



Paul DiLella

Norman Maine Publishing

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Norman Maine Publishing

P.O. Box 1400

Tallevast, FL 34270

Wingin' It

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To
*Dr. Gerry F. Reidenbaugh, Chairman,
Syracuse University Drama Department,
who first took me under his wing.*

Wingin' It

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Wingin' It had a staged reading October 8, 2010 at Pahrump Valley High School in Pahrump, NV: Paul DiLella, director.

LOTTA COLLATTA: Naomi Argabright

"WRONG WAY" WILMA WILLETT: Ashley Brewer

ALEX MUNEZ: Tyler Harris

CARL STOWE: Jordan Leach

GUIDO PACHELLI/GARY ORCHARD: Elijah Quinonez

ELLIE NICKLES: Dylin Smotherman

HOVER HOOVER: Alexandra Bethencourt

PASSENGER: Katie Fairchild

BLINKA NOYES/LUNA DORITTO: Nikki Gradnego

BETHANY GIBBS: Jazmine Hawes

FORTUNA: Cassi Jones

HARRIET B. STOWE: Erika Martinez

BINGO: Brandy Mendoza

DEVON LEWIS/MONSTER: Micah Nauck

CONCHETTA MUNEZ: Amber Phillips

DANNY DIVER: Danny Steele

Wingin' It

FARCE/SPOOF. RearWay Air is known for having the most crashes, accidents, canceled and delayed flights, and lost luggage. Flights depart whenever the pilot shows up, the bottled water tastes like kerosene, and people who complain have been known to disappear. But who cares when you're flying to Vegas, right? On this ill-fated RearWay Airlines Flight 247 to Las Vegas, the passengers have to cope with a manic-depressive pilot, dodge a heat-seeking missile, survive a wing fire, and ignore the monster looming on the wing. Then when a clown hijacks the plane and his stink bomb clown nose accidentally goes off rendering the pilot and navigator unconscious, the passengers find themselves with no pilot, landing gear, radio, or GPS. Luckily, a speed-reader is onboard, but he has just minutes to read two flight manuals and learn how to fly the plane before it crashes. And if that isn't bad enough, the stewardess starts to threaten passengers with a plastic spork and a passenger becomes possessed by an alien named Kanu! Audiences will love this spoof of airplane disaster movies.

Performance Time: Approximately 60 minutes.

Characters

(3 M, 6 F, 7 flexible, opt. extras)

(With doubling: 3 M, 5 F, 6 flexible)

BINGO: Airline passenger and clown; wears full clown makeup and a clown costume; flexible.

DANNY DIVER: Mensa member who is flying to Las Vegas to participate in the World Series of Poker tournament; flexible. Note: "Daniella" if female.

FORTUNA: Psychic flying to Las Vega to attend a psychic convention; female.

CONCHETTA MUNEZ: Newlywed plane passenger; wears a T-shirt that reads, "Daughters of the American Revolution" on the front with a sign on her back that reads, "Just Married"; female.

ALEX MUNEZ: Conchetta's husband; has a trail of cans tied to his backside.

HARRIET B. STOWE: Airline passenger who thinks there is a monster on the wing; female.

CARL STOWE: Harriet's husband.

WILLIE WILLETT: Manic-depressive airline pilot who loves to play practical jokes; wears a pilot's uniform; flexible. Note: "Wilma" if female.

HOVER HOOVER: Airline navigator who loves to play practical jokes; wears an airline uniform; flexible.

LOTTA COLLATTA: Airline stewardess and former Las Vegas showgirl; wears an airline stewardess uniform.

BETHANY GIBBS: RearWay Airline no-nonsense ticket agent; wears an airline uniform; female.

GUIDO PACHELLI/GARY ORCHARD: Insurance agent and ground crew guy; Guido wears a suit coat and Gary wears a flight crew coat; male. Note: Can be played by one or two actors.

DEVON LEWIS: Pastor who gives Passengers blessings before boarding RearWay airplanes; flexible. Note: "Devona" if female.

ELLIE NICKLES: Airline security agent; flexible.

BLINKA NOYES/LUNA DORITITO: Air-traffic controllers; female.

MONSTER: Monster on the wing of the plane; wears all black and a colorful, hideous mask; non-speaking.

EXTRAS (opt.): As Airline Passengers.

Options for Doubling

MONSTER/DEVON (flexible)

BETHANNY GIBBS/ BLINKA NOYES/ LUNA DORITITO
(female)

Setting

Airport. Cockpit and cabin of a RearWay airplane.

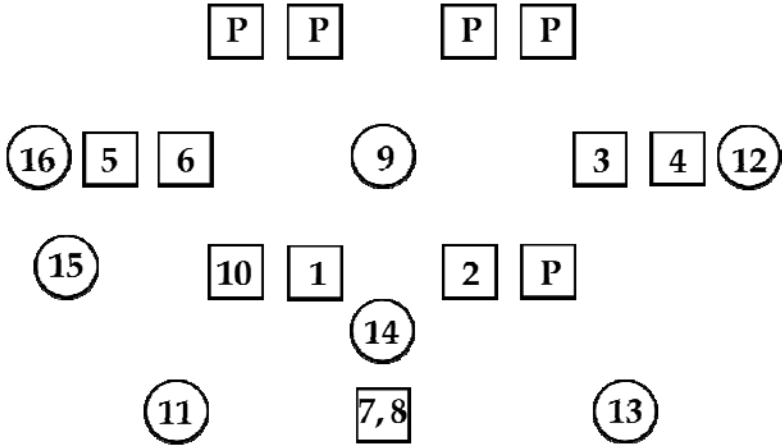
Set

The set may be as simple or as elaborate as your budget allows.

Airport. A sign reads, “[Pahrump] International Airport.” Below the apron, there is a small counter with a desk phone on it. Behind the counter is a set of steps to the main stage. A sign on the counter reads, “Warning: Every flight is D.O.A. (Depends On Aircraft).” Another sign reads, “Arrival/Departure Times D.O.P.E. (Depends On Pilot’s Energy).” At SL is a doorframe that represents the security scanner each passenger must pass through. The security check could be a door frame with black full-length curtains.

