

GEORGE. Homesick for Bedford Falls?

MARY. Yes, and my family and...oh, everything. Would you like to sit down?

GEORGE. All right, for a minute. I still can't understand it though. You know I didn't tell anybody I was coming here.

MARY. Would you rather leave?

GEORGE. No, I don't want to be rude.

MARY. It was nice about Harry and Ruth, wasn't it?

GEORGE. Oh...yeah, yeah. That's all right.

MARY. Don't you like her?

GEORGE. Well, of course I like her. She's a peach.

MARY. Ohhh. It's just marriage in general you're not enthusiastic about, huh?

GEORGE. No. Marriage is okay for Harry, and Sam Wainwright, and you.

5 MRS. HATCH. Mary! Mary! Who's out there with you?

MARY. It's George Bailey, mother.

MRS. HATCH. George Bailey! What does he want?!

MARY. I don't know. What do you want, George?

GEORGE. Me? Not a thing. I just came in to get warm.

MARY. (To MRS. HATCH:) He's making violent love to me, Mother!

MRS. HATCH. You tell him to go right back home, and don't you leave the house, Sam Wainwright promised to call from New York tonight, didn't he?

GEORGE. Your mother needn't— You know I didn't come here for—to...to...

MARY. What did you come here for?

GEORGE. I don't know. You tell me. You're supposed to be the one who has all the answers. You tell me!

MARY. Oh, why don't you go home?!

GEORGE. That's where I'm going! I don't know why I came here in the first place!

(SFX: Telephone ring.)

MRS. HATCH. Mary! The telephone! It's Sam!

MARY. I'll get it. (*On phone:*) Hee-haw! Hello, Sam, how are you?

SAM. Aw, great. Gee, it's good to hear your voice again.

MARY. Oh, well, that's awfully sweet of you, Sam. There's an old friend of yours here, George Bailey.

SAM. You mean old moss-back George?

MARY. Yes, old moss-back George.

SAM. Hee-haw! Put him on.

MARY. Wait a minute, I'll call him. George!

MRS. HATCH. He doesn't want to speak to George, you idiot!

MARY. He does so. He asked for him. George, Sam wants to speak to you.

GEORGE. Hello, Sam.

SAM. Hey, a fine pal you are. What're you trying to do? Steal my girl?

GEORGE. What do you mean? Nobody's trying to steal your girl...

SAM. No, wait a minute. I want to talk to both of you. Tell Mary to get on the extension.

MARY. Mother's on the extension.

A

MRS. HATCH. (*Covering mouth as if on phone:*) I am not!

(SFX: Phone receiver slamming down—other room.)

MARY. We can both hear you. George, just put your head a little closer.

GEORGE. Okay.

MARY. There, that's better. We're listening, Sam.

SAM. I have a big deal coming up that's going to make us all rich. George, you remember that night at Martini's Bar when you told me about making plastics out of soybeans?

GEORGE. Huh? Yeah-yeah-yeah...soybeans. Yeah.

SAM. Well, my father's checked into it, George, see, and now he's going to build a factory outside of Rochester. How do you like that?

GEORGE. Rochester? Well, why Rochester?

SAM. Well, why not? Can you think of anything better?

GEORGE. Oh, I don't know...why not right here in Bedford Falls? You remember that old tool and machinery works? You tell your father he can get that for a song. And all the labor he wants, too. Half the town was thrown out of work when they closed down.