should I know? You're the gal with the answers. How about you tell me why!
9. MARY: (MATCHING HIM) Oh...! I can certainly explain why you should go!
10. TRACK SFX: [FX-12] MARY'S PHONE RINGS (20X)--[EITHER SFX TRACK OR LIVE]--CONTINUE UNTIL MARY ANSWERS, BELOW.
11. GEORGE: (PEEVED) No need! I'll just go!
12. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] Mary! The telephone is--
13. GEORGE: (ANGRY) --I should never have--
14. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] --Mary! The--
15. GEORGE: (NASTY) --Too-da-loo!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George steps a few feet back from mic <4>. He will lean in to deliver his lines, then lean back out.

1. MARY: (NASTY BACK) --Too-da-loo!
2. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] Mary! The phone!
3. GEORGE: [DISTANT] Y'know, with all this yelling, maybe somebody could--
4. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] --Mary! It's Sam! Answer the--
5. MARY: (TO GEORGE) --maybe somebody could what, George?
6. MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] Mary! Get the phone!
7. MARY: (CALLS OUT) Enough, already! I'll get it, Mother! (ANGRY) Oooh! (TO GEORGE) George! On your way out, could you take off the record?
8. GEORGE: (SARCASTICALLY) My pleasure!
9. LIVE SFX: PHONOGRAPH NEEDLE SCRATCHES ACROSS RECORD-- SAVAGELY.
10. TRACK SFX: ABRUPT CUT-OFF OF "BUFFALO GALS"
- 11* GEORGE: (SEETHING) Dad-blasted song!
(EXITING) Enough already!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mary crosses to mic <3> and mimes picking up the handset.

12. LIVE SFX: MARY ANSWERS PHONE--KILL THE RINGING TRACK.
- 13* MARY: Hello... Hatch residence.
14. SAM: [FILTERED] Hiya, Mary. It's me, Sam.
15. MARY: Oh! (FAKE SWOON) Saaaam!
16. SAM: Hey, Mary! It's nice to catch you home.

1. MARY: (DOUBTFUL) It is?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mrs. Hatch steps to Upstage filter/phone mic <F2> and listens in--as if it's a phone handset. At the same time, George steps in close to mic <4>, delivers his next line then steps away--as if exiting.

2. GEORGE: (ON MIC) Excuse me, Mary! (EXITING) Just grabbing my hat.

3. MARY: (TO SAM) Oh, Saaaam! How nice of you to call! All the way from New York! (TO GEORGE--TAUNTING) Hee-haw!

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

5. MARY: You know what, Sam? Your old friend, George Bailey's here.

6. SAM: What? Old stuck-in-the-mud George? In person?

7. MARY: Yep! "Old stuck-in-the-mud George."

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

9. MARY: Wait a minute, Sam. (CALLS OUT) George?

10 MRS. HATCH: [DISTANT] Mary--you idiot! Sam doesn't want to talk to George!

11. MARY: (CALLS OUT) He does too! He even asked for George.

12. GEORGE: (STEPPING BACK IN) What is it, Mary? Y'see, I'm, late. I've got to get--

13. MARY: --Wait! It's Sam Wainwright! He wants to talk to you.

14. GEORGE: "Me"??? Sam Wainwright??? No, I--

15. MARY: (TO SAM) --Sam? Here's George!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mary beckons George to join her and shifts to <3L> as George crosses to <3R>. Mrs. Hatch quietly crosses to <F2> leaning in--as if she's listening to the call.

1. GEORGE: (TO SAM ON PHONE) Er... Hi, Sam.
(HALF-HEARTED) um... Hee-Haw!
2. SAM: Hee-Haw! (TEASINGLY) C'mon, George, what are you doing there? Trying to steal my girl, eh?
3. GEORGE: (DEFENSIVELY) "Steal your..."? Hey-- I don't want to steal anybody's girl.
(TO MARY) Mary? You talk to Sam. He's--
4. SAM: --No! Wait a minute, George. This for you both! Mary can use the extension upstairs.
5. GEORGE: (TO MARY) Um... He says you should go use the phone extension upstairs.
6. MARY: I can't. Mother's on the extension.
7. MRS. HATCH: [FILTERED] (GASP) I am not!
8. MARY: (TO GEORGE) That's okay, George--we can just put our heads closer together, then we can both hear.
9. GEORGE: (SIGH) Well... Okay. (THEY DOUBLE-UP)
10. MARY: There! Alright. (TO SAM) Sam? We're both on the line.
11. SAM: Okay! Now... I got a plan that'll have us all rolling in dough! George--remember that time at Martini's Tavern, when you told me about making plastics out of err... chili beans?
12. GEORGE: What??? Chili--
13. SAM: --Soybeans! I mean soybeans!

1. GEORGE: It was soybeans. Go on.
2. SAM: Well... my dad's willing to bankroll it. We want to build a factory--outside Rochester. What do you think of that?
3. GEORGE: Why Rochester? You can 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 available labor here!
4. SAM: Now you're talking, George! But... Mary, you listen to this too. If you've got any money... put every dime into our stock.
5. GEORGE: Wait a minute, Sam--
6. SAM: --C'mon, George! We might even have a job for you! That is--if you're not wedded to that worn out Building and Loan. Here's your chance to get in on the ground floor--right there in Bedford Falls!
7. MARY: (TO GEORGE) "Ground floor"! That's wonderful.
8. GEORGE: Er... Bedford Falls? I don't know, Sam.
9. SAM: (TO MARY) Oh, Mary...? Are you still listening?
10. MARY: Yes, Sam. I'm here.
11. SAM: Tell that clod-hopper this is the chance of a lifetime, you hear? The chance of a lifetime!
12. MARY: (TO GEORGE) He-- He says... it's the chance of a lifetime...
13. GEORGE: Give me that phone!

1. MARY: (TO SAM) Here's George gain, Sam. You try and--

2. LIVE SFX: GEORGE GRABS AND SLAMS DOWN PHONE HANDSET-- ANGRILY.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Sam is shocked at being hung-up on. He quietly walks back to his seat, upstage. While...

3* MARY: George!

4. GEORGE: (SLOW, BUT INTENSE) Now, listen, Mary! No plastics! No job! No "ground floor!" And no marriage to no-body. Never! Do you understand me?

5. MUSIC: [MUS-13] (BED) "WRENCHING" ENTERS--UNDER.

MUSIC & DIALOGUE TIMING NOTE:

As the "Wrenching" music cue plays, George & Mary need to time their lines so the music rises at "I know" on bar #9. The SFX artist counts the bars and discretely cues Mary for when to deliver her "I know." Practice this!

6. MARY: [BAR #2] (SOBS) Oh, George....

7. GEORGE: [BAR #3-5] I'm gonna do what I want! And--and no-body is gonna maneuver me into any-- (UPSET) Any--

8. MARY: [BAR #6] (UPSET) George...

9. GEORGE: [BAR #7] Mary... Oh, Mary!
[BAR #8] (WHISPER) I... (SIGH) I--

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mary puts her index finger on George's lip, hushing him before he completely humiliates himself. She waits for the (discrete) cue from the SFX Artist.

10. MARY: [BAR #9] [CUE] (WHISPERS) --I know.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George & Mary embrace. Mrs. Hatch slaps her forehead in disbelief! Her worst nightmare has come true.

1. MUSIC: [MUS-14] (BRIDGE) "HEAVENLY #6"--UNDER/QUICK CROSSFADE.

SCENE 15 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #6
(CLARENCE <1R>, SUPERINTENDENT <1L>)

2. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

3* CLARENCE: [REVERB] [CUE] So George and Mary got... what do they say...? "Hitched"?

4. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Ahem. Yes, Clarence. They were married on a brisk day in October, 1932.

5. CLARENCE: (TEARING UP) I- I always cry... in October.

6. SUPERINTENDENT: And--honeymoon-bound--were heading for the train station... (FADING UNDER) --driven by Ernie Bishop, in his taxi...

7. MUSIC: [MUS-15] (BRIDGE) "WEDDING MARCH TAXI"--FADE UNDER.

SCENE 16 - INT. ERNIE'S TAXICAB - SECONDS LATER (OCTOBER 1932)
(ERNIE <4>, MARY <3R>, GEORGE <3L>, OFFICER BERT <LATE-4R>
WALLA-PANIC REMAIN SEATED, ANNOUNCER <LATE-3>)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Ernie holds his script in one hand and mimes driving with the other.

8* TRACK SFX: [FX-13] INTERIOR OF CAB DRIVING, WIPERS, RAIN--UNDER

9* ERNIE: [CUE] Here, ya go, newlyweds! Sorry about the rainy send off, but Mr. Martini says, (BAD ITALIAN ACCENT) "Wet bride, she is good luck." And, Bert sent this bottle of bubbly. But don't tell anyone--a cop violating Prohibition and all. Eh, Mary?

10. MARY: (JOKING) "Mumm's" the word!

1. ERNIE: (LAUGHS) So... What's the plan for this here de-luxe honeymoon, George?
2. LIVE SFX: GEORGE PULLS OUT ENVELOPE OF CASH--RUSTLES IT.
3. GEORGE: See this fat wad of cash? (TO MARY) Count it, Mary. (TO ERNIE) That's our kitty.
4. ERNIE: So...?
5. GEORGE: So... We're gonna shoot the works, Ernie! Week one--New York! Week two--Bermuda! It'll be the swankiest hotels... the dancing-ist music... the prettiest--and soggiest--wife!
6. MARY: That's why I brought an umbrella, cowboy.
7. ERNIE: (LAUGHS) Lucky you--for finally getting outta Bedford Falls. So, where after that?
8. GEORGE: Gee... I don't know. (TO MARY) Um, dear. Where after that?
9. MARY: The moon, of course!
10. GEORGE: Atta-girl! Say, Mrs. Bailey, I haven't kissed you nearly enough!
11. MARY: Well, c'mere, you... [MARY DOES A SFX KISS]
- RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
At her mic, Mary kisses the back of her hand, making a long loud "smooching" sound. George swoons!
12. ERNIE: Hey! Slow down, lovebirds...! Any fond farewells, George? Here's Genesee Street...

1. GEORGE: (CALLING OUT WINDOW) So long, Bedford Falls!
So long, old Building and Loan! So long,
Uncle Billy! And Mr. Potter! And--everybody
else! We're leaving town and won't be back
for a long time!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Walla-Walla crowd stands at their upstage chairs.

2. WALLA-WALLA: BANK PANIC--UNDER, BUILD THRU END OF SCENE.

3* ERNIE: (PAUSE) Uh-oh! Say, George! Something's
fishy, here! Look at that crowd! Over there--
in front of the bank! Looks like the door's
locked!

4. GEORGE: Slow down, Ern. There's some cops. Ask Bert.

5. TRACK SFX: QUICK FADE OUT OF CAB DRIVING AS...

6. TRACK SFX: [FX-14] DO MANUAL CROSSFADE TO "CAB PULLS OVER - RAIN
ON STREET - THUNDER AT END"--UNDER.

7. ERNIE: (CALLS OUT) Hey, Bert. Bert! What's going on?

8. OFFICER BERT: [DISTANT] Looks like a bank run!

9. MARY: What? Here??? In this downpour?

10. OFFICER BERT: [ENTERING] Rain or no, it's a bank run, Mary.
If you've got any money in the bank, you'd
better pull it out--before they go belly up.

11. GEORGE: (TO ERNIE) Stay here, Ernie, I'm gotta see.

12. MARY: No, George! Don't. Let's just go! Please!

(TO ERNIE) Ernie! Take us to the train.

(TO GEORGE) George! No!

13. LIVE SFX: (OPTIONAL) CAB DOOR OPENS--GEORGE GETS OUT--
CAB DOOR SHUTS.

1* GEORGE: Just a minute, honey. Let me see... (EXITING)
It'll only take a second...

2. WALLA-WALLA: BANK-PANIC SUDDENLY LOUDER--UNDER.

3. MARY: No! No, George!
(TO BERT) Bert. Please. Drag him back here!
(CALLING OUT) Please, George. Not now!

4* MUSIC: [MUS-16] "ACT 1 OUTRO"--UNDER AND...

5* DIRECTOR/LIVE SFX: CUE THE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE.

6* MUSIC: LET "ACT ONE OUTRO" FINISH.

-- END OF ACT ONE --

7* ANNOUNCER: [OPTIONAL PROMO MENTION TEXT GOES HERE]

8* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] We'll return to our presentation of
"It's a Wonderful Life!" after a _____
minute intermission. Please stay tuned!

9* DIRECTOR/LIVE SFX: CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM.

(OPTIONAL) INTERMISSION GOES HERE.

-- ACT TWO --

INTRO - INT. RADIO STUDIO/THEATER
(ANNOUNCER <3>)

1* MUSIC: [MUS-17] (BED) "WONDERFUL LIFE ACT 2 INTRO"--FADES
UNDER.

2* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] And now, Act Two of the _____
Radio Theater presentation of... "It's a
Wonderful Life!"

10* DIRECTOR/LIVE SFX: CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM.

3* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] In Heaven, the superintendent of all
angels is still going over George Bailey's
case history. Clarence--an apprentice angel--
is eager to depart for his mission to
Earth...

4* MUSIC: [MUS-18] (BRIDGE) "HEAVENLY #7"--UNDER.

SCENE 1 - EXT. HEAVEN - DAY - #7
(CLARENCE <1R>, SUPERINTENDENT <1L>,
WALLA-SHAREHOLDERS ARE SEATED)

5. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

6* CLARENCE: [REVERB] [CUE] Fiddle-de-dee, your Excellent-
ness! I've heard enough background. If George
Bailey is thinking of taking his life, I'd
better head down to Earth right--

7. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] --Hold your horses, Clarence! We're
nowhere near the point where George Bailey is
contemplating suicide.

8. CLARENCE: What...? Why not?

1. SUPERINTENDENT: (SIGHS) You'll never get your wings unless
you can be patient! Now..., let me see...
Where was I?

2. CLARENCE: Here! (SPEEDILY) George and Mary got married and were heading out on their honeymoon when they ran into a run. Er... a bank run, I mean.
3. SUPERINTENDENT: Ah, yes... It was "The Great Financial Panic." Errr... "The Great Financial Panic of nineteen-thirty-two," you understand. As it was, bank failures were very prevalent er... back then.
4. WALLA-WALLA: ANGRY CROWD-UNDER.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Walla-Walla crowd watches SFX Artist to cue them to instant silence when door is slammed shut.

5. CLARENCE: Whoa! Did Hell break loose... again?
6. SUPERINTENDENT: No! In the lobby of the Building and Loan, dozens of worried shareholders are clamoring for their savings. George has rushed in from the waiting taxi--to find Uncle Billy, hiding in his office...
7. MUSIC: QUICKLY FADE "HEAVENLY" UNDER...

SCENE 2 - INT. UNCLE BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY (OCTOBER 1932)
(GEORGE <3>, UNCLE BILLY <2>, JIMMY THE RAVEN <SFX>,
MR. POTTER/PHONE <F2>)

- 8* LIVE SFX: GEORGE SLAMS THE DOOR SHUT--SILENCING WALLA.

9. WALLA-WALLA: CROWD NOISE ENDS--ABRUPTLY

- 1* GEORGE: [CUE] What is this, Uncle Billy? I saw a line of people outside the bank, but what's with the angry crowd in our lobby?
2. UNCLE BILLY: (NERVOUS) It's a panic, George. They want to withdraw their shares.

3. GEORGE: From us? We're not the bank.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

10. LIVE SFX: GEORGE WALKS--DOOR OPENS INTO...

SCENE 3 - INT. MAIN LOAN OFFICE - SECONDS LATER (OCTOBER 1932)
(GEORGE <3>, CHARLIE <2M>, UNCLE BILLY <3L>, RANDY <2R>, EDDY <2L>, MRS. THOMPSON <4M>, MRS. DAVIS <4R>, MARY <LATE-3>, WALLA-SHAREHOLDERS REMAIN SEATED)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
Platoon the shareholders--3 abreast, a bit back from their assigned mics. They step up for their lines then step back. To gain way, tap others on the shoulder.

11* WALLA-WALLA: CLAMORING CROWD AD LIB "GEORGE!," "MONEY" ETC.--WITH FREQUENT OUTBURSTS TO DIALOGUE.

12* GEORGE: [CUE] Okay. Okay. Hold on, now! Please! Now, now, please-- Everybody! Don't panic! I know you want your money.

1. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"YEAH" "WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?"

2* GEORGE: Look! I just talked with Mr. Potter on the phone! He says the bank will re-open next week. Next week.

3. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"NEXT WEEK?" "MY MONEY'S HERE!"
- 4*. CHARLIE: We want our money, George? Where's our money?
5. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"YEAH" "NOW!"--SUBSIDES UNDER.
- 6* GEORGE: Oh, come on! C'mon, everybody! Wait! Just a minute, now! Listen here! You've got it all wrong.
7. UNCLE BILLY: Yeah! Your money isn't here!
- 8* WALLA-WALLA: CROWD (AD-LIBS) "WHAT?" "HEY!"
- 9* GEORGE: Hold on. 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 Grimaldis' house! It's invested in your own house... And your neighbors' houses!
- 10* WALLA-WALLA: CROWD (AD-LIBS) "WHAT?" "HEY!"
- 11* UNCLE BILLY: That's how the Building and Loan works! If you all want your money now, what should we do? Foreclose on everybody? Throw them out of their homes?
12. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"SURE!" "WHAT?"--ARGUING.
- 1* CHARLIE: I don't care! I got two hundred and forty-two dollars in shares here. Now, two hundred and forty-two dollars won't break you. George, close my account! I want my money... now!
2. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"YEAH" "MINE TOO"--SUBSIDES UNDER.

3* UNCLE BILLY: All you gotta do, Charlie, is sign the withdrawal form and you'll get your funds in sixty days.

4. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"SIXTY DAYS?" "WHAT?"

5* CHARLIE: What do you mean? That's two whole months!

6. GEORGE: Well... Yes, but when you bought your shares in here, you agreed to these rules.

7. RANDY: [DISTANT] Ha! I went and got my money!

8. WALLA-WALLA: CROWD (AD-LIBS) "RANDY" "WHAT?" "HOW?"

9* RANDY: (STEPS UP) Mr. Potter will pay you fifty cents on the dollar for your shares!

10. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"YEAH?" "REALLY?"--SUBSIDES UNDER.

11* MRS. THOMPSON: Now what do you say, George?

12. GEORGE: Well, now, we have to stick to the shareholder agreement.

13. CHARLIE: Oh yeah...? (TO CROWD) C'mon, everybody! We can sell our shares to Potter! Half will be better than nothing!

14. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"YEAH!" "LET'S GO!"--SUBSIDES UNDER.

15. GEORGE: (STRUGGLING WITH THEM) Wait! C'mon! Please! Please, folks! Don't do this! (YELLS) Stop!

16. WALLA-WALLA: CROWD HUSHES A BIT

1* GEORGE: Listen! If you all sell, Potter would then control the Building and Loan. And there won't be a decent house built in this town again! Can't you see? He's just taken over

the town bank. He already controls the bus line, the department store--

2. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"SO WHAT?" "SMART BUSINESSMAN"
--SUBSIDES UNDER.

3. GEORGE: --And now he's after us! You know why? Because we're cutting into his business! With the Building and Loan gone, you'll be living in his crummy shacks--and paying whatever rent he demands.

4. EDDY: But George...

5. 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?

6. EDDY: Well...

7. 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!

8. WALLA-WALLA: CROWD MULLS IT OVER

9* CHARLIE: [DISTANT] That's a lot of fine talk, George, but I've got doctor bills to pay!

10. MRS. DAVIS: [DISTANT] My husband got laid off. We need our money.

1. EDDY: What do we live on until the bank re-opens?

2. WALLA-WALLA: OUTBURST--"RIGHT!" "HOW?" --SUBSIDES UNDER.

3* MRS. THOMPSON: [DISTANT] You can't feed kids on "faith!"

4* WALLA-WALLA: CROWD (AD-LIBS) "THAT'S RIGHT!" "WHAT
ABOUT THAT, GEORGE?!" "YEAH!"--CLAMOR UNDER.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mary breaks through the crowd to join George at <3L>.
George shifts to <3R>.

5* MARY: (STEPS UP) George! George, darling!

6. GEORGE: (STARTLED) Hey! Mary!

7. MARY: How much money do they need? You and I still
have some cash on hand!

8. LIVE SFX: MARY GIVES ENVELOPE OF MONEY TO GEORGE.

9* GEORGE: No! ...Wait! We do???

10. MARY: Our honeymoon money!

11. GEORGE: (GASPS) Oh! We do! (TO ALL) Wait, folks! I've
got two-thousand dollars here! My own money!

12. WALLA-WALLA: CALMS A BIT--BUT STILL RAUCOUS

13. UNCLE BILLY: (TO GEORGE) Well..., that could last us until
the bank re-opens!

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

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

16. WALLA-WALLA: (RIGHT OVER THEM) URGENT CLAMOR UNDER.

17. GEORGE: (STRUGGLING) Okay! So we've got some cash!
Er... Charlie! How much do you need?

1. CHARLIE: I need two hundred and forty-two dollars!

2. GEORGE: (PLEADING) C'mon, Charlie! Can't you make due
with just enough to tide you over?

3. CHARLIE: No! Gimme two hundred and forty-two dollars!

4. GEORGE: "Fine." (TO BILLY) Uncle Billy? Here. Charlie gets two hundred and forty-two dollars.
5. CHARLIE: That closes my account then...
6. GEORGE: No, that doesn't close your account.
7. UNCLE BILLY: It's just a loan, Charlie! Just a loan...
8. WALLA-WALLA: CLAMORS FOR MONEY—UNDER REST OF SCENE
9. GEORGE: So... who's next? ...Eddy, now...
10. EDDY: Well, I got three-hundred dollars in here.
11. GEORGE: Aw, c'mon, Eddy! How much do you need?
12. EDDY: Er... well.... uh... Twenty bucks, then.
13. GEORGE: Thank you, Eddy! Thank you! Next? ...Mrs. Davis, how about you?
14. MRS. DAVIS: But this is your own money, George.
15. GEORGE: That's okay. That's okay. What do you need?
16. MRS. DAVIS: Er... would seven-teen dollars and forty cents be too much?
17. GEORGE: "Seventeen dollars and forty cents"? Bless you, dear! You can pay it back later--when things are better. (TO ALL) Who's next? Who's next, now? Let's try to spread it out. Spread it out... (AD LIB)
17. WALLA-WALLA: CLAMORS THEN FADES UNDER TO SILENCE.
- 18* MUSIC: [MUS-19] (BRIDGE) "TIME PASSING"--FADES UNDER.

SCENE 4 - INT. MAIN LOAN OFFICE - FIVE HOURS LATER (OCTOBER 1932)
(UNCLE BILLY <2>, GEORGE <3>, EUSTACE <4L>, TILLY<4R>,
MARY <LATE-F1>)

- 1* UNCLE BILLY: [CUE] Look at the clock, George! Look!

2. GEORGE: I'm looking, Uncle Billy. I'm looking.
(COUNTS) Five more seconds... four...
3. ALL OF THEM: (TOGETHER) Three... two... one...

MUSIC TIMING:

SFX Artist cues music tech to kill "Time Passing" music cue

4. UNCLE BILLY: Six o'clock! Whew! We made it! Lock that door, Eustace! Lock that door!
5. EUSTACE: Right, George!
6. JIMMY THE RAVEN: (SQUAWKS) "Right, George"!
7. UNCLE BILLY: Shut up, Jimmy!
8. LIVE SFX: EUSTACE CLOSSES FRONT DOOR--W/BELL. LOCKS IT.
9. TRACK SFX: [FX-16] OFFICE PHONE RINGS (1-1/4X) [SFX TRACK OR LIVE]
10. LIVE SFX: TILLY PICKS UP PHONE--QUIETLY UNDER.
11. GEORGE: Ha! We didn't close early, Uncle Billy! Although we've only got two bucks left!
12. UNCLE BILLY: Maybe they'll breed in the safe. Eh, Eustace?
13. EUSTACE: (PUZZLED) Like rabbits?
14. TILLY: George. Telephone!
15. GEORGE: Thanks, Tilly! Oh, by the way... call my wife, will you? I forgot all about--
16. TILLY: --Mrs. Bailey's on the line...

PRODUCTION NOTE:

For Mary's side of the phone conversation below, have her babble into a telephone filter mic <F1> in response to George's dialogue. She should vocalize while flicking her finger across her lips--as if talking underwater. She is NOT to actually speak her lines below--only to "blurble" them using inflection. She "converses" with George, but

only through blurble. He--in turn--echoes back her inflections of "Our home?" "I love you" etc.

1. GEORGE: (DISTRACTED) "Mrs. Bailey"??? No. I don't want... Mrs. Bailey! Wait! Mrs... Bail..? Oh! Right! That's my wife's name too, now! Give me the phone, already, will you? (TO MARY) Hello... errr... is this Mrs. Bailey?
2. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "Yes, this is Mrs. Bailey!"
3. GEORGE: Well, Mary! We survived...! I'm sorry, I--
4. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING)--"Now that you're done saving things, come home!"
5. GEORGE: I... Huh...?
6. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "Come home."
7. GEORGE: "Come home"??? Wait, what home?
8. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "Our home!"
9. GEORGE: What?
10. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "Our home, George! At three-twenty Sycamore."
11. GEORGE: "Three-twenty Sycamore"??? Whose home is that?
12. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "Our home!"
13. GEORGE: ...Huh?
14. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "Our home, bird-brain!"
1. GEORGE: ...But, Mary, how can we have a--
2. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "--Right now!"
3. GEORGE: "Right now." OK.... sure, all right, sure

4. MARY: [FILTERED] (BLURBLING) "I love you!"
5. GEORGE: I love you too, honey. I'm on my way.
- 6* MUSIC: [MUS-20] (BRIDGE) "BRIDE" TO "HEAVENLY #8"--UNDER.

SCENE 5 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #8
(SUPERINTENDENT <1L>, CLARENCE <1R>)

7. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER
- 8* SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] [CUE] So, Clarence, it turns out three-twenty Sycamore was--
9. CLARENCE: [REVERB] --his mother-in-law's?
10. SUPERINTENDENT: No! It was that run-down Granville house--the one George and Mary threw rocks at for their wishes! You see, Mary's wish was to "marry" George--and live in the old Granville house. That's where they honeymooned. That's where they set up house. And... two years later, that's where they were living (FADING UNDER) when Mr. Potter had George come by his office for a little talk...
11. MUSIC: QUICKLY FADE "HEAVENLY" UNDER...

SCENE 6 - INT. MR. POTTER'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY (JUNE 1934)
(MR. POTTER <2>, GEORGE <4>)

12. TRACK SFX: [FX-17] POTTER'S CLOCK TICKS IN BACKGROUND #1--UNDER.
- 13* MR. POTTER: [CUE] Now, George, I suppose you're wondering why you're here.
1. GEORGE: I don't know, Mr. Potter, but I'm sure you do.
2. 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.

3. GEORGE: What? "Giving up"?
4. 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 gain control of it for years, but you've outwitted me, evaded me, de-feated me. Am I right?
5. GEORGE: Errr... actually... (PROUD) yes.
6. MR. POTTER: That's because you're a smart man, George. Two years ago--during that Financial Panic--you and I were the only ones who kept our heads. You saved the Building and Loan... and I... saved everything else.
7. GEORGE: Most would say you stole everything else.
8. MR. POTTER: Envious people might say that, George; The "suckers" might say that--but we both know that I was just being a smart businessman. And that's what I'm being right now.
9. GEORGE: So smart that you're "giving up"???
10. MR. POTTER: Well... "if you can't beat'em..."
11. GEORGE: (ALARMED) No! If you're suggesting we--
12. 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.
1. GEORGE: What???
2. MR. POTTER: Your side. Now... You're a young man--married a few years--making... what?... forty dollars a week?
3. GEORGE: Forty-five.

4. MR. POTTER: OK. Forty-five. And... if you were a common, everyday "bumpkin", you'd think you were doing well. However, you're no common, everyday bumpkin, son. No, you're a smart resourceful, and... ambitious man--who hates his job.
5. GEORGE: (CLEARS THROAT UNCOMFORTABLY) Er...
6. MR. POTTER: Yes! You hate that 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, "frittering away" your life--servant to a bunch of garlic-eaters! Am I right? Or do I exaggerate??
7. GEORGE: Er... so... what's your... point, Mr. Potter?
8. MR. POTTER: My point is, come work for me, George. I'll hire you.
9. GEORGE: "Hire me"...? Er... to do.... what?
10. MR. POTTER: To manage my affairs! Oversee my properties! And... I'll start you off at, say, twenty-thousand per year.
11. GEORGE: (STUNNED) "Twenty thousa--"? Are you talking twenty-thousand dollars? ...per year?
1. MR. POTTER: Of course! And you're worth it! Wouldn't you like to live in the best house in town? Get your wife some fine clothes? Take trips to Europe... (PAUSE) every year?

2. GEORGE: "Europe"??? (INHALES) Wait! You're talking to George Bailey. The George Bailey from the Building and Loan.
3. MR. POTTER: Yes, that George Bailey. (PAUSE) Son, your ship has finally come in! Now, muster up the brains and climb aboard!
4. GEORGE: But-- but... the Building and Loan. What about that?
5. MR. POTTER: (ANGRY) Forget the Building and Loan! I'm offering a three-year contract for... let's sweeten the pot. Make it twenty-five thousand per year. (PAUSE) Agreed?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mr. Potter offers his hand. George crosses to mic <3>.