Plane cockpit and cabin. The plane’s cockpit is located below the apron where the airport counter had been located. Onstage, there are three sets of three chairs SR, CS, and SL with room for aisles. Seats behind these chairs are on platforms. All chairs have seatbelts. If time, money, or resources permit, the backdrop of a sky can be added or a slide show of an airplane diving or climbing. Optional mock wings can be made from cardboard or Styrofoam. Note: If the play is performed on the floor, then all of the chairs behind the counter need to be on platforms. Platforms are needed so that the audience can see all of the passengers.

Sample Set



1. Bingo
 2. Fortuna
 3. Alex Munez
 4. Conchetta Munez
 5. Harriet Stowe
 6. Carl Stowe
 7. Hover Hoover
 8. Willie Willett
 9. Lotta Collatta
 10. Danny Diver
 11. Guido/Gary
 12. Ellie Nickles
 13. Devon Lewis
 14. Bethany Gibbs
 15. Blinka/Luna
 16. Monster
- P=Passengers (opt. extras)

Props

Trail of cans
Sign that reads, "[Pahrump]
International Airport"
Counter sign that reads,
"Warning: Every flight is
D.O.A. (Depends on Aircraft)"
Sign that reads,
"Arrival/Departure Times
D.O.P.E. (Depends on Pilot's
Energy"
Airline tickets
Boarding passes
Ticket with gag, for Bingo
Toolkit
Briefcase, for Willie
Briefcase, for Hover
Flight charts
"Lucky" stuffed animal
Life insurance pamphlets
2 Signal cones
Deck of tarot cards
Assorted carry-on luggage for
Passengers
Oxygen mask
Rolls of duct tape
Water cart or rolling tray
Bottles of water
Flight manifest
Canister
2 Fake snakes
Vegas showgirl outfit, for
Lotta
Bag of Twinkies
Video game control stick
Novel
Clown nose
Pill cup
2 Thick flight manuals
Blackberry or similar
electronic device
Wet compresses or rags
Spork
Piece of paper
Headphones
iPod
Notepad
Bible
Flight charts
Confetti
Purse

Special Effects

Sound effects enhance the limited set and create the illusion of a flying plane. In addition, the reactions of the passengers to the turbulence caused by the plane banking, diving, and climbing enhance the reality of the experience for the audience. When Fortuna becomes possessed, the cabin lights flicker and go out. After the alien leaves Fortuna's body, the lights flicker again and then stay on. Backlighting Fortuna will give her an eerie glow.

Airport noise (people walking, talking, landing/ departing aircraft)

Announcement, "RearWay Airlines Flight 1245 to Beatty has been canceled" or "RearWay Airlines Flight 625 from Las Vegas has been delayed."

Announcement, "RearWay Airlines Flight 247 is ready for boarding. Please show your boarding pass as you enter."

Vegas show music

Plane engines starting

Ground traffic dispatcher guiding airplane

Plane engines preparing for takeoff

Aircraft gathering speed

Plane lifting off

Loud clank

Plane nose-diving

Plane gaining altitude

Sound of plane righting itself

Engine sputtering and dying

Overly romantic music

Sounds of a fight (punching and crashing)

Radio message, "Flight 247.

This is McCarran Tower."

Machine gun fire

Whine of bomb dropping

Swarming bees

Golfers screaming

"The Ride of the Valkyries"

Radio sputtering/ static

Explosion

Missile turning around

Cloud of smoke

Beethoven's "Song of Joy"

Multicolored flashing lights

Blue light

“You can’t keep
a good clown
down.”

—Bingo

Wingin' It

(AT RISE: Airport. Sounds of typical airport noise is heard: people walking, talking, loudspeaker announcements, landing/ departing aircraft. The following announcement is heard: "RearWay Airlines Flight 1245 to Beatty has been canceled." Bethany Gibbs, a RearWay ticket agent, is setting up the counter for Passengers. Guido Pachelli, an insurance salesman, is standing near the aisle SR waiting to greet incoming Passengers. On the SL side, Pastor Devon Lewis is waiting for boarding Passengers. Ellie Nickles, a security person, is waiting by the security checkpoint. Carrying assorted pieces of carry-on luggage, Passengers enter down the SR aisle in this order starting with Conchetta and Alex Munez; Harriet and Carl Stowe; Danny Diver; Bingo the clown; Fortuna the psychic; and any Extras as Passengers (opt.). Passengers are chattering amongst themselves. Giggling and looking into each other's eyes, Conchetta and Alex Munez approach the counter. A trail of cans is tied to Alex's backside. Conchetta is wearing a T-shirt that reads, "Daughters of the American Revolution" on the front and there is a sign on her back that reads, "Just Married.")

GUIDO: (To Conchetta and Alex.) Good afternoon. You must be newlyweds.

CONCHETTA: You can tell?

GUIDO: That trail of cans kind of gives it away. (Conchetta giggles.) Because, today, as a wedding gift, I'm going to offer you the discount of a lifetime.

ALEX: Oh, yeah?

GUIDO: That's right. For you, today only, I'm going to cut my rate in half. Today, you get flight insurance at my cost.

ALEX: We don't need insurance. Thanks, anyway.

GUIDO: Don't be too hasty. Have you ever flown RearWay Air before?

CONCHETTA: Nope.

ALEX: (To Guido.) Never heard of this airline.

GUIDO: Been in all the papers.

CONCHETTA: Thanks to Mr. Rebates, we found it.

GUIDO: Do you know that RearWay Air has the worst record in the industry?

ALEX: Nope. As long as it flies, I don't care.

CONCHETTA: *(To Guido.)* Got the best prices, though.

GUIDO: Well, you can't beat it for the airline with the most crashes, accidents, canceled and delayed flights, lost luggage, and worst customer service. People who complain have been known to disappear, if you know what I mean.

ALEX: We don't care. We're only going to Vegas.

