



## ABRIDGED VERSION

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In Order of Appearance)

**Museum Docent**

Narrator of the story/Assumes multiple roles listed below:

**Junk Dealer, Flight Expert, World's Fair Barker,**

**Vendor 1, Octave Chanute, Mailman, Reporter**

**Orville Wright**

Courageous and persistent Inventors

**Wilbur Wright**

**Susan Wright**

Patient, intelligent Mother

**Young Katharine**

8-10 yrs.

**Young Wilbur**

10-12 yrs.

**Young Orville**

10-12 yrs.

**Katharine Wright**

Encouraging Sister

**Mrs. Welsh**

Gossip

**Dr. Spittler**

Family Physician

**Charles Taylor**

Rough but friendly Mechanic

**Vendors, World's Fair Demonstrators, Townsfolk (Ensemble)**

# “THE WRIGHT BROTHERS AT KITTYHAWK”

By Wayne R. Scott/ Steve & Pattie Burch

## SYNOPSIS OF SONGS

Overture

1. “The Tour” .....Museum Docent, Orville, Wilbur
2. “Measure Twice, Cut Once” .....Susan, Young Orville & Wilbur  
“The Tour” (Reprise).....Docent
3. “Kites” .....Docent, Young Orville & Wilbur
4. “Entrepreneurs” .....Wright Brothers
5. “What Would I do Without You” .....Orville, Katharine, Susan
6. “World’s Fair” .....Barker, Ensemble  
“World’s Fair” (Reprise).....Ensemble
7. “Otto Lilienthal” .....Charlie, Ensemble
8. “You Can’t Do That” .....Mrs. Welsh, Ensemble
9. “Frustration” .....Orville, Wilbur
10. Finale: “You Will Finally Fly” .....Cast Ensemble

# "Kitty Hawk" Abridged Version

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## OVERTURE

### SCENE 1: AVIATION MUSEUM

*(As audience is admitted prior to overture, the "Kitty Hawk Aviation Museum," giant storybook entitled, "The Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk," and the "Wright Brothers Bicycle Shop" are all seen on stage. Under the museum sign are the dimly lit figures of Orville and Wilbur Wright, labeled as such by smaller signs near them. These figures are the actors "frozen" in place on stage. The museum area also contains a video screen for live action footage of early flight and a hat rack featuring various period hats of the Wright's era. The hats will be freely utilized by the Museum Docent, who will wear them while assuming various roles throughout the story, walking in and out of action as needed, and while also serving as story narrator. The Docent greets incoming audience members by saying "welcome to the Kitty Hawk Aviation Museum, and/or "welcome to the story of the Wright Brothers—I'm your tour guide," and the like. After optional theater introduction/announcements(s), the Docent dusts the museum "figures" as lights dim and overture plays. His silhouette may be seen eating an apple, reading a book, etc. during overture. As lights rise at conclusion of overture, the Docent gazes absently at his book, notices audience, then springs to his feet)*

**Docent** Ahh! There you are! Welcome once again to the Kitty Hawk Aviation Museum— and to the story of the first flight. Of course, the story of the first flight is really the story of two brothers, Orville and Wilbur Wright of Dayton, Ohio....

### SONG: "THE TOUR"

**Docent** Now although these men of flight here on display  
Have a pair of sterling resumes  
And although they rose to fame  
Winning plaudits and acclaim  
They were people all the same  
That's right!  
**Orville** *(To life)* We were!  
**Wilbur** *(To life)* You bet!  
**Orville** Yes, sir!  
**Wilbur** And we would like the audience to know  
**Both** Your grandpa could have seen me aviate  
Since I lived 'til nineteen forty-eight!  
**Wilbur** When you look at history, don't forget that you will see  
**All Three** *(As their younger selves appear)* We were young people, yes, fun people  
With lives and hopes and dreams like yours  
With faith, courage, and hard work  
We spread our wings and we soared!  
**Docent** We know these brothers standing here  
Have transformed transportation  
**The Wrights** But we were once as young as you  
And got our education  
**Docent** Orville Wright and Wilbur too  
Were boys with aspirations  
And as they worked and studied hard

They gave us aviation!  
The Wright Brothers were tight brothers  
They kept their eyes on the clear, blue sky  
They proved once and for all time  
That if we try, we can fly!

*(In the preceding song, as the Docent sings last eight lines, the older Wrights place their caps on the passing younger Wright brothers, who are obliviously reading books and engaged in pantomimed discussion. Older Wrights exit)*  
*(Music continues briefly, then fades)*

**Docent** If you think it's hard to believe that the story of the first flight begins with these two boys, you'll be even more surprised to discover how a sled and a caring mother's influence planted the seeds that led to the invention of the first airplane...  
*(Lighting shifts to)*

## SCENE 2: WRIGHT FAMILY HOME & OUTSIDE/ EXTERIOR BICYCLE SHOP

*(Susan and Katharine are engrossed in Katharine's homework)*  
**Katharine** Mummy, how do you spell Cincinnati?  
**Susan** C-I-N-C-I-N-N-A-T-I. What's that you're doing, dear?  
**Katharine** I'm just finishing up my history report on Ohio. It's not due until we go back, but I wanted to make a nice map to go with it, you know, for extra credit.  
**Susan** Good girl! Put in the extra effort and you'll go far!  
**Katharine** All the way to college, just like you, Mummy! *(Hopefully)* Mmmm, do I smell hot cocoa?  
**Susan** You do. It's getting late and the boys will be frozen when they get in. This will warm them up. *(She laughs as Katharine gives her a pathetic look)* Don't worry my girl, there's plenty here for you, too. *(She pours her a cup as the boys come trudging in)*  
**Katharine** Oh, thank you, Mummy!  
**Susan** Oh! And here's our intrepid Arctic adventures now!  
**Wilbur** Hello Mother. *(He kisses her cheek)* Something smells wonderful!  
**Susan** Hot cocoa. You two peel off those icicles and warm up with a cup. *(The boys take off their gear and sit down)* And after supper there's a lovely pie for dessert.  
**Wilbur** Did you make the pie, Kate?  
**Katharine** *(Proudly)* Of course!  
**Orville** If she made it, I pass... *(Wilbur and Susan look at him hard)*... pass on the hot cocoa so I can have... *(Dejectedly)* two pieces of pie.  
**Susan** Just for that my boy, you may have both. But... what's that frown? What's bothering you my boy?  
**Wilbur** Percy's father brought him a new sled and...  
**Orville** And he's lording it over everyone!  
**Susan** It's fast, huh?  
**Wilbur** A real hum-dinger!  
**Orville** We could build a faster one, I know we could, if only Father was here to help us! We miss out on all the fun. Sometimes I wish he wasn't a minister.  
**Susan** Now, you mustn't blame your father Orville. He's got important work to do, and does all he can when he's home. And you mustn't covet what others have either, that's an abomination to God. As Solomon said in the book of Proverbs: "The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied."  
**Wilbur** What do you mean, Mother?  
**Susan** Get me a piece of paper and a pencil, and I'll show you. *(Wilbur jumps up and gets them as Susan clears a space on the table; Katharine has seen this happen before)*  
**Katharine** *(Aside)* Not again! *(Big sigh)* Mummy, Rachael's cat just had kittens' may I go over and see them.  
**Susan** *(Already deep in thought)* Certainly dear... but hurry back... supper's nearly ready. And bundle up!  
**Katharine** Yes, Ma'am. *(She goes to put coat on, etc.)*  
**Susan** We've got quick minds and able hands. We'll plan out our own sled, the fastest one ever, and surprise your father with it when he gets home. We'll draw it out first so we know how

