

VIOLET'S THE PILOT

By Jason Hall

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Characters:

VIOLET – A young girl, pilot and businessperson.

COPES – Violet's older assistant and co-pilot; may be played by a male or female actor.

BUD – A young boy, climate change protester and activist.

Note on the set:

The set comprises only of two trollies, out of which should come all the props; ideally, if space provides, Violet and Bud will also make their entrances out of their respective trolley. The trollies should resemble those typically pushed through an airplane by cabin crew.

ONE

(As the audience enter the playing space, COPES is there welcoming and directing people where to sit. S/he pushes around the two trollies as required.)

COPES Ladies and gentlemen of the worldwide press!

Boys and girls of the global media!

Guys and gals who, um, write things down or record stuff for TV or radio or the internet! Welcome to the grand launch of Violet Skies, the big airline for smaller travellers!

I'm the co-pilot here at Violet Skies – you can call me Copes – and in a moment, I'll be introducing you to the girl you've all come to see: Violet!

But first, let's make sure everyone's here.

(Looking around.) Do we have the reporter from the Business Times Daily?

(COPES gestures to the audience, inviting a reply. If no one volunteers, s/he points to someone.)

Ah, yes, there you are!

(From the trolley, COPES produces a press pass emblazoned with 'Business Times Daily' and its logo.)

You forgot to pick up your press ID. Anybody who writes for an important newspaper like you should have one! Here you go!

(COPES puts it on the audience member.)

Great! And where is the reporter from the Airplane Enquirer?

(Again, COPES gestures to the audience, inviting a reply. If no one volunteers, s/he points to someone.)

Oh, of course, how could I miss you! Here's your pass.

(From the trolley, COPES produces a press pass emblazoned with 'Airplane Enquirer' with a miniature airplane attached to it. S/he puts it on the audience member.)

And, let's see, who here is from the Review of Unnecessarily Large Glasses?

(Again, COPES gestures to the audience, inviting a reply. If no one volunteers, s/he points to someone.)

Oh there you are! Maybe I'm the one who needs the glasses, right?

(From the trolley, COPES produces a press pass emblazoned with 'Review of Unnecessarily Large Glasses' with a huge pair of glasses attached to it. S/he puts it on the audience member.)

Fantastic!

But, oh! Look at the time! I'll be in trouble if I don't hurry up. Violet demands punctuality.

(COPES gets the trolley into position, organises him/herself and becomes more formal.)

Journalists, now is the moment you've all been waiting for! She's the world's youngest pilot. She's the world's youngest business woman. She's the founder and boss of Violet Skies. She's... Violet the Pilot!

(COPES encourages applause from the audience as VIOLET enters the playing area.)

VIOLET Thank you, thank you everyone. Thank you for coming. Now, I know there's no need to introduce myself. You all know me. I'm Violet and, yes, I am amazing. And I know when you see my plane, and experience Violet Skies, you'll think that's amazing too.

But it never hurts for everyone to be reminded just how amazing I am...and how I got this way. So, join me on a trip down memory lane.

(Over the following, COPES may produce some props to help illustrate the story; music could be played; or the story can simply be narrated.)

COPES Ever since she was born, Violet was drawn to the skies!

VIOLET My mother was an air traffic controller.

COPES That's someone who helps airplanes take off and land!

VIOLET An air traffic controller works in the tower at the end of the runway.

COPES And uses technology and math and brains to keep the plane where it should be.

VIOLET It's as difficult and delicate as juggling.

COPES Except you're juggling airplanes filled with hundreds of people!

VIOLET My father? He was a flight attendant.

COPEES A flight attendant is in charge of an airplane's passengers.

VIOLET He made sure everyone got their food and their drinks.

COPEES And their blankets and their headphones and anything else they need!

VIOLET A flight attendant has to keep everybody happy.

COPEES Because when things go wrong, people on planes can get angrier than the angriest angry thing!

VIOLET An air traffic controller Mom and a flight attendant Dad.

COPEES You were destined to fly!

VIOLET If you believe in destiny.

COPEES Exactly!

VIOLET Which I don't.

COPEES Oh.

VIOLET And my parents didn't either.

COPEES Oh?

VIOLET Because they split up!

COPEES Divorced?

VIOLET Couldn't stand each other.

COPEES Oh, right.

VIOLET And Mom moved all the way to the west coast!

COPEES Ah.

VIOLET And Dad moved all the way out east.

COPEES Violet had to travel back and forth to visit them.

VIOLET Think of all the time I spent on planes.

COPEES Hours and hours.

VIOLET Of course, the pilots all knew me.

COPEES Because of her Mom.

VIOLET So I got to do things that most kids didn't.

COPEES Like see the inside of the cockpit.

VIOLET And learn how to fly.

COPEES I bet the cabin crew all knew you too.

VIOLET Of course, my dad is a superstar flight attendant!