GUIDO: You may end up in more pieces than you know. That's why you need flight insurance. Honeymoon special. For you, only \$3.95 for every \$10,000 in coverage. Can't beat it. Waddaya say? Deal or no deal?

CONCHETTA: No deal. When I'm with my honey, I'm safe.

ALEX: *(To Guido.)* No deal. Save it for the next sucker.

(Alex and Conchetta approach the counter. Guido greets the next Passenger. One by one, the other Passengers get the same spiel.)

BETHANY: *(To Alex and Conchetta.)* Good afternoon. May I see your ticket?

(Alex can't find their tickets.)

CONCHETTA: *(To Alex.)* Let me help. *(Starts going through Alex's pockets. Bethany looks at her watch. Finally retrieves ticket.)* Here it is.

(Conchetta hands the ticket to Bethany, who looks it over.)

BETHANY: Okay, Mr. and Mrs. Munez, everything's in order. We don't assign seats. We like to watch passengers duke it out for window seats. Your snack is under your seat...if the last person didn't already eat it. Here are your boarding

passes. *(Hands Alex and Conchetta boarding passes.)* Listen to the announcement for boarding.

ALEX: How long will it be?

BETHANY: Could be any time.

CONCHETTA: Soon?

BETHANY: Any time the pilot decides to show up. Have an enjoyable flight. I hope you bought flight insurance... *(Shouts.)* Next! *(As Alex and Conchetta approach the security check, Pastor Lewis blesses them. Alex and Conchetta untie the cans and hand them to Ellie, who discards them. Alex and Conchetta pass through the door scanner. Next in line is Harriet and Carl Stowe.)* Good afternoon. Tickets, please. *(Carl hands over the tickets. Bethany checks them. Reads.)* "Mr. and Mrs. Stowe." Yes, you're on the manifest.

CARL: Say, can you guarantee this flight will make it?

BETHANY: Why do you ask?

HARRIET: We've read some horrible things about this airline.

BETHANY: Well, it's all true. At RearWay Air, we don't hide anything. In fact, the FAA may shut us down any minute, so you'd better take this flight.

CARL: If we die, we'll sue.

BETHANY: All of our customers say that. *(Shouts.)* Next! *(Hands Carl and Harriet their boarding passes. Harriet and Carl walk past Pastor Lewis, who blesses them, and then pass through the security check. To Danny Diver, a Mensa member.)* Good afternoon. Your ticket, please.

(Danny hands Bethany his ticket.)

DANNY: I can tell from the way you're holding the paper, you're bored with your job. The way you lick your lips says you're dying for a smoke. The stale smell from an old nicotine patch says it's not working. The furtive look in your eyes reveals you're paranoid. Something bad is going to happen on this flight, and you don't want to be blamed. Your makeup can't cover the dark circles around your eyes.

You haven't slept in days because you regret breaking up with your boyfriend, and the way you keep touching your nose says your valium is wearing off. I don't have to ask you if I'm right. I'm always right, right?

BETHANY: (*Checking the manifest.*) Right. As far as to the disaster you're alluding to, I haven't the faintest notion what you mean. I do suggest you buy some accident insurance...Mr....Mr. Diver.

DANNY: Flight 247 will make it.

BETHANY: How do you know? You haven't seen the plane...or the pilot.

DANNY: Don't need to. I'll be on board, remember?

BETHANY: As you say, sir. Here's your boarding pass. (*Hands him a boarding pass.*) Have a safe flight.

(Danny does an end-run around Pastor Lewis and walks through the security sensor. Bingo, a clown, is next in line and is in full clown makeup and wearing a clown costume.)

BINGO: I'm here to make sure we have a boatload of laughs on this trip!

BETHANY: It's a plane.

BINGO: Plane, boat, schmoat, who cares? As long as I'm on board, there will be a barrel of laughs!

BETHANY: Sir, you can't board like that.

BINGO: Like what?

BETHANY: Like a clown.

BINGO: I *am* a clown.

BETHANY: Sir, FAA regulations prohibit a passenger from embarking in a guise that hides a person's identity. Besides, you'd scare the little children.

BINGO: I don't see any children on this flight.

BETHANY: They're in the cargo hold...next to the pets. Besides, FAA regulations—

BINGO: Nix your silly regs! What you see is who I am. I always wear a costume and makeup. How else would

anybody know I'm a clown? Do you know how many gigs I've gotten because of this get-up? More than your toes can count, sweetie. If women can wear makeup, so can I. If foreigners can wear their native robes, then I can show off my clown colors. I'm not lethal, baby, trust me. If I can pass through security, then I can board as I am. Deal, sweetie?

BETHANY: I guess. Please give me your ticket.

(Bingo hands his ticket to Bethany and a springy object jets out, startling her.)

BINGO: Gotcha! Told you I'd make you laugh!

BETHANY: You're good to go. I mean, *please* go.

(Bethany waves Bingo off. Bingo chuckles. As Bingo passes Pastor Lewis, he tosses confetti on him and laughs. Bingo approaches the security portal.)

ELLIE: *(To Bingo.)* Sir, I'm going to ask you to remove the nose.

BINGO: Nobody touches the nose. Nobody!

ELLIE: Sir, we can do it the easy way or hard way. Your choice.

BINGO: Are you singling me out because I am anatomically challenged?

ELLIE: Let the courts decide. Give me the nose.

BINGO: No nose.

ELLIE: Sir, it's a good day for a strip search and a cavity probe.

BINGO: Are you prejudiced against clowns? Do you want to risk a lawsuit? Risk your job?

ELLIE: Good point. Pass through.

(Bingo passes through the security door. The security alarm doesn't go off. Bingo laughs and dances a congratulatory jig. He gets in Ellie's face and makes a fart noise or some other obnoxious noise.)

BINGO: That's what you get for being nose-y!

(Bingo storms off. Next in line is Fortuna.)

FORTUNA: *(To Bethany.)* Let me see your hand.

BETHANY: I beg your pardon?

FORTUNA: Your hand, please.