6. GEORGE: Er... well, twenty-five thousand dollars... a nice home... Europe.... Errr... Can you give me time to think a bit? Ask my wife?
7. MR. POTTER: Of course! Of course, George. Meanwhile, I'll draw up the papers. But first, let's shake on it, son.
8. GEORGE: (WHILE SHAKING HANDS) Well, Mr. Potter! Gee, who would've thought-- If my father could see us now... (CHOKES ON THE THOUGHT) he'd be--
9. MR. POTTER: --What? Is something wrong, George? We're just shaking hands over a little busi--

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses back to mic <4>

1. GEORGE: --Wait!(SUDDENLY REPULSED) Wait! No! I won't do it! I don't need time to think it over. I know right now! The answer is "no"!

2. MR. POTTER: (SHOCKED) What do you mean?
3. GEORGE: If you offered me a million dollars... to stay in Bedford Falls... to be your stooge..., the answer would still be "no"!
4. MR. POTTER: But why?
5. 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! (EXITING) I don't need you or your money!
6. LIVE SFX: GEORGE EXITS--SLAMS POTTER'S OFFICE DOOR.
- 7* MR. POTTER: Oh, really, now. (TO HIMSELF) You're a failure, George Bailey! You just don't know it yet!
8. TRACK SFX: CLOCK TICKING--FADES OUT UNDER MUSIC.
- 9* MUSIC: [MUS-21] (BRIDGE) "INDIGNANT" TO "SLEEPY"--FADE UNDER.

SCENE 7 - INT. GRANVILLE HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT (JUNE 1934)
(GEORGE <3>, MARY <2>)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

SFX Artist will knit--silently--at the SFX mic. At the end of the scene, pulls knitting needles up, revealing a previously hidden baby-bootie.

10. LIVE SFX: GEORGE OPENS BEDROOM DOOR--GENTLY.
THEN, MARY KNITTING QUIETLY--UNDER
- 1* GEORGE: [CUE] Sorry, I'm so late, Mary. Are you bored--waiting up for me?
2. MARY: I was just sitting--and knitting--George. So... What did Mr. Potter want to see you about?

3. GEORGE: (SLEEPY) Oh, not much, really. Just talk-- business-talk, you know... (SIGHS DEEPLY) But jeez... Why-- How could you have married someone like me? Why?
4. MARY: (CHUCKLES) Well, I didn't want to be an "old maid."
5. GEORGE: (DEJECTED) But we were going to see the world! Go places! I was going to give you the moon... But, instead, what have I given you? Huh? Not much. Some husband I am! I feel terrible...
6. MARY: (COOLY) Me too... Especially in the mornings, lately.
7. GEORGE: (NOT CATCHING HER DRIFT) Y'know, you could have married somebody... successful. A guy like Sam Wainwright... A some-body.
8. MARY: I didn't marry "a some-body"... because I wanted a baby that looked like you.
9. GEORGE: I didn't even give you a real honeymoon, Mary. No swanky-- (GETS IT) Wait! You wanted what to look like me?
10. MARY: ...a baby... you bird-brain!
11. GEORGE: (STUNNED) "Baby"??? What?! You mean-- Hey-- ...Mary-- (GOT IT) The knitting! The mornings! Mary, you're?--
1. MARY: --Yep! I'm on the nest!
2. GEORGE: (IMPRESSED) Well! (SQUAWK) "Aawck"!
3. MARY: Shut up, Jimmy!

4. LIVE SFX: SFX ARTIST HOLDS UP KNITTING NEEDLES DANGLING
THE PREVIOUSLY HIDDEN BABY-BOOTIE.

5* MUSIC: [MUS-22] (BRIDGE) "ROCK-A-BYE TO "HEAVENLY #9"--UNDER.

SCENE 8 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER
(SUPERINTENDENT <1L>, CLARENCE <1R>)

6. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

7* SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] [CUE] Well, Clarence, soon, Mary gave birth to their first child--a boy they named Petey.

8. CLARENCE: [REVERB] "Petey"--That's nice!

9. SUPERINTENDENT: Two years later, another baby--a girl--Janie!

10. CLARENCE: "Janie"--Good for them!

11. SUPERINTENDENT: But, of course, George never got out of Bedford Falls.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

1 MUSIC: BEGIN FADING "WAR MONTAGE" UNDER...

2. CLARENCE: Well, then. We're just about up to today!

3. SUPERINTENDENT: We are. The only thing you don't know about George Bailey is how he's come to the point of wanting to take his own life.

4. CLARENCE: (SHUDDERS) Suicide. Tell me. How???

5. SUPERINTENDENT: Alright... Today is the day before Christmas...amidst the usual holiday preparations, (FADING UNDER) George has something else to celebrate.

6. MUSIC: "WAR MONTAGE"--IS COMPLETELY OUT.

SCENE 9 - INT. MAIN LOAN OFFICE - DAY (12/24/1945)
(GEORGE <3>, TILLY <4L>, JIMMY THE RAVEN <SFX-MIC>, EUSTACE <2>, CARTER <4R>, VIOLET <LATE-2>)

7. LIVE SFX: BELL/DOOR OPENS, EXCITEDLY--GEORGE ENTERS--
BELL/DOOR SHUTS.

8* GEORGE: [CUE] (ENTERING) Tilly! Eustace! Did you see this article in the paper? (READS) "Commander Harry Bailey, Famous Navy Ace, decorated by the President"! My own brother! The Medal of Honor!

9. TILLY: Gee, George! That's swell!

10. JIMMY THE RAVEN: (SQUAWKS) Awwwk! "That's swell!"

11. LIVE SFX: FLAPPING BIRD WINGS (2X)

12. TILLY: Shut up, Jimmy.

1. GEORGE: It says here, (READS) "Commander Bailey downed fifteen enemy planes. The last ones, kamikazes, aiming to dive into a troop-ship." Think of it! Our Harry Bailey saved hundreds of lives! (TO EUSTACE) Hey, Eustace, Where's Uncle Billy? Shopping?
2. EUSTACE: He's at the bank. Right, Tilly?
3. TILLY: Yes. But George, (WHISPERS) the er... bank-examiner's here, waiting for him.
4. GEORGE: Oh, right--the annual audit. (TO CARTER) Well... Good afternoon... uh--
5. CARTER: --Carter. Bank-examiner.
6. LIVE SFX: GEORGE FLEXES THE NEWSPAPER--TAPS IT.
7. GEORGE: Y'know, my brother's picture's in the paper! The President is decorating him today!
8. CARTER: (UNIMPRESSED) Yes. Well, I suppose they do that sort of thing. Now, about the books.
9. LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--BELL--VIOLET ENTERS--CLOSE DOOR.
- 10* VIOLET: (ENTERING) Er... George?
11. GEORGE: Violet! How are ya? Did you see the paper? All about Harry's homecoming and...
12. VIOLET: Er... Can I see you a minute, George? ...Privately?
13. GEORGE: Okay. Okay, Vi. We can just go to my...
14. CARTER: (REMINDING GEORGE) Ahem! Mr. Bailey. I'd like to finish your audit.... tonight, so I can get back to Elmira... and spend the holiday at home.

1. GEORGE: Oh, yes. That's right! I just have to... (TO TILLY) Errr... Tilly! Please show the books to uh... uh--
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: Carter... (PATHETIC) Bank-examiner. (SIGHS)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Tilly, Carter, and Eustace step back--nearly to the upstage chairs. George crosses to <4>. When invited, Violet crosses to <3>.

6. GEORGE: Let see... err... Violet. Step into my office.
7. VIOLET: (CROSSING) Oh, sure. Thanks, George.
8. LIVE SFX: GEORGE'S OFFICE DOOR CLOSSES.
9. GEORGE: So, what can I do for you, Vi?
10. VIOLET: That letter you promised...?
11. GEORGE: Uh-- (THINKS) Oh. Yes! The letter of recommendation. I was about to type it when there was all this news about Harry.
12. VIOLET: Good kid, that Harry. So, er... like I told you on the phone, George, I'm leaving--for New York. After that thing with the Waves, I gotta make a fresh start, maybe.
13. GEORGE: Sure! How about this...
14. LIVE SFX: TYPING--UNDER--HIT BELL AT END OF SENTENCES.

1. GEORGE: (TYPING) "To whom it may concern,"
"The bearer--Miss Violet Bick--has been
employed at Bailey Building and Loan (SFX: BELL)
BELL) for the past two years--.
2. VIOLET: --That's a lie, George. I haven't--
3. GEORGE: --Now, now, Violet. (TYPING) "She
demonstrated... intelligence..."--
4. VIOLET: --A lie.
5. GEORGE: (TYPING) --"...ability..."--
6. VIOLET: --Another lie.
7. GEORGE: (TYPING) "...and good character." (SFX: BELL)
8. VIOLET: "Character"? If I had any character, I
wouldn't have gotten drummed outta the--
9. GEORGE: (TYPING) --"I'm happy to give her my whole-
hearted endorsement."
10. LIVE SFX: GEORGE PULLS PAPER UP, SIGNS IT, AND FOLDS
IT--UNDER.
11. VIOLET: Gee... Thanks... "liar."
12. GEORGE: C'mon, now, Violet. It takes a lot to leave
your hometown and start somewhere new.
(PAUSE) And here... Here's something to help
you get started.
13. LIVE SFX: GEORGE HANDS VIOLET THIRTY DOLLARS.
- 14* VIOLET: No. Oh, no, George. I can't take that.

1. GEORGE: C'mon! You're broke, aren't you? D'you want to hock your furs and that hat? Are you gonna walk to New York? It's a loan, Violet! That's all! I'm in the loan business. Besides, you'll find a job.
2. VIOLET: (BRIGHTENS) Yeah... sure! Ok.
3. LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--GEORGE AND VIOLET ENTER LOBBY

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <3L>, next to Violet <3R>.

Tilly, Carter, and Eustace step closer, but not up to the mics. Instead, they just witness.

At her mic, Violet will kiss the back of her hand, making a brief "smooch" sound.

4. GEORGE: Good luck, Vi.
5. VIOLET: I'm glad to know you, George Bailey.
[VIOLET DOES A SFX KISS] Merry Christmas.
6. GEORGE: The same to you, Vi. And err.... say "Hello" to New York for me.
7. LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--BELL--VIOLET EXITS--DOOR CLOSES.
8. JIMMY THE RAVEN: (SQUAWKS) "Aawck!" "Hello, Frisco, Hello!"
Aawck!
9. LIVE SFX: FLAPPING BIRD WINGS (2X)
10. GEORGE: "Frisco"? Aw, shut up, Jimmy.
11. JIMMY THE RAVEN: (SQUAWKS) Aawck! "Shut up, Jimmy." Aawck!
12. LIVE SFX: FLAPPING BIRD WINGS (2X)
13. GEORGE: Eustace! Where's Uncle Billy?
14. EUSTACE: [DISTANT] He's making a deposit--at the bank.

1. JIMMY THE RAVEN: (SQUAWKS) Aawck! "At the bank." "At the bank." Aawck! "Shut up, Jimmy." Aawck!

2. LIVE SFX: FLAPPING BIRD WINGS (2X)

3. MUSIC: [MUS-24] (BRIDGE) "GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN" WITH SOUR ENDING CHORD--LET IT FINISH.

SCENE 10 - INT. BANK LOBBY - AT THE SAME TIME
(UNCLE BILLY <3>, MR. POTTER <4>, BANK TELLER <2>, WALLA-CUSTOMERS REMAIN SEATED)

4* WALLA-WALLA: BANK CUSTOMERS--QUIETLY UNDER

5. LIVE SFX: POTTER'S WHEELCHAIR SQUEAKS--UNDER

6* UNCLE BILLY: [CUE] Well, well! Mr. Potter! Here to personally guard your money? What?--Your bank vault not strong enough?

7. LIVE SFX: POTTER'S WHEELCHAIR SQUEAKS--UNDER

8. MR. POTTER: Look out, Bailey, you old fool! My wheelchair!

9. LIVE SFX: BILLY FLEXES THE NEWSPAPER.

10. UNCLE BILLY: Did you see the newspaper? The headline is-- (READS) "Harry Bailey Gets Medal of Honor!" Gee! What'll those Bailey boys do next?

11. MR. POTTER: Huh? Let me see that newspaper!

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

SCENE 11 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #10
(SUPERINTENDENT <1L>, CLARENCE <1R>)

1. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER
- 2* SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] [CUE] 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.
3. CLARENCE: [REVERB] Oh! And Potter kept that lost money, didn't he? (FADING UNDER) So that's why George and Uncle Billy are out there, scouring the street in front of the bank...

SCENE 12 - EXT. WASHINGTON AVE - MINUTES LATER (12/24/1945)
(GEORGE <3>, UNCLE BILLY <2>)

4. LIVE SFX: GEORGE AND BILLY WALKING IN SNOW.
- 5* GEORGE: [CUE] Look by the curb, Uncle Billy! I'll look by the mailbox.
6. UNCLE BILLY: (DISTRAUGHT) For the life of me, George. I don't know where it could be. When I left our office, I had the envelope with our money.
7. GEORGE: (WORRIED) That eight-thousand dollars is not our money! It's the depositors' money! (SIGHS) And with the bank-examiner here!
8. UNCLE BILLY: But, George! We've checked every step I took.
9. GEORGE: Well, if you didn't drop it, maybe you never put the envelope in your pocket in the first place.
10. UNCLE BILLY: Maybe... Maybe... But oh... (SIGHS) I'm useless to you. Useless, George!

1. GEORGE: (DESPERATE) C'mon! You've got to think!
Think!

2. UNCLE BILLY: (SOBS) I can't think! I just can't!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <2R>, right next to Uncle Billy <2L>.

3. GEORGE: (LASHING OUT) Now, where is the money, you doddering fool? We'll be bankrupt! That's fraud! Scandal! Somebody's going to prison-- and it won't be George Bailey. You keep looking, you hear? (EXITING) I'm going home!

4. LIVE SFX: GEORGE STOMPS OFF IN THE SNOW.

5. UNCLE BILLY: (SOBS) George...!

6. MUSIC: [MUS-26] (BRIDGE) "DESPERATE"--LET IT FINISH.

SCENE 13 - INT. GRANVILLE HOUSE 12/24/1945 AT 6 P.M.

(MARY <4>, GEORGE <2>, JANIE <3>, PETEY <LATE-2>, ZUZU <VERY LATE-2>)

7* MUSIC: [MUS-27] (SOURCE) JANIE'S PIANO PRACTICE #1--"HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"--UNDER--IT ENDS QUICKLY.

8* MARY: [CUE] What's the matter, George? You've been brooding since you got home. Talk to me.

9. GEORGE: How can I?--with Janie's piano-playing. She keeps banging away--over and over.

10. JANIE BAILEY: [DISTANT] But, Daddy! I gotta to practice for the Christmas party.

11. MUSIC: [MUS-28] (SOURCE) JANIE'S PIANO PRACTICING #2--"HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"--SHE RESTARTS--UNDER.

1. MARY: (TO GEORGE) I'm sorry, dear. Hectic day?
2. GEORGE: (SARCASTIC) Another stellar day for the Bailey family.
3. PETEY BAILEY: (STEPS UP) Mom! Here's Zuzu's plate. (TO GEORGE) Hey... Dad!
4. MARY: Not now, Petey.
5. PETEY BAILEY: Hey, Dad! The Browns got a brand new car! You should see it!
6. GEORGE: (ORNERY) What's wrong with our car, Petey? Not good enough for you?
7. PETEY BAILEY: (TAKEN ABACK) Gee, Dad. I was just--
8. MARY: (DIVERTING) --Thank you for bringing Zuzu's plate, Petey. All right. Run along, now.
9. LIVE SFX: MARY PUTS ZUZU'S PLATE AND FORK ON TABLE.
10. PETEY BAILEY: Okay. (EXITING) I'll finish the decorations.
11. GEORGE: Mary, Why is Zuzu eating in her room? What's the matter?
12. MARY: Oh, I think she may have caught a cold, coming home from school. She didn't button her coat because she got a flower as a prize and didn't want to crush it.
13. GEORGE: "She caught a little cold"?
14. MARY: It's okay, dear. The doctor said not to worry.
15. GEORGE: What? The doctor came?
16. MARY: Zuzu's got a little temperature, just ninety-nine point--

1. GEORGE: (ANGRILY) It's this drafty old house! It's a wonder we don't all have pneumonia!
2. MARY: (CONCERNED) George!
3. GEORGE: I mean... why do we live here in the first place? Why in this crummy little town?
4. MARY: (WORRIED) What's wrong, dear?
5. GEORGE: Everything's wrong! Oh...! Why did we have to have all these kids anyway?
6. PETEY BAILEY: (DISTANT) Daddy, how do you spell "frankincense"?
7. MUSIC: JANIE HAS STOPPED PLAYING PIANO BY NOW.
8. GEORGE: [DISTANT] I don't know! Ask your mother!
9. MARY: Where are you going, George?
10. GEORGE: [DISTANT] I'm gonna check on Zuzu!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mary, Janie, and Petey step back from their mics. George crosses to <4> as Zuzu steps to <3>. Try putting Zuzu at a mic that is too tall for her--to make her look small.

11. LIVE SFX: GEORGE WALKS DOWN HALLWAY. OPENS DOOR.
- 12* ZUZU: Da-dee!
13. GEORGE: Are you okay, Zuzu? I heard you caught a cold.
14. ZUZU: (SNIFFLES) I won a flower at school, Da-dee. Can you give it a drink of water?
15. GEORGE: "Drink of..."? (SIGHS) Oh. Okay. I'll um--
16. ZUZU: (GASPS) --Da-dee! You crushed it!
17. GEORGE: Oh! I didn't mean to. I was just--

1. ZUZU: (UPSET) --Fix it, Da-dee. Paste the petals back on.
2. GEORGE: Umm... There! (HIDING LOOSE PETALS IN POCKET) See? It's all fixed. Good as new.
3. ZUZU: Thank you, Da-dee. You can do anything.
4. GEORGE: Er... any-thing? (HUGS/SOBS) ...Now, try to get some sleep, darling. You'll feel better.
5. ZUZU: (SNIFFLES) Happy Christmas, Da-dee.
6. LIVE SFX: GEORGE CLOSSES DOOR--GENTLY. WALKS UP HALLWAY.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Zuzu goes to her upstage chair. George crosses to <4>. Mary steps up to <2R>, Janie to <2L>. Petey stays back, watching.

7. GEORGE: (CALLS OUT TO MARY) Mary...? Zuzu felt a--
8. TRACK SFX: [FX-18] BAILEY PHONE RING (1-1/2X) [SFX TRACK OR LIVE]
9. GEORGE: --Zuzu felt a bit hot to me. We'd better--
10. LIVE SFX: MARY PICKS UP PHONE HANDSET.
- 11* MARY: (INTO PHONE) --Bailey residence.
(LISTENS)...Oh, thank you, Mrs. Welch. Zuzu's resting. I'm sure it's nothing.
12. GEORGE: (STEPS OVER) Who's on the phone, Mary?
13. 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--
14. GEORGE: --Give me the phone, Mary.
15. MARY: (FEARFUL) George, no! Now, calm down.
16. MUSIC: [MUS-29] JANIE PLAYS PIANO #3--"HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"--UNDER--IT WILL END DURING DIALOGUE.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <3L> and mimes grabbing the phone handset from Mary. She backs off to <3R>. Petey watches from behind Mary.

- 1* GEORGE: (GRABBING THE PHONE) Gimme that! (UPSET, INTO PHONE) Is this Mrs. Welch? ...George Bailey here! What kind of teacher are you? Don't you realize she could get pneumonia on account of you?
2. MARY: George!
3. GEORGE: (FUMING) Silly, careless people like you! Sending kids home half-naked! You know, maybe my kids aren't the best-dressed in town, but at least-- ...Hello? Hello??
4. LIVE SFX: GEORGE SLAMS PHONE HANDSET DOWN--ANGRILY.
- 5* GEORGE: (HOLLERS) Janie! Enough with the piano! Somebody stop her!
6. MUSIC: ABRUPTLY KILL JANIE'S PIANO PRACTICE #3.
- 7* JANIE BAILEY: (DISTANT--SOBBING) Oh, Daddy...
- 8* MARY: George! Whatever's gotten into you? You're torturing the children!
9. GEORGE: (SURLY) Okay... Then how about this?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <3> and mimes upending a table.

10. LIVE SFX: GEORGE DESTROYS MODEL BRIDGE.
11. MARY: You worked for months on that bridge model!
12. GEORGE: (SARCASTIC) Happy now?
- 13* MARY: (ANGRY) Stop it! You're acting like a wild--

1. GEORGE: (GETS A GRIP ON HIMSELF) --I'm-- (SIGHS)
Sorry, Janie. Sorry, Mary... I--
2. MARY: --George!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
George crosses to <4>, but distant.

3. LIVE SFX: GEORGE STEPS TO FRONT DOOR--OPENS.
- 4* GEORGE: (EXITING) I-- I've just got to get out of here! I'm sorry.
5. LIVE SFX: GEORGE RUNS OUT--DOOR CLOSES.
6. MUSIC: [MUS-30] (BRIDGE) "TROUBLED"--FADES UNDER.

SCENE 14 - INT. MR. POTTER'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER (12/24/1945)
(MR. POTTER <2>, GEORGE <3>)

7. TRACK SFX: [FX-19] POTTER'S CLOCK TICKS IN BACKGROUND #2--UNDER.
- 8* MR. POTTER: [CUE] So that's what this sudden visit is about, George. You're eight-thousand dollars "short."
9. GEORGE: (DEJECTED) Er... that's right, Mr. Potter. But you gotta help me! I'll pay whatever interest. And if you-- want the Bailey Building and Loan, we can... arrange some--
10. MR. POTTER: --You claim the money was... "lost"? What if it was... stolen? You should notify the police and--
11. GEORGE: --No... no, sir. Harry's homecoming is tomorrow and well, the publicity would--
12. MR. POTTER: --I see... You didn't "lose" that money playing the market, did you, George? Horses, maybe?

1. GEORGE: Of course not! 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 come to my door. Why not your buddy, Sam Wainwright?
5. GEORGE: Well, I er... I tried to reach Sam, but er... he's vacationing 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... All I have is a life insurance policy. Here, It's--
8. LIVE SFX: GEORGE HANDS INSURANCE POLICY TO POTTER
9. MR. POTTER: --Life insurance? For how much?
10. GEORGE: A fifteen-thousand dollar policy. It's--
11. MR. POTTER: --Hmm... (READING) "Fifteen-thousand." But what's your equity in it?
12. GEORGE: Er... (SIGHS) Around five-hundred dollars.
13. MR. POTTER: Five-- hundred??? And you want an emergency loan... for eight-thousand dollars?--on Christmas Eve? Hmmmph!

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

1. LIVE SFX: GEORGE EXITS, SLAMS OFFICE DOOR.
2. 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 report embezzlement at the... (AD LIB FADING UNDER)
3. TRACK SFX: CLOCK TICKING--FADES OUT UNDER MUSIC.
4. MUSIC: [MUS-31] (BRIDGE) "CRUEL TO HEAVENLY #12"--FADES UNDER.

SCENE 15 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #11
(CLARENCE <1R>, SUPERINTENDENT <1L>)

5. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER
6. CLARENCE: [REVERB][CUE] The nerve of that Henry Potter!
7. SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] Yes, Clarence. And he had George's missing eight-thousand dollars sitting in his desk drawer.
8. CLARENCE: What'll George do now? Where is he?
9. SUPERINTENDENT: At Martini's Tavern. George has had a couple of drinks. (FADING UNDER) He's dazed. Just standing at the bar...
10. MUSIC: [MUS-32] (SOURCE) "SANTA LUCIA" ON ACCORDION--UNDER

SCENE 16 - INT. MARTINI'S CAFE - SECONDS LATER (12/24/1945 AT 10 PM)
(GEORGE <3>, NICK <2R>, MARTINI <2L>, WELCH <4>, WALLA-HAPPY TAVERN REMAIN SEATED)

- 11* WALLA-WALLA: HAPPY TAVERN CROWD--UNDER
12. LIVE SFX: OCCASIONAL BARROOM GLASSES CLINKING--UNDER

- 1* GEORGE: [CUE] (PRAYING, QUIETLY) "Our Father who art in Heaven"... Oh, God... I've never been a praying man, but if... you are listening, Please... I'm lost, God. Lost!
2. NICK: (STEPS UP) Mr. Bailey, are you okay? (TO MARTINI) Mr. Martini! George, here, don't look so good.
3. MARTINI: (ITALIAN ACCENT) (TO NICK) You right, Nick. (TO GEORGE) Mr. Bailey, you drink too much! Too much! You have enough... Please!
4. MR. WELCH: [DISTANT] Did you say "Bailey"? Which of the Baileys are you talkin' about?
5. MARTINI: This Mr. Bailey--Mr. George Bailey!
6. MR. WELCH: (STEPS UP) Oh, this George Bailey, is it? Why, you--
7. LIVE SFX: WELCH PUNCHES GEORGE. GEORGE FALLS TO FLOOR.
8. WALLA-WALLA: PATRONS REACT--THEN MURMUR UNDER.
9. MUSIC: ABRUPTLY KILL "SANTA LUCIA"
- 10* MR. WELCH: Serves you right, Bailey! If you ever talk to my wife that way again, I'll give you even worse!
11. GEORGE: (DRUNK/DAZED) Huh?
12. MR. WELCH: She slaves away... teaching your stupid kids how to read and write, then you bawl her out on the phone??? She cried for over an hour, you louse!

1. MARTINI: (STEPS UP) Hey! Get out, Mr. Welch! You punch my best friend! He help me buy my house! Outta here! Go! (TO NICK) Nick, throw him out!
2. NICK: (TOUGH) Go on, Welch! ...Never mind the tab!
3. MR. WELCH: (EXITING) Okay. Okay. I'm goin'...
4. LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--WELCH EXITS--DOOR CLOSES.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Welch returns to his upstage chair. Martini crosses to <3L>, sharing the mic with George <3R>.

5. WALLA-WALLA: TAVERN CROWD RESUMES QUIETLY--UNDER.
- 6* MARTINI: (TO GEORGE) Mr. Bailey! How you doin'?
7. GEORGE: (GETTING UP) Ohhhh! Martini! Who was that?
8. MARTINI: You hit by Mr. Welch!
9. GEORGE: Oh.... (REALIZES) That's what I get for praying... (MUTTERING) Where-- Now, where is my policy?
10. NICK: Huh?
11. GEORGE: My-my insurance policy!
12. MARTINI: Insurance? You no worry, Mr. Bailey! Welch no come here any-more! Here, I get something cold for your face... Look! The blood!
13. GEORGE: (STEPS BACK) No, Mr. Martini. I'm fine.
14. MARTINI: Please! Don't go out, Mr. Bailey! The cold! Stay!
15. NICK: C'mon, Mr. Bailey. It's snowing!
16. MARTINI: Nick! You take Mr. Bailey home.

1. GEORGE: No...! Let me go! (EXITING)...Alone, do you hear?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George steps to <4> then the lip of the stage and stares down at "the river." Clarence and Superintendent watch him.

2* MUSIC: [MUS-33] (BRIDGE) "ALONE TO HEAVENLY #13"--UNDER.

SCENE 17 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - [LAST HEAVEN SCENE]
(SUPERINTENDENT <1L>, CLARENCE <1R>, ANNOUNCER <LATE-3>)

3. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

4* SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] [CUE] Well, Clarence, George staggered out of Martini's Tavern a few moments ago. (SIGHS) Now, he's standing on the river-bridge... gazing down at the river. He's about to jump! Do you have your "plan"?

5. CLARENCE: [REVERB] "My plan"? Um.. not yet, your honor.

6. SUPERINTENDENT: Well... if you can save George Bailey's life, you just may get your wings!

7. CLARENCE: "My wings?" Oh, yes! My wings! I won't let you down, your honor! (CALLING OUT) George...! George Bailey! Get away from that bridge! (EXITING) Don't fret! Clarence Oddbody's on the way!

8* MUSIC: [MUS-34] (BRIDGE) "ACT 2 OUTRO"--ENDS IN SUSPENSE
CHORD

8* LIVE SFX: [CUE THE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM AT END OF MUSIC]

9* MUSIC: LET "ACT 2 OUTRO" FINISH (NO FADE OUT)

-- END OF ACT TWO --

IF NO ADS, GO TO PAGE 98, CUE #1
 IF THERE ARE ADS, CONTINUE BELOW, GO TO AD-SPOT PAGES AND
 RETURN TO PAGE 97, CUE #4

1* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] We'll return in just a moment to the
 _____ presentation of
"It's a Wonderful Life."

2* ANNOUNCER: But now, a word from _____...

3. LIVE SFX: CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM UNDER

[NOTE: AD-SPOTS GO HERE.]

[OPTIONAL RETURN AFTER CUSTOM AD-SPOTS.]

4. LIVE SFX: CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--CALM UNDER

5* ANNOUNCER: And now, the thrilling conclusion of the
 _____ presentation of
"It's a Wonderful Life!"

6. LIVE SFX: CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--CALM UNDER

-- ACT THREE --

SCENE 1 - EXT. RIVER-BRIDGE - NIGHT (12-24-1945 AT 10:45 PM)
(ANNOUNCER <3>, CLARENCE <1> AND THEN <2>, GEORGE <4>)

1* MUSIC: [MUS-35] (BED) "ACT 3 INTRO" TO "DIRE BRIDGE"--UNDER.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George stands out, beyond mic <4>--at the lip of the stage--staring down at "the river." Under the narration, Clarence starts at <1>, crosses to <2> and steps to the lip of the stage. At "When suddenly..." Clarence mimes jumping in and flails. George will also mime jumping in.

2* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] A troubled George Bailey stands on the Bedford Falls river-bridge--convinced that he's worth more dead than alive. Deep in despair, George gazes at the freezing river below--poised to end it all! When suddenly...

4. TRACK SFX: [FX-20] SPLASH--CLARENCE JUMPS IN RIVER. SPLASHING.

5* CLARENCE: [DISTANT] Ohhh! Help me! Help! I'm drowning! Help! (GLUB) (AD LIB UNDER)

6. GEORGE: [DISTANT] Whoa! Wait, there! Here I come...

7. TRACK SFX: [FX-21] QUICK CROSSFADE TO SPLASH--GEORGE JUMPS IN RIVER. SPLASHING--FADES.

8. MUSIC: FADE "DIRE BRIDGE" UNDER.

SCENE 2 - INT. WATCHMAN OFFICE - MINUTES LATER (12/24/1945 AT 11 PM)
(NIGHT WATCHMAN <4>, GEORGE <3>, CLARENCE <2>)

9* NIGHT WATCHMAN: [CUE] (SCOLDING) Jumping in the river like that! You two sure are lucky I was checking the river warehouse tonight. Otherwise, you'd have froze to death. Warming up, now?

10. GEORGE: I'm okay. (TO CLARENCE) How about you?

1. CLARENCE: Well enough... although my underwear seems a bit out of fashion. I was buried in it.
2. NIGHT WATCHMAN: You were buried in what???
3. CLARENCE: Luckily, "Tom Sawyer's" drying out, too.
4. GEORGE: (MISUNDERSTANDING) Um... The name's "George."
5. CLARENCE: No, I'm talking about the book! I have "Tom Sawyer"--the book--along with me. But... you know..., there is a "Tom Sawyer" quality to you, George--Lots of ideas... wanderlust...
6. GEORGE: So how'd you fall in the river?
7. CLARENCE: "Fall in"??? Oh, I didn't fall in! I jumped in!--jumped in to save you, George!
8. GEORGE: That's backward. I jumped in to save you, remember?
9. CLARENCE: Well, it worked, right? You didn't go through with your plan, did you?
10. GEORGE: (PUZZLED) "Go through with my plan"???
11. CLARENCE: (QUIETLY) Y'know... errr... suicide.
12. NIGHT WATCHMAN: Hey! You can't commit suicide 'round here! I think it's against the law!
13. CLARENCE: It's certainly against the law where I come from.
14. NIGHT WATCHMAN: And where might that be, stranger?
16. CLARENCE: Oh... y'know... Heaven.
17. NIGHT WATCHMAN: What???
18. GEORGE: (SARCASTIC) Right...
19. CLARENCE: Errr... George... you're bleeding. Your lip.

1. GEORGE: Oh, that. Well, I got punched in the face in answer to a prayer.
2. CLARENCE: No, George. I'm the answer to your prayer. I was sent down from Heaven to help you.
3. GEORGE: Oh, come on...
4. CLARENCE: The name's Clarence Oddbody. I'm an "A-S-Two."
5. GEORGE: Are you, now?
6. CLARENCE: "A-S-Two. Angel, er... second class.
7. NIGHT WATCHMAN: "Angel"??? (SARCASTIC) Right! Well, I'll go see if any other "angels" just answered some prayers! (EXITING) When your clothes are dry, feel free to leave...
8. LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--NIGHT WATCHMAN EXITS--SLAMS DOOR.
-
- 9* CLARENCE: (CALLS OUT TO NIGHT WATCHMAN) Thank you, so much, for the warm stove...
10. GEORGE: Wait a minute! Now... Why would an "angel" save me?
11. CLARENCE: Because killing yourself is a sin, George. Especially for eight-thousand dollars!
12. GEORGE: "Eight... thousand dollars"??? How in the--?
13. CLARENCE: --I know all about you, George Bailey. You see, I'm your "guardian angel".
14. GEORGE: (TO HIMSELF) Uh-huh... Exactly the kind of angel I'd wind up with. (TO CLARENCE) "Angel," huh? Where are your wings then?

1. 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!
2. GEORGE: Sure. You couldn't "help" me with, say.... eight-thousand dollars, could ya?
3. CLARENCE: Oh... but we don't use money in Heaven.
4. GEORGE: Oh??? (SARCASTIC) Well, it sure comes in handy down here, bub!
5. CLARENCE: (CHUCKLES) Some may think so, but--
6. GEORGE: (SNOTTY) --It just dawned on me a bit late! But, if you know all about me, then you know I'm worth more dead than alive. Right?
7. CLARENCE: Oh... Don't talk that way, George! I'll never earn my wings if you keep that up. You don't know all the good you've done for people. I mean, if it wasn't for you--
8. GEORGE: --If it wasn't for me, they'd all be better off!--my wife.... kids... my friends...
9. CLARENCE: But killing yourself wouldn't make them happier.
10. GEORGE: Hmm... (SIGHS) I suppose you're right... (THINKS) Maybe it would be better if I had never been born to begin with!
11. CLARENCE: What???
12. GEORGE: Yeah... (HMMPH) I wish I'd never been born!
13. CLARENCE: (GETS AN IDEA) Oh.... That's a good one, George.
14. GEORGE: (SNOTTY) Good "what"?

1. CLARENCE: The plan you just gave me--it reminds me of "Tom Sawyer". Well... Let me see here...
[CLARENCE SNAPS FINGERS (1X)]
2. LIVE SFX: WIND CHIME. THUNDER ROLL.
3. GEORGE: Hey...! What the--
4. TRACK SFX: [FX-22] "MAGICAL HARP GLISSANDO-UP"--LET IT FINISH.
5. CLARENCE: --There, George! I've granted your wish! You were never born!
6. GEORGE: (SKEPTICAL) "Never born," huh?
7. CLARENCE: That's right! You have no troubles; no missing eight-thousand dollars; no sheriff--or Mr. Potter--on your trail. Poof! A world without George Bailey.
8. GEORGE: (ALARMED) Hey, wait! [TOUCHES RIGHT EAR] My ear! Say that again?
9. CLARENCE: You heard me alright! You don't have a bad ear. That's because you are not the George Bailey you used to be. Now, you're-- well, in a way, you're... "nobody."
10. GEORGE: That's bonkers... (THINKS) But... I was deaf, and now I can... (ULP) hear???
11. CLARENCE: Your lip isn't bleeding, either... because you never got punched at Martini's Tavern.
11. GEORGE: (AMAZED) Hey...! No blood! What is this???
Bah! I need a drink. Yeah. How about it, "angel?" Let's you and me get a drink.
12. CLARENCE: "A drink"? Oh... but, George, I'm on duty.

1. GEORGE: C'mon! Join me! Once our clothes dry out, we can just--
2. CLARENCE: --Our clothes are dry, George. You see, they never got wet, since you never--
3. GEORGE: (UNSURE) --Never-- Bah! We'll just get dressed and walk back to Martini's for a-- Oh, oh, sorry-- I'll walk and you fly.
4. CLARENCE: Oh, but I haven't earned my--
5. GEORGE: --wings, right. Not yet. Well... after a few drinks, we'll both be flying. C'mon...

SCENE 3 - INT. NICK'S BAR - NIGHT - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(NICK <4>, GEORGE <3>, CLARENCE <2>,
GOWER <LATE-3>, WALLA-BAR CROWD REMAIN SEATED)

- 6* MUSIC: [MUS-36] (SOURCE) "JUKE JOINT JINGLE BELLS"--PLAYS
UNDER ENTIRE SCENE.
7. WALLA-WALLA: ROUGH AND NOISY BAR CROWD--UNDER.
8. LIVE SFX: OCCASIONAL BARROOM GLASS CLINKING--UNDER.
- 9* NICK: [CUE] (STEPS UP) What'll it be?
10. GEORGE: Err... Nick. Is Martini still here? I want to apologize for earlier, when I--
11. NICK: --You want a martini? Or are you a wise guy?
12. GEORGE: No. No! Just give me a double bourbon then.
13. NICK: (TO CLARENCE) And for you?
14. CLARENCE: (TO NICK) Clarence is the name. I'd just love... a flaming rum... No!... hmmm... maybe mulled wine. Yes! With a dollop of nutmeg and just a dash of cloves. Hop to it, my lively lad.

1. NICK: (FED UP) Listen, "Clarence." We serve hard liquor here for men who want to get drunk quick. If that's not good enough, perhaps I could "convince" you otherwise!
2. GEORGE: (TO NICK) No. That's okay, Nick. Just give him the same as me.
3. NICK: Ehh. (EXITING) Two double-bourbons.
4. GEORGE: Why is Nick acting that way? What's going on here? The tavern's all... "different."
5. CLARENCE: Bedford Falls is different. You got your wish, George. You were never born. It's a different world--one without you.
6. GEORGE: "Different."
7. LIVE SFX: CASH REGISTER BELL RINGS--KA-CHING (1X)
- 8* CLARENCE: Ah! (SIGHS) Good! At least somebody made it!
9. GEORGE: Huh? Made "what"???
10. NICK: (ENTERING) Here are your drinks...
11. LIVE SFX: NICK SETS THEIR DRINKS DOWN ON THE BAR
12. CLARENCE: (TO GEORGE) Well, "Every time a bell rings... an angel gets-his-wings."

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

SCENE 4 - EXT. STREET OUTSIDE NICK'S - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE <3>, CLARENCE <4>)

1* TRACK SFX: [FX-23] WIND #1--UNDER.

2* GEORGE: [CUE] What happened to Mr. Gower? How could that be? "Poisoning a kid"?

3. CLARENCE: Don't you see, George? You didn't stop Gower from putting poison into those capsules, so--

4. GEORGE: --Sure I did. I was there!

5. CLARENCE: No you weren't! Because you were never born.

6. GEORGE: Well, then who the hell am I?

7. CLARENCE: You're... nobody! You don't exist.

8. GEORGE: What do you mean? I'm George Bailey!

9. CLARENCE: No, you're not! No driver's license. No Four-F card... and no insurance policy.

10. GEORGE: (THINKS) Zuzu's petals. I put them--

11. CLARENCE: --Sorry, George. They aren't there either. You may have put those flower petals in your pocket--before--but now. Well...

12. GEORGE: They're gone. Gone! What am I? A... ghost?

13. CLARENCE: You've been given a gift, George: To see the world without you.

14. GEORGE: You're nuts! And you're making me nuts, too! I'm heading home to my wife and family--do you hear? (FADING UNDER) Go away!

15. LIVE SFX: GEORGE RUNS OFF IN SNOW...

16. TRACK SFX: FADE OUT WIND.

17. MUSIC: [MUS-37] (SOURCE) "POTTERSVILLE STREETSCENE"--UNDER

SCENE 5 - EXT. GENESEE ST. - SECONDS LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE <4>, OFFICER BERT <3L>, VIOLET <LATE-3R>,
WALLA-DRUNKS REMAIN SEATED)

1. TRACK SFX: [FX-24] DOWNTOWN POTTERSVILLE TRAFFIC--UNDER.
- 2* GEORGE: [CUE] (ENTERING) Hey, officer! Officer!
(RECOGNIZES) Bert! Hey! What's with this sign... "Welcome to Pottersville."
3. OFFICER BERT: What about it? You're in downtown Pottersville.
4. GEORGE: "Pottersville"??? But where's the Building and Loan...? The Bailey Brothers' Building and Loan.
5. OFFICER BERT: (PUZZLED) What? Oh, that closed down years ago. As you can see, it's a pawnshop now.
6. GEORGE: But what about the--
7. LIVE SFX: [DISTANT] CRASH OF TRASH CAN.
8. WALLA-WALLA: ARGUING DRUNKS--UNDER.
9. LIVE SFX: SCUFFLE. VIOLET STAGGERS UP--IN HIGH HEELS.
10. OFFICER BERT: (TO VIOLET) --Hey! Where do you think you're going, Violet?
11. VIOLET: (ENTERING) (DRUNK) Get your filthy hands offa me, copper! I didn't jack-roll nobody! That sailor had it coming!
12. OFFICER BERT: He did, eh? Well, you're coming with me--
13. 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--
14. WALLA-WALLA: ROWDY DRUNKS YELLING.

1. LIVE SFX: BERT SCUFFLES WITH VIOLET
2. OFFICER BERT: --Enough out of you! Get in the wagon! I'm running you in.
3. VIOLET: (EXITING) (CRYING) No! No! No! (AD LIB)
4. GEORGE: Wait! Violet! (TO BERT) Hey, I know that girl! She--
5. OFFICER BERT: [DISTANT] --Yeah. You and every other wolf in town! Now, move along! ...before I run you in too!
6. MUSIC: FADE OUT "POTTERSVILLE STREETSCENE"
7. TRACK SFX: FADE OUT DOWNTOWN POTTERSVILLE/TRAFFIC.
8. MUSIC: [MUS-38] (BRIDGE) "I KNOW THAT GIRL"--FADE UNDER

SCENE 6 - INT. ERNIE'S CAB - NIGHT - SECONDS LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE <3>, ERNIE <4>)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Ernie holds his script in one hand and mimes driving with the other.

9. TRACK SFX: [FX-25] INTERIOR OF CAB DRIVING #2--UNDER
- 10* GEORGE: [CUE] Step on the gas, Ernie. You gotta get me home. I'm losing my mind!
11. ERNIE: (TOUGH) Uh-huh... So where's "home", pal?
12. GEORGE: Now, cut it out, Ernie! Don't try that on me. I live at three-twenty Sycamore!
13. ERNIE: (SKEPTICAL) "Three-twenty Sycamore"?
14. GEORGE: Yeah! And hurry! Zuzu's sick.
15. ERNIE: Whatever you say.

1. GEORGE: Listen, Ernie, I-- Something crazy's going on here. I'm-- I don't know... loopy. (SIGH) Tell me, now. Your name's Ernie Bishop, isn't it? And you and your wife and son live over in Bailey Park.
2. ERNIE: (NASTILY) What? What about my wife?
3. GEORGE: Deloris! I've been to your house! The one I built for you.
4. ERNIE: My wife ran away five years ago--and took the kid with her! I rent one of Potter's shacks! And I've never seen you before in my life, so what are you calling me "Ernie" for?
5. GEORGE: (ULP) Okay, Ern..., I mean-- (SIGHS) Okay. Just keep driving.
6. TRACK SFX: FADE OUT INTERIOR OF CAB DRIVING.
7. 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 <2L>, CLARENCE <2R>, ERNIE <4>, OFFICER BERT <3>)
- 8* LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--CREAK. GEORGE STEPS IN.
- 9 GEORGE: [CUE] (CALLS OUT) Mary? Kids? Where is everybody? Petey! Janie! Zuzu! Tommy! Hello?
10. CLARENCE: (STEPS UP) This house is just an abandoned wreck, George. You have no wife--or children.
11. GEORGE: What's happened to them? I just want to--
12. ERNIE: [DISTANT] (TO BERT) --In there, officer! That guy! He's off his rocker!

1. OFFICER BERT: [DISTANT] Hold it, you two! This is the police! Put your hands up!
2. GEORGE: Bert! Wait! It's me...
3. OFFICER BERT: (ENTERING) Take it easy, mister! Come along, quiet-like, and we'll get you some help.
4. GEORGE: Bert! What's happened to you? (FRANTIC) Look! It's this guy, here! He-- he's an angel! I've been hypnotized.
5. CLARENCE: Well, I am an angel, but we don't hypnotize people. We prefer to--
6. OFFICER BERT: --Right. Well, I'm taking the both of you in.
7. ERNIE: I'm with you, Bert.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Clarence crosses to <3L>, besides Officer Bert at <3R> and the two sway and scuffle. George steps back from <2>.

8. LIVE SFX: CLARENCE AND BERT SCUFFLE--UNDER.
9. OFFICER BERT: (STARTLED) Hey! Ow! Let go of me, you--
10. CLARENCE: (TO GEORGE) --Now's your chance, George! Run!
11. LIVE SFX: GEORGE RUNS OFF
12. OFFICER BERT: Ow! Bite me?--will ya...! (STRUGGLES UNDER)
13. CLARENCE: Hey! You wouldn't smite an old angel, now? Wait...! (CALLS OUT) Oh, Superintendent? Superintendent? Help! Help me!
- 14* MUSIC: [MUS-40] (GLISSANDO UP) "MAGICAL HELP"--QUICK CUE

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Clarence slips back from <3L> and hides by the upstage chairs.

15. LIVE SFX: BERT SCUFFLES WITH NOTHING--GIVES UP.

- 1* OFFICER BERT: What the??? Hey! Where'd the old coot go?
2. ERNIE: I--I don't know! "Poof" and he was gone!
3. OFFICER BERT: What about the other one?
4. ERNIE: He ran south--down Sycamore! C'mon...
5. MUSIC: [MUS-41] (BRIDGE) "ESCAPE" TO "MEAN MOTHER"--FADE
UNDER...

SCENE 8 - EXT. MA BAILEY'S PORCH - SECONDS LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(MA BAILEY <4>, GEORGE <2>)

6. LIVE SFX: GEORGE POUNDS FRANTICALLY ON DOOR--(3X-3X)
(PAUSE) MA OPENS DOOR A CRACK.
7. MA BAILEY: [CUE] (SOURLY) Yeah...?
8. GEORGE: Mother!
9. MA BAILEY: (REVOLTED) Mother? Who are you?
10. GEORGE: I'm George! Surely, you remember me! George!
11. MA BAILEY: George who?
12. 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--
13. MA BAILEY: --Get over what? No vacancies. Scram!
14. GEORGE: But we're family! You know... me, your brother-in-law--Uncle Billy, and--
15. MA BAILEY: (SUSPICIOUS) --You know Billy?
16. GEORGE: Sure! I saw him today at the--
17. MA BAILEY: --Today? Ha! Billy's locked away in the nut house! ...Ever since he lost his business.

1. GEORGE: Uncle Billy? The nut house? What--
2. MA BAILEY: --The Pottersville nut house! And that's where you belong too! Now, beat it!
3. LIVE SFX: MA SLAMS DOOR. LOCKS IT.
GEORGE POUNDS ON 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. MUSIC: [MUS-42] (BED) "SHATTERED" TO "THE CEMETERY"--PLAYS
UNDER SCENE. FADES AT "TELL ME WHERE SHE IS."

SCENE 9 - EXT. POTTERSVILLE CEMETERY - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(CLARENCE <3>, GEORGE <2>)

7. TRACK SFX: [FX-26] WIND #2 (CEMETERY)--UNDER.
8. LIVE SFX: CLARENCE STEPS IN--ON SNOW.
- 9* CLARENCE: [CUE] (STEPS UP) (SIGHS) Looking for "Bailey Park," George?
10. GEORGE: You again! Well... where's the housing development? ...Bailey Park! My dad and I built it...right... right...(UNSURE) here...
11. CLARENCE: As you can see... It's a cemetary, George.
12. GEORGE: "Cemetery"? Where are the houses...? The people I knew...?
13. CLARENCE: Oh... (SIGHS) They're here, George....
They're here.
14. GEORGE: What?

1. CLARENCE: Amidst these gravestones. Martini's buried here.... the little Blaine girl... there. Your father... and... right next to him--
2. GEORGE: (UNCOMPREHENDINGLY) --Ha- Harry??? Harry Bailey??? Dead?
3. CLARENCE: Little Harry fell through the ice... and drowned at the age of nine.
4. GEORGE: (ANGRY) No! No! Harry got the Medal of Honor! Harry shot down the kamikazes--and saved the lives of every man on that troop-ship.
5. CLARENCE: Every man on that troop-ship died, George!
6. GEORGE: Wha--? How???
7. CLARENCE: Harry wasn't there to save them... because you weren't there to save Harry.
8. GEORGE: (SHOCKED) "Me"???
9. CLARENCE: Strange, isn't it? Every man's life touches the lives of so many others. Y'know, George, you had a wonderful life.
10. GEORGE: "Wonderful"???
12. CLARENCE: It's been said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is spread upon the Earth... but men do not see it." Don't you see, George? See what a mistake it would be to throw your life away?
13. GEORGE: (SUDDENLY BROKEN) But-- all the things I... wanted to... do.
14. CLARENCE: (SIGHS) It's easier to want what you get... than to get... what you want.
15. GEORGE: (PAUSE) But... But... Clarence...
16. CLARENCE: Yes?

1. GEORGE: (BROKEN) What about... Mary? My wife.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <3L>, besides Clarence at <3R>.

2. CLARENCE: (SIGHS) Ah, George.

3. GEORGE: (SUDDENLY URGENT) Please, Clarence. My wife!

4. CLARENCE: You don't have a--

5. SFX: GEORGE SCUFFLES WITH CLARENCE.

6. MUSIC: QUIETLY FADE OUT "THE CEMETERY"--UNDER.

7. GEORGE: (URGENTLY) --Where is she? Where--

8. CLARENCE: --You won't like it, George.

9. GEORGE: (DESPERATELY) What's become of her?

(THREATENING) Where's my wife?!

10. CLARENCE: Haven't you seen enough, George?

11. GEORGE: (ANGRIER) Where is she? Tell me!

12. CLARENCE: (FEARFULLY) Err... uh... She... never married. She's become... an "old maid"!

13. GEORGE: Where? Tell me! Now!

(FURIOUS) Or do I have to beat it out of you?

14. CLARENCE: (GASPS) Okay! Okay, George! The library! She works at the library! About now, she's closing up for the night. But she won't--

15. GEORGE: (EXITING) --Mary! Mary! Help me! Mary!

16. LIVE SFX: GEORGE RUNS OFF--ON SNOW.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George runs back from <3L>, heading towards the upstage chairs.

1* CLARENCE: George! George! Come back! Oh... (SIGHS)
(FADING UNDER) There must be an easier way to
get my wings.

2. TRACK SFX: FADE OUT WIND--UNDER.

3. MUSIC: [MUS-43] (BRIDGE) "LIGHTLY" INTO "OLD MAID"--FADE
UNDER

SCENE 10 - EXT. LIBRARY SIDEWALK - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE <2>, MARY <4>,
WALLA-MOB STARTS SEATED. RISES LATER)

4* LIVE SFX: GEORGE RUNS UP--ON SNOW.

5* GEORGE: [CUE] (ENTERING) Mary! Mary! I...

6. MARY: Sorry, but the library closed early tonight.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
George crosses to <3> while speaking.

7. GEORGE: No! Mary! It's me! George...! George! C'mon--
You know me! I--

8. MARY: --No. (WARY) I don't think so. Excuse me.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
George crosses to <4L>. Mary shifts to <4R>.

9. GEORGE: (GRABBING HER) Mary! I--

10. MARY: (SHOCKED) --Let me go!

11. LIVE SFX: GEORGE AND MARY SCUFFLE--UNDER

12. GEORGE: Mary! I want you! Please! I know you! We--

13. MARY: (STRUGGLING) --No! Stop! Let me go!

14. GEORGE: Mary, please! Please! Where are the kids?--
our kids? I need you, Mary! I beg you!

1. MARY: (STRUGGLING) Let go! Get away! (CALLS OUT)
Help! Help!
2. GEORGE: No! No, Mary! It's me--George! George!
- 3* MARY: Help! Somebody help me! He's mad!
(SCREAMS) Ahhhhhh!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <3>. Walla-mob members rise at their seats and advance towards <3>. Stopping a few feet back.

4. WALLA-WALLA: PEDESTRIANS NEARBY GASP.
"HEY!" ETC. "CALL A COP!"

5. GEORGE: Mary! It's me! Your husband!
6. MARY: (SCREAMS) Ahhhhhh!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <2>. Some walla-mob members rush to <3> barring his way to Mary at <4>. Others surround him at <2>.

7. WALLA-WALLA: MOB RESTRAINS GEORGE--"HOLD IT NOW, YOU"
ETC.--CONTINUE UNDER.

8. LIVE SFX: GEORGE SCUFFLES WITH CROWD--UNDER.

9. GEORGE: (STRUGGLING) Hey! Hey! Get out of my way!
That's my wife! Let me go!
10. MARY: No...! No...!
11. GEORGE: Mary! Wait! Wait! Don't run away!
12. MARY: [DISTANT] Help! Help! There's a madman after
me! Stop him! Help!
13. GEORGE: I've got to see her! (EXITING) Mary! Mary!
Please! Please...!

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George slips back to the upstage chairs. The walla-mob turn and follow him. Under the next music cue they return to their seats. George slowly makes his way to <4>.

1. WALLA-WALLA: UPROAR--"THERE HE GOES, OFFICER!"--HOLD UNDER
2. LIVE SFX: POLICE WHISTLE (2X) GUNSHOTS (2X)--FADE UNDER

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George slowly makes his way to the lip of the stage--beyond <4>. Once more, he stands at "the river."

- 3* MUSIC: [MUS-44] (BED) "LYNCH MOB" TO "REDEMPTION" THEME--HOLD UNDER, UNTIL HARP GLISSANDO, THEN FADE.

SCENE 11 - EXT. RIVER-BRIDGE - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
(GEORGE <4-LIP>, THEN <4>, CLARENCE <3>,
OFFICER BERT <LATE-2>)

4. SFX TRACKS: [FX-27] WIND #3 AT BRIDGE--UNDER.
FADE OUT BY "THAT'S THE SPIRIT"
- 5* GEORGE: [CUE] [DISTANT] Clarence...! Clarence...!
(PAUSE) Are you here...? Clarence! Where'd you go? (DESPAIRING) Is any-body there?
6. CLARENCE: [DISTANT] Here I am, George. (STEPS TO MIC)
Are you going to jump off this bridge...
again?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <4>, speaking as he goes.

7. GEORGE: 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! The newspapers... bankruptcy... disgrace!

1. GEORGE: (HUMBLED) Yes! But I'll do it! Anything!
Gladly! ...Just let me see my family,
Clarence! I want to live!
2. CLARENCE: (RELIEVED) Ah! That's the spirit, George!
Don't despair... (STEPS BACK) Always be
willing!
3. 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...!
4. LIVE SFX: WIND CHIME. THUNDER ROLL--UNDER.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Clarence steps back to the upstage chairs, as Officer Bert rises and cautiously approaches <2>.

5. TRACK SFX: [FX-28] "MAGICAL HARP GLISSANDO--DOWN"--UNDER.
- 6* GEORGE: (PRAYING) Yes, God, I want to live! Yes, God,
please...! Oh, yes. Oh, yes... (AD LIB)
- 7* OFFICER BERT: [CUE] [DISTANT] George...? What are you doing
here?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Officer Bert crosses towards <3>, but back a few feet.

8. GEORGE: (DAZED) Huh...? Bert!? (FEARFUL) Stay away!
Stay away, officer! (ANGRY) Come any closer
and I'll... I'll... (CALLS OUT) Clarence!
Clarence! Save me!
9. OFFICER BERT: (ENTERING) What in "the Sam Hill" are you
talking about, George?
10. GEORGE: Huh...?! (PUZZLED) "George"? "George"???
11. OFFICER BERT: Well, that is your name, isn't it?

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <3R>, beside Officer Bert at <3L>.

1. GEROGE: Oh, Bert! You recognize me? You know me?
2. OFFICER BERT: Know you so well, I've been searching all over town for you! Where've you been?
3. GEORGE: "Where've I been"? Wait! Say that again. I can't hear you.
4. OFFICER BERT: I'll try the good ear. (SPEAKS TO GEORGE'S LEFT EAR) I said, "Where'd you go."
5. GEORGE: Why, Bert...! (REALIZES) I'm alive! Alive again!
6. OFFICER BERT: (PUZZLED) "Alive... again"? Are you all right, George? Hey... your lip's bleeding.
7. GEORGE: My lip? (ELATED) Hey...! My lip is bleeding! Gee! Look at all that blood oozing out there! Well, what do you know?!
8. OFFICER BERT: It's not that bad, George.
9. GEORGE: Oh and-- Hey! Zuzu's petals? I had them in my right pocket over--
10. LIVE SFX: GEORGE SEARCHES PANTS POCKET.
11. OFFICER BERT: --Petals? Flower petals?
- 12* GEORGE: (GASPS) They're here! Here in my pocket! Aww...., Merry Christmas, Bert!
13. OFFICER BERT: (UNSURE) Well... Merry Christmas to you, too, George. Now, hop in the squad car and I'll drive you home. I just got a stop by the--

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to <4>.

1. GEORGE: --Sorry, Bert, but I can't wait! (EXITING)
I'm going home! And I know the way! Boy, do I
know the way! ...Merry Christmas!
2. OFFICER BERT: (BEMUSED) Have it your way. (EXITING) Merry
Christmas, George...
3. MUSIC: [MUS-45] (BED) "ORGAN: HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING"--
UNDER--THEN FADES

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George crosses to several mics as indicated below.

4. GEORGE: (DISTANT <4>) (RUNNING) Merry Christmas,
Bedford Falls!... Oh! How I love this
town!.... (DISTANT <3>) Hey! Merry Christmas,
Building and Loan...! Hurray!...
(DISTANT <2>) Merry Christmas, Mr. Potter!...
Everybody! (LAUGHS) Ha-ha-ha-ha! (AD LIB)

SCENE 12 - INT. GRANVILLE HOUSE - MINUTES LATER. (12/24/1945)
(GEORGE <3C>, CARTER <2>, SHERIFF <4L>, ANNIE<4R> JANIE <3L>,
ZUZU <3R>, MARY <3L>, UNCLE BILLY <2L> ERNIE <2R>,
VIOLET <3L>, HARRY <3R> MA <3L>, WALLA-EVERYBODY STARTS SEATED)

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

George stands at <3>. All others stand back from their
assigned mics--stepping in to deliver their lines, then
stepping back to allow others in. Tap on shoulders to
gain way.