to cut it.  
**Wilbur** Now, what are the dimensions of Percy's sled, Wil?  
**Susan** I guess... about... four feet long by two wide and... probably a foot off the ground.  
 we would Well, that's fine for a two-person sled, but if we lengthen it, then the whole family can ride. Let's  
**Orville** make it narrower too. And we should make it lower to the ground. Do you know why  
**Katharine** want to do that, Orville?  
 Because... uh...  
**Wilbur** Wind resistance silly! (*She sticks out here tongue and flounces out the door*)  
 (*Music begins*)  
 Of course! Like when you're walking up hill on a windy day and you lean into the wind to make  
 the going easier. If we build the sled lower, the wind will go right over our backs. It'll  
 faster than greased lightning!  
**Orville** (*Embarrassed*) I knew that! (*He grabs the drawing*) Well, let's get cutting!  
**Susan** (*Taking the plans back*) Now, not so fast my boy; we have to make sure the plan is just right.  
 And always remember: measure twice, cut once. That's how you get things done!

**SONG: "MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE"**

**Susan** Measure twice, cut once. Think it out write it own on paper  
**Wil & Orv** Measure twice, cut once. You can build anything.  
 (Measure twice, carefully we draw our plan, as we write it down on paper)  
 (Think it through carefully we plan it out. We can build anything)

**Susan** One day, you never know, the places you will go  
**Wil & Orv** (Think it through (Plan it out)

**Susan** The science mysteries were made to be  
**Will & Orv** (Write it down) (Follow the plans we've made)

**Susan** Discovered by someone, it might be both of you, who will find  
**Wil & Orv** (Maybe you (Maybe me)

**Susan** Answers there, where others fail to see, be sure to think it through  
**Wil & Orv** (Carefully (Write it down and think it through)

**Susan** Be sure to write it out, the lessons you will learn, will be your guide  
**Wil & Orv** (Write it out) (We will learn)

**Susan** So never fail to see and learn from history  
**Wil & Orv** (Lessons will be our guide never fail)

**Susan** The great inventors lives were times to maximize their potential  
**Wil & Orv** (History) (Were times to maximize their potential)

**Susan** Measure twice, cut once. Think it out, write  
**Wil & Orv** (Measure twice, carefully we draw our plan, as we write)

**Susan** It down on paper. Measure twice, cut once. Think it out  
**Wil & Orv** (Write it down on paper. Think it through, carefully we plan it out)

**Susan** Write it down on paper. Measure twice, cut once  
 (Write it down on paper. Think it through, carefully we plan it out)

**Susan** You can build anything  
**Wil & Orv** (We can build anything)

**All** Anything you (we) put your (our) mind to, anything you (we) put your (our)  
 heart in

**Susan  
Wil & Orv** Anything, anything, anything  
(Measure twice, cut once, do it carefully, measure twice, cut once, we can build anything)  
(Musical segue to next song)

**Orville** (*Holding the new sled*) I don't know about this, Wilbur. This sled is so different. Do you really think it will work?

**Wilbur** Of course, it will. Mother knows what she's doing. Let's go try it out on that hill over there...  
(*They exit out audience aisle*)

**Docent** (*Looking out to audience, pointing*) And there they go with their new and improved sled. Before they knew it, the boys were challenged to a sled race. None of their friends thought the strange new sled could possibly win...

### **SONG: "THE TOUR" (Reprise)**

**Docent** The Brothers Wright put everyone to shame  
Their sled was faster than the rest  
And because they did their best  
They would relish every test  
And God would surely bless—  
The Wright Brothers were tight brothers  
Who shared their lives and dreams of flight  
From fast sleds they were soon led  
To set their sights on some kites!...

(*The boys re-enter. Katharine follows them*)  
(*Music trails out*)

**Orville** I'm sure glad winter's over, Wilbur.

**Wilbur** Me too!

**Orville** It's spring— and you know what that means. Time to fly kites!

**Wilbur** If only we had kites.

**Orville** I've had my eye on one of those new kites at Jensen's Mercantile... And I've been saving up for the last couple of months.

**Wilbur** You've saved enough?

**Orville** Well... no... but if we pooled our funds...

**Wilbur** Don't look at me, I gave my savings to the church food drive.

**Orville** All of it?

**Wilbur** Yep.

(*Shaking her head matter-of-factly*) Uh-uh.

**Docent** When the Wright Brothers got their hearts and minds set on something, they wouldn't let anything stop them. Not even a pesky little sister! They set out for new kites, but they didn't like the kites they saw...

(*The boys run in breathlessly, meeting Susan and Katharine in the Wright home*)  
(*Music trails out*)

**Susan** Well, here's our two "Captains of Industry!" I thought you'd never get home for supper.

**Orville** Sorry, Mother.

**Wilbur** We got a little sidetracked.

**Susan** Oh?

**Wilbur** We... we ran all the way, because Orville insisted on stopping at the mercantile to see the kites.

**Orville** Well, I...

**Susan** You mean you've saved enough already?

**Orville** Well no, we only just started really...

**Wilbur** But we were noticing as we watched the boys fly their kites, that the store bought ones seem to be of shoddy construction. So we went to the mercantile for a closer look.

**Orville** And decided we could probably make a better one ourselves.

**Susan** Of course you can! So tell me about these shoddy kites.

**Katharine** You mean like the kites they wanted to buy with my encyclopedia money?

**Susan** Boys, you didn't!

**Orville** I just asked Mother, I don't know. Anyway what does she need encyclopedias for; she's a walking encyclopedia!

**Wilbur** That's true... she'll probably be a teacher or something! Why, the way you're going Kate, you'll probably graduate college before Orv and I graduate high school!

**Susan** What was that?

**Orville** Well, gee, Mother, you're always saying that our minds are our most precious possession. If we could use them to invent something a better kite for instance, and sell them, well, it just seems like a waste of time to finish school.

**Susan** Never let me hear you say that again Orville, not even in jest! Nothing is a substitute for a good education! Are you truing to break your poor mother's heart?

