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Dramatic Publishing

FLYERS



Musical
by Julia Lander and
Carol Lander

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FLYERS



Musical. By Julia Lander and Carol Lander.
Cast: 15 to 30m., 6 to 13w., 20 or more either gender. Young Orville and Wilbur Wright are convinced that real flight is possible, even though everyone else laughs at them. The Wrights follow aviation advances through the years but never dream they will be at the forefront of the aeronautical world. Then, nearly losing Orville to typhoid fever and hearing of the tragic death of their hero, a pioneer of aviation, they are inspired to throw their hats in the ring and join the “race to flight.” Failing to perfectly tweak the elements of proper lift and drag, they are convinced that something in the accepted science must be incorrect and realize that, to be taken seriously, they will have to come up with the right math. The inexhaustible, innovative brothers keep trying until their ultimate success! With catchy songs inspired by the Gay '90s, *Flyers* leaves audiences humming to themselves even after the play is over and they've finished laughing, crying and cheering. *Simple set, flexible staging. Approximate running time: 60 minutes. Code: FF4.*



*Library of Congress photos. Front: First flight, 1903.
Back: Wilbur and Orvil, 1909. Glider Wreck, 1900.
Cover design: Susan Carle.*

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Flyers

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JULIA LANDER
and
CAROL LANDER



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Flyers

CHARACTERS

DATE KEEPER: Displays the years of the scenes.

YOUNG WILBUR WRIGHT: Intelligent, quiet, confident.

YOUNG ORVILLE WRIGHT: Bright, mischievous, shy, curious.

YOUNG KATHARINE WRIGHT: Youngest Wright, not school age yet.

MRS. SUSAN WRIGHT: Wrights' mother, technically skilled.

BISHOP MILTON WRIGHT: Wrights' father, intelligent, religious.

REUCHLIN WRIGHT: Oldest Wright brother.

LORIN WRIGHT: Close with older brother Reuchlin.

ADULT WILBUR: Contemplative, gifted writer, speaker.

ADULT ORVILLE: Energetic, born inventor, optimistic.

ADULT KATHARINE: Caring, educated, helps her brothers.

TEACHER: Female, schoolmarm type, dramatic.

SALLY: Classmate.

RACHEL: Classmate.

FRANK: Classmate.

ROBERT: Classmate.

MARY JANE: Classmate.

FLORENCE: Classmate.

GENTLEMAN 1: Disheveled from bicycle accident.

GENTLEMAN 2: Friend of Gentleman 1.

MAMA: German woman, hiker, speaks with German accent.

HANS: German woman's son, speaks with German accent.

GRETCHEN: German woman's daughter, speaks with German accent.

STRANGER: German man, speaks with German accent.

PICNICKER 1: Picnicker on German mountain, speaks with German accent.

PICNICKER 2: Picnicker on German mountain, speaks with German accent.

FRENCH PHOTOGRAPHER: Photographs Lilienthal's last flight, speaks with French accent.

PAUL: Dayton child playing in the park.

JOANNA: Dayton child playing in the park.

LUKE: Dayton child playing in the park.

NATHAN: Dayton child playing in the park.

BOY: Dayton boy in the Wright cycle shop for bicycle repair/parts.

CHUCK TAYLOR: Wrights' employee, builds airplane engine.

OCTAVE CHANUTE: French-born engineer, Wrights' mentor, speaks with French accent.

BILL TATE: Fisherman, Kitty Hawk, well educated.

DAN TATE: Bill's half-brother, fisherman.

MRS. TATE: Bill's wife, Kitty Hawk postmistress.

MISS TATE: Bill's daughter.

EDWARD HUFFAKER: Aeronautical engineer, know-it-all.

GEORGE SPRATT: Aeronautical engineer, helpful.

AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERS (optional number)

INVENTORS (optional number)

J.T. DANIELS: Kill Devil lifesaver, took famous photo.

ADAM ETHERIDGE: Kill Devil lifesaver.

WILL DOUGH: Kill Devil lifesaver.

W.C. BRINKLEY: Man from Manteo.

