

George

GEORGE. I better go get ready for Harry's prom. Goodbye, Uncle Billy.

CLARISSA returns.

CLARISSA. Oh now, if he's going travelling, I might need some more clothes myself, I...

*Dance music.*

Oh, oh, that's catchy. So, George is going to spend his last night in Bedford Falls at his brother's high school prom. SAM. You made it, George. Hee-haw! Eyes peeled for Violet Bick...

GEORGE. Violet... oh well... I don't know, Sam... SAM. Harry's the guy I want to see.

GEORGE. I thought it was Mary Hatch you were here to see.

SAM. Mary... yeah... Mary's a swell girl. Hey... Mary... Hee-haw!

MARY makes her way towards them quite slowly, as if through a crowd while SAM talks and GEORGE watches her.

Couch has heard all about Harry. He's followed every high-school game and his mouth's watering. He wants me to find out if he's going to come along to college with you. GEORGE. He's got to make some dough first.

SAM. He'd better make it fast. We need great quarterbacks like Harry, not broken-down old guys like you. GEORGE (to MARY). You... you look wonderful. I'd ask you to dance but I've got two left feet.

MARY. Strange. I've got two right ones. Shall we?

GEORGE. Let's.

*They dance.*

SAM. Hey, careful with that girl of mine, Bailey.

GEORGE. And I told Harry I thought I'd be bored to death. You know if it wasn't me talking, I'd say you were the prettiest girl in town.

MARY. Well, why don't you say it?

GEORGE. I don't know. Maybe I will say it. How old are you anyway?

MARY. Eighteen.

GEORGE. Eighteen! Why it was only last year you were seventeen.

*He trends on her feet.*

MARY. Ow!

GEORGE. There now... I told you!

MARY. Two left feet. If you point them at the door, will they take you outside?

GEORGE. We could try it.

*They make their way through the crowd, acknowledging unseen revellers as they go.*

Thanks for the loan of your sister, Marty... no, no, she'll be fine with me.

MARY. Go away, Marty... I'm getting a breath of fresh air...

*They are outside.*

GEORGE. Breath of fresh air.

*They stand looking at each other.*

MARY. What shall we do?

GEORGE. Cross-country run?

*They walk.*

MARY. Hunt the slipper?

GEORGE. Look! The old Granville House... I could go throw a rock...

MARY. Oh no, don't, I love that old house.

GEORGE. No. You see you make a wish and then try and break some glass. You have to be a pretty good shot, too. Watch, right on the second floor there.

*Throws a rock... no not really... towards the audience. Sound of breaking glass.*

MARY. What'd you wish, George?

GEORGE. Not just one wish. A whole haulful, Mary. I know what I'm going to do tomorrow and the next day and the next year and the year after that. I'm shaking the dust of this crummy little town off my feet and I'm going to see the world. Italy, Greece, the Parthenon, the Colosseum. Then I'm coming back here and going to college and see what they know... and then I'm going to build things. I'm gonna build airfields. I'm gonna build skyscrapers a hundred storeys high. Bridges a mile long...

BERT. Cop in a small town, you're the one gets called when there's bad news. It had to be me to tell him. He was having such a good time, too.

GEORGE. Are you gonna throw a rock?

MARY *throws a rock. Sound of breaking glass.*

That's pretty good! What'd you wish, Mary?

MARY *smiles and starts whistling whatever tune it was that was playing when they danced.*

Hey, I told you what I wished for... now you...

MARY. If I told you, it might not come true.

GEORGE. What is it you want, Mary? You want the moon? Just say the word and I'll throw a lasso around it and pull it down.

MARY. Well, that's a pretty good ideal!

GEORGE. It sure is, Mary, I'll give you the moon...

MARY. I'll take it. And then what?

GEORGE. Well, then you could swallow it and the moonbeams'd shoot out of your fingers and toes and the ends of your hair, and...

BERT. George! George! You gotta get home quick. Your father's had a stroke.

GEORGE. What? Did you get a doctor?

BERT. Campbell's with him now.

GEORGE. Mary, I'm sorry... *(But she has already gone.)*

BERT. George gave up his trip to Europe to straighten out his father's affairs and take his father's place at the Building and Loan. Until the time came for him to go to college.

BERT *exits. UNCLE BILLY enters, shakes GEORGE's hand and, if possible, shows him to a seat in the audience or as near as possible. UNCLE BILLY addresses the audience as the board of the Building and Loan.*

BILLY. Now then... yes... Good afternoon. Yes... Now... gentlemen of the board of Bailey Brothers Building and Loan. I sure hope this is the last meeting that I'll have to chair. Guess I'm not cut out to be a chairwoman, eh, George?

GEORGE. You're doing just fine, Uncle Billy.

BILLY. Thanks, George. Anyhow our main purpose here today is to appoint a successor to my brother, Peter... to Peter Bailey. But first I guess we should offer our vote of thanks to George. Good luck to you at college, George.

CLARISSA *re-appears.*

CLARISSA. Good luck! He sure deserves it!

POTTER *(emerging from audience)*. Mr Chairman, I'd like to get to my real purpose.

BILLY. Mr Potter! Wait just a minute now.

CLARISSA. So, this is Jehro Potter, eh? The richest man in town.