**Wilbur** He didn't mean it Mother, truly.

**Susan** Well, all right then. Now about these kites...

**Wilbur** We'd like to make a kite that stays up longer and flies higher. Percy Robbin's kite did all right until it got up about 60 feet...

**Orville** ... Then it started to dip and swerve like a banshee!

**Susan** Do you think a longer tail might help?

**Wilbur** Maybe.

**Orville** But we thought also if we use lighter wood for the cross bars, and made the belly band a little tighter... maybe used piano wire to wrap...

**Wilbur** Whoa, slow down will you! *(To Susan)* His bran's been going a mile-a-minute since we left the shop Mother. I can't keep up with him!

**Susan** Well, you'd better get it down on paper then, before your brother's brain explodes entirely! *(They all laugh)* Katharine and I will leave it to you two; we need to get to the grocery and library before dark. We'll be back. *(She and Kate exit)*

*(Music begins)*

**Wilbur** All right Mother.

**Orville** *(Pencil, paper, and straightedge in hand)* All right, so like I was saying, we can try a different tail, but I really think that the reason Percy's kite flopped was that it was bound too tightly in the middle cross bars. It couldn't flex, so it broke.

**Wilbur** Only way to tell is to make one up and test it.

**Orville** Sure, but lets hurry; I think the wind might pick up.

**Wilbur** Now Orville, you can't speed up perfection. Remember what Mother always says...

**Orville** I've been thinking, Will.

**Wilbur** Not a surprise to me!

**Orville** I've been thinking that... well... if a kite can soar so high and steady-like, I bet you and I might fly some day. If we could attach ourselves to a really big kite, maybe we could go so high... *(He trails off. Both boys look toward the heavens expectantly, then at each other)*

**Both** Nah!

*(Musical segue with the sound of wind under it)*

**Wilbur** Hurry up, Orville! The wind is kicking up! Let's give this thing a try!

**Docent** Once again the Wright boys have taken something ordinary and turned it into something extraordinary... a pattern they would repeat throughout their lives. And, as always, they had their critics. Most folks thought the new, improved kite would never work...

### SONG: "KITES"

**Docent** It was the craziest looking kite they'd ever seen!  
How could they get it airborne, what a stupid, silly thing!  
But the brothers just reached for the sky—  
With that design the kite would fly

**Wil & Orv** Let's try it

**All** Ready, send it up, go!  
Look at it go, look at it fly!  
Who would believe that they (we) got it to fly so high!



(The Wright) brothers have beaten the rest  
Their design was really the best!  
The store-bought kites fell to defeat once again  
We can see what it means to be obsolete  
*(Musical interlude)*

**Katharine  
Wilbur  
Orville  
Susan  
Wilbur** *(Looking out, pointing)* Hey Orville! Wilbur! Look at that crowd of people coming toward you!  
Yikes!  
What do they want?!  
They're lining up to buy your kite!  
Hey, that's great!

*(Song resumes)*  
If you want to buy our kites, then you'll have to pay the price  
You can get a cheaper kite  
But it won't fly as high as our kites will  
Just you wait and see, we both know we're gonna be  
Inventors and entrepreneurs  
*(Music segues to next song)*

**Susan  
Katharine  
Wilbur  
Katharine  
Orville** And that's only the beginning!  
I know what an inventor is, but what's an entrepre... entrepre—  
An entrepreneur is someone who comes up with an idea and starts a business.  
Some business—selling kites!  
Not just kites! We can invent and sell sleds, better wagons, anything! Why, with brains and hard  
work, the sky's the limit!...  
*(During the next son, the boys "grow" to become young men, exchanging caps with their older  
counterparts seen previously)*

### **SONG: "ENTREPRENEURS"**

**Will & Orv** Entrepreneurs, you can insure profit is yours when you endure  
Business in America, the way to get ahead is have an idea  
Then make it real, hire some help, get out and sell  
If you've really got what it takes  
We can take it, we are gonna make it  
Work it on our never a doubt, what do you say, starting today  
We'll be partners in our own enterprise; it'll change our lives  
Entrepreneurs, gotta be sure, makin' our schemes, followin' dreams  
Right here in America  
That's the way it came about for Thomas Edison  
Andrew Carnegie made steel, and such a deal  
So if we really stick together, something we could rather  
Do to get ahead, there's nothing we couldn't make  
Entrepreneurs, you can insure profit is yours when you endure  
Business in America, the way to get ahead is have an idea  
Then make it real, hire some help, get out and sell  
Business in America, yes that's our plan. We're gonna be entrepreneurs  
*(Music continues as a 20 second transition, trailing to end)*

**Docent** *(Lighting special on Docent, who assumes guise and role of Doctor)*  
Yes, their future was bright! But while playing hockey with their friends, Wilbur suffered a  
terrible accidental blow from a hockey stick. This life-threatening injury tested the entire Wright  
family and helped the brothers realize how much they depended on each other...

**Mr.s Welsh  
Dr Spitler  
Mr.s Welsh** *(Approaching rapidly)* Doctor Spitler! Doctor Spitler!  
Yes, Mr.s Welsh.  
Oh! I heard all about Wilbur Wright's injury when I was downtown. What a sham! But  
honestly! What in the world are two grown young men of their age doing playing hockey?! Is he

hurt bad?  
**Dr Spitler** I'm afraid so, ma'am.  
**Mr.s Welsh** Well, I guess all we can do is hope for the best.  
**Dr Spitler** And pray.  
**Mr.s Welsh** Oh. That too. But first, I've got to tell Myrtle across the street all about it. *(Exiting)* Hockey! How juvenile! Next thing ya know, grown men will be playing football!... Oh Myrtle— !...  
*(Lights transition to main stage. Wilbur is seated in a chair, covered in a quilt. Susan is at his side)*

**Susan** Wilbur... Wilbur... wake up son. Wilbur, it's Mother dear... time to wake up now.  
**Wilbur** *(His eyes flutter open and his hand goes to his jaw. With great difficulty...)* Mo-mother...  
**Susan** Oh my dear, there you are at last! Now, you mustn't talk, son. Oh, that must hurt something awful. The doctor's been putting iodine and sulphur on these gums; you lost a bit of blood and teeth there.

**Wilbur** I'm all right, Mother. How... how long?  
**Susan** It happened yesterday. You've been out all night and half the day. My brave boy, you hardly winced when it happened. *(Weakly he tries to sit up)* Now, now, you must lie still. I'm going to let the others know you're awake at last. Then I'll bring you some nice broth; you'll need to regain your strength. *(She kisses him tenderly and exits to the others. Katharine runs to her)*

**Susan** Awake... he's awake at last. I'm going to take him that broth now. *(Katharine looks soberly at the doctor. Then she offers...)*

**Katharine** Mother... mother let me do it please? You and Father, you've been up all night. I want to do it, please?

**Susan** Oh, precious girl, I'm sure your brother would love that.  
*(Katharine begins feeding broth to Wilbur as Susan meets the doctor)*

**Dr Spitler** Any change in him, yet?  
**Susan** Not much... Doctor Spitler, I believe the heart muscle has been damaged b the blow. I'm afraid there's not much I can do for him expect try to fight the infection. He's in God's hands now.  
*(Crying)* Oh, Doctor...