BETHANY: Will I get it back? *(Extends her palm.)*

FORTUNA: *(Points to her palm.)* All these deep lines show you are an old soul.

BETHANY: No, I do dishes a lot. Does that mean I'll be an old maid?

FORTUNA: My dear, you are destined to have three marriages.

BETHANY: Oh, my.

FORTUNA: Six children.

BETHANY: Oh, my.

FORTUNA: Your happiest marriage will be your last...in the prime of life.

BETHANY: Thank goodness. For a minute, I thought I'd be too old to enjoy it.

FORTUNA: When you're 96. A very good year to settle down.

BETHANY: Oh, my!

FORTUNA: I see major changes in—

BETHANY: Don't tell me. Here's your boarding pass. *(Quickly hands Fortuna a boarding pass.)* Say no more!

(Fortuna moves along and nods at Pastor Lewis. Other Passengers stop at the ticket counter but their check-in goes more quickly. As the Passengers check in, stewardess Lotta Collatta tidies up the passenger section. Captain "Wrong Way" Willie Willett boards, carrying a toolkit and a briefcase. He is followed by Hover Hoover, the navigator, who is carrying a briefcase with the flight charts. While Bethany checks in the last of the Passengers, Willie and Hover talk. When Bethany is finished checking in Passengers, she exits.)

Willie and Hover go down the steps to the ticket counter, which is now the flight cockpit. Note: The actors remove the counter signs, phone, and other objects signifying a ticket counter. Willie takes his lucky stuffed animal out of his briefcase and sets it on the plane's instrument panel. Pastor Lewis exits. Guido becomes Gary Orchard, ground crew traffic man, by changing his coat and picking up two signal cones. The cleared Passengers huddle SL. When everyone has passed through security, we hear the following announcement: "RearWay Flight 247 is ready for boarding. Please show your boarding pass as you enter." The Passengers flash their boarding passes to Ellie and board. Alex and Conchetta board quickly while the Stowes board slowly. Danny chooses the safest seat. Fortuna takes out a deck of cards and picks one to indicate to her which seat to take. Bingo is the last to board. Ellie exits. Lotta walks around, checking that Passengers have stowed their carry-ons and fastened their seatbelts. Satisfied, Lotta goes downstage, faces the Passengers, and drapes an oxygen mask around her neck.)

LOTTA: *(To Passengers.)* Good afternoon. On behalf of RearWay Air, I want to welcome you to Flight 247, nonstop service from [Pahrump, Nevada], to Las Vegas. Would you please take a moment to review our emergency procedures? *[Or insert a different departure location.]* *(Vegas show music starts. As Lotta gives her safety spiel, she begins to remove her stewardess uniform to reveal a Vegas showgirl type outfit underneath. Lotta removes her airline hat, tosses it, and then dons a Vegas showgirl headdress. She removes her uniform, revealing a showgirl type outfit underneath. She flings her uniform and it lands on Carl, who is obviously enjoying her showgirl act. Lotta unties her airline scarf and tosses it. In her Vegas showgirl outfit, she dances up and down the aisle, taking part of her safety spiel to different Passengers. Clumsily demonstrates.)* Should the cabin experience a sudden loss in pressure, an oxygen mask will drop from the cabin roof. Pull the elastic band over your head and put your face in the mask. Take slow, deep breaths. In case the oxygen malfunctions, press the call

button located above your seat. In the event the stewardess or crew are incapacitated, say a prayer and— *(Puts two fingers to her lips and touches her butt.)* ksssss your assss-sets goodbye. Should we have a mechanical malfunction over water, your seat will act as a flotation device. If you weigh more than 200 pounds, you will sink like a rock. *(Big finish. Big pose. Vegas show music out. Carl tosses Lotta her uniform. Another Passenger returns Lotta's hat and scarf. During the following exchange, Lotta dons her uniform.)* Any questions?

DANNY: Wow. I didn't even text once.

BINGO: That girl knows how to get attention.

CARL: My wife is vision-impaired. Can we see it again?

HARRIET: *(To Carl.)* Oh, stop.

LOTTA: No. But you can buy a personally autographed DVD.

CARL: I'll take three. *(His wife slaps his arm.)* For the kids. They gotta fly this airline!

FORTUNA: In a past life, she danced for the Sultan of Iran. She wore golden shells on a net of red.

(Danny rolls his eyes.)

ALEX: She can dance for me anytime.

(Conchetta slaps Alex.)

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* Good afternoon! This is your pilot, Captain William P. Willett. Welcome to our Happy Hour Shuttle. We hope you enjoyed Miss Collatta's floor show. Flight 147 will take off shortly, as soon as we can get the tumbleweeds out of the engine. Estimated flight time today to Las Vegas is [35 minutes], give or take three hours. Our lovely stewardess, Miss Lotta Collatta, will hand out complimentary rolls of duct tape in case the plane splits a seam or two during flight. Weather in Las Vegas at the

moment is a scorching 105 degrees. Well, we can't go anywhere until I stop talking— *[Or insert another time.]*
(Intercom goes dead. Long pause. Suddenly, wild laughter is heard from the cockpit. Lotta goes down the aisle, passing out rolls of duct tape. The sound of airplane engines starting is heard.)

CONCHETTA: *(To Lotta.)* Miss...Miss...

LOTTA: Collatta.

CONCHETTA: Miss Collatta, I really enjoyed your dance, er, I mean presentation.

LOTTA: Music does that to me. I just lose myself in it.

ALEX: I can tell.

LOTTA: I'm a graduate of Juilliard. Wouldn't think it to look at me, would you?

ALEX: I'd look at you anytime.

(Conchetta gives Alex a disapproving look. Lotta sits and fastens her seatbelt. Outside, Gary Orchard, the ground traffic dispatcher, is heard guiding the plane to the runway. Sounds of the engines grow louder. Passengers brace themselves as the sound of the aircraft gathering speed on the runway is heard and then the sound of the plane lifting off. From the cockpit over the intercom "Wahooo!" is heard. Gary exits. The sound of a loud clank is heard.)