JOHN MOORE: Teen from Nag's Head.

Please see the back of the book for details on properties and a phonetics guide for accents.

Flyers

Scene 1

SETTING: *An old-fashioned 1878 classroom in Dayton, Ohio.*

AT RISE: *All the actors sit in frozen tableau until the action starts. TEACHER stands at a lectern R, reading with overly dramatic flair from a thick book of Greek mythology. Her students sit facing her in orderly rows of desks surrounding an old-fashioned coal stove. YOUNG ORVILLE WRIGHT and YOUNG WILBUR WRIGHT sit C. WILBUR holds a paper airplane. Sticking out of ORVILLE's pocket is a whirligig, or pinwheel on a stick. He sits up straight, paying keen attention, and leans slightly more forward than the rest of the class with a bright-eyed and skeptical look. In the back of class, a bored student sits glassy-eyed, while a sleeper slumps over his desk on a stack of books, assuming he is unseen by the TEACHER. Two students roll their eyes and exchange looks, due to the teacher's melodramatic reading style. A teacher's pet sits up front, avidly listening to every word the teacher says and mimicking her over-emotional attitude. A daydreamer gazes out the window, amused by a bird, which sits on a branch with a nest, a symbol for "mankind's infancy in flight." The rest of the students, SALLY, RACHEL, FRANK, ROBERT, MARY JANE and FLORENCE, display a mild interest, listening with polite expressions. Various statues, busts or drawings of Greek and Roman gods or philosophers can be displayed around the classroom to show that the students have been studying ancient civilizations. The backstage wall is lined*

with four tall windows. At L is a free standing blackboard with two blackboard erasers in its chalk tray. Just outside the classroom, L, a tall 1878 bicycle leans against the wall, awaiting its owner.

(DATE KEEPER enters R holding up an old-fashioned looking placard displaying the year 1878 as he crosses the stage and exits L. His exit cues the action.)

TEACHER (*reading*). “We must fly! Fly, Icarus, my son!” said Daedalus. “But how, Father?” Icarus asked. And at that moment Daedalus presented Icarus with two beautiful pairs of waxen wings. Their white feathers gleamed golden in the morning sunlight. “Only with these will we be able to escape this evil Minotaur’s maze.”

(TEACHER pauses to hold the large book up and show the picture.)

ORVILLE (*leans over and whispers to WILBUR*). They should have known those wings would never work! They’re too flimsy!

(The eye rollers overhear him and smirk. TEACHER looks ORVILLE’s way, and WILBUR lowers his paper airplane out of view. He looks from TEACHER to his little brother; puts a finger to his lips and shushes him with a silent frown.)

ORVILLE (*cont’d, stage whispering*). Well look at the things! They’re made of wax and feathers! I’m telling you, it wouldn’t work! And look at their shape! Didn’t Leonardo Da Vinci already test wings like that a long time ago?

(The TEACHER puts one hand on her hip.)

TEACHER (*loudly, with a withering look at ORVILLE*). And so! With the wings on their shoulders, they flew from the labyrinth of the man-eating monster. “Father, Father! Look at me!” said Icarus. “Look how high I can fly!” But Daedalus warned, “Not so high! Not so near the sun, my child!”

(After showing a picture to the class and turning the page, TEACHER leaves the lectern with her big book to slowly stroll down the aisle between the desks, still reading continually. She stops by the sleeping student.)

TEACHER (*cont'd*). But Icarus would not obey his father. As he flew nearer and nearer the sun, the waxen wings began to melt, and as they melted, the feathers fell out, first one at a time, and then like a flurry of snow.

ORVILLE (*to WILBUR*). Told yuh!

(WILBUR shushes him again while finishing up his paper airplane, once the TEACHER's back is to him.)

TEACHER (*explosively dramatic*). And, *alas!*

(At the same time she shouts these words, the sleeper comically jumps to an alert position in his desk. The entire class titters as TEACHER makes her way back to the lectern, never missing a beat in her story.)