**Susan** Come. I'll pray with you... *(They move to side stage and freeze)*  
**Dr Spitler** *(Feeding Wilbur)* You're doing well, Wil.  
**Katharine** *(Painfully)* 'S good, Kate.  
**Wilbur** If you keep eating like this, you'll be up and about in no time.  
**Katharine** *(Orville enters the room sheepishly, grinning)*

**Orville** Wil, it's time you were up. What a connivin' way to get me to do your chores.  
**Wilbur** *(Tries to smile as Kate feeds him another spoonful)* No more Kate. 'M sorry... it hurts.  
**Katharine** *(Tenderly)* Well, all right but I'll be in later with the rest. *(She takes Orville's hand as she exits, and he squeezes it gratefully)*

**Orville** So... uh... you... you remember this. *(He lays a small helicopter in Wilbur's hand)*  
**Wilbur** It's... it's the...  
**Orville** The whirlybird Father brought from California when we were kids! Remember, when you wound it up it would hover a couple of inches above the table?

**Wilbur** Until it broke...  
**Orville** Yeah! Broke into about a dozen pieces! Well, I... scooped 'em up into a box, it's been on the top shelf all these years.  
**Wilbur** ...wondered what that was...  
**Orville** *(Chuckles)* Yeah, well, I put it back together. Remember, we were going to try to redesign it so we could get it to stay up longer.

**Wilbur** Doezeit work?  
**Orville** Well, no, not yet. That's what I need for you. If we can figure out how to...  
**Wilbur** Orv...I'm awful tired Orv...  
**Orville** Oh yeah...sure...Doc says you need your rest. Well...I'll just set this here. *(He puts the toy on the chair as he stands)* So you can think on it when you wake up...*(He starts to leave)*

**Wilbur** Orv?  
**Orville** *(Turning back quickly)* Yeah?  
**Wilbur** Couldjew stay? Jus' till I fall 'sleep?  
**Orville** What's a matter brother, afraid of the dark! *(Sobering)* Sure...sure Wil, no problem. *(He holds the helicopter and sits down again. Wilbur closes his eyes. During the following song, lights highlight other singers in specials)*

**SONG: "WHAT WOULD I DO WITHOUT YOU?"**

**Orville** What would I do without you my brother?  
What would I do without you?  
Without you, what a dreary world for me!  
My best friend and my co-conspirator.  
You're my mentor, my guide.  
You are the very best I can be.  
You are the one who keeps my feet  
On the ground.  
When my thoughts fly too high, you  
Help me to reach the sky!

**Kate & Orv**  
**Susan & Orv** What would I do without you my brother?  
That's a thought I can't bear! (*Kate goes to Susan*)  
Wil, whatever you ask of me.  
(We ask you Lord...)  
Any trial, any task of me...  
(...save our son)  
....I will do! Be strong brother, and live  
(God's will be done!)

**Orv & Family** I give to you now my most solemn vow,  
(We) (Our)  
That I'll stand beside you as I have breath!  
(We'll) (Together) (We)  
And whatever the dream  
We will make it come true, (*Orville:*) me and you...  
So dream and live!  
(*Music segues to underscore the following*)

(*Blackout*)

(*Lighting special up on Docent*)

**Docent** While he was recovering, Wilbur had plenty of time to think. Like most of us, he wondered what was in store for his life. What is the right path to choose? How should life be lived? These are good questions for all of us to ask... In due course, the brothers found their path to the future...  
(*As lights rise, Mrs. Welsh meets Katharine in the "street"*)

**SCENE 3: JUST OUTSIDE WRIGHT BICYCLE SHOP & INTERIOR**

**Mr.s Welsh** Oh, yoo hoo! Katharine, dear! How is your poor, dear brother, Wilbur? I heard he was practically at death's door!

**Katharine** That was many weeks ago, Mr.s. Welsh. He's fine now.

**Mr.s Welsh** Really?! I hadn't heard.

**Katharine** Mother says it's practically a miracle!

**Mr.s Welsh** I should say so!

**Katharine** And in fact, they're planning to start a new business. Good day! (*Exits*)

**Mr.s. Welsh** A new business!? A new business!? How come I didn't hear about this?!  
(*She exits opposite direction as Wright brothers appear*)

**Wilbur** What? Bicycles?!

**Orville** It's the latest thing, I'm telling you! Bicycles! Now the town folk are gonna start buying them, right?

**Wilbur** I suppose so.

**Orville** But they're a new invention— brand new. And their design isn't quite perfected. So they'll break down. And nobody can fix'em.

**Wilbur** So?

**Orville** So, look at this, Wil, just look! *(He hands the paper he's hiding to Wilbur)*

**Wilbur** It's a handbill.

**Orville** It says that Sherman's Bakery is closing their doors... going out of business... for good! You know, the bakery on Main Street, right next to the undertaker's. It's a prime location, Wil! You see what I'm getting at, don't you?

**Wilbur** We're... we're going to become bakers?

**Orville** Yeah... what?! *(Wilbur laughs)* Very funny, come on, quit kiddin' will ya! This could be our future, Wil!

**Wilbur** Cashing in on the bicycle craze? Orville, next time you get one of these brainstorm, would you at least give me a little warning so I can ease into the idea gentle-like?

**Orville** You... you don't like it?

**Wilbur** Well, it's a though I suppose, but Orv, we don't have the least little idea how to go about this.

**Orville** Look, if we rent the bakery, we'll have the location, we already have most of the tools, we have the know-how and what we don't know, we'll learn! And we won't just be fixin' bikes, Wil; I've contacted the Springfield Bicycle Company, they're going to let us be their official parts distributor in this county. And if we manage to sell a few of their top-line bicycles, we can make a tidy profit!

**Wilbur** I don't suppose you've come up with a name for this grand enterprise.

**Orville** "Course I have! *(Dreamily)* "The Wright Cycle Company." It sounds great, doesn't it?

**Wilbur** What it sounds like, dear brother, is a lot of work!

*(Blackout)*

*(Lighting special rises on Docent, who changes into "barker/vendor" guise)*

**Docent** The bicycle mania firmly established the Wright Brothers' Bicycle Shop. Their mechanical abilities improved as business increased. And the young men's curiosity about how things worked also increased. In 1893, the World's Fair beckoned the young men with tantalizing new curiosities...

