

**Excerpt from
FLYGIRLS**

**A ten-minute play
by Jeannette Angell**

Jeannette Angell
PO Box 507
North Truro MA 02652
508-487-1456
angevine@aya.yale.edu
www.JeannetteAngell.com

© 2009 by Jeannette Cézanne. This play was first produced at the Provincetown Universal Theatre Winter Festival in January, 2009, under the direction of Eric Dray.

SETTING

A nondescript room with three chairs and a table. A stack of books is on the table. Harriet QUIMBY is sitting at the table, polishing a piece of equipment. She is wearing a purple flying suit (or pair of coveralls) and a long white scarf.

There is a knock, as if on a door, and Amelia EARHART enters.

Harriet

Oh, good: you finally got here. They told me you'd be coming, but I thought I must be early. They sent me here to wait for you. Sort of a welcoming committee.

Amelia

(looking around)

Is this the right place? I feel like I've been in transit forever.

Harriet

Well, it took you a while to show up. It didn't seem like they were ready to let you go. Every time I thought you'd be here, there was another headline about someone saying they'd heard from you, or someone else saying you'd been seen, or rescued, or something.

Amelia

Can you blame them? People really didn't want to let go. They adored me — they were my fans. Fans don't give up. Even when they have to invent sightings. I stayed around a while to see how it would turn out. But they weren't ever going to find the plane, so I gave up. You can't haunt a stretch of empty ocean, can you?

(pause)

So this is what it's like. Can I get a cigarette?

Harriet

No one smokes here. It's a filthy habit, anyway.

Amelia

Um, excuse me? Have I offended you in some way?

Harriet

You could say that.

Amelia

(stretches out her hand as though to shake Harriet's)

Oh, of course. Silly me. It's my fault. Manners were never my strong point. We haven't been introduced. I'm Amelia. Amelia Earhart.

Harriet

(doesn't take the offered hand)

I know.

Amelia

(looks at her)

You look familiar to me. Have we met?

Harriet

Never. I was around years before your time.

Amelia

Still, you're awfully familiar.

Harriet

Well, you should know me, though now apparently nobody else does. I'm —

Amelia

You're —

Harriet and Amelia

(together)

— Harriet Quimby!

Amelia

Oh, my God! This is an honor! A real pleasure! I read everything about you ...

(reverently)

The first American woman to hold a pilot's license.

Harriet

Yup.

Amelia

The first woman pilot to fly across the English Channel.

Harriet

Yup.

Amelia

You started wearing those long white scarves ... do you know, all the pilots in the war wore them, too? Oh — the war was after your time, I guess ... Anyway, everyone thought they were so sexy, and no one realized you were the one who'd

worn them first. Being a woman, and all, you know: it was boys who wore them in the war. And that purple flying suit! Velvet! That was amazing. You were way out in front of your time. You had real fashion sense.

Harriet

Yup.

Amelia

Oh, man, that trip across the Channel ... it must have been marvelous! Cold and scary and wonderful all at once. I saw the photographs they took that morning when you landed. You and that little group you always traveled with — those three women, who were they all, anyway? Your entourage? Didn't you like men? Anyway, I remember that picture: you were all there on the sand, and all those French people flocking down to the beach to meet you ... all those people ...

Harriet

That's what impresses you?

Amelia

What?

Harriet

All the people. All the fame.

Amelia

(laughs)

Of course it is! That's what it's about, isn't it? Your name plastered in the newspapers for weeks... that must have been so terrific!

Harriet

You probably aren't remembering your history, but the Titanic sank just before I made the flight. It was hard for people to get excited about me, after that.

Amelia

I didn't read much about the Titanic, but I did read a lot about you. I used to have some of the newspaper clippings.

(pats her pockets, looks around vaguely)

They're not here. I guess I didn't bring anything with me.

Harriet

No one does. That's pretty much the point, I think.