TEACHER (*cont'd*). By the time Icarus realized what was happening, it was too late. “Father, Father!” he cried out, but Daedalus could not reach him in time. As his wings melted completely, he fell into the sea and was lost forever.

(TEACHER closes the book sadly.)

SALLY (*mimicking TEACHER's dramatic style of speaking*).

Oh, poor Icarus!

RACHEL (*all goody two-shoes*). Well he should have obeyed his pa, and not flied so close to the sun.

TEACHER (*correcting grammar*). Should not have flown, Rachel.

ORVILLE (*sounding practical*). He should have invented better wings that rest on the air like this!

(ORVILLE surprises WILBUR by snatching the paper airplane from under his nose and flying it across the room. The entire class is transfixed, watching its flight. Then as it comes to a landing, FRANK and GEORGE dive out of their seats without permission to be the first to retrieve it. The class bursts into hysterics when they conk heads fighting for it. The TEACHER's hands go to her hips again, and she gives them a scathing stare. They grow quiet. FRANK snatches the plane from GEORGE and returns it to ORVILLE, who then returns it to WILBUR. WILBUR scowls at him with a "Thanks a lot!" kind of look. The boys return to their desks.)

FRANK (*as he returns to his desk*). A human-sized glider sure would've beat all the arm-flapping those two Greek guys had to do!

TEACHER. Daedalus and Icarus are adventurous, mythological heroes, Frank! Not "two Greek guys." (*Shuddering at his uncouthness.*) That will be enough, boys! Sit down. And, Orville, put that ... (*Unsure what to call it.*) whirligig on my desk.

ORVILLE (*proudly as he obeys*). Oh, it's not a whirligig, ma'am, it's a glider. This here's a whirligig. (*Reaching into his pocket.*) My pa brought it home from his last trip to the ministers' conference in Iowa.

(The class looks on excitedly as ORVILLE pulls the whirligig from his pocket, pursing his lips to blow on it and make the blades spin. But TEACHER sniffs and gives him such a “don’t even think about it” frown that he freezes and puts it away with a sad little sigh. The class looks disappointed. ORVILLE returns to his seat.)

ROBERT *(raising his hand but not waiting to be called on).*

My pa says if people were meant to fly, then the good Lord would’ve given them wings like a bird.

RACHEL. My ma says trying to fly is prideful. It’s like trying to argue with God. Just like the people in the Bible who tried to build that huge tower of Babel.

SALLY. Yeah! Those Babel-ites just got too big for their britches!

(The class laughs again, even TEACHER. WILBUR raises his hand and waits politely to be called on.)

TEACHER. Children, children! Wait to be called on! Yes, Wilbur?

WILBUR. I think it’s just the opposite, ma’am.

TEACHER. What did you say, Wilbur? Speak up! I can never hear you.

WILBUR *(coming to his feet).* I think God gave us birds with wings to show us that flight is possible. It’s just a matter of having enough power to keep you moving forward, and the kind of wings that will work. *(Looking towards the nest outside the window.)* Even baby birds don’t know how to fly right away.

FLORENCE. Yeah, their parents have to show them how. And they have to practice over and over.

WILBUR. Maybe we're all like birds in the nest who just haven't figured out what it takes to fly yet.

TEACHER (*interested, then dismissive*). Hmm. Well, I wish we had more time to discuss this, but it's 3 o'clock, and you are all dismissed. Florence, don't forget it's your turn to clean erasers!

FLORENCE. Yes, ma'am.

(TEACHER turns her back and begins packing her satchel. When she is finished, she exits R. FLORENCE goes to the blackboard, takes the erasers outside and begins whacking them together, creating a lot of chalk dust. The students with no lines exit R, one brushing shoulders with YOUNG KATHARINE WRIGHT, who has come to wait for her brothers. ORVILLE and WILBUR walk just outside the classroom. The remaining students linger and surround them. MARY JANE grabs the two erasers from FLORENCE and follows the Wright brothers.)

ROBERT. Have fun learning how to fly this weekend, Chick-en Little. Just 'cause a chicken's gotta pair of wings, it doesn't make him a flyer.

(KATHARINE angrily approaches and stands beside her brothers.)