#### SCENE 4: WORLD'S FAIR, CHICAGO, COLUMBIA EXPOSITION OF 1893

*(Storybook may simply be closed, with story title visible, as action is played out in front of book)*

#### **SONG: "WORLD'S FAIR"**

**Barker** Go to the World's Fair, take me to the World's Fair  
The exposition of the century  
We'll see the wonders of science and industry  
We'll even watch them demonstrate electricity  
Go to the World's Fair; take me to the World's Fair  
Chicago is the city for me  
There's no better place top be to find opportunity  
At the dawning of the twentieth century

Ladeez and gentlemen, girls and boys, welcome to the Columbia World Exposition, where your hearts, and— most importantly— things to help you part with a substantial portion of your hard-earned money! Yes, indeed, folks. We have balloon rides, Ferris wheels, roller coasters, and many other rides to frighten you out of you wits. On the more intellectual side, we have symposiums of the great scientists from around the globe, giving fascinating presentations on the latest developments in all areas of scientific knowledge.

**Wilbur** Orville, over there. *(He looks at map)* That way to the hall of Inventions. *(They head on over)*

**Orville** *(Awed)* Wilbur, take a look at this! I can't believe you can light up a whole city like this!

**Wilbur** Come on— let's find the inventors. I hear that they have a boat in here somewhere that has a motor engine that runs on gasoline.

**Orville** *(Incredulous)* A motor, on a boat? Jeepers who ever would'a thought?

**Wilbur** That's what I say! But it might just catch on, you never know. Hey look, here's a picture of it. Gee, that motor looks a lot smaller than I figured it would on such a big boat!

**Orville** Wonder if you could use such a thing on a bicycle, or a kite?

**Wilbur** The bicycle I could see, but the kite... what for?  
**Orville** Oh, I don't know, it's an idea, that's all. Wonder how you make an engine in the first place.  
**Wilbur** I bet mother could have figured it out. *(They sigh, lost in thought until vendors interrupt)*  
**Vendor 1** Get your Cracker Jacks here. New, delicious, caramel popcorn with peanuts for extra crunch. And a spectacular toy surprise in every pack!  
**Vendor 2** Frankfurters! Hot and delicious Frankfurters! A delectable new tidbit from Germany! A treat to titillate and tantalize yer taste buds; try it today! Get yer chees and chili on top!  
**Vendor 3** Juicy Fruit Gum, get your new Juicy Fruit Gum!  
**Orville** Hey! That one I've heard of!  
**Vendor 3** 'Course ya have, sonny-boy. Originally from the deep, dark jungles of South America, the long lasting taste of Juicy Fruit Gum. Heightens the health and sweetens the breath, too.  
**Orville** How much?  
**Vendor 3** Just a penny! Lasts all day!  
**Orville** Let's buy some. *(They do, and stuff it in their mouth)*  
**Wilbur** This is the best stuff I've ever tasted. Let's get some for Katharine! *(He buys some more)*  
*(They begin walking)*  
**Telegraph Demonstrator** Take a look, young man. No need to say a word. You can now transport your thoughts with this ingenious machine. Each and every letter has its own sounds. Put those letter sounds together and you have words. Put those words together and you have sentences – easy as that! It's the future of long distance communication. You can talk to people around the world.  
*(They move on to kinetograph demonstration)*  
**Kinetograph Demonstrator** Go ahead. Give it a try! The pictures flip like a deck of cards in rapid succession giving the illusion of a non-stop moving picture.  
**Orville** *(Spotting a large poster)* Hey, over there is a series of lectures on flying machines. That might be interesting. Some fellow named...Octave Chanute is leading it. Ha! What a name!  
**Wilbur** Octave Chanute? I've heard that name before; in fact I've read some of his articles on heavier-than-air flying machines.  
**Orville** Aren't all flying machines heavier than air?  
**Wilbur** No, it...it means machines that don't depend on a balloon to lift them and keep them in the air. I've gotta hear this guy! *(He heads off stage towards poster)*  
**Orville** But, it's nearly 5:00. We're supposed to meet Father and Katharine for supper.  
**Wilbur** Who can think of food at a time like this? This flying is amazing stuff, Orv, the stuff of dreams.  
**Orville** Dreams, huh? Lead on, brother, I'm right beside ya! *(They exit through curtain)*

### **SONG: "WORLD'S FAIR" (Reprise)**

**Ensemble** Go to the World's Fair, take me to the World's Fair.  
The exposition of the century.  
We'll see the wonders of science and industry,  
We'll even see the latest in cartography  
Go to the World's Fair, take me to the World's Fair.  
Chicago is the city for me.  
There's no better place to be to find opportunity  
At the dawning of the twentieth,  
The dawning of the twentieth,  
The dawning of the twentieth century.  
*(Music segues 25 seconds to next scene)*  
*(Lighting transitions to:)*

### **SCENE 5: THE WRIGHT BICYCLE SHOP (INTERIOR) / MUSEUM**

**Orville** I tell ya! I just can't get over the amazing things we saw at the fair. All those glider designs that that Octave Chanute fellow was showing, why he made our kite experiments look like child's play! *(Music ends)*  
**Wilbur** We had to start somewhere, Orville. Every major invention started with small steps, not giant

leaps. The more we play with our design of a kite wing, the more I'm convinced that manned flight is a real possibility; but figuring out how wing design effects flight is a mystery that'll take a lot of research to solve.

**Orville** Well, when we do solve it, you can bet that I'll be the first to volunteer to go up! Like that fellow with the glider that Chanute spoke about, what was his name?

**Wilbur** Otto Lilienthal.

**Orville** Right! He's been up, not once, but twice, hundreds of times, can you imagine? What a feeling that would be, nothing holding you to the ground. *(He spreads his arms like a little kid playing airplane and darts about the stage still talking, not paying attention to anything)* The wind, coming at you, cool and easy while you looked down at the countryside! Why, you'd feel free as a bird!

*(He arrives at the shop and nearly collides with a startled Charlie)*

**Wilbur** Holy cow Orv, are you trying to mow down our customers?

**Orville** Oh, ha ha, sorry! *(He grabs Charlie's hand and shakes it vigorously)*

**Charlie** *(Uncomfortably)* You, you own this shop? You're the Wright Brothers?

**Orville** Wright, that's right, we're Wright, right? *(He grins)*

**Wilbur** Never mind him, he's the black sheep. I'm Wilbur Wright and this is my "unfortunate" brother Orville.

**Charlie** Oh, ha ha! *(He attempts a laugh)* Right...I mean...uh, I'm Charlie, Charlie Taylor. I, uh, I heard you were looking for help in your shop.

**Orville** Oh we are, we are! Business is really booming!

**Wilbur** So, tell me what you know about bicycles Charlie.

**Charlie** Not that much actually, but I know about mechanics in general. I've owned my own shop, and right now I'm working for Dayton Electric Company as a machinist, but I'm looking for something closer to home; I live not far from here.