5* LIVE SFX: DOOR OPENS--GEORGE ENTERS--TO...

6* WALLA-WALLA: REPORTERS, COPS MURMUR--THEY PETER OUT,
MIDWAY THROUGH GEORGE'S LINES

- 1* GEORGE: [CUE] (CALLS OUT) Mary, I-- (NOTICES) What's with all the-- (REALIZES) Oh! Reporters! The Sheriff! ...Yes! (LAUGHS) Well...! Merry Christmas... reporters! Sheriff! (SEES CARTER) And you--
2. CARTER: (STEPS UP) --Carter, bank-examiner... Mr. Bailey, your books show a deficit of--
3. GEORGE: --Yes! Eight-thousand dollars, Right?
4. SHERIFF: (STEPS UP) (TO CARTER) --Excuse me. (TO GEORGE) Mr. Bailey... I have a warrant, here, for your--
5. GEORGE: --arrest? Yes! A warrant, Sheriff!
(CHORTLES) Christmas in jail! Isn't that wonderful?
6. SHERIFF: (TAKEN ABACK) Actually, George, it's not so--
7. WALLA-WALLA: REPORTERS QUERY GEORGE. "MR. BAILEY..."
8. GEORGE: --Yes. In a minute, folks. (CALLS OUT) Mary...? Kids? I'm home! I'm home! (TO REPORTERS) Oh, I love this marvelous, drafty, old house! (CALLS OUT) Mary...?
(SEES KIDS) Kids!
9. WALLA-WALLA: CROWD REACTS TO STAMPEDE OF KIDS.
10. BAILEY KIDS: (AD LIB) (ENTERING) Daddy! Daddy! You're home. Merry Christmas, Daddy! Merry Christmas!
11. GEORGE: Yes! (KISSING EACH) Janie! Petey! Tommy! Oh, I love you so! Where's your mother? Where is she?

1. JANIE BAILEY: Out looking for you, Daddy--her and Uncle Billy.
2. ZUZU BAILEY: (ENTERING) Da-dee!
3. GEORGE: Zuzu! Merry Christmas, sweetheart! How are you feeling?
4. ZUZU BAILEY: All better, Da-dee! Not a smidge-- Not a smidge of temp-a-shure!
5. GEORGE: "Not a smidge"! It's a miracle!
6. LIVE SFX: FRONT DOOR OPENS--MARY ENTERS.
- 7* MARY: [DISTANT] George...? George!
8. JANIE BAILEY: Mommy's home! Mommy!
9. GEORGE: Oh, Mary...!
10. MARY: (RUNS UP) George, where did you--
11. GEORGE: --Mary! (HUGS HER)
12. MARY: George, dear! [MARY DOES A SFX KISS]

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:

Mary kisses the back of her hand, making a "smooch" sound.

13. GEORGE: Mary! I have to hold you! (HUGS HER) Oh, it's you, Mary! You! You're real! Oh..., you don't know what happened!
14. MARY: And you don't know what's happened, George!
15. LIVE SFX: FRONT DOOR OPENS. CROWD POURS IN.
16. WALLA-WALLA: JOYOUS ERUPTION. (AD LIB) "HOORAY!"
"GEORGE!"--CONTINUED HAPPY BUZZ--UNDER.
- 17* UNCLE BILLY: (ENTERING) George! Look what I've got!
18. GEORGE: Uncle Billy!

1. UNCLE BILLY: Money, George! Bushels... of money!
2. GEORGE: You found the eight-thousand dollars?
3. UNCLE BILLY: No, George. Mary saved the day! Didn't you.
4. MARY: Well, people heard you were in trouble, dear--your friends! They've pitched in to help!
- X. GEORGE: Annie? A pie... and your "strong-box"?
- X. ANNIE: Oh, I've just been saving this here money for a divorce... in case I ever get a husband.
5. WALLA-WALLA: CLAMORS--"HERE'S MORE, GEORGE" "A GIFT" ETC.--
-CONTINUED BUSTLE UNDER...
- 6* GEORGE: (ELATED) Martini! Mrs. Davis-- and Mr. Gower! Mr. Gower...! Thank you! Mrs. Thompson! Thank you! Eddy! Tom! Yes! I can't believe it! (TO ERNIE) Ernie!
7. ERNIE: (STEPS UP) Well, I wouldn't have a roof over my head if it wasn't for you, George!
8. WALLA-WALLA: CLAMORS OF APPROVAL--CONTINUED BUZZ UNDER...
9. VIOLET: Here, Georgie. Call it a "loan"...!
10. GEORGE: Violet! You didn't go...?
11. VIOLET: Naw... This town needs a town-flirt,
12. MARY: Wait, everybody! Here's a cable from Sam Wainwright! It reads... (READS) "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."
13. WALLA-WALLA: CHEERS--CONTINUED BUZZ UNDER...

1. GEORGE: I don't know what to say...!
(GASPS) Mother? And Harry?
2. MA BAILEY: (STEPS UP) George! Mary called us down in
Washington, and--
3. HARRY BAILEY: (STEPS UP) --we flew in as fast as we could.
4. LIVE SFX: CHAMPAGNE CORK POP.
6. ERNIE: [DISTANT] (TO THE CROWD) A toast! C'mon, Hey!
I propose a toast! A toast! Go ahead, Harry!
7. HARRY BAILEY: Yes...! A toast... to my brother, George--
The "richest" man in Bedford Falls!
(CONDUCTING TOAST) To George!
8. WALLA-WALLA: JOYOUS ERUPTION. (AD LIB) "TO GEORGE!"
9. LIVE SFX: GLASSES CLINK.
10. MUSIC: [MUS-46] (BED) JANIE AT PIANO, BEGINS "AULD LANG SYNE"
HALTINGLY--CONTINUE UNDER.
11. WALLA-WALLA: BEGIN SINGING "AULD LANG SYNE"--UP AT
FIRST, THEN QUIETLY UNDER.
- 12* MARY: (TO GEORGE) George, somebody left a book--
here--under the Christmas tree. See?
13. GEORGE: (CHUCKLES) Why, it's "The Adventures of Tom
Sawyer"!
14. LIVE SFX: GEORGE OPENS HARDBACK BOOK TO TITLE PAGE.
15. MARY: There's an inscription. What's it say?
16. GEORGE: (READS QUIETLY) "Dear George, Remember... no
man is a failure... who has friends. Thanks
for the wings... Love, Clarence."
17. MARY: "Clarence?"

1. GEORGE: Yeah. A very "old"... friend of mine.
- 2* ZUZU BAILEY: Da-dee, look! See my little bell hanging on the Christmas tree?
3. GEORGE: I see it, Zuzu.
4. ZUZU BAILEY: I hung it up there all by myself!--and a ladder. (PAUSE) Can you ring it, Da-dee?
- 5* LIVE SFX: GEORGE RINGS ZUZU'S SMALL TEA BELL
- 6* ZUZU BAILEY: (GASPS) Teacher says, "Every time a bell rings..., an angel gets-their-wings!"
7. GEORGE: (JOYOUS) You're right, Zuzu. You are so right! (TO HIMSELF) Thank you, Clarence. Thank you! Yes... It truly is a wonderful life! (PAUSE) (CALLS OUT) Happy landings!
8. 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!
- 9* LIVE SFX: CUE THE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--UNDER.

PRODUCTION NOTE:

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

10: MUSIC: [MUS-47] ORGAN--"AULD LANG SYNE" TO A FINISH.

10. ALL: (SING "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.

--OPTIONAL (LONGER SONG) ENDING--

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

2. ALL:

(SING "AULD LANG SYNE" VERSE)

Should old acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
We'll take a cup o' kindness yet,
for old 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.

[CHORUS]

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

--END OF PLAY--

[OPTIONAL CREDIT SEQUENCE ON NEXT PAGE]

1* MUSIC: [MUS-49] WONDERFUL CREDITS--UNDER--FADE AFTER IT ENDS.

2* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] "It's A Wonderful Life!" was adapted for radio by Anthony E. Palermo [paw-LAIR-mo] from Frank Capra's 1946 film, based on the story, *The Greatest Gift* by Philip Van Doren Stern. The musical score was composed and performed by Jonathan Green.

Our stage manager was _____,
Audio engineering by _____,
Lighting design by _____,
Directed by _____.
Our radio troupe featured...

As Mr. Gower, _____,
As Ma Bailey, _____,
As Sam Wainwright, _____,
As Violet, _____,
As Mr. Potter, _____,
As Pop Bailey, _____,
As The Superintendent, _____,
As Clarence, _____,
As Mary Bailey, _____,
And as George Bailey, _____,
Our sound effects artist, _____,
I'm your announcer, _____.

3* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] Tune in again, next life!
This has been a very "merry" production of the _____ Radio Theater.

--END OF CREDIT SEQUENCE--

APPENDIX - How to Produce *'It's a Wonderful Life!'* as a Radio Show

Here are over 100 pages on how to mount a professional radio-on-stage production of my adaptation of *It's a Wonderful Life!* You'll find everything from concepts to details: thematic approaches to casting monologues; a sound effects cookbook; pre-recorded track listings; audio gear resources; mic-blocking instructions; even how to “work” a microphone. There's also a history of how radio-on-stage shows were produced in the Golden Age of Radio and how you can blend the various production styles to fit your troupe's resources and likings. As extras, there are six scripted 1940s-style ad-spots.

Section (pages)	Description
DIRECTION (129-139)	Writer/Director's notes on how to approach the drama.
CASTING (140-148)	Casting list, Doubling roles, Audition list, Casting monologues
SFX LIVE (149-159)	Live Sound Effects Cookbook
SFX TRACKS (160-166)	Pre-recorded sound effects listing and advice
MUSIC (167-173)	Pre-recorded music cue listing and advice, keyboardist tips.
PRODUCTION (174-195)	Production design background and advice, radio-director's gesture cues
AUDIO (196-210)	Engineering advice, microphone school for cast and crew, Audio setup, technical checklist, mic & stand resources
EXTRAS (211-232)	Scripted audience warm-up routine, cell phone silencing, six commercial ad-spots and “How To Work a Mic” lesson.

Printing Instructions

To print just the script, specify pages 1-128. (pages 10-128 are the dialogue pages)

To print just the How-To appendix, specify pages 129-210 (pages 129-232 for everything)

To print just the scripted extras (warm-up routine, cell silencing, ad-spots, and How to “Work” a Mic lesson), specify pages 211-232

Handy RuyaSonic production info webpages

- [IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE]
- [IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE]
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Themes and approaches to *Wonderful Life!*

by Anthony E. Palermo, radio dramatist, sound effects designer, and director

My adaptation of *It's A Wonderful Life!* brings this beloved tale to the stage--as a particularly imaginative 1940s-style radio-on-stage production. While troupes can merely perform the show in a recording studio, my adaptation is designed as a live theater crowd-pleaser, with the pizzazz and delight of golden-era live radio programs, the *Lux Radio Theater* and *Theater Guild on the Air*.

This style of production features a stage full of actors reading from authentic 1940-style formatted radio scripts in front of microphones, while live sound effects artists perform the door knocks, bell ringing, fights, etc., accompanied by an organist—with occasional piano and other source music.

This script includes an extensive appendix on “How To Produce *It's a Wonderful Life!* as a Radio-On-Stage show”, dealing with everything from the dramatic themes, to the look of the set, the audio gear, the sound effects, options regarding the musical accompaniment, and instructions for how to work a mic, do radio-on-stage blocking, employ costume accessory props, and more. Six short vintage-style ad-spots are included, to provide backstory, humor, and insight into the story.

Troupes will be especially interested in the SFX "cookbook" explaining how to make or find the live sound effects (doors, slaps, champagne cork, ice breaking, car door, etc.) In keeping with 1940s radio dramas, some sounds (crickets, windows breaking, jumping in the river, cars, clocks, etc.) are rendered as pre-recorded tracks--which RuyaSonic offers as downloadable MP3 files.

We also offer pre-recorded music tracks to provide classic radio-style underscoring. These tracks include a period-correct radio-theater organ, upright piano, accordion, a 1928 dance band, and 1940s jazz combo. However, if you have a live accompanist, they can work from sheet music of the original score.

While several playwrights offer radio-play versions of *Wonderful Life!*, I am a professional radio dramatist and performer who brings the experience of doing over 2500 radio shows (on-air and on-stage) to my adaptation. My experience is particularly useful here, since I wrote and produced the hit radio-on-stage *Wonderful Life!* adaptation for a 6-week run at the 680-seat Pasadena Playhouse in 2005. Our rotating casts included such stars as Michael Richards, Joe Mantegna, Alfred Molina, Stephanie Zimbalist, Sharon Lawrence, Jamie Farr, Tony Shaloub, Orson Bean, Susan Sullivan and others. My 2011 cast at L.A.'s Geffen Playhouse included Annette Bening, Peter Gallagher, Bryan Cranston, Shirley Jones and Leslie Jordan. If you are looking for a

proven and authentic radio drama version of *Wonderful Life*, you've tuned into the right frequency.

Rather than merely present "the film, *cloned* for the stage," my adaptation fully explores the themes in Capra's original, but features radio-drama hijinks theater audiences will enjoy. There are plenty of opportunities for the audience to marvel at the tricks used to convey the frozen pond, the swimming pool dance, the board meeting, one- and two-sided phone calls, George getting punched out, walking in the snow, cash registers, knitting needles, Jimmy the Raven, and more.

The dialogue is not word-for-word from the film--it's been sharpened for the radio medium; tweaked to reinforce Frank Capra's themes. This fantastical story is particularly well-suited to radio medium, hitching the ear to the imagination. This provides an unlimited special effects budget. Please take note of my intentions when producing this script.

Thematic Approach

In order to present this play as something deeper than a nostalgia trip or mere rerun of Frank Capra's film, you must understand the themes working beneath the surface. While my adaptation abounds in exuberance and comedy, it explores the sorrow, regret, sacrifice and redemption undergirding the story. Take note as I explain the subtext of the story and how my adaptation uses it to make the drama come alive.

George Bailey's Rise and Fall (and Rise)

It's a Wonderful Life is an Americanized version of Charles Dickens' *Christmas Carol*. Only here, George Bailey's kindly Bob Cratchit-like clerk character meets the otherworldly visitor who re-educates him via a frightful "Christmas-Yet-To-Come." If you can see how Frank Capra echoes Dickens, you can make the story resonate with audiences better—a more engaging theatrical experience. On the surface, *Wonderful Life* seems a folksy 1940s romp—the trials & tribulations of George Bailey—but you'll find Dickens' *Carol* beneath the Americana. While the miserly Mr. Potter may seem the stand-in for Scrooge, as the story progresses, George Bailey takes on many Scrooge-isms.

For example: George was a dreamy youth, as was the boy Scrooge—fascinated by the exotic worlds of *Robinson Crusoe* and *Ali Baba*. But for all George's longing for adventure, he—like Scrooge—winds up merely counting money. Both George and Scrooge are tormented by Desire and Fear; For George, his desire to see the big world out there, and his fear of being trapped forever in small town America.

Yet, the more George sacrifices his dreams, the more frustrated and resentful he becomes, finally cracking under the pressure of a missing \$8000, which would mean

prison—a horrible fate for the wanderlust-y George. After a lifetime of sacrifice, George decides he will give no more. He snaps, becoming a monster who abuses his family and friends, fights strangers, and even attempts suicide—the ultimate selfish act. George has given in completely to his dark side.

Mr. Potter, George's Evil Twin

George is unconsciously similar to his nemesis, Mr. Potter, whom fate has somehow shackled him to. There's a lesson here for George. He and Potter are both ambitious, imaginative men, but both have seen frustration in life; Potter is physically crippled; while George is crippled by circumstance. George can no more run away from Bedford Falls than can Mr. Potter in his wheelchair. Potter only lives for money and George plans to die for money—the insurance payout to cover the \$8000 shortfall. Both are shrewd businessmen—neither losing his head in the bank panic—but both love being in control—of their own lives and controlling (either aiding or squashing) their fellow citizens.

This doppelgänger aspect is important—and I underline it in my adaptation—with Potter thoroughly understanding George's fears and desires, which he uses to taunt George. But Potter is mistaken in his cynicism and sourness. No amount of money or control will leaven his bitter resentment. Mr. Potter functions like the ghost of Jacob Marley in Dickens' *Carol*; He shows the hero where he'll end up if he gives in to selfishness and misanthropy: unloved; damned to a personal Hell.

Throughout my script, Potter recognizes himself in George and seeks to tempt George to the dark side of money and power. Their many confrontations are actually George arguing with his own dark self. George thinks he can defy his "inner-Mr. Potter." Ironically, it is only when George fully gives *into* his dark side, that he can escape Potter's wretched fate. The paradox of *Wonderful Life!* is that George's road to Heaven must go through Potter's Inferno. Dante's *Divine Comedy* is a similar tale of a mortal man on a fantastical journey through a dystopia full of grotesques, yet who finally emerges into the light of humility and selflessness. One reason Frank Capra's film has such an emotional effect upon people is that George's dilemma resonates with themes central to Western culture and religion.

George's Dark Night of the Soul

In *Wonderful Life!*, George's is led by Clarence, the clownish “apprentice” angel, who, ironically, one-ups Mr. Potter's devilish temptations by granting George's most selfish desire—to escape from Bedford Falls by having *never been born*. George *contemplates* suicide, but Clarence makes it happen. This plan is from Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*—where a dream-chasing adventurer with big plans decides to fake his death and, thus, see everyone in town mourn him at his funeral. Capra didn't have

Clarence quote from *Tom Sawyer*, but themes of death and resurrection are threaded throughout the film. George is both Tom Sawyer *and* Ebenezer Scrooge—an Everyman in crisis.

Like Tom Sawyer, George gets his death-wish, but the funeral he attends is for everyone else! George's absence transforms quiet little Bedford Falls into the nightmarish "Pottersville"—awash in violence, fear, and loneliness. Pottersville is a fallen world of ruined marriages, broken lives, tawdry bars, tough cops, and rampant vice. George gets to experience what his hometown would be like without his do-gooder efforts. He sees that the life he hated—with his dreams denied, scrounging just to get by—actually made a big difference to those around him.

This dystopia sequence was the entirety of Philip Van Doren Stern's unpublished short story, *The Greatest Gift*—the source material that Frank Capra and his writers reworked into the *Wonderful Life* film. However, both Van Doren Stern's and Capra's nightmare scenarios spring from the "Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come" sequence from Dickens' *Christmas Carol*. In Pottersville, we see a collection of Dickensian lowlifes—from Nick's Bar, to a rum-head Mr. Gower, to a nasty Violet Bick being arrested for jack-rolling a sailor. Both stories pivot on a soul-shattering graveyard revelation.

In the Hell of Pottersville, several characters are dead because George wasn't around to aid them. I handle this by having Clarence *tour* George through Pottersville's cemetery—what would have been the "Bailey Park" housing development. This is a tender moment—a sudden change of pace between Nick's rowdy bar and the upcoming mob scene. Haunted regret in a cemetery—right out of Dickens' *Carol*—drives home how much George matters to the world of the living.

Amidst the crumbling tombstones, an incredulous George asks, "A cemetery??? Where are the houses? The people I knew?" Clarence replies, "Oh... they're here. George. They're here... The little Blaine girl... Martini... your father... and over here... Harry Bailey." Harry's death brings along with it the deaths of hundreds on a troop transport that Harry would have saved in WW II. Ironically, George's long wished-for escape from Bedford Falls comes at a great cost to his town, his country, and the world. Those troops—and Harry—died for George's sin of selfishness. Harry is George's "Tiny Tim" and Harry's death is the real turning point for George's redemption.

It is here that George faces the enormity of his selfishness in wanting to have never been born. While the bitterness exhibited by the Pottersville versions of Nick, Bert, Violet, Ernie and even Ma Bailey could be mere attitude, the needless deaths in the cemetery make George confront what his selfishness has wrought. It's the pivotal moment in George's salvation—and oddly, a scene missing entirely or merely whisked through in other play adaptations of *Wonderful Life*. Capra's film version has visuals of tombstones and windy snow, but other adaptations don't sufficiently marshal the

dramatic arsenal of words, music, and sound to give this scene the gravitas, sorrow, and tragic irony of its moment.

However, this cemetery scene is not the final straw for George. Trying to escape the guilt of the graveyard, George seeks refuge in the greatest joy from his Bedford Falls life; he must see what's become of Mary in Pottersville. Here—having never married George—she is a timid, stunted old maid, working at the library. Desperate for one last thread to hang onto, the never-born George accosts Mary outside the library, pleading with her to recognize—and save—him from the weight of his sin.

Pottersville Mary panics, drawing a crowd that quickly becomes a mob chasing after George. Having given up living, he must now run for his life, pursued by the mob and shot at by the cops. Pottersville can no more abide the never-born George Bailey than he can abide it. In my adaptation, the mob pursuing George is frightening—and ugly—and an evocative use of radio drama's powerful “walla-walla” crowd sound effect.

Eluding the angry mob, George returns to the bridge, where the only way to escape Pottersville is suicide. Clarence asks if he's going to really kill himself this time, but George has been chastened by his suffering. He has learned his lesson: “Don't despair! Life could be worse!” What's more, George realizes suffering is a necessary step on the road to salvation. It serves to purge one of ego and selfishness. Sacrifice isn't something to avoid or resent—it must be embraced! This aura of necessary sacrifice permeated American culture during World War II—and resonates with modern audiences, as we are again plagued by war, division, and economic hardship. Willful sacrifice in order to aid your fellows is a deeply philosophical paradox, and I address it dramatically throughout my adaptation.

The Frank Capra Hero

In many of Frank Capra's films, there is a Christ figure—and a crucifixion. You can see this hero in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *Mr. Deeds Goes To Town*, *Meet John Doe*, and of course, *It's a Wonderful Life*. These martyrs *must* suffer before they can find salvation. Capra was a Catholic and the theme of Christ suffering on the cross is as central to Capra's art as the plucky optimism of his wisecracking, down-home characters. Nailed to the cross, as long as Christ held onto his mortal side—the fear of pain and death, the desire to escape his fate—he writhed and suffered. But at a pivotal point in his ordeal, Christ lets go of his resistance to his fate and gives himself up to his duty: sacrificing himself for mankind. This decision to surrender himself *willingly* is how Christ transcends his mortal self and becomes one with the Divine. This “letting go” of ego is also found in the stories of Herakles, Gilgamesh, Odin, and Mohammed. For the mythical hero, *humility* is key. And that lesson permeates Frank Capra's films.

In *Wonderful Life*, George has been writhing on his *own* cross—from his frustrations at being "trapped" in Bedford Falls, to fear of bankruptcy and prison over the missing \$8000, to the incredible guilt engendered by the nightmarish visit to Pottersville.

Throughout my play, George continually boasts of his dreams and then sees them dashed—setting up the believability of his later dark turn. In Capra's 1946 film, actor James Stewart created a very emotional George—arguing for generosity, compassionate about his neighbors, but later, ornery, lashing out, kicking chairs. In my adaptation, George's descent into despair is illuminated by cutting off others lines, ornery banter, slamming doors, stalking off. This *radio* physicality allows actors playing George to hit the right *thematic* notes without aping Stewart's increasingly desperate demeanor or distinctive manner of speaking.

George has suffered *throughout* the story—because he's always seen Paradise as being "over the rainbow"—in traveling, in building bridges or skyscrapers; in doing " *big* things." George's Paradise was always *somewhere not here*.

On the Bedford Falls river-bridge, I have Clarence quote the apocryphal *Gospel of Thomas*, telling George, "The kingdom of Heaven is spread upon the Earth ...but men do not see it." George will come to realize that *his* Heaven was Bedford Falls all along. It was there, amidst the frustrations and troubles, in his service to family and community. At the end of his Pottersville ordeal, George finally understands his life's *real* adventure—selfless service—and is now willing to embrace his previously "unbearable" life. George must let go of his dream of finding happiness "somewhere else" and learn to participate joyfully in the sorrows of the world he is in. And at that moment of realization, George is reborn/enlightened/resurrected. With his attitude transformed, George's life—no matter *what* it is—becomes truly wonderful.

This echoes Dickens' Ebenezer Scrooge after his graveyard conversion. He becomes as giddy as a schoolboy and as generous as he'd been miserly. Both Scrooge and George are now joyful lunatics, running through town, shouting "Merry Christmas" to one and all. George now says "yes" to everything—the reporters, the bank examiner, the sheriff, even prison. And the Universe reciprocates his newfound willingness with money raining down like manna from Heaven—via his friends' contributions to a rescue fund. While bushels of money as a Christmas gift may seem crass and materialistic, they are tokens of love, thanks and goodwill—fully earned by George for his lifetime of service. This is the *real* meaning of Christmas—the hero willing to sacrifice himself for his fellow man.

As much as *Wonderful Life* echoes the patriotic lessons of World War II, my adaptation sets it as a profoundly spiritual tale of death and resurrection, echoing Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Christ's story, and Dickens' *Carol*.

These psychological, philosophical, and religious undercurrents are threaded through my play—but not as overtly as in this essay. I employ metaphor (birds, water plunges, doors, bells, etc.) language, and character “feather in” the theme of this battle for George’s soul. And it is this dramatized battle that lifts my *Wonderful Life!* adaptation beyond a mere nostalgia-trip for fans of the film. The play must work on its own as drama in order to truly reach a live theater audience, both emotionally and symbolically. It does so through playing the subtext of the story and not just via the dialogue, sound effects, and music. Otherwise, one could merely show Capra’s film version.

That being said, my adaptation is still comical and full of invention in exploiting the radio-on-stage medium, while exploring the themes and emotional nuances of Capra’s story.

Music

In radio drama, sound effects are motion and music is *e-motion*. Underscoring has a powerful effect on audiences. In scoring *Wonderful Life!*, accompanist/composer, Jonathan Green played a radio theater-style organ—employing the unique registrations (organ drawbar settings) that made 1930s-1940s radio dramas sound so distinctive. This is no synthesizer, but the authentic sound and style used in radio drama’s heyday.

Much of the score consists of bridge cues that shuttle us between Heaven and Bedford Falls, while commenting on the drama. These cues immediately make it clear where we are—which is important with so many scene changes. They let the audience know that time and tone have changed—from Mr. Gower’s pharmacy to the old Granville House to Ernie’s cab to George emotional state as he loses his last chance at college or is peering into the oblivion of the river. In Martini’s Tavern, an Italian accordion plays “Santa Lucia” while George prays for help.

In several cues, Jonathan used a beat-up spinet piano to render young Janie’s shaky practicing and the bluesy barrelhouse atmosphere of Nick’s Bar. In the finale, “Auld Lang Syne” is played on Janie’s broken down piano and then reprised on the organ as sing-along for the cast and audience.

Troupes wishing to have their own accompanist perform live can purchase the sheet music derived directly from the pre-recorded score (available for a fee—contact Sales@RuyaSonic.com) The score even includes a listing of the organ registrations (drawbar settings) that your keyboardist could use to reproduce the authentic timbre of radio drama organs—if they are using a Hammond organ or some similar keyboard.

Sound Effects

Part of the fun of seeing a radio-on-stage production is to witness the inventive ways sound effects are produced. My *WL!* script includes an extensive "SFX Cookbook" that details what to use or make to produce the sounds required. Also, how to play the live and pre-recorded sounds for maximum crowd-pleasing effect. In addition to being a radio dramatist and director, I'm a world-renowned radio sound effects artist whose mentors worked with Orson Welles, Jack Benny and Jack Webb. As such, I utilize SFX extensively in the script to bring realism to the production, as well as *magic*.

Bells are central to this story and I use plenty of them as sound effects. The bells serve as punctuation and as a metaphorical "wake up call" for George—who's lost in his dreams—and later, his nightmares. The bell sound effects begin with heavenly chimes and work their way through the many phone calls, cash register ka-chings, and to Zuzu's little Christmas tree bell as Clarence finally earns his angel wings.

There is also a great deal of background walla-walla (live crowd sounds) to create the illusion of the ice pond, boardroom, bank run, bars, angry mob, and the finale's celebration. In many scenes, the sound effects, voices, and music are layered together in a pattern that enhances the storytelling. Being a SFX artist, I make full use of the power of sound to support the drama and entertain the audience.

For example: In the argument-into-proposal scene, Mary plays a noisy 78 RPM novelty record of "Buffalo Gals" that clashes with Mary's nagging mother, the telephone ringing, and George and Mary bickering. As the tension mounts and the romance unravels, the cacophony heightens the drama. And when the lovers break up, George noisily scratches the record in anger.

This differs markedly from Capra's filmed scene, but the tension contributed by the layering of voices, music, and SFX reflects the turbulence between George and Mary. For all the aural fireworks, the scene ends with Mary *whispering* "I know...". This sonic contrast underlines the peace the lovers find in each other. Sound Effects are not merely noises to represent the reality of doors and cars and crickets. They can produce *dramatic* effects, and do so throughout my adaptation.

Similarly, the sound effects of the Jimmy the raven, (a repeated squawking voice and a small umbrella being "flapped") lend humor to the establishment of Carter, the bank examiner—a scene that could have just been dull plot mechanics.