MARY JANE. Yeah, just a fryer! (*Noticing KATHARINE.*) Well, well, well! If it isn't the littlest Chicken Little, come to collect her brothers.

(All the children laugh.)

MARY JANE (*cont'd*). Oh, and Wilbur? Here's something I read about in my *Cornish Book of Fairy Tales* that you might need if you wanna fly. Some pixie dust!

(MARY JANE whacks the chalky erasers beneath his nose. FLORENCE and the rest of the children laugh as WILBUR sneezes violently and brushes off his jacket. KATHARINE takes a threatening stomp at MARY JANE.)

KATHARINE. Listen, you! If my brother says it's possible for people to fly, then you better believe him, because my brother doesn't say anything unless he's sure it's the truth!

(MARY JANE backs off, surprised, and the Wrights begin walking to DC.)

ROBERT *(calling after them)*. Ladies and gentlemen, there go the Bishop's kids, otherwise known as The Incredible Flying Fryers!

FRANK *(flapping his arms)*. Brawk, brawk, brawk!

(WILBUR frowns. All but the Wright children run off R, laughing. During the introduction of the song, ORVILLE shakes his head, and KATHARINE puts her hands on her hips. Then all three Wright children step out onto the apron or DC to sing. They line up side by side in order of their solo verses: WILBUR, KATHARINE, ORVILLE. Each should step to the end of the line after their solo, thereby changing up the order for solos and spoken parts.)

(#1: "If Birds Can Fly, Then Why Can't I?")

WILBUR.

I LOOK AT BIRDS AND WATCH THEM SOAR THEIR
HIGHWAYS IN THE SKY.
AND WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE TO SPREAD YOUR
WINGS AND LEARN TO FLY.
ABOVE THE TREES, ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS,

GLIDING EVER HIGHER.
WHAT ARE THE SECRETS WE MUST LEARN TO ALSO
BE A FLYER?

CHORUS.

WHAT ARE THE SECRETS WE MUST LEARN TO ALSO
BE A FLYER?

WILBUR.

THE GOOD LORD DID NOT GIVE US WINGS, BUT
GAVE US BRAINS TO WONDER.
IF BIRDS CAN FLY,

CHORUS.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY,

WILBUR.

THEN WHY CAN'T I?

CHORUS.

THEN WHY CAN'T I?

WILBUR.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY, THEN WHY CAN'T I?

KATHARINE.

AND I

ORVILLE.

AND I

ALL.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY, THEN WHY CAN'T I?

KATHARINE.

ARE WE JUST LIKE THE BABY BIRDS THAT DON'T
KNOW HOW TO FLY YET?

WHO LACK THE NERVE AND NEED A PUSH IN ORDER JUST TO TRY IT.
IF I HAD WINGS I'D GET IN LINE TO LEARN FROM MAMA'S FLIGHT.
AND SOON I'D BE THERE GLIDING HIGH JUST LIKE A SOARING KITE.

CHORUS.

AND SOON SHE'D BE THERE GLIDING HIGH JUST LIKE A SOARING KITE.

KATHARINE.

THE GOOD LORD DID NOT GIVE US WINGS, BUT GAVE US BRAINS TO WONDER.
IF BIRDS CAN FLY,

CHORUS.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY,

KATHARINE.

THEN WHY CAN'T I?

CHORUS.

THEN WHY CAN'T I?

KATHARINE.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY, THEN WHY CAN'T I?

ORVILLE.

AND I

WILBUR.

AND I

ALL.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY, THEN WHY CAN'T I?

ORVILLE.

IF WE DON'T INVESTIGATE OUR CURIOSITIES,
WE WOULDN'T HAVE THE CLIPPER SHIPS TO SAIL
UPON THE SEAS.
THE TELEGRAPH, THE PHOTOGRAPH, THE TRANS-
ATLANTIC CABLE.
AND SOON WE'LL HAVE ELECTRIC LIGHT TO SEE
AROUND THE TABLE.

CHORUS.

AND SOON WE'LL HAVE ELECTRIC LIGHT TO SEE
AROUND THE TABLE.