**Wilbur** I thought you looked familiar. Well, you sound like the kind of help we could use. The job pays eighteen dollars a week.

**Charlie** That much? Gosh, business must be booming!

**Orville** So, when can you start old fellow?

**Charlie** Oh, any time, right now if you need me!

**Orville** Terrific! *(They enter the shop)* Well, this is it; look around, make yourself familiar with the place. This is our current job. *(He points to a dismantled bike and hands Charlie a tool apron)* There it is, go to it! *(During the dialogue, Wilbur has been reading the newspaper he had under his arms)* *(Laughs this time for real)* Ha...All right!

**Charlie** Hey, Orville...look at this. *(Wilbur crosses)* That fellow, that Otto Lilienthal we were just talking about...he crashed! He was killed instantly when he lost control of his glider...

**Orville** You're kidding! Jeepers creepers! It says he crashed due to control problems.

**Wilbur** That's what Octave Chanute was saying...that even though Lilienthal had made a number of flights, the way he changed directions by leaning this way or that just wasn't a reliable way to control a heavy glider. That's why Chanute was doing that research. This isn't just some harmless experiment Orv. It could be really dangerous.

**Orville** I know Wilbur, but I know that the answers to every problem are out there, waiting to be found.

Why not by us? Sure there's risk, but the greatest risk in life is not to take any risk at all! That's what Mother taught us, and I bet Otto Lilienthal would agree!

**Wilbur** Lilienthal is dead, and Mother would have also reminded you that there is such a thing as unacceptable risks. You mustn't waste your life in vain pursuits, Orv...Still, if we do the research, plan carefully, do it right the first time...

**Orville** Then we'd make Mother really proud!

**Wilbur** *(Looking to heaven)* She is proud, Orville. Right! *(He shoves things about the table just like Susan used to do)* Enough talk, time to build us a glider!

**Orville** Whoo hooo! Yes! Now the way I see it, we need to deal with three problems: we need wings for lift, a steady wind, and a way to control turns.

**Wilbur** True! Without control, we're just flying kites! *(He takes a large roll of paper and starts drawing)*

**Orville** Birds make it look so easy; they turn their wings a little, their whole body follows. They drop their tails and they can slow down and stop on a dime. How do they do that?

*(Wilbur stands up suddenly puzzling, looking into space)*

**Orville** What's a matter Wil, why'd you stop? Are you stuck or something?

**Wilbur** No...I'm...I'm thinking about what you just said. *(He look surprised)* You may have just

stumbled onto something; I think it might solve one of our problems! *(He extends his arms wide to demonstrate)* Look Orville, if a bird twists his wing like this, he turns to the left. It's like he warps his wings to turn. One side goes up, the other automatically goes down. The bird turns effortlessly, without even thinking. If it works for a bird, why not for our glider?

**Charlie** *(Listening in, he finally speaks up)* Listen....excuse me for saying so, seeing as how you're my bosses and all, but...do you know how nuts you both sound? You're talking about doing something that even our government scientists can't figure out.

**Orville** Being crazy never stopped us before.

**Charlie** Have you two ever heard of Charles Langley? He got something like...fifty grand from the government to develop a flying machine and he ain't come up with nothin' yet.

**Wilbur** And...?

**Charlie** And even Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell have been trying to build a flying machine. Now if they can't do it, with all their brains and their millions of dollars, what makes you think you can?

**Wilbur** Hey, Orville, looks like we've hired a thinker here, he's got all the facts and figures down.

**Charlie** Listen to me fellas...that Otto Lilienthal guy, he should have been happy eating his Bratwurst, but no, he...he has to get himself killed.

**Orville** You're a smart man Charlie, wanting to keep your bosses alive and keep yourself in a job. Why, you might even wind up a partner that way.

**Wilbur** By the way Charlie, how are you at building engines?

**Charlie** Well, I never have before, but I'm sure I could if I had the details. Hey...you don't mean for this...flying gizmo! What for? That would be like puttin' an engine on a kite!

**Orville** Now you got the idea boy!

*(Optional: "Otto Lilienthal" Song sung by Charlie and Docent)*

*(Additional Option: Docent narrates video (improvisation) of flight attempts at museum video screen with "Lilienthal" song as underscore)*

*(Lighting special rises on Docent)*

**Docent** And so the race was on to find out who would be the first to fly. The idea of flight had intrigued mankind from the days of ancient Greece, and probably before that too. Some very interesting techniques were tried – most with tragic results. But, the skeptics and disasters couldn't discourage these bold and sometimes foolish thinkers.

### SONG: "OTTO LILIENTHAL"

**Charlie** Otto Lilienthal, he was in the thrall of flying, gliding,  
Didn't really think about dying.  
Otto Lilienthal, first to be in the hall of fame, he died,  
He couldn't quite control his aeroplane.  
It's not that he was lazy, though people thought he was crazy,  
He couldn't find a consistent way  
To control his glider in any weather  
So thought he would rather  
Shift his balance from side to side.  
Otto Lilienthal was not the first fall from the sky,  
Oh my, many others thought they could fly.  
Laws no one can defy, will assert their presence by and by.  
So you think you wanna fly,  
Did you ever think you might die,  
It's a long way to fall from up there to down here,  
And don't you ever doubt it  
**Charlie** Others came before, and they didn't open any doors,  
**Docent** All they did was make a mess for  
Those around watching on the ground,  
Everyone would be so pleased  
If you really did succeed,  
But if history's any guides, well you're fried.  
In ancient Greece there was a story of feathers,

Two guys used wax to hold some wings together,  
 But disappointingly, they fell into the sea,  
 Sure it's a myth but it just goes to show,  
 That wise men through the ages said to use caution,  
 And faulty logic makes your conclusion a false one.  
 And what about that man who didn't understand,  
 That flapping wings on a big machine cannot do a thing  
 To lift any plane from the ground to the sky,  
 Hist'ry doesn't lie, so learn a lesson now before it's too late.  
 Everyone who has tried ended up a failure  
 Don't be mulish,  
 Everybody thinks you're foolish.  
 Otto Lilienthal sacrificed all too soon,  
 He met his doom, you ain't gonna zoom,  
 This ain't gonna work for you. Yeah!  
*(Musical segue back into next scene)*

**Charlie  
 Docent**

**Charlie & Docent**

*(Lighting transitions to)*

### SCENE 6: THE WRIGHT HOME

**Docent** *(As mailman)* Special delivery, Katharine...  
*(Katharine is receiving a large stack of letters from a mailman. She hands him a few, mimes a thank you, good-bye, and he exits. She starts sorting through the pile as Orville runs up)*

**Orville** That the mail Kate? Anything for me?  
**Katharine** Just a lot of bills for you and Wilbur. *(She hands him a bunch and continues through the stack)*  
*(Music ends)*

**Orville** *(Dejected)* Bills huh?...*(He looks through them quickly, then back to her)* But, isn't there anything else? It...it wouldn't look like a bill...

