

JOSEPH. No...on that old cigar lighter. It's a tradition among the boys in Bedford Falls.

YOUNG GEORGE. Wish I had a million dollars.

SFX: Lighter clicks on. (Note: This is considerably larger than a standard lighter.)

YOUNG GEORGE. Hot dog!

CLARENCE. He'll get his wish!

JOSEPH. Hmmm.

YOUNG GEORGE. Mr. Gower...? You back there?

GOWER *(slightly off mike)*. You're late!

YOUNG GEORGE. Yes sir. Sorry.

START

YOUNG MARY. Hello, George.

YOUNG GEORGE. Oh...hi, Mary.

YOUNG MARY. I have a whole dime. I'm trying to decide between a soda and chocolate ice cream.

SFX: Door opens. Bell tinkles. Door closes.

YOUNG VIOLET. Hello, George!

YOUNG GEORGE. Hi, Violet.

YOUNG VIOLET *(sizing up a rival)*. 'Lo, Mary.

YOUNG MARY *(primly)*. Hello, Violet.

YOUNG VIOLET. Do you mind if I sit here at the soda fountain with you?

YOUNG MARY. Certainly not.

YOUNG GEORGE. The usual?

YOUNG VIOLET. Mary was here first.

YOUNG MARY. I'm still deciding.

YOUNG VIOLET. All right, then, two cents worth of licorice shoelaces.

YOUNG GEORGE (*confirmed*). The usual. I'll get 'em. Be right back.

YOUNG VIOLET. I like him!

YOUNG MARY. You like every boy you see!

YOUNG VIOLET. What's wrong with that? Oh! Here he comes!

YOUNG GEORGE. There you go, Violet.

YOUNG VIOLET (*honey dripping*). Thank you, George. Help me down off the stool? It's awfully high.

YOUNG GEORGE (*not buying it*). Uh huh.

YOUNG VIOLET (*sweetly*). Never mind!

SFX: Little girl's shoes land on floor.

YOUNG VIOLET. There! Did it myself! (*Gaily:*) Goodbye, Georgie!
(*Flatly:*) Goodbye, Mary.

YOUNG MARY. Goodbye, Violet.

SFX: Door opens. Bell tinkles. Door closes.

(*Note: YOUNG VIOLET may leave stage until she becomes JANIE in Act Two.*)

YOUNG GEORGE. Made up your mind yet?

YOUNG MARY. Chocolate ice cream.

YOUNG GEORGE. What? Sorry...talk into my good ear here.

YOUNG MARY. Chocolate ice cream.

YOUNG GEORGE. With coconut?

YOUNG MARY. I don't like coconut.

YOUNG GEORGE. You don't like coconut! Say, don't you know where coconuts come from?

YOUNG MARY. A coconut tree?

YOUNG GEORGE. No! *(He realizes she's right, though it's not the answer he wanted.)* Well yeah! But where *is* that tree?

YOUNG MARY. I don't know.

YOUNG GEORGE. Tahiti! Or the Fiji Islands...the Coral Sea! Look here!

SFX: Ruffling of paper.

YOUNG GEORGE. *National Geographic* magazine! Only us explorers can get it! I been nominated for membership!

YOUNG MARY. Ooo.

YOUNG GEORGE. You just watch...I'm going out exploring some day.

YOUNG MARY *(all the faith in the world)*. I know you will.

YOUNG GEORGE. Darn right. Hey, what's this under the counter? You drop this?

YOUNG MARY. No, George, I...

YOUNG GEORGE (*he fades away from mike as he says this line*). Hold on, I'll get it.

YOUNG MARY. George? (*Softly.*) Oh...this is your bad ear. (*A pause. Soft.*) I know you can't hear me with this ear...but I love you, George Bailey... I'll love you till the day I die. (*She realizes what she has said.*) Oh!

YOUNG GEORGE (*fading in*). Here it is. Looks like some kinda...telegram or somethin'. You drop this? Hey, what's the matter with you?

YOUNG MARY. Nothing.

YOUNG GEORGE. I'll get you that ice cream.

YOUNG MARY. No...no. I changed my mind. I...I have to go. Goodbye, George!

SFX: Light little-girl footsteps down off stool, across to door. Door opens. Bell.

(Note: YOUNG MARY may leave the stage. She will be ZUZU in Act Two.)

YOUNG GEORGE. Well, don't that beat all. Oh! Hey! You forgot your telegr...

SFX: Door slams shut. Paper rustles.

YOUNG GEORGE. Maybe it isn't hers. (*Reading softly:*) "Dear Mr. Gower..." Oh! "...we regret to inform you that your son, Robert, died..." (*A brief pause for a gasp.*) "...died this morning of influenza... everything possible was done for his comfort..." Oh. Gee.

GOWER (*calling from off mike*). George! Come back here!

YOUNG GEORGE. Yes sir...

SFX: Footsteps.

FINISH