ORVILLE.

THE GOOD LORD DID NOT GIVE US WINGS, BUT
GAVE US BRAINS TO WONDER.
IF BIRDS CAN FLY,

CHORUS.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY,

ORVILLE.

THEN WHY CAN'T I?

CHORUS.

THEN WHY CAN'T I?

ORVILLE.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY, THEN WHY CAN'T I?

WILBUR.

AND I

KATHARINE.

AND I

ALL.

IF BIRDS CAN FLY, THEN WHY CAN'T I?

(The Wright children start to exit R but stop to watch as GENTLEMAN 1 and GENTLEMAN 2 enter L. They wear fine clothing, but one of them looks like he's been through the Crimean War. His jacket is dusty and dirty with its sleeves ripped at the elbow. His trousers are torn at the knees, and he limps slightly as he walks. His two front teeth are comically chipped in half. NOTE: Black crayon on the lower portion of the teeth can pull off this effect quite nicely.)

GENTLEMAN 1 *(pointing at the 1878 bicycle furiously).*

There's the blasted thing right where I left it! The front wheel hit just one pebble—one round pebble, I tell you! It set the front wheel to wobbling and off I flew! Right over the schoolyard fence!

(He and his friend go to the leaning bicycle, pick the unwieldy thing up together and begin carrying it away. They go at a snail's pace due to GENTLEMAN 1's limp.)

GENTLEMAN 2. So I guess you'll be getting rid of it, eh?

GENTLEMAN 1 *(astonished).* Rid of it?

GENTLEMAN 2 *(equally astonished).* You don't mean to tell me that you plan to get back up on this shaky contraption, do you?

GENTLEMAN 1. But, it cost me six months' wages!

GENTLEMAN 2 *(putting a hand on his friend's shoulder).*

Better the loss of six months' wages, than the cost of two snapped ankles and a broken neck!

GENTLEMAN 1. Ah, perhaps you're right. I'll put her in the shop window and let a younger man try his luck.

GENTLEMAN 2. Shop window? The devilish things ought
to be outlawed!

"Fast forward past Orville's battle with typhoid fever and the fatal accident of aviator Otto Lilienthal to 1900 where we find our two inventors hard at work experimenting with test kites, and running their bicycle shop."

Scene 4

(A park in Dayton, Ohio, and the Wright Cycle Shop, 1900. At R is the Wright Cycle Shop. As the curtain opens, in pantomime, KATHARINE waits on bicycle customers, who

come and go throughout the first part of the scene, ringing up small boxes of bike parts at a cash register. CHUCK TAYLOR, a bike mechanic, sits on a low stool working on a bicycle that is set upside down on its handlebars with a tire wrench. ORVILLE and MILTON are seriously discussing things over a workbench on which are a couple of notebooks and pens. ORVILLE sketches their latest aeronautical ideas for his father and talks animatedly, trying to get MILTON's blessing for their most current flying experiments. KATHARINE eavesdrops keenly. At L, WILBUR is in a park holding two thin sticks in his hands, about ruler sized, that he pumps alternately forward and back to warp the wings of his test kite. He is with two excited children, PAUL and JOANNA, who have seen nothing like this kite that can dip to the right then to the left in the air strictly by the man's controlling it. The audience must imagine the kite by the actors' reactions to it. WILBUR looks happy at the control he's able to achieve in his kite's flight and at how impressed the children are.

DATE KEEPER enters R, holding up a placard reading 1900 as he crosses the stage and exits L. His exit cues the park scene's action.)

PAUL. Hey, Luke, Nathan! Come here, you gotta see this!

(Two boys, LUKE and NATHAN run on L in baseball togs, carrying baseball gloves and a ball and bat.)

LUKE. I don't wanna spend my Saturday flying kites. Come on, you guys, let's get a ball game goin'!

JOANNA. This isn't just any kite, knucklehead. This is Mr. Wright's kite!

PAUL. Yeah, it's an experiment.

JOANNA. A test kite. He and his brother are learning how to fly!