**Katharine** There's nothing else here. Would it be from someone in particular?  
*(Wilbur unseen by Orville)*

**Orville** *(Reluctantly)* Well...yes...a Mr. Octave Chanute.  
**Wilbur** *(Startling Orville)* Octave Chanute!  
**Katharine** The Octave Chanute? That silly fellow that you two went on and on about after the World's Fair?  
**Orville** He's not a silly fellow! I'll have you know that he happens to be a brilliant engineer, regarded by many as the foremost authority on the dynamics of manned flight!

**Katharine** Really...has he ever flown himself?  
**Orville** No...  
**Katharine** *(Smugly)* I rest my case!  
**Wilbur** What makes you think Octave Chanute would be bothered writing us Orv?  
**Orville** Because...*(Reluctantly)* Because I wrote to him. I...told him a bit about our experiments and our glider design *(Quickly so Wilbur won't be alarmed)* no details of course! And I asked him for advice on the best location to launch our test flights.  
**Wilbur** I already made inquiries with the National Weather Service about that.  
**Orville** I know, but I just thought we could use his input.  
**Wilbur** you should have told me before you mailed that letter Orv, so I could approve it. This is supposed to be kept under wraps.  
**Orville** Well, I have the letter right here; well, a draft of fit, at least. *(He pulls a worn piece of paper from his pocket and hands it to Wilbur; who fumbles around for his eyeglasses)*

**Katharine** I'll read it if you like, Will. *(He hands it to her. She reads:)* Dear Mr.. Chanute: My name is Orville Wright of Dayton Ohio. My Brother Wilbur and I were privileged to attend your lecture on the development and difficulties of manned flight last year at the Chicago Exposition. For some years we have been afflicted with the belief that flight is possible to man. Our disease has increased in severity and we feel that it will soon cost us an increased amount of money if not our very lives. We have been trying to arrange our affairs in such a way that we can devote our entire time from the months of September through January to experiment in this field. We would be particularly thankful for advice as to a suitable locality with dependable winds of about fifteen miles per hour, without rain or much inclement weather...It...it ends there.

**Orville** *(Taking it back from her)* Well, that's the gist of it, like I said, no details...



**Katharine** And just what was that part about your experiments costing you your life?! This letter sounds awfully fatalistic!

**Orville** Now Kate...

**Katharine** Don't "Now Kate" me! What did you mean!?

*(Mailman interrupts)*

**Mailman** Uh, 'scuse me Miss Wright. Just found this letter. I couldn't read it rightly because the script looks a little foreign...

**Orville** *(Grabbing letter)* It is...it is Will! It's from him! Ha! *(He starts ripping it open)* And you thought he'd be bothered...*(He reads excitedly)*

**Wilbur** *(Getting excited himself)* Well, what does it say?

**Orville** Dear Mr.. Wright: Though I have received a good many letters from crackpots and would be conquerors-of-the-heavens, the sincerity and resolve by which you expressed your intentions has caused me to believe that you and your brother are genuine men of science and therefore worthy of any small help or advice that I can bestow. Chicago, of course, has the dependable wind currents that you desire, but in my humble opinion the area just outside of the small town of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, would be a more congenial locale. It has not only consistent wind velocity, but a sandy, hill terrain with only short scrub vegetation, which would be conducive to an easy, unencumbered take off and cushioned landing.

**Mailman** *(Befuddled, scratching his head)* Eh? That fella speakin' English? What does he mean?

**Orville** *(The boys grin at each other)* It means, we're going flying! It also says here that the contact man there is the local postmaster, Bill Tate. Right! *(He starts to the house followed by Wilbur)* You send a telegram to this Tate fellow – *(He hands Wilbur the letter)* – to tell him when we'll be there and I'll get the suitcases...

**Wilbur** I should write and thank Mr.. Chanute.

**Orville** Oh sure. And let's see, we've got that parts list, where'd we put that?

*(Mailman leaves, scratches his head)*

**Katharine** Wait! Telegrams, suitcases; you two get a letter and you're leaving, just like that?!

**Wilbur** Hardly "just like that" Kate. We've been working on this well over a year.

**Katharine** But it's dangerous! And who's going to run the shop while you're gone?

**Orville** It's the off season; Charlie can run it.

**Katharine** Charlie!

**Orville** Sure, what's wrong with Charlie?

**Katharine** Aside from the fact that he's uneducated, smokes those smelly cigars incessantly, and thinks he knows-it-all, you mean?

**Orville** He does know-it-all, about mechanics anyway. Besides, who else would run the business?

**Katharine** What about me?

**Orville** *(Unbelieving)* You? You're a girl! *(Katharine's face turns to stone and she huffs past him, crossing the stage)*

**Orville** *(To Wilbur)* What? What did I say?

**Wilbur** *(Glancing with understanding at Katharine, he says to Orville:)* *(Sigh)* Look, I think that parts list is at the shop. We have the metal fasteners and fittings and spools of 15 gauge wire, but we need the satin fabric for the wings...

**Orville** We can find that in Cincinnati and I can pick up that light-weight spruce for the frame in Chicago. You go ahead and scout out the location, and I'll follow with the rest of the supplies. Let me get that list. *(He exits)*

**Wilbur** *(He crosses to his sister)* Kate...Kate, I know you don't want us to leave but...

**Katharine** Not want you to leave! Of course I want you to leave. It'll be refreshing to have a little peace and quiet around here for a change; I'll be able to hear myself think!

**Wilbur** *(Chuckles, then sobers)* Kate...about the shop and all, well, Orville didn't mean what he said. I mean, it's true that you're a girl, but we both know that you're more than capable of watching things. It's just that Charlie's a good fellow really. Oh, he's rough around the edges, but the customers like him, so it's just good business sense to...

**Katharine** *(Turning to him)* Business sense? Since when did you two have business sense? Which reminds me...*(She draws a small bank book from her pocket, handing it to Wilbur)*...here. There's Two Hundred Dollars in there; I'll withdraw it from the bank first thing tomorrow.