There's even a *silent* sound effects gag, where Mary is knitting in bed—which the SFX artist "performs," as the audience looks on in bewilderment at the silence of knitting. This is a setup for when, as Mary informs George that she's expecting, the SFX artist raises the knitting needles to reveal a blue baby-bootie. This is entirely a radio-on-stage gag—one that couldn't be heard over the air. It's an inside joke to both the audience in

the theater and an especially inside joke to sound effects artists, who are often tasked to perform such idiotic SFX by clueless radio dramatists or directors.

Sounds such as doors, dinner dishes, footsteps, the scratching record, cracking ice, and the finale's champagne toast are to be produced by the on-stage SFX artist or crew. Other sounds, such as wind, clock ticking, Clarence's river splashing, cars, and harp glissandos *can* be performed by the live SFX artists, but more-likely triggered from pre-recorded SFX tracks. An SFX artist can serve as the "Sound Trucker" triggering these tracks from a playback device on-stage, beside the live SFX crew.

I offer my own professionally-designed SFX tracks as MP3 files. In the appendix's SFX section, I explain how the SFX crew can double along with pre-recorded tracks to aid the sound and present a better illusion of radio artistry.

Direction Suggestions

Please be conscious that there is a ritual aspect to *Wonderful Life*, especially when produced at the Christmas season. I've seen audiences in tears when George is miraculously granted a second chance. Given the dramatic setup in this adaptation, the humbled adventurer's redemption is a highly emotional moment for the audience. Just as the Winter Solstice assures us there will indeed be future warmth and a Springtime, George's heartfelt gratitude symbolizes our own hopes for a happily-ever-after. With that in mind, I use other metaphors to fully evoke this ritual of sacrifice, death, and regeneration.

First, I suggest you seek to convey an edge-of-the-seat quality via a spirited delivery and slightly fast tempo. Radio productions run a bit faster than real life. There's no place here for long stage-pauses because if the radio audience hears "dead air," they may tune to some other station. In a radio-on-stage show, a slightly faster tempo overcomes the "stasis" of watching actors at microphones reading from scripts. For troupes with amateur actors, the faster delivery will allow inexperienced players to coast over a lack of acting skills.

There's also a thematic case for the slightly faster tempo;. This is a Christmas-themed show, a holiday that celebrates the pending birth of a child, full of anticipation and mystery. Likewise, there's a rush to unwrap Christmas gifts, and how to ghost stories—which is what *Wonderful Life!* is.

The second metaphor to pursue is the contrast of delight amidst awfulness—the bustling crowds despite the repeated crises—especially in the use of walla-walla. The more exuberant and noisy this "mumble chorus" is—at a controlled volume level—the better. Again, thematically, there's a defiant mysticism to celebrating life on the shortest

day of the year. The idea that hope can spring from such bleak surroundings is at the heart of Christmas and Hanukah, and both Dickens' and Capra's fables.

Lastly, I suggest your cast bring gusto to the many "little people" of Bedford Falls and their grotesque Pottersville counterparts. The actors will enjoy portraying characters who are sweet early-on and sour, later. Have them do so with urgency—to highlight the contrasting worlds on display here. George's loony joy at the end is that much higher for all the frustration and suffering that precedes it.

Encourage cast and crew to dive headlong into their roles and leave behind the film's familiar portrayals. This adaptation is a re-invention of the film—for radio-on-stage and as a stand-alone dramatic experience.

Radio-on-Stage Tips

The *WL!* script's scene headings suggest which characters use which mics—as mapped out on page 180. Due to the differing heights of actors, you may need to reassign the "home" mics suggested. But before you do, see the "How to *Work*" a Mic. mini-script (at the end of the appendix). Amid dialogue cues, there are occasional production notes suggesting Radio-on-Stage mic-blocking. This includes crosses to visually reinforce dramatic moments. Even if you've re-assigned home mics, adapt these crosses to your new scheme. If 5-year-old Zuzu is being played by an adult, try assigning her to a "too-tall" mic, which will create the illusion she is a child. It also gets a laugh.

Use the suggested costume-accessories (page 186) to differentiate actors who double.

EXTRAS - Mini-Scripts for patter, ads, mic training

In addition to the appendix How-To info, I've included mini-scripts to help train your cast & crew; warm-up your live audience; and supply humorous ads for your show. They can be found at the end of this appendix, beginning at page 211.

- Warm-up Routine (studio applause lesson, silencing "noise-makers", patter)
- Six 1940's-style Commercial Ad-spots
- Lesson-script on How to *Work* a Mic.

Preparation

Tell your actors to *NOT* watch the 1946 Frank Capra film version. Many who do so will try to ape the film's portrayals and vocal delivery—especially Jimmy Stewart, Thomas Mitchell, and Lionel Barrymore. Such mimicry will distract your audience from experiencing the drama afresh. Tell your actors to explore this script and make the story theirs. Embrace your own "Wonderful Life"—just the way George Bailey does.

Casting and Radio-play Auditions

Radio actors often double-up—or even *quadruple*-up—roles. They can change their voices or wear different hats and the audience will accept them as a variety of characters. *Wonderful Life* has many roles, so actors can play multiple parts and stay busy throughout the show. Those actors not at a mic during a scene may also perform walla-walla crowd noises as part of the “mumble chorus” seated upstage.

Rather than trading short dialogue lines with a casting director, radio casting relies on actors delivering specially-prepared monologues with 20 to 40 seconds of uninterrupted speech. This way, the director can evaluate an auditioner’s energy, attitude, elocution, vocal timbre, and ability to speak right-off-the-page.

For *broadcast-only* productions, vocal timbre is especially important. You don’t want actors with similar timbres in long conversation, which could make it difficult for over-the-air listeners to tell one from the other. Even for Radio-on-Stage shows, I set up a mic and have actors deliver monologues as I listen over headphones. The ear doesn’t lie.

To conduct auditions, give actors the 13 casting monologues below and have them choose one or two—regardless of what role they may especially want. Many amateur actors choose to audition with the Announcer’s monologue, thinking it less risky, audition-wise, than character parts. However, Announcers generally have more underlined emphasis pivots, so that monologue is a good test for any role. Note that I don’t provide monologues for every character. The 13 sides give a long enough performance for the director to adequately judge an actor’s ability.

Once the auditioners have been given their casting sides, send them off separately to read over their monologues *aloud* several times—trying different attitudes or voices. They don’t need to prepare monologues in advance, memorize lines, nor read the entire script to find out “who” their character is. Just have them act right-off-the-page, as that is what they’ll be doing in performance. A seat-of-the-pants flexibility is the mark of a good radio actor.

For call backs, have an actor also perform *other* monologues—even cross-gender roles—as you are looking for *quality* of expression. It’s been said that direction is 90% casting. Put your strongest actors in the lead roles.

Radio actors should NOT memorize dialogue. Radio drama requires cast & crew to read from the script in performance. The coordination of voices, music, and sound effects is generally trickier than in stage-plays or musicals. In radio, scripts *rule!*

Casting Evaluation - *Wonderful Life!*

Cast size: 30 max/14 min, plus 5 SFX artists . MAX: 3 M, 8F, 19M/F -OR- with doubling suggestions below, 3M, 4F, 7M/F. But can be done by 15 total, with actors doing some SFX too.

_____	George Bailey	Dreamer/Loan officer (m)
_____	Clarence	Angel, Second Grade (m)
_____	Mary Hatch Bailey	George's wife/Librarian (f)
_____	Superintendent	Boss of Angels (m/f)
_____	Uncle Billy	Scatter-brained clerk (m)
_____	Mr. Potter	Warped, old financier (m)
_____	Ma Bailey	George's mother (f)
_____	Annie	Bailey family cook (f)
_____	Violet Bick	Beautician/Sultry gal (f)
_____	Bert	Local policeman (m)
_____	Ernie	Cab driver (m/f)
_____	Nick	Ornery shareholder/bartender (m/f)
_____	Pop Bailey	George's father (m)
_____	Sam Wainwright	Rich businessman (m)
_____	Gower	Druggist (m/f)
_____	Mrs. Hatch	Mary's mother (f)
_____	Harry Bailey	George's younger brother
_____	Announcer	Radio announcer (m/f)
_____	Martini	Italian café owner (m/f)
_____	Charlie	Difficult shareholder (m/f)
_____	Cousin Tilly	Loan office clerk (f)
_____	Young George Bailey	Boy, age 10 (m)
_____	Toll-Taker	Bridge night watchman (m/f)
_____	Zuzu Bailey	Girl, age 5 (f)
_____	Janie Bailey	Girl, age 8 (f)
_____	Dr. Campbell	Board President (m/f)
_____	Mr. Welch I	rate husband (m)
_____	Bank Teller	Bank clerk (m/f)
_____	Eustace	Loan office clerk (m/f)
_____	Carter	Bank Examiner (m/f)
_____	Petey Bailey	Boy, age 9 (m/f)
_____	Mrs. Davis	Shareholder (f)
_____	Impatient Neighbor	Impatient neighbor (m/f)
_____	Randy	Shareholder (m/f)
_____	Mrs. Thompson	Shareholder (f)
_____	Sheriff	County sheriff (m/f)
_____	Eddy	Shareholder(m/f)
_____	The Radio-Director	[OPTIONAL] (m/f)

Doubling Roles

Regarding casting, I've produced the show with a cast of 7 men and 4 women and also 8 men and 3 women. However, plenty of roles can be played by either men or women--as is indicated--so you may mix and match as needed.

Please note, that unlike some playwrights, I have no problems with you changing genders of characters. "Mrs. Potter," anyone?

Here's one way of splitting up roles between 11 actors.

--ACTOR--

GEORGE BAILEY Dreamer/Loan Officer (m)

--ACTOR--

CLARENCE Angel, Second Grade (m/f)

--ACTRESS--

MARY HATCH BAILEY George's Wife/Librarian (f)

--ACTOR OR ACTRESS--

SUPERINTENDENT Boss of Angels (m/f)

CARTER Bank Examiner (m/f)

--ACTOR--

ANNOUNCER Radio announcer (m/f)

UNCLE BILLY Scatter-brained clerk (m/f)

NIGHT WATCHMAN Night watchman (near bridge) (m/f)

--ACTOR--

MR. POTTER Warped, old financier (m/f)

OFFICER BERT Local policeman (m/f)

EDDY Shareholder(m/f)

--ACTOR--

ERNIE Cab driver (m/f)

GOWER Pharmacist (m/f)

DR. CAMPBELL Board President (m/f)

MARTINI Italian café owner (m/f)

CHARLIE Shareholder (m/f)

--ACTOR--

POP BAILEY	George's father (m)
YOUNG GEORGE	Boy, age 10 (m)
EUSTACE	Loan office clerk (m/f)
MR. WELCH	Irate husband (m)
PETEY BAILEY	Boy, age 9 (m/f)
RANDY	Shareholder (m/f)

--ACTOR--

SAM WAINWRIGHT	Rich businessman (m)
HARRY BAILEY	George's younger brother (m)
NICK	Ornery shareholder/bartender (m/f)
SHERIFF	County Sheriff (m/f)

--ACTRESS--

VIOLET BICK	Beautician/Sultry gal (f)
MRS. HATCH	Mary's mother (f)
ANNIE	Bailey family cook (f)
ZUZU BAILEY	Girl, age 5 (f)
MRS. DAVIS	Shareholder (f)

-- ACTRESS--

MA BAILEY	George's mother (f)
COUSIN TILLY	Loan office clerk (m/f)
JANIE BAILEY	Girl, age 8 (f)
BANK TELLER	Bank clerk (m/f)
IMPATIENT NEIGHBOR	Impatient neighbor (m/f)
MRS. THOMPSON	Shareholder (f)

For information on Costumes and doubling character accessories, see page 186, in the PRODUCTION section of this appendix.

Casting Monologues - *Wonderful Life!*

Not all roles are represented below, but auditions using these 13 monologues help determine which actors are best suited for all the roles in the play. Pay attention to the double-dashed clauses, and deliver the underlined words with emphasis.

To prepare for the audition, select a character or two and read their lines to yourself several times, both silently and aloud. Try a variety of interpretations or styles of delivery. Since radio actors often play several parts, try auditioning using different voices or accents for the various roles.

ANNOUNCER: This is the story of George Bailey--an ordinary man who lives in Bedford Falls, New York. For his whole life, George Bailey wanted to see the world--the world laying beyond his small town. (PAUSE) But, our story doesn't start in Bedford Falls, New York. Indeed, it doesn't begin in this world...

SUPERINTENDENT ANGEL: Now look. A few months later, Young George was working at Gower's pharmacy. But Mr. Gower had just received a telegram informing him that his only son had died. It was The Great Pandemic. Er... the one from 1918 to 1919, you understand. Devastated, Mr. Gower was trying to drown his sorrows in whiskey, when the... (AD-LIB)

GEORGE BAILEY 1: What did I wish for, Mary? Oh... (THINKS) Hmmm... It's not one wish, Mary. I made a whole bunch of 'em. Y'see... I'm leaving this one-horse town. I'm gonna travel. Italy!--the Coliseum. And then Greece!--the Parthenon! And that's just this summer!

GEORGE BAILEY 2: Now, wait a minute! Why my father ever started this measly Building and Loan, I can't say. But know this, Mr. Potter! That... "rabble"... out there... They do most of the working and paying... and living and dying in this town. Can't they work and pay and live and die in some decent rooms, with a bath? Well, My father thought so! Neighbors were human beings to him! But to you--a warped, frustrated, old man--they're just cattle!

MARY HATCH BAILEY: (CONCERNED) What's the matter, George? You've been mum, since you got here. Zuzu's got a little temperature. The doctor said it was nothing serious. (PAUSE) Why are you shouting? George? (ANGRY) Whatever's gotten into you? You're torturing the children!

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Sound Effects Cookbook - *Wonderful Life!*

- Tingling wind chimes
- Ice cracking
- Phone rings
- Phone handset picked up/hung up
- Phone being dialed
- Face slaps
- Dinner plates/forks
- Footsteps on sidewalk
- Footsteps on wooden floor
- Gym floor retracting
- Dog barks/howls
- Mary's robe rips
- shaking flower bush
- Gavel
- Door opening/closing/shut
- Bell (attached to door) rings
- Creaking door opening / door locking
- Phonograph clicked on
- Needle scratches record
- Envelope of money rustled
- Cab door opens/shuts
- Flapping bird wings
- Knitting needles quietly knitting
- Typewriter (keys and bell)
- Squeaky wheelchair
- Newspaper flexed/handed over
- Footsteps in snow
- Model bridge being destroyed
- George hands insurance policy over
- Barroom glasses clinking
- Punch
- Body drop
- Thunder roll
- Cash register ka-ching & bell
- Drinks being set down on bar
- Bottle being slammed down on bar
- Scuffles
- Crash of trash can
- Woman staggers in high heels

- Frantic pounding on door
- Police whistle
- Gunshots
- Searching a pocket
- Champagne cork pop
- Book opened
- Small tea bell rung

Sound Effects Cookbook - Extra material

Troupes who opt to use the warm-up routine and six ad-spots scripts found at the end of the appendix, will need several other SFX devices. They are listed below and described in the SFX “recipe” section that follows.

- Knuckle knocks on sheet metal
- Hammers, saws
- “Jibber jabber” groan-hammer toys
- Clock ticking
- Slide-whistle downward glissando

Live Sound Effects Cookbook - *Wonderful Life!*

Don't call sound effects "foley"

In professional radio drama, the term for sound effects is... *sound effects*, and the term for the person who performs and controls them is *sound effects artist*. "Foley" is a film production term in use only since the late-1980s and covers the *replacement* of sounds that we're not recorded well during the film shoot. A radio sound effects artist does everything a foley artist does *in real time* and many more sounds—both live and pre-recorded. SAG-AFTRA covers professional sound effects artists, whereas pro foley artists belong to the Motion Picture Sound Editors union. Calling SFX "foley" is inauthentic.

For photos of Radio SFX rigs, see: [\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#)

[] TINGLING WIND CHIMES:

Shake a small wind chime. Think "twinkling stars." Hang it on a stand near the SFX table mic, so you can finger it to keep it tinkling under the Heaven scenes. Search the web for solid aluminum chimes similar to *Cupids Love wind chimes* or *Farm Tractor wind chimes*.

[] ICE CRACKING:

Use your hand to grasp/crush a thin-walled 16oz plastic water bottle. Use an empty bottle, without a cap. Blow into it to re-inflate. One bottle should last for several shows.

[] PHONE BEING DIALED:

Use an old rotary dial phone—a Western Electric model #500 or #302 phone will do. See Wikipedia for info on those two models. To purchase one, try flea markets or e-bay. Beware of modern reproductions with pushbutton numbers inside a fake rotary dial.

[] PHONE RINGS:

Ring Rhythm: 2 seconds, then pause for 4 seconds and repeat.

Take two "handbells" (the kind with the clapper on a small spring) and ring them.

Search the web for *Kidsplay Chromatic Add-On Handbells*.

-OR- wire up an electric "delivery bell." Search Google for: *Heath Zenith 2-1/2" Wired chime Model# 172C-A*. It's available at many hardware stores. This bell can run on a 6-volt lantern battery or from AC power—via a transformer. Use a quiet push-button.

-OR- ring an old rotary dial telephone using a [\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#)

This is useful for other stage plays because it will ring old or new (wired) phones.

[] PHONE HANDSET PICKED UP/HUNG UP:

Rattle telephone handset on cradle. You must rattle it more than would be necessary to really answer it. This way the audience can better tell what's that a phone is being answered. For hang-ups, use the rhythm: "ba-DUMP."

[] FACE SLAPS:

Slap one hand on another or slap hand on a fist-sized piece of wood covered with a thin layer of leather. Experiment to position it properly at the SFX mic. Try to avoid a breeze from your hand, causing a thud into the mic.

[] DINNER PLATES/FORKS:

Scrape a fork on a small dessert plate. You may wish to drop the fork on a particular line of dialogue—for dramatic emphasis. Have two or three different sized plates/saucers and several forks—so you can quickly grab one on a crowded SFX table.

[] FOOTSTEPS ON WOODEN FLOOR:

Use conventionally heeled shoes on a wooden "walk-board"--an 18"x18" (450mm x 450mm) piece of 3/4" (20mm) plywood, backed with rubber shelf liner matting (stapled on), so it won't slide on the stage floor.

Men walk with a heel-toe sound "ka-TUNK, ka-TUNK"). For women walking in high-heels, walk just on your heels ("TIG-TIG-TIG-TIG").

As an alternative, wear men's or ladies' shoes on your hands and do steps on 12"x12" walk-boards (wooden or stone). The walk-boards sit *ON* the SFX table. However, now your hands aren't available for other *simultaneous* sound effects. If you use hands-as-feet, you'll need more SFX artists.

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The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Extra SFX devices for Warm-Up routine and Ad-spots (see pages 211-223)

If you will be doing the six scripted ad-spots, you will need a few more SFX devices.

[] KNUCKLE KNOCKS ON SHEET METAL

Use your knuckles to knock (2X) on the bottom of a 12” (300mm) non-stick frying pan.

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The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE]

Pre-recorded Sound Effect Cues - *Wonderful Life!*

A collection of *Wonderful Life!* sound effects tracks is available from Sales@RuyaSonic.com

Certain sound effects can be hard to produce live or hard to mic well—or both. In *Wonderful Life!* these difficult-to-do-live sounds include crickets, cars, water plunging/splashing, glass breaking, ticking clocks, and wind. It is possible to produce these sounds with mechanical devices, but I suggest using pre-recorded tracks—for a variety of reasons.

My SFX mentors worked with Orson Welles, Jack Benny, Jack Webb and other radio greats and in the Golden Age of radio drama, these network SFX artists *always* used a mix of live sounds and pre-recorded ones. There was no SFX purism preferring live over pre-recorded sounds; they used whatever worked to best achieve the effect the script called for.

Background ambiences, such as jungles, factories, weather, interiors of cars, etc. were pre-recorded. Actions, such as fights, doors, feet, guns, etc., were done live. Using a mix of live and pre-recorded sounds served both the budget and the realism of the shows—and this was true for both studio shows and those done in front of live audiences.

For modern productions of *Wonderful Life!*, some directors may want live SFX for everything—crickets, water, cars, etc. Not only would that NOT be authentic to 1940s radio-drama, it would sound poor. For example: water SFX are notoriously hard to mic. You would need a dozen SFX artists clicking away to create believable crickets. And if one SFX artist was busy cranking a wind machine, would a second be able to

simultaneously do a scuffle, running on snow, and gunshots? Pre-recorded SFX allow for a smaller crew.

While pre-recorded sounds lack the magic and fun of live SFX, there are ways to make pre-recorded SFX entertaining for live audiences.

Real Sonic Sorcery

In the heyday of radio drama—for both studio and live performances—the SFX crew consisted of one or more artists doing the live SFX, while another played 78 RPM sound effects records from a “sound truck”—a wheeled console consisting of multiple turntables, a mixer for crossfading between turntables/tonearms, and a speaker. The “sound trucker” could play the pre-recorded wind, while firing live prop gunshots, and the live SFX artist does the scuffle and running.

A modern playback system—apps running on a tablet or laptop computer—can replace the sound truck’s multiple turntables, but be hidden from the audience’s view.

I suggest putting a sound truck “station” on-stage and have one of your SFX artists trigger the pre-recorded tracks. This increases the precision of coordinating SFX with dialogue. Plus, being on-stage, right next to the live SFX table allows the SFX artists to easily “double” certain pre-recorded tracks with live SFX. Doubling can create the illusion of genius live sound effects work—and entertain the audience in a way impossible if pre-recorded SFX were merely triggered by an unseen technician in the booth.

The Glass Half-Fool

For example, in one scene, George and Mary throw rocks to break windows at the old Granville house. However, live glass-break SFX can be dangerous and unreliable on-stage. Sometimes glass doesn’t break; other times it skitters across the stage. The best way to do this bit dependably is to have an SFX artist *be seen* to grab a hammer and kneel down behind the SFX table—as if he’s got a bucket of glass there. He holds the hammer aloft—in clear view of the audience—while his other hand is poised on the play button for the pre-recorded “distant window break” SFX track. When George or Mary reach the line about throwing a rock, the SFX artist brings the hammer down—as if breaking the glass—while triggering the pre-recorded SFX track: SMASH! The audience thinks a perfect window break has occurred *live* on-stage. Yes, it is cheating, but theater is full of such cheats.

A Bigger Splash

This doubling is also useful for the scene where Clarence and George jump into the river and splash about. Here, have the live SFX artist poised with her hand on a splash-

plunger submerged in a bucket of water. Her other hand is ready to trigger the pre-recorded “plunge/splashing” SFX tracks. When the character “jumps,” the SFX artist pulls a “splash plunger” out of the tub while simultaneously triggering the pre-recorded track: SPLASH! Again, the audience will be convinced your SFX team can work miracles. (A “splash plunger” is like a toilet plunger, but instead of the rubber suction cup, it has an X-shaped “branding iron” of wood strips. To splash, you pull it OUT of a 5-gallon bucket with some water in it. Don’t mic it—as water SFX are hard to pick up. Just make sure there is a safe distance between the electronic playback device and the splash area. Keep some bath towels nearby to wipe the floor of excess water from the real splash.)

These illusions could be accomplished with a booth technician triggering the pre-recorded tracks, but coordination between the live SFX artist and the far-away booth technician will be tougher. You’ll need more rehearsal and there’s a greater chance of mis-timing the actions, which would expose the trickery and disappoint the audience.

For a vintage look, you can also “accessorize” the sound truck with some old 78 RPM records and have the sound trucker appear to be “cueing up” the records—when she’s actually triggering CD or MP3 tracks. The on-stage sound truck is totally authentic to 1930s-1950s radio dramas.

To more info and photos, see [\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#)

My sound truck is a wheeled modular cabinet, 36” tall, 20” wide, 25” deep—painted in “CBS Blue.” It’s pretty fancy, but I’ve done 90 shows a year. For *Wonderful Life!* you won’t need anything as elaborate as mine, which has a 24-input mixer board, a reverb/FX unit, and a headphone amp. To trigger pre-recorded tracks, I have dual DJ-style MP3 players that use SD chips (like a thumb drive). However, a tablet running a theatrical playback app could also serve.

Because my sound truck has a 24-input mixer, I also route all SFX mics through that mixer, plus the actors’ telephone filter mics. Troupes should have all mics controlled by a booth technician—who can even work in a small booth on-stage, behind the actors’ chairs. “Engineer” is the studio term, but I prefer the more colorful “Switch Doctor.”

If you are using pre-recorded music tracks, I suggest this technician, the “Playback-Organist” also work from on-stage—with her playback gear housed by a fake organ shell. She could also trigger the pre-recorded SFX tracks from here—as well as mix the voice and SFX mics.

If the Sound Trucker, Playback-Organist and Switch Doctor are on stage, they can be cued by the on-stage radio-director (or chief SFX artist). It’s always easier to coordinate the many elements of radio dramas when all control is taking place on-stage.

Pre-Recorded Sound Effect List - *Wonderful Life!*

All tracks end with 8 seconds of silence, to provide time to pause playback devices that don't have one-track-then-stop mode. "BED" describes sounds that play underneath live dialogue. "SPOT" sounds stand out in the open--with no dialogue over them.

Track	Volume	Description	Run time
01		Splashes into ice pond [BED]	0:18
02		Gower's phone rings (3X) – can be done live, also [BED]	0:20
03		Dance band / Floor retracting / Splashing [BED]	1:08
04		Crickets #1 [BED]	5:42
05		Distant window shattered by rock #1 [SPOT]	0:10
06		Distant window shattered by rock #2 [SPOT]	0:10
07		Uncle Billy's car pulls up, idles--under [BED]	0:31
08		Downtown Bedford Falls (Traffic) [BED]	3:51
09		Ernie's cab pulls away from curb [BED]	0:13
10		Crickets #2 [BED]	2:24
11		"Buffalo Gals" 78 RPM record [BED]	2:08
12		Mary's phone rings (20X) – can be done live, also [BED]	2:18
13		Interior of cab driving, wipers, rain on roof [BED]	3:06
14		Cab pulls over - Rain on street - Thunder at end [BED]	1:08
15		Uncle Billy's phone rings (1-½X) – can be live, also [BED]	0:16
16		Office phone rings (1-¼X) – can be done live, also [BED]	0:13
17		Potter's clock ticking in background #1 [BED]	5:02
18		Bailey phone rings (2X) – can be live, also [BED]	0:13
19		Potter's clock ticking in background #2 [BED]	3:47
20		Clarence jumps in river, splashes around [BED]	0:51
21		George jumps in river, splashes around [BED]	0:24
22		Magical harp glissando--UP [BED]	0:15
23		Wind #1 [BED]	1:39
24		Downtown Pottersville (Traffic) [BED]	1:26
25		Interior of cab driving #2 [BED]	1:37
26		Wind #2 (Cemetery) [BED]	4:24
27		Wind #3 (Bridge) [BED]	0:49
28		Magical harp glissando--DOWN [BED]	0:15

Playback devices - Requirements & Methods

Theater audio gear for stage-plays may be challenged by radio-plays' more sophisticated use of pre-recorded tracks. *Wonderful Life!* uses 28 pre-recorded SFX tracks and 49 music tracks. Not every track is merely triggered and played solo. Often, SFX tracks fade in toward the end of a music track. Elsewhere, two SFX tracks play in rapid succession. In a few spots, one SFX track plays while another SFX track is still playing. Make sure your playback technology is up to such tasks.

In several *WL!* scene changes, SFX ambience tracks run back-to-back: for example, "Downtown Traffic" followed by a brief musical bridge, then "Crickets" SFX. In other scenes, SFX tracks play *on top* of one another: for example, "Mary's Phone Rings 20X" plays while the "Buffalo Gals" record is playing in the background. You will need to trigger tracks quickly and control their volume levels independently.

For SFX track playback, you can use TWO playback devices -OR- a dedicated theater playback app for tablets/smartphones--tricked out to have separate audio outputs.

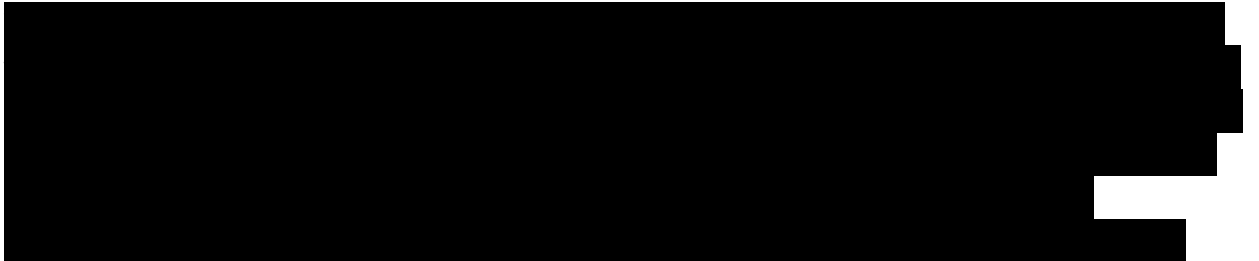
If you use two *hardware* devices (say, 2 CD players or a DJ-style dual MP3 player) don't split every other track between two playback devices in an A-reel/B-reel scheme. Instead, load the same CD or MP3 folder of tracks into *both* devices and trigger whatever tracks the script calls for. Route the 2 playback devices' audio into your mixer (or a mini-mixer) so you can separately adjust volumes, fadeouts, and cross-fade from one track to another.