NATHAN. Fly?

LUKE. Huh! No tests for me. Not on a Saturday. Let's play ball!

NATHAN (*with mechanical interest*). Are those sticks what's making your kite turn right and left like that?

WILBUR. Yep. I'm warping the wings, the same way birds do when they want to fly in a certain direction.

PAUL. Warping the wings?

WILBUR. Yes! Once we find the right design, my brother and I are going to build a flying machine that you can steer through the air like a ship steers through the ocean.

JOANNA. You mean you'll make a huge kite you can ride on?

WILBUR (*smiling*). Not quite. More like a big glider. We'll kite the glider first, to make sure it's safe. Then we'll get on and pilot it!

PAUL. Wow! And you'll be riding through the sky? Way up there?

WILBUR. Once we can conceptualize and then design all the essential elements of control, then yes. We'll fly like birds!

(The children all smile up at the kite a few beats as though they are all imagining it. At last, LUKE breaks the silence.)

LUKE. Well, we can't stand around here waiting for him to figure out . . . well, whatever he just said. We've only got so much daylight left to play!

NATHAN. Yeah, the only thing I wanna see fly through the air right now is this baseball.

LUKE. Yeah, if you could only hit it!

NATHAN (*looks at his bat frowning*). Maybe my bat is what's warped.

JOANNA. Or maybe your head is what's warped!

(The children run off L, laughing. WILBUR looks at his pocket watch then exits slowly R while pantomiming reeling in his glider kite. In the Wright Cycle Shop, ORVILLE picks up a long flat inner tube box and twists its ends in opposite directions as he explains their new invention to his father. WILBUR walks in carrying his folded up test glider kite just as ORVILLE is explaining wing warping.)

ORVILLE *(enthusiastic)*. Hi, Wilbur. So you see, Pa, with the ability to twist the wings of our glider like this, we'll have better control over it. We call it wing warping.

MILTON. Hmm. Wing warping. And you're sure it'll give you more control?

WILBUR. Positive! If we can manipulate the wings like this, we can maintain balance and turn the glider as well. We've been trying out the idea with test kites first.

ORVILLE. Now that we've made a workable model on a small scale, we'll implement the idea into a full-sized glider.

WILBUR. Think of all the materials and time and money this will save us, Pa!

MILTON. It's not the time or the money that I'm worried about, boys.

KATHARINE *(moving closer)*. Pa, Octave Chanute assured the boys that they have the most up to date aeronautical information the Smithsonian has to offer.

ORVILLE *(imitating Octave Chanute and his French accent)*. *Oui oui, (Pronounced wee-wee.)* Bishop Wright! Based on the work of many ingenious inventors. Herring! Pratt! And don't forget Smeaton, with his coefficient of the density of air! Or Lilienthal—

MILTON *(meaningfully)* Lilienthal? The man who fell to his death? You make my point exactly, boys. And this is no laughing matter to me, Orville. You'll understand when you have children of your own.

(ORVILLE and KATHARINE hang their heads sadly. WILBUR looks uncomfortable. A BOY customer comes up with a bike parts box for KATHARINE to ring up and hands her the money for it.)

MILTON. A lot of good Lilienthal's scientific calculations did him when a rough wind kicked up. I've never talked you out of anything you wanted to do, boys, but this flying? It's just too dangerous!

WILBUR. But Pa, Lilienthal didn't know about controlling the forces of air on his glider.

ORVILLE. Or the concept of wing warping.

(Just then the BOY who has just bought the bike part interrupts their conversation.)

BOY. Thanks, Miss Wright. Oh and one more thing. My brother Stanley wants to know if you can fix his St. Clair. He bent its front wheel trying to impress all the girls last week.

ORVILLE. Well, I should hope we can fix it. We're the ones who invented that bike! You tell Stanley to bring it on in, and we'll have it good as new by Friday.

BOY. Good! 'Cause Friday's when he wants to ride over to Sally's and ask her dad if he can take her to the high-school social. Sally was the girl most impressed when he crashed.

(The Wright siblings are glad for the comic relief as the BOY exits the shop.)