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* Captain speaking. Looks like we lost the landing gear. Not to worry. We'll just surf her in on her belly.

HARRIET: *(To Carl.)* Is it true what they say?

CARL: Yes, dear.

HARRIET: You're sure?

CARL: Of course.

HARRIET: I haven't said what was true.

CARL: That's okay. I trust you.

HARRIET: Don't patronize me, Carl. Is it true that Captain Willett has no sense of direction?

(Plane suddenly banks SL. Passengers grip their seats as their bodies are flung SL and they cry out "Oh!")

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* Captain here. McCarran Tower informs me our landing will be delayed due to a backlog of flights, so we got time to kill. Thought you'd like to see [Red Rock Canyon] up close. Watch your heads! *[Or another location.]*

(Sound of plane nose-diving. Passengers scream as they are tossed SL and SR.)

CARL: *(To Danny.)* That wild-eyed idiot! When I get my stomach back, I'm going to sue this airline for every nut and bolt it has!

DANNY: I think they all work for the airline.

CONCHETTA: *(To Alex.)* Fantastic! Wilder than a kamikaze!

ALEX: Yeah, baby!

(Fortuna is dealing cards on her lap.)

FORTUNA: *(To no one in particular.)* Wheel of fortune...reversed. We're in for a wild ride.

BINGO: You said it. You ain't seen nothing yet!

(Lights dim on cabin. Spotlight on cockpit.)

HOVER: Captain, I've lost course. The compass is spinning wildly.

WILLIE: I'm not surprised. There must be a heavy deposit of iron ferrite. The needle will settle down shortly. What's GPS say?

HOVER: It's jammed.

WILLIE: Jammed?

HOVER: Tell ya, it's jammed.

WILLIE: Jumpin' jiminy!

HOVER: What do we do?

WILLIE: We'll just stay on this heading for a while. It's still light.

HOVER: Couldn't we just look out the window and use the stratosphere as a landmark?

WILLIE: Hover, that would be cheating. Don't you have a sense of adventure?

HOVER: Only if I get to live through it.

WILLIE: Hang on, Hoovie, we're about to go where [no man] has gone before! [*If female, insert "no woman."*]

(Spotlight down on cockpit. Lights up on cabin.)

BINGO: *(To Danny.)* Hi, my name is Bingo. It's not just a stage name. It's my legal name. Changed it years ago. I'm quite an interesting person, if you care to listen.

DANNY: Can't say I have any place to go. My ears are your ears.

BINGO: I've had many careers. For 15 years, I was a golf pro, and then I was a stock broker for [Lehman Brothers]. [*Or insert the name of another company.*]

DANNY: Why'd you quit? Not enough laughs fleecing customers?

BINGO: Funny you asked. One day, a buddy of mine is in a panic because the magician he hired for his daughter's birthday party canceled. Poor schmo was beside himself. From the stories I had told, he knew I had done a few clown gigs in high school. So he begs me...tells me he'll pay any price just so he doesn't have to disappoint his kid. For three hundred, I cave. I excuse myself from work by saying I have a toothache, go home, dig out the kit, the costume, and off I go to the party. Had a rocky start, but by the time I was done, I had them eating cake out of my hand. Well, word got around. One thing led to another. Pretty soon a career was born. Besides, buying and selling stocks is pretty bipolar. Often, the market is marching along like ooze. Suddenly, there's a frenzy and you're gulping coffee or

popping pills just to keep up. It's like walk, then sprint. Walk, sprint. Too unnerving, if you ask me. Clown capers seemed like a good tradeoff. So...what brings you to Vegas?

DANNY: I'm entered in the World Series of Poker tournament at The Venetian.

BINGO: Are you jackin' my ace? *(Pause.)* That's a joke, son.

DANNY: Couldn't you tell I was serious? I was wearing my poker face.

BINGO: Bingo! That's a good one, kid. I'll have to remember that.

DANNY: Should be easy with your I.Q.

BINGO: Bingo, bango! You're pretty smart, for a wise-ace.

DANNY: My I.Q. is 170. I belong to Mensa. I graduated high school at ten, M.I.T. at 13. I have two doctorates: one in Euclidean math, one in bioinformatics. For fun, I play poker...for money.

BINGO: Hey, maybe you could teach me a thing or two.

DANNY: I'm sure I could.

(Lights dim on cabin. Spotlight on Conchetta and Alex. Overly romantic music plays in the background.)

CONCHETTA: Alex.

ALEX: Chetta.

CONCHETTA: Alex.

ALEX: Chetta.

CONCHETTA: Oh, Alex.

ALEX: Oh, Chetta.

CONCHETTA: Oh, Alex.

ALEX: Oh, Chetta.

ALEX: Oh, what?

CONCHETTA: I just love saying your name.

ALEX: I love saying your name, too.

(Pause.)

CONCHETTA: Say it.

ALEX: Say what?

CONCHETTA: (*Nudging him.*) Say my name.

ALEX: Chetta.

CONCHETTA: Do you love me?

ALEX: Do I love you?

CONCHETTA: Do you love me?

ALEX: Yes.

CONCHETTA: Tell me you love me.

ALEX: Tell you?

CONCHETTA: Tell me!

ALEX: I love you.

CONCHETTA: I love you, Chetta.

ALEX: I love you, Chetta.

CONCHETTA: Say it with feeling.

ALEX: (*Melodramatic.*) I love you, Chetta.

CONCHETTA: (*Melting.*) Oh, I love hearing those words!

(*Alex and Conchetta embrace. Overly romantic music out. Spotlight down. Lights up on Cabin.*)

CARL: (*To Harriet.*) Okay. Got your schedule?

HARRIET: Of course. It's in my purse.

CARL: Where's your purse?

HARRIET: Under my seat.

CARL: You're sure?

HARRIET: If you don't believe me, search the plane. Gosh!

CARL: We're on a tight schedule. Don't want to miss anything. Don't want you to get lost.

HARRIET: I'm not the one who got lost, Carl, remember?