An alternative to having 2 playback devices is to use

However, while a

You can program playback apps to set track volume levels and even automate volume changes within a track, allowing for timed fades and cross-fades. But programming these automations can be very time-consuming. I suggest you task the "Sound Trucker" member of the SFX crew to manually control the volume and fades with a physical "hands-on" mini-mixer.

Trick to split a single theater playback app's audio into two separate feeds



: Fader 1 for the odd-numbered cues. Fader 2 for the even-numbered cues.

Use the



Triggering the pre-recorded SFX tracks

1. Load the pre-recorded SFX tracks into your playback device. If using a single tablet/smartphone running a theater playback app, **use the stereo-split trick above** to assign every other track to be panned hard left or hard right.
2. Take the **Pre-Recorded Sound Effects List** above and listen to what the tracks sound like and how long they run.

Use a paper copy of the script to create a binder for triggering “TRACK SFX.” see [\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#)

1. (section #5, “For TRACK SFX”) for how markup cues for pre-recorded tracks. On your paper script, use a Sharpie-style marker pen to note which fader controls which SFX track (say, fader #1 for odd-numbered tracks, #2 for even-numbered).
2. Arrange a “spotting session” with the director to determine the volume levels for the various TRACK SFX cues. Some SFX cues are ambiances that play quietly beneath dialogue (such as crickets, clocks, or wind). Others may be “spot” effects that must stand out from whatever dialogue, music, ambience, or walla-walla is going on (such as phone rings, thunder cracks, magical harp glissandi, etc.).

Going cue by cue, have an actor speak a scene's dialogue lines into a mic and set the mixer's input fader so—*in relation to the dialogue volume*—SFX tracks aren't too quiet or too loud.

In some cases, the director may want to boost or cut the volume for a track while it is playing. All these levels may change over the course of rehearsals, so mark TRACK SFX volume levels in the script using PENCIL and keep an eraser handy.

3. Once the TRACK SFX script has been finalized, put the paper pages into plastic sheet protectors (back-to-back) and put them into the 3-ring binder. Having pages back-to-back allows the Sound Trucker to see 2 pages ahead.
4. During rehearsals and performances, the Sound Trucker reads along in the script—while monitoring the voices, music, and all SFX on headphones. They perform their Track SFX just the way actors perform dialogue and the live SFX-perts make their sounds.

Music - *Wonderful Life!*

A collection of *Wonderful Life!* music underscore tracks is available from Sales@RuyaSonic.com.

Pre-Recorded versus Live Music

Some troupes may use the pre-recorded radio-theater organ and piano music cues I offer or opt for a keyboardist to play the cues live from the matching sheet-music score.

In radio-drama, music cues can be “Beds,” which play underneath dialogue, or “Bridges,” which play between scenes but have no dialogue spoken over them. Both types of cues may fade down in volume under a new scene’s dialogue. Other cues are diegetic—music that the characters within a scene can hear. These are called “source” music cues, supposedly played by musicians or a phonograph within the scene—often at a bar or party. The radio engineer (a/k/a the “switch doctor”) must mix the music with the voices and sound effects so the three volume levels of are properly balanced.

Generally, music needs to be faded out as dialogue begins—unless the script indicates otherwise, such as LET CUE FINISH, or PLAYS UNDER ENTIRE SCENE, or MUSIC CUTS ABRUPTLY at a certain line of dialogue or with a specific sound effect—say, George’s body dropping to the barroom floor.

Pre-Recorded music tracks option

If using pre-recorded music tracks, someone must trigger those tracks from a playback device—CD, laptop, app, etc. For clarity, I call this trigger technician the “Playback-Organist” to differentiate her from an actual live keyboardist.

However, both must be able to hear the dialogue and sound effects clearly—while reading along in the script & score—to play the music precisely as needed. To hear the entire mix clearly, they should wear headphones while the show is being performed.

Typically, in stage-play productions, music is triggered from the control booth at the back of the theater. However, hearing the on-stage dialogue from there can be difficult. For radio-plays, I suggest the Playback-Organist be *on-stage*, seated at a fake organ shell. This provides easier coordination of music playback for the actors and SFX crew. Close proximity of all sound sources on-stage saves rehearsal time and directors’ notes.

Some music cues are triggered quickly in succession. One scene may end with a punctuating music cue and the next scene begin immediately with a new music cue.

In *WL!* there are many scene transitions between Bedford Falls and Heaven. Consider having TWO music playback devices—both loaded with the exact same tracks—and

trigger one after the other or even crossfade between the two. A theater playback app—like **Go Button** (IOS) or **Audio Cues** (Android)—is useful here, as new cues can be fired off while the old cue is just finishing. See the **Playback devices - Requirements, Methods, and Tricks** information in the SFX section above for details. The technical requirements for pre-recorded music playback are the same as for pre-recorded SFX.

Live Keyboardist option

If using a live keyboardist, they should work from the *Wonderful Life!* sheet music for the organ and piano cues. The 80-page score also provides information on organ settings that mimic radio theater organ sounds of the 1940s. However, two “source” music cues—an accordion playing “Santa Lucia” and a nightclub jazz combo—are not intended to be played live by the keyboardist. If you license the *WL!* sheet-music, those two cues are provided as pre-recorded tracks.

Whether there are pre-recorded or live music cues, you may have to “duck” them (fade their volume levels) once a scene’s dialogue begins. Some keyboardists may use a volume pedal to adjust their own volume as they play—particularly as they hold a chord at the end a cue. Some troupes may have a booth audio technician handle those fades outs. You’ll need to designate who rules the fade outs—versus who sets the overall level of the music in relation to the dialogue and sound effects.

Rehearsal Tip

Most troupes with a live keyboardist playing the *WL!* score, also license the pre-recorded music tracks because rehearsals can proceed without the keyboardist present for every one. With 47 scenes and 49 music cues, *Wonderful Life!* requires that actors know where they are in the many, quick scene transitions. It’s best to rehearse the play with transition music bookending each scene—as well as occasionally playing beneath dialogue within some scenes. This is especially critical in timing George and Mary’s fumbling to the touching “I know...” line during the argument/love scene.

So even if you have a live keyboardist, consider the logistical advantages of licensing the pre-recorded music tracks. The tracks can also aid the keyboardist, regarding tempo and timbre of the organ registrations. What’s more, a keyboardist can get a quick feel for the show by watching a rehearsal done with the pre-recorded music.

Pre-recorded Music Cue List - *Wonderful Life!*

“BED” music cues play underneath dialogue and sound effects. “BRIDGE” music cues have no dialogue on top of them, but may have sound effects. “SPOT” cues stand out in the open—with no dialogue over them. “SOURCE” describes music that is supposedly being played by somebody in the scene—it can be heard by the characters.

A complete script should be marked up with highlighted colors to show how long music cues run (through scenes and dialogue). See [\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#)

(section 4, under “Music Cues:”)

The initial volume of a music track should be high—to establish itself, then fade it down a bit once the actors begin to speak. Some scenes may require fading the music bed at the end—the timing of the fadeout will vary due to actors’ differing delivery tempos.

Track	Volume	Description	Run time
1		“Wonderful Overture” (Radio Theater Theme) [BED]	0:47
2		“Wonderful Life Intro” [BED]	0:57
3		“Heavenly No. 1” [BED]	0:48
4		“Gower’s Sad Drugstore” [BRIDGE]	0:15
5		“Tender Moment” [BED]	0:15
6		“Rip to Heavenly No. 2” [BRIDGE]	0:18
7		“Heavenly No. 3” [BED]	0:46
8		Last 2 Bars of “Buffalo Gals” setup [BRIDGE]	0:10
9		“Tragic” into “Heavenly No. 4” [BRIDGE]	0:38
10		“Oh Well into Heavenly No. 5” [BRIDGE]	0:53
11		“Downtown Bedford Falls” [BRIDGE]	0:19
12		“From Violet to Mary” [BED]	0:21
13		“Wrenching” [BED]	0:33
14		“Heavenly No. 6” [BED]	0:46
15		“Wedding March Taxi” [BRIDGE]	0:13
16		“Act 1 Outro” [BED]	0:18
17		“Wonderful Life Act 2 Intro” [BED]	0:23
18		“Heavenly No. 7” [BED]	0:49
19		“Time Passing” [BED]	0:27
20		“Bride to Heavenly No. 8” [BRIDGE]	0:44
21		“Indignant” to “Sleepy” [BRIDGE]	0:19
22		“Rock-a-Bye to Heavenly No. 9” [BRIDGE]	0:50
23		“War Montage” [BED]	1:44
24		“God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen” - ends sourly [BRIDGE]	0:16
25		“Lost to Heavenly No. 10” [BRIDGE]	0:37
26		“Desperate” -- Let it Finish [BRIDGE]	0:14

27		Janie Piano - #1 - "Hark the Herald Angels" [BED] (SOURCE)	0:20
28		Janie Piano - #2 - "Hark the Herald Angels" [BED] (SOURCE)	1:16
29		Janie Piano - #3 - "Hark the Herald Angels" [BED] (SOURCE)	0:43
30		"Troubled" [BRIDGE]	0:15
31		"Cruel" to "Heavenly No. 11" [BRIDGE]	0:55
32		"Santa Lucia" on accordion--gets abruptly stopped [BED] (SOURCE)	1:10
33		"Alone to Heavenly No. 12" [BRIDGE]	0:19
34		ACT 2 Outro --ends in suspense chord [BRIDGE]	0:17
35		"Act 3 Intro/"Dire Bridge" [BED]	0:51
36		"Juke Joint Jingle Bells"--under entire scene [BED] (SOURCE)	3:14
37		"Pottersville Streetscene"--under entire scene [BED] (SOURCE)	1:16
38		"I Know That Girl" [BRIDGE]	0:15
39		"Empty Granville House" [BRIDGE]	0:37
40		(GLISSANDO UP) "Magical Help" [SPOT]	0:11
41		"Escape" to "Mean Mother" [BRIDGE]	0:30
42		"Shattered" to "The Cemetery" [BED]	2:46
43		"Lightly" to "Old Maid" [BRIDGE]	0:18
44		"Lynch Mob" to "Redemption" [BED]	1:20
45		"Organ Hark The Herald Angels Sing" [BED]	1:00
46		"Piano Auld Lang Syne" - Janie playing [BED] (SOURCE)	1:46
47		"Organ Auld Lang Syne" - Chorus only [BED]	0:32
48		"Organ Auld Lang Syne" - Verse & 2 choruses (OPTIONAL) [BED]	1:11
49		"Wonderful Credits" - Long version of intro (OPTIONAL) [BED]	2:18

NOTE: All tracks end with 8 seconds of silence, to provide time to pause playback devices that don't have one-track-then-stop mode. If tracks must be triggered in rapid succession, an old track may still be playing its silent padding when you wish to trigger the new track.

All music arranged and performed by Jonathan Green.

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Advice for Live Keyboardists - *Wonderful Life!*

If a troupe has a live keyboardist accompany the drama, they should concentrate on organ, as this was used for most Golden Age radio dramas. Some used small orchestras, but budgets led many shows to the organ as “one-man orchestra,” capable of producing a wide variety of timbres. Organ was particularly well-suited for underscoring radio dramas because of its ability to sustain notes under the dialogue. Using the more percussive piano would steal focus from the actors’ voices.

However, there are portions of this adaptation of *Wonderful Life!* that call for pianos—as “source” music within the location a scene is set in: There’s a bluesy, barrelhouse piano played in Nick’s Bar; 8-year-old Janie Bailey practicing a halting “Hark The Herald Angels Sing,” and in the finale, Janie struggling through “Auld Lang Syne.” These scenes call for a slightly out-of-tune piano sound, since neither the roughneck bar nor the modest Bailey household would have well-tuned grand pianos. One more scene—Martini’s Italian Tavern—uses an accordion, but that can be played with a piano if you don’t have a real accordion, or accordion sound on your keyboard. Troupes licensing the 80-page *WL* score get pre-recorded tracks for the accordion and a jazz-combo for the dystopian Pottersville.

In reproducing the sound of organs used in Golden Age radio shows, please note that they ranged from Hammond (models A-B, B-C, B-V) to small Wurlitzer theater organs. Some modern synthesizer/sampler keyboards or software instruments can emulate these sounds. Most organ emulations are of the famous Hammond B-3 model, which was introduced in 1954, so the B-3’s most familiar jazz, gospel, rock or soul sounds weren’t part of 1940s radio drama. Yet, you can configure a B-3, or some modern clones, to emulate Golden Age radio organs. This requires setting organ’s drawbars for the two manuals in somewhat unusual registrations. (For info on organ registrations and drawbars, see: [\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#))

[\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#)

To hear a modern example of Golden Age organ tones—played in the radio drama style, listen to the short MP3 clip [\[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE\]](#)

In seeking to accompany your troupe's production of *Wonderful Life*, listen to the pre-recorded music tracks to get an idea of the style and feel. The tracks are available for download as MP3 files—for a fee (contact Sales@RuyaSonic.com for info.)

To hear some music cues, see the RuyaSonic page, '*It's A Wonderful Life!*' play - Music & Sound Effects Tracks <https://ruyasonic.com/wonderful-life-play-music-and-sound-effects.html>

In order for the keyboardist to be precise in playing their music cues where needed, they should wear headphones, providing a mix of voices, sound effects, and their keyboard. On-stage, it's hard to hear exactly what the actors are saying—especially if there is a crowd scene going on. Without headphones, the SFX team and keyboardist may miss cues or bungle them. There's no need to provide a “more me” keyboard-heavy mix—just whatever's going to the P.A. system or over the air.

At the end of an organ music cue leading into a new scene, the organ usually fades out as the dialogue begins. Someone must do that fading. Usually, the on-stage organist—using a volume pedal (or an organ-style expression pedal, which controls both volume and EQ—will fade the volume in coordination with what the music, say, holding a suspense chord. However, it is also possible for booth technician to do this fade. You'll need to designate who controls those fadeouts—organist or booth technician.

The full *WL!* score lists the drawbar registrations, chorus, vibrato, tone-generator leakage and Leslie rotating speaker settings for every cue.

If you don't license the *WL!* score, listed below are some generic radio soap opera and theater organ drawbar settings—plus vibrato, chorus, and rotating speaker settings. If your keyboard or a VSTi program can alter drawbar and other settings, you can approximate these sounds—and come up with variations to suit the needs of the show.

Radio Soap Opera Organ Registrations

Registration	Name
00 8703 004 (Vibrato 3, Chorus 3 - fast Leslie)	Soap Opera #1
60 2584 878	Soap Opera #2
70 4008 084	Soap Opera #3
71 4118 184 (Vibrato 3, Chorus 3 - fast Leslie)	Soap Opera #4

Theater-Organ Registrations

Here are typical drawbar settings used to reproduce the sound of theater-organs, which are far closer to the timbres of radio drama organs than the familiar Hammond B-3 gospel, jazz, rock and soul settings in use since the 1950s.

UPPER MANUAL	
Registration	Name
-- ---- ---	Cancel
00 8740 000	French Horn 8'
00 8408 004	Tibias 8' & 2'
00 8080 840	Clarinet 8'
08 8800 880	Novel Solo 8'
60 8088 000	Theater Solo 16'
00 4685 300	Oboe Horn 8'
60 8807 006	Full Tibias 16'
00 6888 654	Trumpet 8'
76 8878 667	Full Theater Brass 16'

LOWER MANUAL	
Registration	Name
-- ---- ---	Cancel
00 4545 440	Cello 8'
00 4432 000	Dulciana 8'
00 4800 000	Vibraharp 8'
00 3800 460	Vox 8' & Tibia 4'
00 6554 322	String Accomp. 8'
00 5642 200	Open Diapason 8'
43 5434 334	Full Accomp. 16'
00 8030 000	Tibia 8'
84 7767 666	Bombarde 16'

Producing *Wonderful Life!* as a radio-on-stage show

Below are several ways old-time radio shows were presented, from the 1930s to the 1960s. Pick and choose the elements that fit your vision and budget. I also include logistical info regarding how you can mount *Wonderful Life!* as a radio-on-stage production. If you are doing an audio-only production, read through this section anyway—as it may aid your decision making in the studio—or, when producing remotely via Zoom or other teleconferencing methods.

Radio Reality Ain't What It's Cracked Up to Be

Theater troupes seeking to present my radio adaptation of *WL!* as an authentic piece of classic radio-drama need to understand just how shows were actually produced in the fabled Golden Age. There were actors reading from scripts in front of microphones, live sound effects artists, pre-recorded sound effects and an organist, orchestra, or even a pre-recorded score. There were radio directors “throwing cues” (from a booth or on-the-floor), sound trucks, headphones for the SFX artists, sponsors watching from their glassed booths, assistants with stop watches running up to actors at the mic, crossing out dialogue so as to fit the show into very strict time-slots, and more. Your production can use as many of these authentic elements as you choose. Some are logistical, others—such as assistants crossing out dialogue—can be thrown in for theatrical effect.

However, “authenticity” can be a trap. As we say in the radio sound effects world, “Reality ain't what it's cracked up to be”—meaning that mistaken notions about how-it-was-done can harm your production. I've seen modern stage depictions of “old-time radio” chock full of errors—such as applause signs, calling sound effects by the modern film term “foley,” actors tossing script pages to the floor, the absence of anybody throwing cues, even fake mics with actors using “stage voices”—and “stage whispers.”

Here's a primer on classic radio-on-stage productions that may spare you from anachronisms, bogus “realism,” and unnecessary art direction/prop expenses. Once you grasp the concepts of radio-drama production, you can mix and match elements to create your own crowd-pleasing show—whether on-stage, over the air or the internet.

Hollywood Radio-On-Stage Productions

A typical 1940s radio-on-stage show—such as for the weekly *Lux Radio Theater* or *Theater Guild on the Air* programs—took place in a large, legitimate theater (seating 600-1000) or in a fancy movie house. These live-audience shows were hour-long adaptations of recent Hollywood movies—often with one or two lead actors reprising their film roles. The broadcasts mostly served to promote *upcoming* films starring those actors. The live audience functioned as a sound effect—there to validate the egos of the film studios, producers, and movie stars, as well as make listeners at home feel they were sitting among all the Hollywood “swells” in the live audience.

For radio-dramas such as Lionel Barrymore's annual *Christmas Carol* shows or *It's A Wonderful Life*, these *radio-on-stage* productions in large theaters made no attempt to recreate the look of an actual radio studio—no control room windows, no acoustical tile, no overhead boom mics, no “On-Air” signs, etc. Instead of any kind of “radio-land” set, radio-on-stage shows used a few boxy-shaped microphones on stands, set in front of long velvet drapes—which acoustically deadened the large theater space.

Radio-on-stage actors were elegantly dressed, even if the characters they portrayed were pirates or coal miners. There were no fedora-wearing actors with turned-up shirtsleeves, no gum-chewing actresses, no cigar smoking by the SFX artists, no hammy, Damon Runyon version of the 1940s. The look of these fancy presentations resembled our modern Oscar ceremonies. The intent of was glamour, and not a showcasing of the technical aspects of radio production. As such, the sound effects were often minimal and presented without much fanfare—or even visibility.

In this kind of Hollywood radio-on-stage show, there were 3-4 microphones on stands—positioned downstage-center running right to left. Since the focus of these shows was on the movie stars, the sound effects elements were downplayed. The SFX table would be unobtrusively located Stage-Right or Stage-Left. Next to that table, a “sound truck”—a console with several turntables and a speaker—played pre-recorded sound effects from 78 RPM records. An orchestra or organist might be upstage or in the pit in front of the stage apron. A group of vocal “extras”—called the “mumble chorus”—would be seated upstage, headed by a “conductor” for the “walla-walla” crowd scenes. All wore fashionable business attire.

This Hollywood radio-on-stage setup is one that most modern troupes could easily reproduce in any theater space. It is totally authentic for *Wonderful Life!* However, I believe this style of presentation requires some tweaking in order to provide a more satisfying experience for modern theater audiences. Those tweaks can be borrowed from the other authentic production styles detailed below.

Radio-Studio-Theater Productions

Radio's weekly comedy and variety shows, such as the *Jack Benny Program* and the *Fred Allen Show*, were broadcast from radio studio-theaters—seating 150 to 300 spectators. Modern sit-coms and late night talk shows are based on this production model. These radio shows used a setup similar to the above Hollywood Radio-On-Stage model—with a smaller stage, drapes, mics, SFX, sound truck, etc., but the walls surrounding the audience itself had acoustical tile or drapes. There was an “On-Air” sign—but never an “Applause” sign. (Audience applause was “conducted” by the sound effects artists.) Along the side walls, behind glassed windows, was the control room and

a booth for the commercial sponsors—much like an opera box or skybox at modern sports arenas.

In radio sit-coms such as *the Jack Benny Program* or *My Favorite Wife*, sound-effects artists were prominently featured, often with elaborate props that were visual as well as aural. The studio audience was active and well-mic'd. They gave the performers instant feedback as to how well jokes went over—and most importantly, their laughter assured *advertisers* that the show they were sponsoring was *actually funny*. If somebody screwed up on-stage, it was all part of the show.

Using the Radio-Studio-Theater model of production would allow your version of *Wonderful Life!* to be authentic, but also incorporate a “wink” to the live audience. By emphasizing the “fakeness” of radio-drama—the visible sound effects work, phone filter mics, doubling of roles by actors, the mumble chorus, etc.—this model lets the studio audience in on the illusions, say, George & Mary breaking windows, crowd scenes, Jimmy the raven, etc. The audience is not only acknowledged, but actually serve as *accomplices* in that they know what the unseeing “broadcast audience” does not—just how wonderfully “fake” the radio art form is.

This “radio wink”—revealing radio tricks to the live audience—can be very useful when presenting radio-dramas in a theater. You can “work” the audience by having the SFX artist “test” his various devices during the pre-show—but not formally demonstrating them. Then, before “going to air”, the radio director or announcer trains the audience how to applaud like a *professional* studio audience. Then, request a silencing of “noisemakers” without mentioning cell phones. My *WL!* script includes a number of radio audience winks, including an audience warm-up, humorous commercials, and an audience sing-along at the finale.

Small Radio-Studio Productions

Radio *genre* shows—crime, suspense, westerns, soap operas, horror—were performed *without* an audience present. Audience reactions would destroy the realism these dramatic shows required. Modern crime and medical TV shows resemble this model and are filmed with no audience.

In the Golden Age of Radio, these genre programs were produced in small radio studios with *Celotex* acoustical tile everywhere, some drapes, and large control and advertising client box windows placed behind and beside the performers. The sound truck and live SFX devices were sprawled across the studio—often taking up a great deal of space—while the 4-8 actors were off to the side, huddled around 1 or 2 (bi-directional) mics. The cast would provide their own “walla-walla” crowd sounds—often while seated several feet from the actors at the mics. Here, cast and crew could be dressed informally—some in suits, others with rolled-up shirtsleeves and collars loosened—and

SFX men in bow ties (or long ties tucked into shirt fronts), ladies in dresses—usually never in slacks—unless they were the sound effects artists.

To achieve this Small Radio-Studio look, you can use white-painted pegboard for the walls, above dark wainscoting, a prop talk-back speaker, an illuminated On-Air sign, a large vintage clock—with a second hand, an armoire-style SFX closet, a 6-foot (2 m) long SFX table and “sound truck,” (see SFX section for sound truck info), wooden folding chairs, and a large window into a control room, peopled by a silent “director” and “engineer.” You can add a water pitcher and glasses, or a small table with coffee, etc.

While it is possible to present your show using this Small Radio-Studio model, please note it this is the least authentic way to present *Wonderful Life!* In the 1940s, this particular show would have been produced using the Hollywood Radio-On-Stage or Radio Studio-Theater production models. However, feel free to use elements from all three styles of production to fashion a look that fits your theater space, budget, and artistic vision.

QUESTION: Does the live, in-theater audience exist—or not?

Many modern theater troupes may employ the Small Radio-Studio model when presenting radio-dramas on stage. This approach—with the performers ensconced in the *characters'* world and ignoring that there is a live audience present—is how modern theater troupes produce most conventional plays. Art directors tend to see the Small Radio-Studio as a typical stage-play setting-where-drama-occurs. Appropriately “retro” art direction can look realistic and provide an enticing behind-the-scenes glimpse into the world of the “radio actor” characters. Conceptually, however, the presence of the live theater audience defeats that reality.

You may choose to treat the radio-studio as a kind of “closed set”—so the live theater audience doesn't exist. Here, the characters appear to be playing to the mics and the *unseen broadcast audience* instead of to the actual audience seated just in front of the stage. In this way, the live audience members are silent voyeurs, functioning as they do for traditional theater productions that are set in offices, kitchens, porches, etc. Since that is what most theater troupes are used to, they might think to treat a radio-style *WL!* the same way.

However, there is much to be gained by acknowledging the presence of the live in-theater audience—and making them part of the show. Since you have chosen to produce a *WL!* radio-play—and not with sets for Building & Loan office, the Bailey home, graveyard, etc.—you may want to go a step further and fully break the “Fourth Wall” separating the performers from the live audience.

Ask yourself: Are you in a radio studio—or not? Does the live theater audience exist—or not? The Small Radio-Studio model was about intimacy and control, while the Hollywood Radio-On-Stage and Radio Studio-Theater models were about a communal spectacle—where the audience’s laughter was essential in presenting comic material. Unlike most theatrical plays, radio-on-stage productions can openly break the Fourth Wall and treat the audience to a “show.” This difference can make for a very fresh theater experience for your troupe and your audiences.

If you take the Small Radio-Studio model and merely incorporate the live theater audience as a “studio audience” please note that you are no longer authentic. You may have seen other modern stage productions present radio-drama this way, but do not confuse that ersatz style with the reality of Golden Age radio. And most importantly, don’t think that just because some other modern troupes have gone this route that you must, too.

You are not limited to the Hollywood Radio-On-Stage or Radio-Studio Theater production styles just because they are authentic. I’m only informing you on what’s available as production models.

Authenticity isn’t bulletproof. Purism by itself doesn’t make for a satisfying theater experience, but mistaken notions of what is authentic can lead you to poor decisions about the look and presentation of your *WL!* show.

For example, some troupes mistakenly think ALL sound effects have to be produced manually (including cars, crickets, rain and wind). Consequently, their shows suffer from lousy sound as they fail to utilize pre-recorded sounds the way Golden Age shows did. It’s best to know the rules and then choose to break them.

Feel free to mix the various models listed above, but don’t be a slave to clichéd notions of authenticity or conventional ways of dealing with the audience/performer divide. Do a bit of research on the medium and your show will benefit greatly.

Resources

A great book about old time radio—with plenty of photos—

STAGE SETUP

Here are some technical and logistical issues you should consider in producing for radio-on-stage, or for in-studio, or remote-performed (zoom) production.

Microphones

Use *real* microphones hooked up to a P.A. system. Some troupes think dummy mics and loud stage voices will carry, but with the amount of music and sound effects in a radio show like *Wonderful Life!*, the actors' voices will need to be properly (and continually) balanced with the other sounds. I've done over 2500 radio shows—many of them as radio-on-stage productions—and they could NOT be done without mics for actors, let alone the live sound effects.

For this show, actors must learn to employ quieter, conversational voices and realistic whispers—not stage-voices. It will take a while for them to get used to doing drama over a P.A. system in a theater. To quickly familiarize cast and crew with this different performances style, rehearse, standing, at mic stands—with live mics going through a P.A. or some amplification. See the Audio (engineering) section for information about setting up the P.A. system for radio drama.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Radio-play setup for blocking

This show can either be performed on-stage, in a recording studio, or via Zoom-styled remote production. All three have performers (actors & sound effects artists) who are alternately ON-MIC or OFF-MIC. Several technicians can be on-stage, but never at a mic—the SFX Sound Trucker, the “Playback Organist” (or live keyboardist), and the Engineer. Some troupes may opt for a Radio-Director on-stage, to “throws cues,” conduct the walla-walla “mumble chorus,” and cue audience applause.

Troupes can use the following set-up for mics, chairs, booths, and tables:

[Audience]

STAGE LEFT

STAGE-RIGHT

<Mic 1>
(Angels)

<2>

<3>

<4>

<F2>
(Sam
Potter)

Sound
Truck

SFX Table 1

SFX Table 2

<F1>
(Mrs. Hatch
or Mary)

----- Cast chairs -----
[Organ Station] (optional) [Engineer's Booth] (optional)

Scene headings in the *WL*/script indicate radio-on-stage blocking for each character, such as mic <1> or <3> or—when actors share a mic—<4L> or <4R>, left or right. Mic blocking notes interspersed amid dialogue indicate when—for dramatic purposes—characters cross from one mic to another.

Mic 1: [Redacted]

Mics 2, 3, and 4 are used by [Redacted]

Mics F1 & F2 [Redacted]

Each *WL!* scene heading specifies which characters need to be at the mics and suggests specific mics: <1>, <2>, <3>, <4> as well as filter (telephone) mics <F1> and <F2>.

Example:

SCENE 4 - INT. BAILEY DINING ROOM - EVENING (JUNE 1928)
(GEORGE <2>, POP BAILEY <3>, MA BAILEY <4R>, HARRY <4L>)

Extreme actor heights may require changes. Scenes with more than four characters will designate a mic location of Left or Right, as in <4L> <4R>. When many actors need to use the same mic, they can line up a few steps back of their mic and then step forward to speak. They can tap other actors on the shoulder to signal “let me through.”