MILTON. Now as I was saying, boys, I've never stopped you from doing anything you took an interest to in your whole lives, and I don't plan to start now. Just promise me one thing.

WILBUR & ORVILLE *(ad-lib)*. What's that, Pa? Anything, Pa. What is it?

MILTON (*soberly*). Once you build this flying machine of yours, you have to promise me you'll never ride in it at the same time.

ORVILLE (*solemnly*). Don't worry, Pa, you have our word.

(They react with relief at having his fatherly blessing. WILBUR picks up some postcards from the stack of postcards and letters and looks through them one after the other.)

WILBUR. Now to solve the problem of where to fly. I've had my eye on Mr. Huffman's prairie, north of town. It's the windiest and flattest place around Dayton.

MILTON. Good! It'll be close enough that I can keep an eye on you!

KATHARINE. But aren't there trees and even some telegraph poles in that pasture?

ORVILLE. Yeah. Not to mention cows! What about the place where Octave Chanute flew in Indiana? With the sand dunes?

WILBUR (*shuffling through the letters from Chanute and reading*). Let's look in the letter he wrote. Hmm. He says in Indiana there were newspaper reporters and photographers crawling on their bellies behind every sand dune! Well, so what? I don't mind letting local reporters know what we're up to.

ORVILLE. Wilbur, no! We'd never get any serious work done! Reporters aren't interested in aeronautical science. They just want a good show, like we're nothing but circus performers.

KATHARINE (*picking up a sealed envelope*). What's this letter here?

WILBUR (*excitedly taking it from her and opening it*). Hey! When did this letter arrive? I've been waiting for it!

MILTON. Who's it from?

WILBUR. It's from the National Weather Bureau. I told them the kind of weather conditions we needed for gliding: steady winds of at least 15 miles per hour and hopefully places with some sand or water to cushion the impact of a possible crash. *(Looks sheepishly at his father.)*

ORVILLE *(reading over his shoulder)*. They took you seriously! They've made a list of places!

KATHARINE *(also reading over his shoulder)*. Ooh! San Diego!

WILBUR *(dreamily)*. I've always fancied a vacation in San Diego.

KATHARINE. And Florida! Couldn't I tag along on the trip, Pa?

MILTON. Over my dead body. Knowing you, you'd probably talk the boys into giving you glider rides.

KATHARINE. Rides! I'd rather talk them into flying lessons!

MILTON *(clutching his heart comically)*. Katharine, don't frighten your poor old father.

(They all laugh.)

KATHARINE *(in light-hearted martyrdom)*. I suppose I'll stay, then, Pa. Someone's gotta mind this shop, I guess!

ORVILLE. Here's a place that's sixth on the list that's not so far away. Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. They call it a little hamlet just off the coast.

WILBUR *(picks up Chanute's letter)* Hmm. Let's see what our dear Octave Chanute has to say about Kitty Hawk.

KATHARINE *(smiling)*. I like the name Kitty Hawk. It has a nice ring to it. Because hawks can fly and kitties always land on their feet unharmed when they fall!

(They all laugh.)

WILBUR (*reading Chanute's letter*). "Georgia has some favorable flying areas, and so do the Carolinas. Sandy beaches," he writes. "Miles and miles long! Ocean headwinds to help you fly back to where you take off."

MILTON. Well, if you're trying to work discreetly, you certainly couldn't get any more isolated.

WILBUR. Then Kitty Hawk it shall be!

ORVILLE (*snatching the letter away with both hands and kissing it*). Octave Chanute, what would we do without you?

MILTON (*puts his hands on his hips and frowns, still anxious*). I know just what you would do without Octave Chanute. You would stay alive!

(He shakes his head and rolls his eyes. KATHARINE pats him on the shoulder to comfort him).

WILBUR. Aw, Pa, we'll be careful.

ORVILLE. To Kitty Hawk, North Carolina! Here we come!
(Raises his fist in the air.)

(They all raise their hands in the air as though making a toast.)

ALL. To Kitty Hawk!

(They all laugh at the funny sounding name. Curtain closes.)