**Wilbur** But Kate, isn't this your tuition money?

**Katharine** Yes, but *(Wilbur starts to protest)* a semester or two without books won't kill me. Look, you two already owe so many creditors – besides, Cincinnati, Chicago, that Kitty...bird place; just how

were you two planning on getting everywhere? *(She chuckles)* Were you going to fly?!  
*(Musical segue "Otto Lilienthal" begins)*

**Wilbur** I appreciate this Kate, really. And I promise you; you'll get this back just as soon as we...  
**Katharine** Well, you'd better. Just make sure you don't go and get yourself killed. I'm investing in you staying alive!  
*(Wilbur hugs Katharine and exits to the house. Katharine watches him with a smile, then her face sobers with worry)*  
*(Black out)*  
*(Lighting special up on Docent, who assumes Octave Chanute guise)*  
**Docent** And so the brothers made their way to a place with an ominous name: Kill Devil Hill. This was an area at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, where the winds constantly blew, making it an ideal location for the Wright's experiments...  
*(Lighting transitions to)*

## SCENE 7: DUNES OF KITTY HAWK/ WRIGHT BICYCLE SHOP

*(Wilbur is seated on a camping stool, writing on a tablet. Orville arrives, suitcases in hand)*  
**Orville** Wilbur!  
**Wilbur** Orville! *(He stands)* You made it! I thought you'd never get here!  
**Orville** I didn't either! I arrived in town yesterday and started asking how to get here. It may be only seven miles away, but it might as well have been another country. Whenever I asked for directions to Kill Devil hill, all I got was blank stares and dumb looks. *(He demonstrates, they both start laughing)* I swear, nobody in Kitty Hawk knows where this place is!  
*(Music ends)*  
**Wilbur** I got news for you, brother, nobody anywhere else knows where Kitty Hawk is!  
**Orville** Well, maybe we'll be the ones to put it on the map!  
**Wilbur** Maybe! So, how'd you find me?  
**Orville** I ran into Bill Tate and he pointed the way. I managed to just catch the last ferry over.  
**Wilbur** I asked him to watch for you. He didn't come over too? He's been a big help to me.  
**Orville** No. But he'll be over early tomorrow with all the supplies and equipment. We had to bribe the ferryman to make a special early crossing.  
**Wilbur** Bribe, eh? How much did that cost?  
**Orville** Plenty! So, you worked out that wing problem yet? Is that what you were working on there?  
*(He refers to a paper pad)*  
*(Wilbur pours Orville a cup of coffee and they sit down)*  
**Wilbur** Oh...no, I was just writing Kate. I promised I would write her often, but so far I haven't much to say.  
**Orville** Well, read what you've got so far.  
*(Musical underscore begins)*  
**Wilbur** All right. "Dear Katharine, here is the letter I promised you, though I must admit that nothing much has happened here so far. I continue to...  
*(Lights come up on the other side of the stage where Katharine sits in a chair reading the letter)*  
**Katharine** .... "to research and refine the plans for the glider while waiting for Orville's arrival. I hope that you and Father are well. I think you and home mostly at night. Nighttimes here have proved to be most disagreeable; last night I was chilled to the bone. A cold nor'easter is blowing, and though I have two blankets, I freeze most every night. The wind blows over my head, so I pull the blankets up, then when my feet freeze, I pull them down. I keep this up all night, and in the morning, I am hardly able to tell where I'm at in the bedclothes." *(Kate looks up)* How awful! I'll have to send them more blankets – long ones!...  
*(Continuing)* "The sand is everywhere, dense clouds of it blow up suddenly and then it's completely gone in a few hours. I am amazed how nearly it almost blinds me. This is what I imagine the Sahara to be like. *(Looking up again, worried)* This is not to be believed! What a terrible place! I'm sure the letter must get better...*(She continues)* The mosquitoes are unbelievable. They chewed clean through my underwear and socks. Lumps began swelling all over my body...misery."  
*(Lights up quickly on tent area)*  
**Orville** Mosquitoes? There's mosquitoes here? I haven't seen any!

**Wilbur** Big as my hand! Just wait till the sun goes down.  
**Orville** Sounds lousy! Look, so far this letter is all doom and gloom. You better put something hopeful in it, you know what a worrier Kate is.

**Wilbur** Well, tell me what to write, you're better at that sort of thing.  
**Orville** All right. Put this: Actually, though, this place is grand. The sunset...  
*(Lights shift again to other side of stage)*

**Katharine** "...is the prettiest I have ever seen. The moon rises in much the same style, and it lights up this pile of sand almost like day. I read my watch at all hours of the night without the aid of any other light than the stars shining brightly through the canvas of the tent."  
*(Lights up on both sides)*

**Orville** She'll love that last part. Do you think it'll soften her up a bit?  
**Katharine** Orville must have arrived and added that part. Wilbur never waxes poetic like that, Wilbur always tells the truth!

**Wilbur** It's a masterpiece, brother, a work of art. Of course, you haven't been here at night yet.  
**Orville** I have an imagination. Speaking of which, I'm tired, let's call it a night.  
**Wilbur** All right, I can finish this up in the morning. Besides, we'd better turn in before the mosquitoes find us.  
*(He smiles wickedly as Orville slaps at a mosquito. They go into the tent)*  
*(Music ends after 10 seconds)*  
*(Lights off on tent side)*

**Katharine** This was written. "By the way, Orville has arrived at last." *(To Father)* I knew it! "Word has spread among the town folk that we are making a flying machine. Some have come to scoff, but they keep their distance and don't bother us much. Folks around here believe in a good God, a hot hell, and more than anything else...that the same good God did not intend that man should ever fly. I hope we can prove them wrong." *(Sighing)* It ends there. Why would anyone want to endure such hardships?!....  
*(Exits)*  
*(Lighting special up on Docent)*

**Docent** *(To audience)* But, isn't it true that when we are passionate about something – when we are called to something, we will endure all obstacles? This was certainly true for the Wright brothers. And their hardships taught them so much...  
*(Lighting transitions to:)*

## SCENE 8: THE WRIGHT BICYCLE SHOP / JUST OUTSIDE

*(Orville and Wilbur run tests with a wind tunnel by using a noisy motor-driven fan and model planes, which seem to be "flying")*  
*(Motor sound effect)*  
*(Working fan)* Enter into log.  
**Orville** *(Writing info in a journal)* Enter into log.  
**Wilbur** Test number 184, four-inch wing, monoplane.  
**Orville** Got it. Ready to test?  
**Orville** Wait, let me adjust this blade angle. All right, ready. Step aside. *(Wilbur moves out and runs into Mrs. Welsh who is with Mrs. Dean)*

**Mrs. Welsh** Charlie? *(Startled)* Oh, Wilbur! Wilbur Wright! Why – what are you doing here? Is that Orville there?

**Wilbur** Yes, ma'am. Sorry, I didn't see you. Well, we're...we're back, Ma'am. The weather got rough, so we decided to come home and run some more tests.

**Mrs. Welsh** Oh, what a shame, so that flying contraption of yours didn't work. Well, it was the hand of Providence, Wilbur. But you've got a nice little business and a comfortable life. Don't worry, my boy, no one will think any less of you if you give up.

**Wilbur** Actually Mrs. Welch, we did fly; in fact, we actually set some gliding records – four-hundred feet and two minutes in the air.

**Mrs. Welsh** Really?

**Wilbur** Yes, really. And next season, when the weather's good again, and we've raised the money, we'll be right back at Kitty Hawk, trying to better those records.