CARL: I got lost looking for you. You were lost.

HARRIET: Stow it, Carl. Just stow it.

CARL: I'm just trying to help, that's all.

HARRIET: I've got the list memorized.

CARL: If you had only worn that red headscarf like I told you, I could have found you

HARRIET: If you had been on time, I wouldn't have gone into [Saks]. [*Or insert the name of another store.*]

CARL: If you hadn't been spending so much money, I would've quit the game.

HARRIET: You lost \$3,500. Stow it, Carl, just stow it.

CARL: I'm really beginning to hate my name.

(Carl and Harriet pout.)

BINGO: *(To Danny.)* You know, some hack tried to sell me life insurance. Can you believe that?

DANNY: Don't need it.

BINGO: *(To Fortuna.)* Whaddaya think? *(Fortuna is laying out cards. No response.)* Hey, lady, I asked you a question.

DANNY: Don't bother her. She's in the middle of a reading.

BINGO: Yeah, right. Like you believe that mumbo jumbo.

DANNY: Man has used forms of divination since the caveman. Stars, clouds, runes, burning embers, entrails, bones...you name it. My guess—and I'm rarely wrong—is she's laying out the Celtic Cross, a reading of past, present, and future.

BINGO: On who?

DANNY: On us. This flight.

FORTUNA: I see great danger ahead.

BINGO: No kidding. Get a look at our pilot?

FORTUNA: *(To no one in particular.)* Silence! I see fire! I see fighting! I see false friends! We are doomed!

BINGO: Can you be more specific?

FORTUNA: For \$19.95, I will give you all the details.

DANNY: If you're psychic, how come you're on this flight?

BINGO: *(To Fortuna.)* Yeah.

FORTUNA: My spirit guides will protect me. I will not be hurt. Others will!

DANNY: So you decided to jump on a doomed flight to drum up business?

FORTUNA: No, I'm attending a psychic convention in Las Vegas.

BINGO: Bingo! If I live, maybe I can go in between gigs. Where is it?

FORTUNA: I don't know. The activity secretary wouldn't tell me. She said, "If you're psychic, you'll find it." Last year, it was at the Hard Rock. I feel an unusual vibration from the Luxor, so it might be there. If any of you hear about it, let me know, okay?

(Lotta pushes a water cart down the aisle.)

LOTTA: Water, anybody?

CARL: Don't you serve liquor?

DANNY: *(To Lotta.)* Soda?

LOTTA: I'm sorry. We lost our liquor license when the crew and the passengers got sloshed. We crash-landed into a dairy farm. Boy, there was barbecued steak that night! You might have read about it.

DANNY: Coffee?

LOTTA: Sorry. According to FAA regulations and edicts from the Department of Health, we are restricted to offering only healthy beverages to our customers. Our water is delicious, and it's free.

(Murmurs and indistinct gripes from Passengers. Lotta hands everyone a bottle of water anyway and puts away the cart.)

DANNY: *(From water bottle label, reads.)* "Processed by Lake Meade Bottling Company." How strange. Never heard of them. Didn't scientists find radioactive materials in that lake?

CARL: Old wives' tale.

DANNY: *(Reads label.)* "If you drink this, you may grow a tail." I like my anatomy the way it is.

BINGO: Suit yourself, but it's the only game in town. *(Takes a swig. Makes a face.)* Little gritty, but not bad. Got a kick like kerosene. Try it.

DANNY: Not if it'd increase my I.Q. by 20 points...not that I need it.

(Carl takes a sip from his bottle.)

CARL: Owww! It burned my throat!

HARRIET: Big baby.

(Willie and Hover stage a mock fight to frighten the Passengers. Sounds of a fight are heard in the cockpit.)

HOVER: *(Shouts.)* Stop! Stop! You're hurting me!

WILLIE: *(Shouts.)* I'm going to rip your head off!

HOVER: *(Shouts.)* Stop! Stop! I'll tell you what you want to know!

WILLIE: *(Shouts.)* Where's the money?

(Sounds of punching and crashing from the cockpit are heard.)

HOVER: *(Shouts.)* It's...it's...in Vegas. Vegas, I tell you!

WILLIE: *(Shouts.)* Where in Vegas?

HOVER: *(Shouts.)* In the vault!

(Sound of someone being punched is heard.)

WILLIE: *(Shouts.)* Quit stalling! Where?!

HOVER: *(Calmly.)* Why, in the [MGM Grand], [The Venetian], [Le Rêve], the [Bellagio], [Excalibur]. They always keep their money in a vault. *[Or insert the names of other Vegas casinos.]*

(Willie and Hover laugh hysterically.)

WILLIE: *(Intercom. To Passengers.)* Captain speaking. I hope you ladies and gentlemen enjoyed our little joke. Think of it as in-flight entertainment at your expense.

(Hover and Willie laugh. The following radio message is heard: "Flight 247. This is McCarran Tower." Spotlight up on cabin.)

HOVER: Here, Captain.

(Hover hands mic to Willie.)

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* Captain Willett.

(In an alcove, a spotlight comes up on McCarran Tower, where air-traffic controller Blinka Noyes looks at a screen. Note: This can be done offstage or as a pre-recorded sound cue.)

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Flight 247. You're off course. Change your heading to one-zero-six degrees. Over.

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* Tower, we're experiencing mechanical difficulties. Compass and GPS broken. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Use your instruments. Over.

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* We have no instruments. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Look out the window, you fool! Over.

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* Our windows are too dirty. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Then follow my instructions. Turn right until I tell you to stop. Over.

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* Your right or my right? Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Your right! Over.

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* Right. Your right. Turning right. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Hold altitude. Over.

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* Holding. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* You're dropping like a rock! Get it up! Over.

WILLIE: *(Into mic.)* Getting it up! Over.

BLINKA: (*Into mic.*) You're too far right! Left! More left! Left! Over.

WILLIE: (*Into mic.*) Right. More left. Over.

BLINKA: (*Into mic.*) You're off the screen, Captain! Where the heck are you? Over.