Chairs for off-mic actors

Place a row (or two) of chairs upstage for actors to sit on when they aren't on-mic. The chairs should be quiet when sitting down or getting up, so beware of creaking chairs, swivel chairs, or padded chairs that emit “whoosh” sounds when sat upon.

There is no need for actors to be off-stage at any point in the show, so no doors or exits are required. (However, if you use a radio-studio type of set, you may want to have the actors enter as if they're coming in the studio door.) The seated actors will be the “mumble chorus” to provide walla-walla crowd noises. The distance from their upstage chairs to the downstage mics will help keep the mumble chorus' volume balanced in the audio mix.

“Radio” costuming for Radio-on-Stage presentations

Whether you choose to have a contemporary look for your actors or put everybody in 1940s radio-actor garb, I suggest you have actors use character-based *costume accessories* (hats, aprons, or shawls) when they are at the mic—to help the live audience understand if the actor is portraying a delivery boy, bank clerk, cab driver, cop, reporter, sheriff, housewife, etc.

This is especially true if your actors are doubling up several roles. For example: A 1940s fedora can signal “bank examiner,” while the same actor—without a hat—could be “Superintendent of Angels”; A pill-box hat can differentiate Violet from when that actress plays 5-year-old Zuzu—by standing at a too-tall mic, etc.

While such character costuming is not authentic to 1940s radio *studio* productions, the clarity it brings to radio-on-stage shows is invaluable. Without the shawl, the audience

might wonder if it's Ma Bailey practicing piano, but, if that actress wears a big bow in her hair or a Santa hat, she becomes 8-year-old Janie. Actors can stow these costume accessories beneath their upstage chairs. They can don the costume just before they step up to the mic to deliver their lines. See below for a list of recommended *WL!* costume accessories.

Items *NOT* recommended

Some radio-on-stage productions may want to put actors' scripts in 3-ring binders. However, this makes for noisy page turning, physically limits how many actors can share a mic, and is not authentic to Golden Age radio shows.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Stools or chairs at microphones may be necessary if your actors cannot stand up for however long their scenes are, but these also clutter the stage, inhibit vocal performance, and make radio blocking difficult. Conduct rehearsals standing up at mics. As a director of hundreds of radio shows, I even do the “table read” standing up at mics.

Actors should never be off-stage when they are off-mic. A radio-play has so many scenes and characters that continual off-stage/on-stage traffic would steal focus from actors at the mics. The best way to handle off-mic actors is to have them sit on the upstage chairs.

Sound effects

Use a 6-foot (2m) table for sound effects at Stage-Right—set as far downstage as the actors' microphones. Sometimes the SFX artist must make eye contact with an actor (to coordinate, say, dialing a phone or knocking on a door.) This would be impossible if the SFX table is upstage of the actors at their mics.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

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“Playback Organist” or Live keyboardist

Throughout the show, there are music cues to bridge between scenes or play beneath dialogue. These can either be the pre-recorded music tracks I offer, or you may use a live keyboardist playing from sheet music in the *WL!* score.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

The Playback Organist would wear headphones—receiving a mix of the voices, music, and SFX—to follow along in the script, triggering the pre-recorded music—and adjust the volume levels as needed.

The organ shell should be located upstage left—on the side of the stage from the SFX tables. For photos of a typical SFX rig and the Organ Shell, see the RuyaSonic page,

[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE]

Nearby, but also on-stage, have the Engineer mix the vocal mics. This would save you from having to run audio cables to the theater’s tech booth—and headphone feeds back to the stage.

Lighting for Radio-on-Stage presentations

Firstly, performers need sufficient light to read their scripts throughout the performance—that includes the mumble chorus seated upstage. This often requires light from above/just behind the mics. One way to provide enough light is to bounce it off the backdrop or curtains, so the reflected light illuminates script pages held at the microphone. Actors can also “cheat” by tilting their scripts down to catch theatrical light instruments positioned above the audience.

An illuminated “On-Air” sign would be an authentic touch—just time its lighting up to coordinate with the Radio-Director (or SFX artist) throwing the On-Air cue. However, *AVOID* an illuminated or foam-core “Applause” sign—they were for early TV, not radio. When the show needs the audience to applaud—say at intermission or at the end of the live commercials—the script indicates that the on-stage Radio-Director (or SFX Artist) can cue them with a silent clapping motion. The crowd responds to when and *how long* to applaud. Manually cueing the applause provides more control than any illuminated sign could. The supplied Warm-Up Routine script includes a humorous training section on “How to Applaud like a *Professional* Studio Audience.”

WARNING: Audio equipment should *NOT* share power outlets with dimmer packs for the theatrical lighting system, otherwise electrical hum may come through the audio system.

Lighting for theatrical effects

For Act 1 and 2, light the stage *without* heavy dramatics. You may wish to dim the lights a bit when scene headings indicate EXTERIOR and NIGHT. For example, George and Mary's rock throwing scene, George's conversations with Ernie and Violet, or George "picketing" Mary's house.

However, in Act 3, you could try some nightmarish lighting for the dystopian "Pottersville" sequences. Just make sure actors and on-stage crew still have enough light to read their scripts—including the keyboardist's score. You may want a shimmery effect for Clarence's magic—George being un-born and re-born, and Clarence's escape from the cop.

Costumes For Radio Actors

You may choose a contemporary look for your actors or put everybody in 1940s garb. Even though *Wonderful Life!* is set in a small-town, spanning the years 1919-1945, our radio-on-stage look consists of *radio actors* performing the *WL!* show in front of a live audience. The cast should be costumed as *radio actors*.

If you choose a 1940s look, a neutral *radio actor* outfit will be the most flexible. Avoid Zoot Suits or *Guys & Dolls* gangster garb. When an radio-on-stage actor doubles roles, a full costume that is too distinctive—say, a sexy 1940s gal look—may work *against* her when she's portraying 8-year-old Janie Bailey. You may *want* that kind of disparity, but it could undermine Janie's innocence. With neutral radio actor clothing, a few costume *accessories* can allow a change of looks when actors are doubling.

- MEN: Long sleeved shirts, belts or suspenders, long ties or bow ties, vests, pullover or unbuttoned sweaters, jackets. No hats—except as detailed below, for multi-role character differentiation. Long ties for The Announcer, George. Mr. Potter.

WOMEN:

SFX ARTISTS:

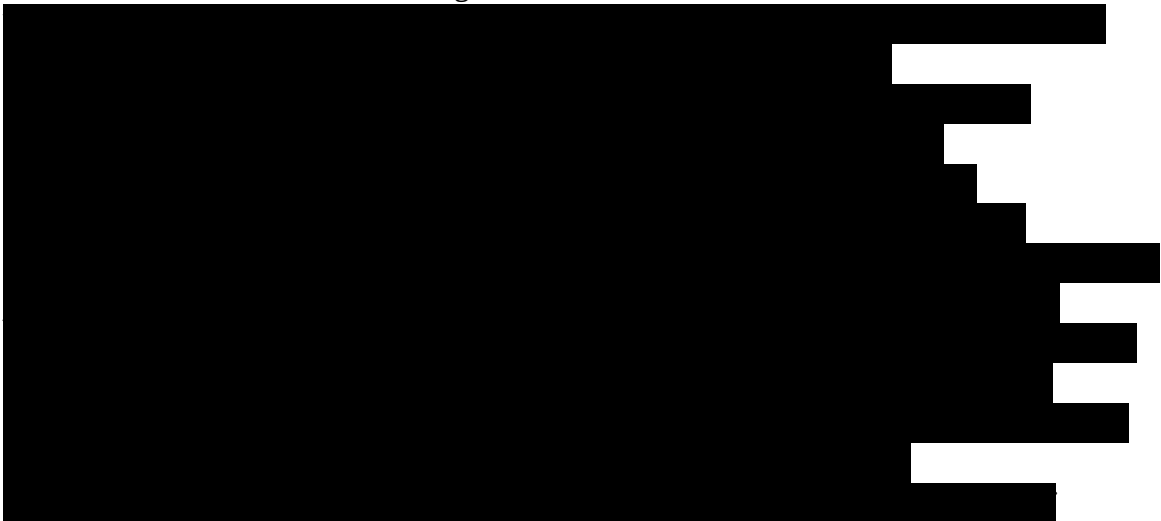


- PLAYBACK ORGANIST, ENGINEER, KEYBOARDIST: [Redacted]

Costume accessories to differentiate multiple-role players

In radio dramas, actors often double-up on roles. Radio-on-Stage productions can benefit from using costume accessories to help the live audience keep straight if an actor is playing, say, Ma Bailey in one scene and 5-year-old Zuzu in another. While an in-studio radio drama wouldn't need visual aids, actors are used to working in costume and the use of accessories may help them—and their vocal interpretations—in playing multiple roles. Below are suggestions for costume accessories—but they may vary depending on how your cast divvies up roles. Store the accessories under the actors' chairs Upstage. Put them on just before the character is called for in the script.

YOUNG GEORGE BAILEY	Boy, age 10 (m/f)	Beanie or stocking cap
UNCLE BILLY	Absent-minded clerk (m)	Fedora (1920s)
MR. POTTER	Warped, old financier (m)	Men's shawl
MA BAILEY	George's mother (f)	Mother's shawl #1



Radio-on-Stage Advice to Cast & Crew

Microphone technique

Microphones will be set up at various heights to accommodate a variety of actors. You will generally be assigned a "home" mic and use it whenever you have lines and that mic is free.

For drama, mics are used differently than they are for singing or public speeches. In radio-drama, we do NOT “eat” the mic the way singers do. Keep your mouth 4-6 inches from the mic. Set up the stands so the mic height comes to just below an actor’s chin—so as to not obscure their eyes. This distance will also prevent them from popping their “P’s. It will take a day or two of working with mics before an actor feels comfortable doing drama that is being amplified to a crowd. They need to learn to employ regular, conversational volume—not stage voices.

Use “mic blocking” to assign actors particular mics to speak at. This may be because a special effect is called for, such as reverb or a phone-filter. Or there may be mic assignments for specific scenes and even specific lines within a scene. At times, characters will be on separate mics and at others they can be grouped together on one mic, to aid the drama.

Note on your script which mic to be at for a particular scene or cue. For *Wonderful Life!*, I suggest the regular voice mics be numbered 1-2-3-4(R) from Stage-Left to Stage-Right. Use a separate mic for reverb (for the Angels—when they are Heaven.

When their characters appear in a scene, those actors should remain at the mic until their characters exit—even if they have no more lines in the scene. Early-exiting by actors confuses the live audience as to where their *characters* are. At all times, you must consider the live audience’s perceptions of what’s going on in a scene—and not just the “broadcast” audience.

When a line of dialogue indicates [ENTERING], the actor should begin speaking their lines a bit back from the mic as they step up to it. For [EXITING] they should back away from the mic and finish speaking at about 2 feet away. The sound effects artist will watch their approach and time his footsteps to mimic these entrances and exits. The dialogue instruction [FADING] means the actor should step back a bit from the mic as they deliver the line and reduce volume—as if this were a film and we were dissolving to a new scene. When the script indicates [DISTANT], the actor should stand about 2 feet from the mic and deliver their lines. This will sound as if the actor is across the room or a dozen feet away. When the script indicates (SCREAMS) the actor should direct their voice up into the house—so as to not distort the mic nor deafen the SFX artist and Engineer who are listening on headphones.

Understanding radio-play script conventions

Radio actors in the 1940s would have their scripts either stapled in the upper left-hand side, or loose—either lying flat or slightly center-creased, length-wise. A single 1-1/2” book ring works better than staples. Never use 3-ring binders for actors radio-scripts

because binders make for noisy page turning that will be picked up by the mics. Binders also make it hard to have several actors share one mic—since the scripts are now double-wide. No matter how your scripts are held, all page turning should be done with care, to be as quiet as possible: Hold the script away from the mic and gently turn the page and let it fall. This also goes for actors seated Upstage. If 10 or 20 actors noisily turn their script pages, it sounds like a flock of birds and could get picked up by the mics.

Scene headings and mic-blocking

Each scene starts with a shaded heading indicating the location and time as well as which characters appear during that scene. Actors can unobtrusively make their way to the mics during someone else's speech towards the end of the previous scene, or during the music cue that bridges the last scene to the one they are in.

Example from pages 103-106:

SCENE 3 - INT. NICK'S BAR - NIGHT - MINUTES LATER (DECEMBER 1945)
**(NICK <4>, GEORGE <3>, CLARENCE <2>,
 GOWER <LATE-2> THEN <3R>, WALLA-BAR CROWD REMAIN SEATED)**

Just prior to this scene starting, the actors portraying Nick, George, and Clarence should make their way to their designated mics and be ready to speak. The “mumble chorus” should be ready for “Bar Patron” crowd noises.

A bit before Gower's dialogue, he should rise from his upstage chair and advance toward the designated mic. A production note there gives mic-blocking instructions.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
Gower begins to stagger up, back a few feet from <2>.

Gower staggers as he enters and notes his first line indicate [DISTANT]—being off-mic. A production note indicates necessary crosses for dramatic effect.

RADIO-ON-STAGE MIC BLOCKING:
Gower staggers over to <3L>, sharing the mic with George <3R>.

NOTE: Actors who have been speaking in a scene, but have no more lines for the rest of that scene must remain at the mics—unless the script specifies their characters have exited. When live theater audiences see actors leave the mics, they assume the *characters* have also left the scene—which can be confusing if important plot information is being discussed. Actors should **ONLY** return to their Upstage seats at the end of the scene, or when their *characters* have exited the scene. In studio-only performances, actors staying at the mics also provide those still speaking lines with someone to relate as they act. It is both polite and professional.

Numbered Cues and timing-asterisks

The elements of radio-dramas are **Dialogue**, **Music**, and **Sound Effects**—all of which are called “cues” because they come at a certain time in the script—and the performer may have to be cued by a director to begin. All cues are numbered in RuyaSonic radio-play scripts—as they were in 1940s network radio scripts. This numbering allows for faster rehearsals and giving notes. If someone needs to refer an actor or technician to a specific line in the script, just call out the page and cue #. For example: “Page 14, cue #4.” Or “Let’s pick up at Page 98, cue #2. OK... Action!”

Certain numbered cues in the script have an asterisk (*) beside them.

2* MUSIC: [MUS-35] (BED) "ACT 3 INTRO" TO "DIRE BRIDGE"--UNDER.

3* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] A troubled George Bailey stands on the Bedford Falls river-bridge--convinced that he's worth more dead than alive. (PAUSE) Deep in despair, George gazes at the freezing river below--poised to end it all! When...

4. TRACK SFX: [FX-20] SPLASH--CLARENCE JUMPS IN RIVER. SPLASHING.

5* CLARENCE: [DISTANT] Help! Help me! I'm drowning!
Drowning! Help! (GLUB) (AD LIB UNDER)

Performers must pay special attention when their cue numbers have an asterisk. If not, they risk stepping-on or bull-doing the previous cue. This is especially important when dialogue follows either a music or sound effects cue—which are always underlined in radio scripts. The asterisks indicate that precise timing is important right here.

In the example cited above, there are several cues with timing asterisks:

- **2* MUSIC:** Indicates the engineer or organist wait for a signal from the Radio-Director to begin playing the Act 3 Intro.
- **3* ANNOUNCER:** Indicates that the currently-playing music track has to establish itself a bit before the announcer begins speaking. Often the Radio-Director will point to cue the announcer to begin her lines.
- **5* CLARENCE:** Indicates the actor should wait until the track SFX of jumping in the river has established itself with the audience. Don’t “step” on the splash SFX or the audience may not hear it well—and wonder what has happened to

Clarence to make him cry out.

The RuyaSonic website has instructions on how to prepare radio scripts for production, recommending that the paper master script be marked up with a large letter Q wherever a timing asterisk is found. That will make them stand-out for cast and crew.

[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE]

Golden Age radio actors used pencils to circle their character cues (GEORGE MARY:, etc.) and then underlined their dialogue. If exact visual period authenticity isn't required, colored highlighter pens are fine for scripts, but try to use orange or pink, because yellow highlighting can often disappear in some light situations, whether on-stage, or in recording studios.

In the script excerpt above, note how the Narrator's dialogue employs parenthetical instructions (PAUSE) as well as ellipses ... to indicate the timing of the delivery of lines. Additionally, underlining is used to indicate that specific words be emphasized—either by slowing down delivery or changes to timbre or volume. Unlike stage-plays, radio scripts are meant to be read aloud right-off-the-page. Delivery markings allow radio troupes to use less rehearsal but gain in accuracy. In union productions of radio plays, the amount of rehearsal time is typically short, so such markings keep shows within budget while ensuring high-quality performances.

Walla-Walla vocalisms of the Mumble Chorus

WALLA-WALLA is the indistinct murmuring of crowds in radio-dramas. Please **DO NOT** say “walla-walla-walla,” “peas & carrots,” or “rhubarb”—just mumble or moan or mutter. In Hollywood radio-on-stage productions from the 1930s-1950s, the walla-walla performers were colorfully called the “Mumble Chorus.” Generally, 4 or 5 voices are all that's needed to produce this unique vocal sound-effect.

Throughout the *WZ* script, walla is indicated with a circle—to stand out from specific actors' lines.

3* **UNCLE BILLY:** All you gotta do, Charlie, is sign the withdrawal form and you'll get your funds in sixty days.

4. **WALLA-WALLA:** OUTBURST--“SIXTY DAYS?” “WHAT?”

While walla works as a sound effect, it is usually performed by cast members whose characters are **NOT** speaking the main dialogue in a scene. Typically, it is delivered off-mic—by the actors seated Upstage. Good walla needs energy, but at a lower volume than real crowds. Remember to keep the walla going in a scene—don't let it peter out.

The cacophony of walla really adds to a scene, particularly in the board meeting, the bank run, the lynch mob, and party finale.

In performance, the Radio-Director—or a sound effects artist—should “conduct” the walla as to vitality, length, and most importantly, keeping the volume down. Hand signals can convey all these directions. Think like an orchestra conductor.

Please note that live radio-drama walla-walla differs from film-style “loop group” backgrounds in that mumbling—NOT distinct sentences—is the rule, so as to not steal focus when there’s a pause in a scene’s foreground dialogue. However, the script may call for specific words or phrases in walla cues. These phrases can be ad-libbed. For a good deal more about radio walla-walla, see the RuyaSonic webpage,

[IN THE FULL SCRIPT, A LINK TO A WEBSITE WOULD GO HERE]

“Throwing” cues on-stage or in the studio

Radio dramas differ from stage-plays in that they generally have more scene transitions, music cues, and precise timing and volume balancing for sound effects. An over-the-air radio-drama—or a radio-on-stage show—is more like a movie unfolding in real-time than a typical stage-play. In traditional theater, once a scene starts, the actors are on their own regarding tempo.

With so many elements in need of coordination in radio-drama, it is essential that *somebody* coordinate the ensemble. Otherwise, the troupe may spend endless rehearsal trying to avoid “train wrecks” resulting from using hands-off stage-directing methods trying control a far more complicated production. Giving notes *after* a rehearsal or performance may work for fine-tuning the dramatic tone, but it won’t do for the traffic-cop coordination of radio-drama, in real-time.

In radio-plays—from the Golden Age to now—the radio-director provides the timing and coordination of voice, sound effects, and music. The radio-director “conducts” the ensemble much the way an orchestra conductor handles tempo, volume, and emphasis. Radio-directors provide real-time feedback as to the performance of cast & crew. Not only can the radio-director see the actors—to signal if someone is standing too far from the mic—the director wears headphones and can signal that the actor (or walla-walla) is too slow, too quiet, or too tame, or too slow, and instruct the performers *visually* to make adjustments.

The radio-director silently signals to cast & crew when to trigger the next music cue, or when to begin the sound effect ambience track, a door knock, or when an actor is to begin a line after the music cue has established itself. This is done visually with hand signals and requires that the radio-director be seen by the cast and crew. A list of radio direction signals follows this section of the script appendix.

Please note that the radio-director does NOT signal when EVERY cue is to be performed. It is only when the coordination of voices, music, and SFX requires the director's precise coordination. (See the previous section about radio-play script conventions.)

This kind of coordination is typically required whenever there is a transition from one scene to another.

For example, George is about to kiss Mary outside the old Granville House, when Uncle Billy pulls up in his car and tells George his father has had a stroke. George delivers his last line, the tragic organ music plays—underlining the emotion, the SFX artist fades out the cricket ambience, the tragic music segues into the Heavenly Theme to take us into the next scene. Now, the director waits until the Heavenly Theme has played just long enough for the audience to realize we are in Heaven, and then cues the Angel Superintendent to begin speaking.

Below is the script for this transition:

4. TRACK SFX: [FX-07] UNCLE BILLY'S CAR PULLS UP--IDLES--UNDER.

5* UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] --George! There you are!

6. GEORGE: Uncle Billy! You're just in time to see me kiss Mary Hatch!

7. UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] Not now, George! C'mon. Jump in the car. It's your father!

8. GEORGE: My father?!

9. UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] A stroke! He's had a stroke!

10. GEORGE: What? He's had a--

11. UNCLE BILLY: [DISTANT] --We gotta go, George. C'mon!

12. GEORGE: (EXITING) Here, Mary. (TOSSES ROBE) Sorry!

13* MUSIC: [MUS-09] (BRIDGE) "TRAGIC INTO HEAVENLY #4"--UNDER.

SCENE 7 - EXT. HEAVEN - SECONDS LATER - #4
(SUPERINTENDENT <1L>, CLARENCE <1R>)

14. LIVE SFX: TINGLING "STARRY" WIND CHIMES--UNDER

1* SUPERINTENDENT: [REVERB] [CUE] Well, George's father died that night, Clarence. And there was no European trip for George that summer...

Without the radio-director's live cueing—at least in rehearsals—the coordination of so many events will require lots of practice. In radio, we don't get weeks to rehearse shows. Sometimes we get the script and perform it that same day. For your radio-on-stage show, you can use this authentic radio-drama direction style—and make it part of the show. However, it isn't necessary that your actual play director do the radio directing on-stage.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Radio great, Orson Welles often stood on a raised platform in the studio, wearing headphones and flamboyantly “conducting” the ensemble while also performing dialogue. Some radio-on-stage directors sit in the audience—front row center—at a card table, and throw their cues from there. Others sit on a stool on the floor—at the lip of the stage—just off-center.

Radio-play Rehearsal & Re-take tips

Unlike in stage-play rehearsals, it's best to fix-things-as-you-go. Don't let cast & crew run through an entire scene--or the whole show--and *then* give “notes” on what to fix. Radio-plays have too many interconnecting cues of voices, music, and sound effects to rely on a dozens of director's notes at the end. Stop for mis-pronunciations of names, skipped lines, actors starting too soon (“stepping on”) a music or SFX cue. It's especially common with actors not waiting for door or telephone SFX to “clear.”

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Radio Skills School

Microphone Technique Tips

- Demonstrate the sensitive and dead areas. Don't touch!
- Proximity effect. (Boomy if too close.)
- Proper distance for radio acting (4-6 inches from mouth).
- Dynamics and distance. (Back off to yell.)
- Off-mic use for distant sounds. Asides.
- Popping "P"s and S-S-S-sibilance.
- Mic safety. (hitting, blowing, dropping)
- Assume every mic is always ON--and being listened to by your grandma!
- Quiet script page turning.

Radio Acting

- Quiet in the studio. (Hand up, finger to mouth in "shsss" gesture.)
- Don't cough, laugh, or talk during performance.
- Watch the director. Wait for your cue. (Q)
- Speed equals excitement. Don't bore audience by dawdling.
- Jump in if there's "dead air."
- Wait for director's "OK" signal at end of show.

Radio Direction "Sign Language"

- "Wait" - Open hand.
- "5-4-3---" - Finger countdown to going on-air.
- "The musical theme should start" - Form a "T" with hands.
- "Watch for cue" - Point to actor or SFX-er then your eye.
- "You're on" - Pointing finger.
- "Cut" - Finger slits throat.
- "Faster" - Draw a circle in the air sideways.
- "Stretch it out" - Pulling taffy.
- "Come in/"Back off" microphone - Move hand towards/away from face.
- "Louder" - Elevate the hand, palm up.
- "Quieter" - Lower the hand, palm down.
- "Keep walla going up" - Hand motions in a big circle--sideways.

Radio-On-Stage Audio Setup

Unlike traditional stage-plays, **radio-style shows require that all voices be mic'd, as well as the live sound effects.** Additionally, there will be the triggering of pre-recorded sound effects, and either a live keyboardist or pre-recorded music tracks. A radio-play like *Wonderful Life!* will be busier—audio-wise—than any stage-play. Coordination and timing of actors and sounds/music will be more complex than in stage-plays. The number of live SFX, pre-recorded SFX, and music cues may seem daunting, but there are ways to split up control of those sounds.

Some troupes may think they can get by without real mics for the actors, but balancing the volume levels of the various elements will be impossible unless voices and live SFX are mic'd. Prop-mics and stage-voices will not work for a radio-style show.

However,



P.A. system

You'll need a P.A. system sufficient to fill the venue—with mostly talk. While P.A.s are used for rather loud music groups, the volume levels required doing radio-drama won't approach those used for rock bands or musicals. You won't need massive amplification. If your theater uses a P.A. system to play background music and pre-recorded sound design for conventional stage-plays, then the power of your amp will be sufficient for radio-on-stage productions.


Audio Inputs

The sound sources will consist of 4 conventional voice mics, 1 or 2 “filter” telephone voice mics,



Electronic effects





Speaker placement for radio-on-stage theater-productions

For a radio-on-stage show, the goal is to reinforce the sound of the performers as coming from the performers on-stage—actors, sound effects crew, “sound-trucker” and organist/music triggerer. The *WL* show does *NOT* place anything within a stereo soundscape.


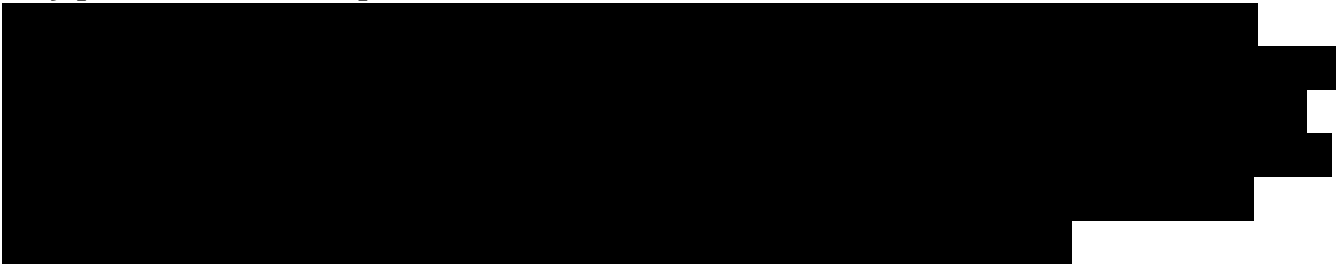
Your theater’s usual speaker placements may be fine for stage-plays featuring scene-setting music or an occasional sound effect, but in a radio-on-stage production, problems can arise.

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The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Monitoring

For monitoring purposes, there should be *no* speakers facing the performers—as this may produce monitor spill. Instead, the sound effects artist(s), the “sound-trucker” (who

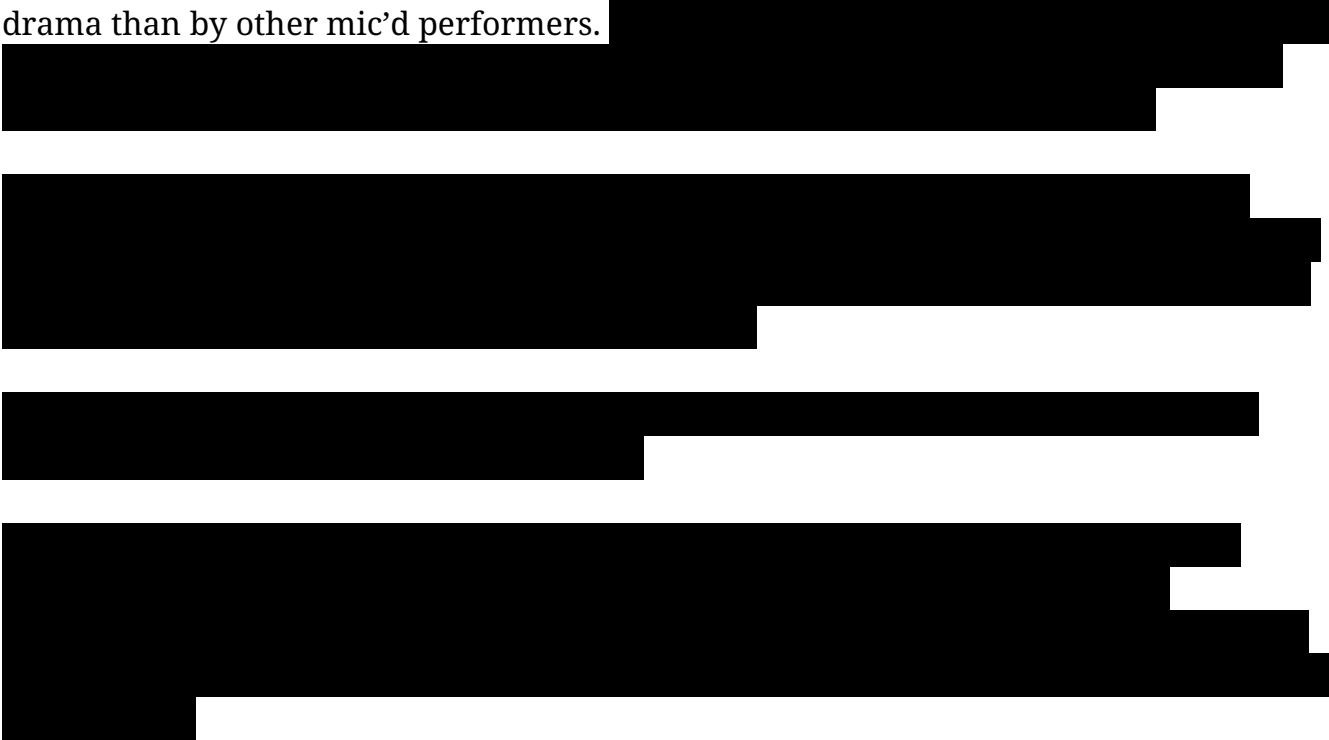


Mics for actors

If you have a cast of 12, you do *NOT* need a separate mic for each actor. **Radio-dramas rarely have more than 4 characters on-mic in a single scene.** For *Wonderful Life!*, 4 regular vocal mics should suffice—plus 1 or 2 “filter” mics to simulate telephone voices.