HOVER: (*To himself.*) In the air, hopefully.

WILLIE: (*Into mic.*) Over Golden Hills Golf Course. I see the sign. Over.

BLINKA: (*Into mic.*) What are you doing? Over.

WILLIE: Hover, take it from here.

(*Willie hands the mic to Hover.*)

HOVER: (*To Blinka, into mic.*) Captain is strafing the golf course, ma'am. Loves to scare the golfers. Scores go higher than this plane.

BINGO: (*Shouts.*) Hey, we're over a golf course! If we got any closer, I could join a three-some.

WILLIE: Hover, start the sound cue. (*The sounds of machine-gun fire and then the whine of a bomb dropping is heard. Actually, it's a canister, filled with bees.*) I love watching those duffers try to hit bees with their clubs!

BLINKA: (*Into mic.*) Willett, where are you? Willett, do you read? Over.

HOVER: (*Into mic.*) Ma'am, the Captain is indisposed, right now. He'll get back to you later.

BLINKA: (*Into mic.*) Willet, I'm gonna pull your license! Willett! Do you hear me? Willett—

HOVER: (*Into mic.*) Over and out. (*Mimics turning off the radio. To Willie.*) Do you still have your license?

WILLIE: Not a real one. Got it from an online diploma mill.

HOVER: How come?

WILLIE: Couldn't pass the physical. I'm manic-depressive. Doesn't look good if the pilot goes yo-yo during a flight. (*Yawns.*) Problem is the meds make me drowsy. Sometimes

I just conk out. I try to counter that by keeping an adrenaline rush.

HOVER: So what's next?

WILLIE: *(To Passengers.)* Time for our fire gag.

HOVER: Oh, yeah! *(Puts on a tape of "The Ride of the Valkyries.")*

WILLIE: *(Intercom. To Passengers.)* Ladies and gentlemen, Captain again. I don't want to alarm you, but it seems we have a fire in the hold. I'm sending our navigator down with an extinguisher. Don't panic. He can take care of it. If not, I'll make sure he gets the parachute with the holes. *(Hover can barely contain his laughter. To Hover.)* Take the canister and go down there. You know the routine. *(Hover picks up a canister. Note: If the cockpit is below the apron, then a small stair unit can get the actor onstage. Hover walks down the airplane aisle and offstage to the cargo hold. Lotta follows him. Music is still playing.)* Ladies and gentlemen, I've given our navigator two minutes to resolve the problem. He should be there now. Count with me here...120-119-118-117-116—

HARRIET: 114-113-112—

CARL: Why are you counting?

HARRIET: This is exciting!

CARL: Get a life.

HARRIET: Gave it up to marry you.

CARL: Stow it, will you?

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* 99-98-97—

FORTUNA: *(To no one in particular.)* Ten major arcana. Reversal of fortune. Not good.

BINGO: 90-89-88—

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* 75-74-73—

BINGO: *(To Danny, indicating Willie.)* Where'd he learn to count?

DANNY: It's not surprising. He can't fly and he can't count.

HARRIET: 65-64-63—

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* 53-51-49-47—

DANNY: *(To Passengers.)* He's only doing odds.

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* 43-41-39—

ALL: 37-35-33—

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* 27-25-23—

DANNY: *(To Passengers.)* Louder, everybody! Drown him out!

PASSENGERS: 19-17-15-13—

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* First man done, wins! 5-4-3-2—

(Hover appears. He has a fake boa constrictor around his neck.)

HOVER: Fire's out.

HARRIET: *(Screams.)* Eeeek! Snakes on the plane!

(Passengers panic and scream. Passengers unbuckle their seatbelts and leap out of their seats. As Hover walks by, he tosses the fake boa constrictor and it lands on one of the Passengers. S/he grabs it and tosses it to another Passenger, etc. More screams.)

HOVER: *(Calls.)* Hey, Captain, come out and see this!

(Willett enters. Lotta tries to calm the Passengers. Willie and Hover laugh.)

LOTTA: *(To Passengers.)* Calm down! Calm down! It's only a rubber snake. It's only a joke. Calm down. Give me the snake. Go back to your seats. Everything's all right.

(A Passenger tosses the snake to Lotta. Instead of her uniform, she is wearing her Vegas showgirl outfit. She drapes the snake around her body.)

HARRIET: *(Angry.)* That's not funny, Captain. You should be ashamed of yourself. Carl, say something!

CARL: *(To Willie, angry.)* That's right! What a stupid trick. I'm going to sue!

HOVER: Take a number. The airline is going into receivership. In fact, this may be her last flight.

WILLIE: So we're going to make it a good one.

HOVER: Memorable.

DANNY: Excuse me, but who's flying the plane?

BINGO: Never heard of autopilot?

LOTTA: This plane doesn't have autopilot.

CARL: Then who's flying the plane?

(At that moment, the sound of the plane nose-diving is heard.)

WILLIE: Whoops! Back to the cabin!

HOVER: Guess the duct tape didn't hold.

(Willie and Hover return to the cabin. Sound of airplane righting itself is heard.)

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* Wheee!

LOTTA: *(To Passengers.)* Okay, fun's over. Take your seats.

Calm down. As a door prize, I'll pass out Twinkies.

HARRIET: I'm diabetic.

LOTTA: Then sniff the wrapper. Back in a sec.

(Lotta exits to the back of the plane offstage to get the snacks. Sound of an engine sputtering then dying is heard. Lights down on cabin. Spotlight up on cockpit.)

WILLIE: Crap! Left engine out!

HOVER: It's gonna yaw!

WILLIE: Co'mon rudder. Aileron up. Bank five degrees right. Raise the undercarriage. Lower the nose.

HOVER: Now will it feather?

WILLIE: We'll find out. *(Pause.)* Co'mon. Co'mon. Co'mon, baby. *(Pause.)* Nope. Dead. Ah, we can still make it.

(Spotlight down on cockpit. Lights up on cabin.)

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* Ladies and gentlemen, I regret to inform you we have lost the left engine.