Only the bank run and final party scenes have more than 5 characters. For them, a tag-team method would allow each character to deliver their lines into just a few dialogue mics.

Mics running through a theater's P.A. system are treated differently by actors doing drama than by other mic'd performers.



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It will take time for the cast to get used to *acting* into a microphone that's being amplified in a theater. Rock singers, lecturers, or DJs often "eat" the mic (put their lips right on the mic.) Drama requires a natural tone of voice, so the actors should never be closer than 4 inches (100mm) from the mic element. If they speak too close to the mic, the super-bassy "proximity effect" kicks in and you get the unnatural sound of a TV-commercial announcer. Such close-micing also ups the risk of actors "popping their Ps" while delivering lines.

Mic height

You can avoid both the proximity effect and popping P's by setting the mic at what might appear to be a bit below the conventional mic height for a singer. Instead of setting up the mic stand to position the mic at lip height, adjust the stand so the mic is just below chin level, aimed up towards the mouth at a 45-degree angle. This radio drama mic-method works for venues from 40-seat black box theaters to 2700-seat performing arts centers. It eliminates popped Ps and provides a natural, conversational tone well-suited to drama. It also keeps the mics from obscuring the performer's faces.

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Conduct Mic School

Although you set the mic heights in this way, please note that actors must learn how to “work” a mic. At the end of this appendix is an 8-page mini-script that your cast and crew can use to learn how to “work” a mic. You could set up a mixer backstage with headphones and the mini-script and let them individually read it aloud.

However, even if your actors have done voiceovers or assemblies, few are experienced when it comes to performing *drama* through a mic into an amplification system for a live audience. Assemble the actors—together with the director—for mic school. With the P.A. on, do a mic technique demonstration so they can learn how to act into a mic.

1. Explain the concept of below-the-chin mic'ing. Tell each actor to select a “home” mic based on their height and try to play there as much as possible during the play.
2. Describe and show your mics' “pickup patterns”—what areas are sensitive: the front—but like a funnel up, down & sideways; the less-sensitive sides; and deadest zone *behind* the mic.

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Mics for live sound effects

The SFX area should be stage-right. The SFX artists should be downstage, in order to provide the audience with a clear view of their magic. You'll need 2 or 3 dynamic unidirectional mics for sound effects, depending upon how many SFX devices there are and how large. SFX artists work in front of a 6-foot (2m) table sporting a variety of noise-making devices—creakers, scratchers, crashers, etc. They may also use their feet to walk upon wooden or stone surfaces. They may have a full-size door beside the SFX table or miniature door mounted to either the main SFX table or on a second table behind them.

For the main SFX table, I recommend using a conventional mic stand outfitted with a boom arm. The artists may sometimes hold a device—like a ratchet-wrench or envelope of money—near the mic. Some SFX devices such as a toaster, cannot be picked up because it requires two hands to operate. You may want two mics on stationary booms over the main table, especially if you use the hands-in-shoes method of doing footsteps.

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The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

Gear List For Radio-Play Productions

For actors

[REDACTED]

For live sound effects

[REDACTED]

For pre-recorded music or SFX tracks

[REDACTED]

Overall

[REDACTED]

NOTE: Try to mix the show so the sound appears to be coming from the performers on-stage, not far left and far right—or way up in the ceiling. Everything should be mono.

Radio-On-Stage Mic & Stand resources

Microphones

One easy-to-find vintage-looking mic that is authentic for a 1940s radio-drama look is the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

For SFX, get a few conventional mics—something like a Shure SM-58. To find some good clones. Search Google [REDACTED]

Mic stands & booms

To complete the 1940s look, I'd suggest shiny chrome mic stands. You may have to use modern black stands or paint them with chrome-looking paint.

Search Google: [REDACTED]

You'd also want one or two boom arms—for the SFX table mic. Try to get one without plastic hardware, as they will be more reliable

Google: [REDACTED]

For feet-in-shoes footstep SFX, look for a short mic stand with a mini-boom arm:

Google: [REDACTED]

Mics and stands and booms can also be rented from P.A. supply companies at weekly rates. Just make sure they work—as those stands and booms are often abused by careless renters.

Headphones for sound effects team, director, audio techs

In the Golden Age of radio-drama, sound effects artists and organists wore headphones to clearly hear the dialogue and their own work, as did Radio Directors, all to be more precise regarding timing and volume levels.

Deliver to headphones the exact mix going out to the P.A. system or over the air—voices, sound effects, and music. There is no need to generate separate “more me” mixes for the SFX crew or anyone. The point is to provide clarity of what the show sounds like to the audience.

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Google the following inexpensive, wired headphones (as of 2023)



Radio-directors also wore headphones and if your troupe chooses to have an on-stage Radio-Director character cueing the performers, get a set for the director. I'd also recommend the use of headphones for audio technicians in the control booth. Don't try to rely on the typical stage-play use of a far-away booth technician listening to the voices through a window to the stage. Since you have everybody on mic, make use of headphones to provide a crystal clear sound for the technicians.

I'd suggest that for any on-stage headphones, you also buy some straight (not coiled) extension cables. Get 25-foot cables.

Google:



Multi-headphone amp

You may need a headphone amp on-stage to power multiple headphones—and provide individual volume controls.

You can find some nice 4-output headphone amps at like the [REDACTED]

Please note it will be necessary to deliver a mix of voices, SFX, and music from your main mixer—wherever it is located—back to the stage to feed the headphone amp. Some theaters use a “snake” XLR stage box to send the many inputs from the stage to the control booth. It is possible to send a “return” from the control room back to the stage via these boxes. Then run that feed into the multi-headphone amp and into the headphones.

Telephone Voice Effects

There are several scenes with through-the-phone voices (Sam Wainwright's call to Mary, Mr. Potter's call to George, and Mary's call to George). For these lines, you'll need to simulate the tinny tone of a telephone handset's through-the-earpiece sound. There are several ways to achieve this phone voice effect.

The Coffee Mug Method

One easy version can be produced by taking a coffee mug, paper cup, or tall drink glass and holding it up to the side of your mouth while you speak into a regular microphone. You have to play with the positioning a bit to get the right balance of full voice and phone-voice. Garrison Keillor's actors on the radio variety show, *Prairie Home Companion*, used this technique. The sound quality only suggests the phone and our imaginations let it BE a phone caller. It's a testament to radio drama's power of suggestion.

The EQ-it-to-Heck Method

A not too bad electronic method uses a standard microphone run through a mixer board that cuts out all frequencies under 300 Hz and over 3000 Hz—but not all mixers can cut so specifically, nor as deep (12-15dB) as is needed. Like the cup method, this equalization tweaking method only *suggests* a voice over the phone.

There are also computer “plug-in” effects out there that use this EQ technique, but they lack the slight distortion and thus, the intimacy of a real telephone—but those plug-ins may not work in real-time for an on-stage show. I've seen some engineers use a beat up old microphone and run it through an electric guitar distortion pedal and then EQ it severely, but that's expensive and not entirely convincing. The effect pedal trick also tends to feed back easily in live situations.

List of All Pre-Recorded Cues - *Wonderful Life!*

NOTE: This is a list of all pre-recorded cues—both music and SFX. If you load the cues to your playback device, this list has all tracks in page-and-cue order. You can re-number the cues listed within the script to match the track numbers used by your playback device.

Use a pencil—not a pen—to write in the mixer volume settings for each cue. Note: that these settings may change over the course of rehearsals and performances. You may need to adjust your mixer settings before triggering each cue.

Track	Volume	Description
		(BED) "Wonderful Overture" (Radio Theater Theme)
		(BED) "Wonderful Life Intro"
		(BED) "Heavenly No. 1"
		(FX) Splashes into ice pond
		(BRIDGE) "Gower's Sad Drugstore"
		(FX) Gower's phone rings (3X) – can be done live, also
		(BED) "Tender Moment"
		(BRIDGE) "Rip to "Heavenly No. 2"
		(BED) "Heavenly No. 3"
		(FX) Dance band, / Retracting floor / Splashing
		(BRIDGE) Last 2 Bars of "Buffalo Gals" setup
		(FX) Crickets #1
		(FX) Distant window shattered by rock #1
		(FX) Distant window shattered by rock #2
		(FX) Car pulls up, idles—under
		(BRIDGE) "Tragic into "Heavenly No. 4"
		(BRIDGE) "Oh Well" into Heavenly No. 5"
		(FX) Downtown Bedford Falls (Traffic)
		(BRIDGE) "Downtown Bedford Falls"
		(FX) Ernie's cab pulls away from curb
		(BRIDGE) "From Violet to Mary"
		(FX) Crickets #2
		(FX) "Buffalo Gals" 78 RPM record
		(FX) Mary's phone rings (20X) – can be done live, also
		(BED) "Wrenching"
		(BED) "Heavenly No. 6"
		(BRIDGE) "Wedding March Taxi"
		(FX) Interior of cab driving, wipers, rain on roof
		(FX) Cab pulls over, rain on street, thunder at end

	(BED) "Act 1 Outro"
	(BED) "Wonderful Life Act 2 Intro"
	(BED) "Heavenly No. 7"
	(FX) Billy's phone rings (1-½X) – can be live, also
	(BED) "Time Passing"
	(FX) Office phone rings (1-¼X) – can be done live, also
	(BRIDGE) "Bride to Heavenly No. 8"
	(FX) Potter's clock ticking in background #1
	(BRIDGE) "Indignant" to "Sleepy"
	(BRIDGE) "Rock-a-bye to Heavenly No. 10"
	(BED) "War Montage"
	(BRIDGE) "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" - ends sourly
	(BRIDGE) "Lost to Heavenly No. 11"
	(BRIDGE) "Desperate" -- Let it Finish
	(SOURCE) Janie Piano - #1 - "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"
	(SOURCE) Janie Piano - #2 - "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"
	(FX) Bailey phone rings (2X) – can be live, also
	(SOURCE) Janie Piano - #3 - "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"
	(BRIDGE) "Troubled"
	(FX) Potter's clock ticking in background #2
	(BRIDGE) "Cruel to Heavenly No. 12"
	(SOURCE) "Santa Lucia" on accordion--gets abruptly stopped
	(BRIDGE) "Alone" to "Heavenly"
	(BRIDGE) ACT 2 Outro --ends in suspense chord
	(BED) "Act 3 Intro/"Dire Bridge"
	(FX) Clarence jumps in river, splashes around
	(FX) George jumps in river, splashes around
	(FX) Magical harp glissando--UP
	(SOURCE) "Juke Joint Jingle Bells"--under entire scene
	(FX) Wind #1
	(SOURCE) "Pottersville Streetscene"--under entire scene
	(FX) Downtown Pottersville (Traffic)
	(BRIDGE) "I Know That Girl"
	(FX) Interior of cab driving #2
	(BRIDGE) "Empty Granville House"
	(GLISSANDO UP) "Magical Help"
	(BRIDGE) "Escape" to "Mean Mother"
	(BED) "Shattered" to "The Cemetery"
	(FX) Wind #2 (Cemetery)
	(BRIDGE) "Lightly" to "Old Maid"
	(BED) "Lynch Mob" to "Redemption"

	(FX) Wind #3 (Bridge)
	(FX) Magical harp glissando-DOWN
	(BED) "Organ Hark The Herald Angels Sing"
	(BED) "Piano Auld Lang Syne" – Janie playing
	(BED) "Organ Auld Lang Syne" – Chorus only
	(BED) "Organ Auld Lang Syne" – Verse & 2 choruses (OPTIONAL)
	(BED) "Wonderful Credits" – Long version of intro (OPTIONAL)

All tracks have 8 seconds of silence tacked onto the end, to allow you time to pause the playback device before the next track would begin to play.

EXTRAS - Warm up, Ad-spots, How to “Work” a Mic

Here three break-out mini-scripts: Training your troupe on microphone use; Doing an audience warm-up routine/Silence cell phones/Welcome back after Intermission; and 1940s-style ad-spots. Pick which mini-scripts you like, print and insert them into your master *WL* script as indicated below. Use that augmented master script to make copies for your cast and crew. Note that each mini-script has page numbers starting at 1.

The **How to “Work” a Mic. Script** is for training--*NOT* part of the actual show.

Suggested order of *Wonderful Life* radio-script sections

Warm-up routine - Insert just before page 10 of *WL* script

- Informal warm-up and studio-audience lesson, including a comic request to silence “noisemakers”--without actually mentioning cell/mobile phones.

Ad-spots 1 & 2 - Insert just after Warm-up routine (so, just before page 11)

- Ad-spot #1 - Studebaker
- Ad-spot #2 - The Corps of Engineers

Wonderful Life - Act 1 script pages 10-56

Ad-spots 3 & 4 - Insert just before page 57

- Welcome back from Intermission/Reminder to silence “noisemakers”
- Ad-spot #3 - Ro-DON'T pest control pellets
- Ad-spot #4 - Formula B-4 mineral tonic

Wonderful Life - Act 2 script pages 57-97

Ad-spots 5 & 6 - Insert just before page 98

- Ad-spot #5 - Frimly's Soup
- Ad-spot #6 - Listener Telegram

Wonderful Life - Act 3 script pages 98-128

Ad-spots - *Wonderful Life!*

To establish the play's 1946 time-frame, you can use these period-authentic commercial ad-spots sprinkled throughout your show. They run *before* the start of each act. These short spots provide the live theater audience with a chance to settle down. They demonstrate how radio-on-stage conventions work *before* the main play's drama begins. As a result, the sound effects and the mumble chorus will steal less focus during the main play. The appendix's Sound Effects Cookbook has a special section at the end about the SFX devices called for in the ads.

Below are six short, often-comic ad-spots that place us just after World War II, hint at the desires of the *Wonderful Life!* characters, and provide some radio-on-stage hijinks for your show. Additionally, the ad-spot pitchmen roles provide an opportunity to feature cast-members who have smaller parts in the main play.

While you *could* find actual old-time-radio commercial ad-copy to perform, be aware that some 1940s ads could sap the energy from a radio-on-stage show. An authentic 3-minute ad for Roma Wines can kill momentum. It might take several minutes to regain the energy after a long *authentic* 1940s ad-spot. If you write your *own* ads—perhaps for local merchants—try to keep them short and comic. You may wish to model your ads on the ones below.

The ad-spot script page numbering starts a 1 to keep them separate from the *Wonderful Life* script. Insert the pages—or your own spots—into the full *WL* script as noted here:

- Spots 1 and 2 go before *WL* script page 11.
- The Return-from-Intermission and Spots 3 and 4 go before *WL* script page 57.
- Spots 5 and 6 go before *WL* script page 98.

Ad-spot #1: The New 1947 Studebaker Automobiles

This establishes the time-period of late 1946 and the booming post-war economy.

Live SFX: Knuckle knocks on sheet metal.

Ad-spot #2: The Corps of Engineers

This echoes George Bailey's dream of building things in exotic places. It also provides a glimpse of the walla-walla "mumble chorus" at work.

LIVE SFX: Hammers, saws (plastic threaded plumbing pipe on cardboard box)

Return from Intermission / Set-up for Ads 3 & 4

After intermission, remind the audience to silence their cell phones. This spot does the job without referencing modern technology. It also introduces the next two ad-spots.

Ad-spot #3: Ro-DON'T pest control pellets

A comic spot with ensemble SFX and ambiguous “widely approved” ingredients.

LIVE SFX: several toy groan hammers Search the web for “Jibber Jabber toy”. The cast, seated in their Upstage chairs, can make this sound—by shaking the groan hammers -OR- by flapping their lips and vocalizing as “mice.” Make it silly.

Ad-spot #4: Formula B-4 mineral tonic

A comic spot with a slide-whistle droop, an echo effect, and a second reference to the still-unidentified but “widely approved” ingredients. In both spots, deliver those “ingredient” lines the same way—straight. See if the audience notes the absurdity.

LIVE SFX: Clock ticking (Tap a spoon on two different surfaces), Slide-Whistle toy. Triangle rung with a spoon.

Have the ECHO VOICE character speak into the reverbed Angels Mic #1. And repeat the “4-4-4-4-4” vocally. So, it’s “Formula B-4-4-4-4-4”

Ad-spot #5: Frimly’s Soup

A sly wink at stereotypical 1940s housewife “worries.” Your Ma Bailey actor may be good as the pitchman for this soup, or Mary. But not Violet, who has a tragic fate coming up minutes later in Act 3. Audition several actors to find who can wring the most from this ad-copy. For the line about “a steaming bowl of...” deliver it as if about to say “a steaming pile of horsesh*t.” Don’t play this “sexy” or arch-ironic. That doesn’t work.

Ad-spot #6: Listener Telegram

Rather than tout a product, this spot winks at the acting troupe, hoping they “don’t blow it in Act Three.” After the Frimly’s Soup spot, this eases the audience back into George’s dark hour.

PROP: Paper telegram page.

NOTE: The break-out pages that follow are numbered as page WARM-UP-1 through 3 and page SPOTS-1 through 7. Please preserve the running order of these spots. They fit together as units, and are specifically placed within the *WL* show’s story-line.

[INSERT THESE PAGES BEFORE WL SCRIPT-PAGE #10]**WARM-UP/CELL PHONE SILENCING ROUTINE - "WONDERFUL LIFE"
(ANNOUNCER, SFX ARTIST, STUDIO AUDIENCE)**

1. ANNOUNCER: (INFORMALLY) Hello there! Welcome to the _____ Radio Theater's presentation of It's a Wonderful Life! We're running just a little late today... (SIGHS) Yes, aren't we all-- this time of year... Where does the time go? Before you know it, it will be nineteen-forty-seven!

2. ANNOUNCER: Now, this is live radio... How many of you have been part of a studio audience... for a live radio broadcast? (WATCH FOR RAISED HANDS)

- 3* ANNOUNCER: Of course, please laugh and enjoy yourself, but at certain times we'll need your applause, so you'll be given a cue from our sound effects artist here, _____.
(SFX ARTIST WAVES)
When _____ gives you the signal, please applaud with gusto. Okay. Let's try it... Here's the signal...

4. SFX ARTIST: (CUES APPLAUSE. AUDIENCE APPLAUDS)

- 5* ANNOUNCER: (CONDESCENDINGLY) Well, that's very "nice..." But "polite applause" doesn't sound good on the radio. C'mon! There's no need to be reserved here.

1. ANNOUNCER: (PAUSE) Er... We have a little "trick" in radio. If you clap twice as fast, it conveys a feeling of exuberance and delight that goes out right over the airwaves. (TO SFX-PERT) Now, _____, would you conduct the twice-as-fast clap with our studio audience?

2. SFX ARTIST: (DEMONSTRATES DOUBLE-TIME CLAP.
AUDIENCE APPLAUDS AS SFX ARTIST CONDUCTS THEM
UP AND DOWN (2X) THEN FAST UP&DOWN, UP&DOWN.

3* ANNOUNCER: Yes! Very good! Thank... "heavens!" You may make an excellent studio audience after all!

4. ANNOUNCER: Okay. We'll be going on the air--nation-wide--in just a moment, so please remove anything on your person that might make noise. Such as...

- ...Buzzers... [SFX: BUZZER]
- ...Doorbells... [SFX: DOORBELL]
- ...Field telephones... [SFX: PHONE RINGS]
- ...Squeaky wheelchairs... [SFX: SQUEAK]
- ...Noisy candy wrappers... [SFX: CRINKLE]
- ...Or firecrackers... [SFX: EXPLOSION]
- ...even a fog horn... [SFX: FOGHORN]

5* ANNOUNCER: (TO SFX-PERT) Are we leaving anything out? [SFX: WHOOPEE CUSHION]
A whoopee cushion! Oops! That's from our last production.

1. ANNOUNCER: Thank you! We're ready to go "live" in just a few moments. Settle down now. We'll be getting the signal to start. So please sit back and get comfortable.
- 2* ANNOUNCER: Ahem! Okay. Now... enjoy being part of our live radio broadcast.
3. LIVE SFX: LONG BUZZER SIGNAL--READY TO GO "LIVE."

--END OF WARM-UP ROUTINE--

PRODUCTION NOTE:

SFX artist (or Radio-Director) will quiet the cast and crew, look to the engineer, then give a "heads up" and "stand by" hand cue to the audience, cast and crew. Then begin a silent hand countdown of 5-4-3-2... Cue any "On The Air" sign. Cue the Organist and "hold" the Announcer a moment...

[ENTIRE CAST AND CREW NOW GO TO WL SCRIPT, PAGE 10, CUE 1]

AD-SPOT #1 "THE 1947 STUDEBAKER" [GOES BETWEEN ON-AIR START & ACT 1 START. BEFORE PAGE #11]

1947 STUDEBAKER [PRONOUNCED "STEWDAH-BAYKER"]
(PITCHMAN #1, PITCHMAN #2)

- 1* PITCHMAN #1: [CUE] Are you ready for your dream car? The new, 1947 Studebaker--America's first genuine post-war cars--are now being built and delivered to the public. Listen to Quality!
2. LIVE SFX: KNUCKLE KNOCK ON METAL (2X) AS INDICATED BELOW
3. PITCHMAN #2: Steel above you! [SFX: KNOCK 2X] Steel beneath you! [SFX: KNOCK 2X] Steel surrounding you! [SFX: KNOCK 2X] Only Studebaker gives you ambi-steel construction--with safety glass where necessary. Amazing???

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

8. SFX/RADIO-DIRECTOR: [CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM]
--END OF SPOT--

PROCEED TO NEXT AD-SPOT #2: "THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS"

AD-SPOT #2 "CORPS OF ENGINEERS"
(PITCHMAN #3, WALLA-MEN)

1* LIVE SFX: [CUE] HAMMERING, SAWING--STOPS WHEN ASKED

2* WALLA-MEN: (WORK CHATTER) "OVER HERE." "THAT'S IT!"

3* PITCHMAN #3: [CUE] Hey, all you construction workers, electricians and architects! How'd you like to take your valuable skills and relocate?

5* WALLA-MEN: (AD-LIB) "RELOCATE?" "MOVE?" "WHERE?"

6. FOREMAN: Yeah... relocate where?

7. PITCHMAN #3: Relocate to help rebuild... Hawaii!

8* LIVE SFX: WAVE DRUM, SEAGULL--UNDER

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

--END OF SPOT--

[RETURN TO MAIN SCRIPT - ACT 1 START - PAGE 11, CUE #1]

AD-SPOTS - BEFORE ACT 2 BEGINS ON PAGE 57

WELCOME-BACK FROM INTERMISSION - "SILENCE NOISEMAKERS"
(ANNOUNCER -OR- RADIO-DIRECTOR)

1. ANNOUNCER/RADIO DIR: (INFORMALLY--TO AUDIENCE)

OK. Welcome back, everybody in our studio audience. Please silence all noise makers, candy wrappers and such before we go back--live--to the network. [LET THEM SILENCE] Alright, please settle--we'll be going to "Air" in just a moment.

[CHECK SFX ARTISTS/WALLA-MICE AND "BETTY"] OK?

1B. LIVE SFX: BUZZER--(COUNT OF 5)

PRODUCTION NOTE:

SFX ARIST or DIRECTOR gives "stand by" hand cue to the audience, cast. Begins silent hand countdown of 5-4-3-2... Cues "On-The-Air" sign. Cues announcer.

2* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] Welcome back to the _____ Radio Theater presentation of "It's a Wonderful Life!"

3. SFX/RADIO-DIRECTOR: [CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM]

4* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] We'll return with Act Two in just a moment, but first... a word from the makers of Ro-Don't pest control pellets...

[PROCEED DIRECTLY TO AD-SPOT #3: "RO-DON'T"]

AD-SPOT #3 - RO-DON'T RAT POISON
(PITCHMAN #4, SFX -OR- WALLA, BETTY)

1* LIVE SFX/WALLA: [CUE] MANY MICE SQUEAKING-- (GROAN
HAMMERS/JIBBER JABBERS) UNDER.

2* PITCHMAN #4: [CUE] Folks, got a problem with household
pests?

3. BETTY: Pests??? You mean... (LOOKS DOWN) Mi.. mice!
(SCREAMS) Ahhhhhhhh!

4. PITCHMAN #4: Yes, if you've got rodents,
get... RO-DON'T!

RO-DON'T is America's leading pest control
product! It eliminates mice, moles, skunks and
rats...

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS
POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

7. SFX/RADIO-DIRECTOR: [CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM]

--END OF SPOT--

[PROCEED DIRECTLY TO AD-SPOT #4 "FORMULA B-4"]

AD-SPOT #4 - FORMULA B-4
(PITCHMAN #5, ECHO VOICE, SFX)

- 1* LIVE SFX: [CUE] TICKING CLOCK--UNDER
DESCENDING SLIDE-WHISTLE GLISS (AS INDICATED)
- 2* PITCHMAN #5: [CUE] Are you one of the millions who feel worn down by the stresses and strains of everyday life? [SFX: GLISS DOWN] Feeling fatigued by the often debilitating effects of growing older? [SFX: GLISS DOWN] Just plain tired? [SFX: GLISS DOWN]
- Luckily, there's...
3. ECHO VOICE: [REVERB] FORMULA B-4! [ECHO: 4-4-4-4-...]
4. PITCHMAN #5: Formula B-4 is the vitamin and mineral tonic--the geri-tonic tonic--that re-invigorates every fiber in your body. You'll feel younger, stronger, more full of pep!

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

taken as directed. Ask your pharmacist.

9. SFX/RADIO-DIRECTOR: [CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--THEN CALM THEM]

--END OF SPOT--

[RETURN TO MAIN SCRIPT - ACT 2 START - PAGE 57, CUE #1]

AD-SPOTS - THESE GO BETWEEN ACT 2 and ACT 3 - *BEFORE* Page 98

**AD-SPOT #5 - "FRIMLY'S SOUP"
(PITCHWOMAN #6)**

1* PITCHWOMAN #6: [CUE] Ladies, you know how important it is for a busy wife and mother to provide everything for her family from (SMILE) soup to nuts, but...
Does your family think you're a mess?...
Does your husband wish you would go away?...
Has the love he felt for you turned to hate?

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--END OF SPOT--

[PROCEED TO NEXT AD-SPOT #6 "LISTENER TELEGRAM"]

AD-SPOT #6 - "LISTENER TELEGRAM"
(ANNOUNCER)

- 1* ANNOUNCER: [CUE] Ladies and gentlemen, before we return to tonight's drama, I'd like to share a telegram we've just received--from a long-time listener out there in radio-land... a, errr... shut-in, it appears. [PULLS OUT TELEGRAM]
2. ANNOUNCER: It reads: (READS) Dear _____ Radio Players. STOP. I've been sitting here at home, listening to your program with my three-legged cat, Hoppy. STOP. While I've enjoyed many of your productions, this "Wonderful Life!" show strikes me as your very best--so far--funny, touching, and profound. STOP. I sure hope you don't ruin it in Act Three! STOP. A heartfelt thank-you from folks like me who can't get out to the theater. STOP. Sincerely, Peggy W.

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The full script & appendix runs 232 pages.

--END OF SPOT--

- 5* ANNOUNCER: And now, the thrilling conclusion of the _____ presentation of "It's a Wonderful Life!"
6. LIVE SFX: CUE LIVE AUDIENCE APPLAUSE--CALM UNDER

[RETURN TO MAIN SCRIPT - ACT 3 START - PAGE 98, CUE #1]

How to “Work” a Mic. Self-Taught

Each cast and crew member of a radio troupe needs to understand how to *work* a microphone. So, plug a mic (on a mic stand) into a mixer with headphones and read this script aloud. As do, listen closely to the sounds produced by the various mic positions. Then—*without* the headphones—do the exercises again, noting how close or far you are from the mic. Remember these positions *visually* and use them at the mic—in a studio or a radio-on-stage show.

Welcome to exotic Microphone-esia!

[STEP TO THE MIC]

1. ANNOUNCER: Hello, ears! It's me, [YOUR NAME HERE.]
Gee! My voice in the headphones sounds odd! What the...? Ooops! Always assume every mic is “live”—going out over the air—to Grandma! So, never swear around mics. And... avoid blowing into a mic or bumping mic stands—which can harm speakers and eardrums. Here's a secret:

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[RETURN TO WITHIN 4 TO 6 INCHES FROM MIC SURFACE]

4. ANNOUNCER: [ON-MIC] And that concludes “Do-it-Yourself Mic School. Now go out there and—as we say in radio—“Break a lip!”

--END OF LESSONS--