BINGO: *(To Danny.)* Very funny. I could've thought of that.

DANNY: No, you couldn't.

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* No joke. We've lost the engine.

HARRIET: Why should we believe you?

CARL: *(To Willie.)* Yeah, you're the boy who cried wolf.

WILLIE: *(Intercom.)* I'm going to reduce airspeed and drop to a lower altitude to save fuel. We can make it on one engine.

HARRIET: *(To Carl.)* I think he means it.

HOVER: *(Intercom.)* He means it. This is not a drill.

HARRIET: *(Screams.)* We're gonna die! We're gonna die! I'll never see my Tigger Puss again!

CARL: You could always join him in storage.

HARRIET: You're a brute, Carl. A brute. Just stow it!

(Lotta enters, wearing her uniform. She has a bag of Twinkies.)

LOTTA: Twinkie time! Who wants one?

(Passengers raise their hands and Lotta tosses Twinkies to them like a trainer feeding seals.)

CONCHETTA: Is it true we're going to crash?

LOTTA: Mrs. Stowe, Captain Willett is experienced. I'm sure he's doing everything possible. At the worst, we can parachute out.

CARL: *(To Harriet.)* There, there, honey. Parachutes for everybody.

LOTTA: Some have holes. We'll have to draw lots.

CARL: I'm gonna sue you so hard your skin will fall off!

LOTTA: Take a number.

(Lights dim on cabin. Spotlights up on cockpit and on Blinka at McCarran Tower.)

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* McCarran Tower. This is RWA147. Pan. Pan. Pan. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* McCarran Tower. What's your status? Over.

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* Lost left engine. Have reduced airspeed and altitude. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Can you stay aloft? Over.

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* For the time being. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* What is your position? Over.

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* We're following a bird at eleven o'clock. He seems to know where he's going. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* Where are you? Over.

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* Don't know. Compass kaput. No instruments. It's getting dark outside. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* RWA147. You're off our radar. I'll send an FAA emergency alert and relay this information to network air traffic controllers. Do you wish to continue to your original destination? Over.

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* That's affirmative. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* How are the passengers doing? Over.

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* Calm for the most part. If they get unruly, we can sedate them. Over.

BLINKA: *(Into mic.)* What's your fuel level? Ov—

(Radio goes dead.)

HOVER: *(Into mic.)* Hello? McCarren Tower? *(Pause. To Willie.)* Radio's dead. Now what?

WILLIE: We're on our own. Wahoo!

(Spotlight out on cockpit. Lights up on cabin.)

BINGO: *(To Danny.)* I smell something.

DANNY: How can you tell?

BINGO: I have a big nose.

DANNY: Like what?

BINGO: Like...like water.

DANNY: We're flying over the desert. We're hundreds of miles from water...unless it's bottled water you smell.

BINGO: I tell you, we're over water!

FORTUNA: (*Flips a card. To no one in particular.*) Thirteen major. Trident. Neptune.

CARL: (*To Lotta, shouts.*) Stewardess! Stewardess! Come here!

(*Lotta strolls over. She's doing her fingernails.*)

LOTTA: Mr. Stowe, you didn't use your call button. That's what it's for.

CARL: I suppose, then, you won't answer my question.

LOTTA: Now that I'm here, I'll give it a shot.

CARL: Bingo says he smells water. A guy with a big nose ought to know.

LOTTA: I'd only get worried if I smelled alcohol on his breath. Is that it?

HARRIET: (*Hysterical, screams.*) Water?!

LOTTA: Do you need more water?

CARL: Are we flying over water?!

LOTTA: I'll ask the Captain. (*Knocks on the cockpit "door."*) Captain!

WILLIE: Come in, Lotta.

(*Lotta enters cockpit.*)

LOTTA: Sir, one of the passengers says he smells water.

HOVER: Eeew, this is serious.

LOTTA: Is it true?

WILLIE: He's complaining about the bottled water? I know it's got some nasty stuff —

LOTTA: No, sir. He thinks we're flying over water.

WILLIE: Well, let's find out. Goin' down! (*Moves the stick up and the sound of the plane going into a steep nosedive is heard.*)

(Passengers start screaming and items are flung into the air.) Our lights will reflect if it's water. Keep your eyes peeled.

HOVER: It's...it's...it's—

LOTTA: Water!

HOVER: Pullin' 'er up!

(Willie pulls the "stick" down. Sound of the plane gaining altitude is heard. Passengers are pushed back into their seats and things fly off their laps. Lotta returns to the cabin. Lights up on cabin. Spotlight down on cockpit.)

LOTTA: *(To Passengers.)* Bingo! We're over water!

BINGO: I knew it! I knew it! The nose doesn't lie. Let's hear it for the nose!

HARRIET: Carl, I don't feel so good.

CARL: You know, I don't feel so good myself.

LOTTA: Anyone for stomach displacement containers?

BINGO: In English?!

DANNY: *(Shouts.)* Barf bag, anybody?

(Everyone except Danny raises his hand.)

LOTTA: *(To Passengers.)* They're under your seats. Use the snack bag. Empty it out. If your sack has been soiled, raise your hand, and I'll get you a fresh one. RearWay Air believes in recycling.

BINGO: I think I'm going to hurl!

FORTUNA: *(To no one in particular.)* Three of cups reversed. Three of swords upright. Emotional turmoil and physical problems.

BINGO: Will you stop, already? Those cards are making me cranky.

FORTUNA: Ignore fate at your own peril.

BINGO: I bet you the cards don't tell you everything.

(A monstrous face appears at Harriet's window. An actor wearing black sneaks in and positions himself near her "window.")

HARRIET: *(Screams.)* Eeeeeeeeeeeeeek! Carl! Carl! There's something at my window! Look! Look! A monster!

CARL: I told you not to bring your mother on this trip.

HARRIET: My mother doesn't fly.

CARL: I forgot. Your mother doesn't have wings. She has horns.

HARRIET: Stop talking and look!

[END OF FREEVIEW]