COPEES So you got to do things most kids didn't.

VIOLET Like learning how you host and serve passengers.

COPEES And make everyone on board happy.

VIOLET So, after a while...

COPEES After all those flights...

VIOLET All those hours in the air...

COPEES Violet thought to herself...

VIOLET Serving passengers? Flying a plane? Why, I can –

COPEES (*Cutting her off.*) 'I can do that!'

VIOLET No.

COPEES No?

VIOLET No. I did not think 'I can do that.'

COPEES What did you think?

VIOLET I thought, 'I can do *better than that.*'

COPEES Ahhhh!

VIOLET You see, if you're a kid and you've been on an airplane you'll know – it's awful!

COPEES Yea!

VIOLET The seats are too big. The entertainment is boring. The food is gross. The pilot never flies the plane in a fun way. And without fail, there's always some annoying grown up nearby who falls asleep and starts snoring!

COPEES Ew!

VIOLET I hate snoring!

COPEES Yes, it can be a nuisance.

VIOLET No, I REALLY HATE SNORING!

(Beat.)

COPEES Okay....

VIOLET During all these flights, coast to coast, back and forth, I started thinking to myself, why can't young people have their own airline? Why can't we have a plane built just for us?

COPEES Well, probably because it's incredibly expensive and impractical and –

VIOLET There's *no reason* why young people can't have their own airline! And to prove it, I called in a few favours, and Violet Skies was born.

COPEES Ta da!

VIOLET Because I'm always right.

COPEES Er – yes.

VIOLET And what I need you lovely, delightful, sensible and reasonable people to do is write really nice things about Violet Skies in all your newspapers and magazines and websites and whatever so kids from all over the world will want to use my airline!

COPEES You'll do that, won't you?

VIOLET Of course they will.

BUD *(From inside the trolley.)* No!

VIOLET What? Did somebody say 'no'?

COPEES *(Nervous.)* I didn't hear anything!

VIOLET *(To the audience.)* Did you hear somebody say ‘no’? Did you hear somebody say they wouldn’t write me a good review?

COPEs *(Still nervous.)* Of course they didn’t *hear* that because nobody *said* that. *(To the audience.)* You’re all going to write good reviews, right? Just wait til you see the inside of that plane, you’ll –

VIOLET *(As if really noticing the audience for the first time.)* Wait a minute. Is everybody here?

COPEs Oh yes! There’s the reporter from the Business Times Daily.

VIOLET Yes, I saw that.

COPEs And there’s the reporter from the Airplane Enquirer.

VIOLET Okay.

COPEs And that one there is from the Review of Unnecessarily Large Glasses.

VIOLET But it doesn’t *look* like everyone’s here.

COPEs They are.

VIOLET Are you saying I’m wrong?

COPEs Er, well...

VIOLET Because I’m never wrong.

COPEs I know.

VIOLET And it’s your job to look after all the guests.

COPEs I’m pretty sure everybody’s here.

VIOLET So where’s the reporter from banana-enthusiast.com?

COPEs Oh.

VIOLET ‘Oh.’

Is anyone here from banana-enthusiast.com?

(VIOLET gestures to the audience, inviting a reply. If no one volunteers, she points to someone – preferably an adult.)

VIOLET There you are! And without your press ID, I’m *so* sorry.

COPEs No, *I'm* sorry Violet, I thought we had everyone, please forgive me.

(From the trolley, COPEs produces a press pass emblazoned with 'banana-enthusiast.com' with a large bunch of bananas attached to it. S/he puts it on the audience member.)

VIOLET And I just want you to know how much we all love bananas here at Violet Skies. Please keep that in mind when you're writing your review.

BUD *(From inside the trolley.)* Tell us about the pollution!

VIOLET Who said that?

COPEs *(Nervous.)* I didn't hear anything!

VIOLET *(Examining the audience.)* Somebody said something about pollution!

COPEs No...

VIOLET Are you saying I'm wrong, Copes?

COPEs Maybe you mis-heard.

VIOLET Because I'm never wrong.

COPEs So you said.

VIOLET *(To the audience.)* Who shouted something about 'pollution'? What does pollution have to do with my airline?

BUD *(From inside the trolley.)* Your airline *causes* pollution!

VIOLET Who keeps saying that?

COPEs *(Nervous.)* Saying what? I didn't hear anything, must have been the wind or or or somebody with something caught in their throat. *(Nervous laughter.)* Anyway, don't you think it's time to show everyone the inside of the plane?

VIOLET I suppose.

COPEs You're all going to love it!

VIOLET I've designed the most kid-friendly plane in the history of air travel.

COPEs So, if you'll all just come on board with us, we can show you the amazing designs that –

BUD *(From inside the trolley.)* No!

VIOLET WHO KEEPS SAYING THAT!?!

(BUD bursts out of the trolley.)

BUD Me!

VIOLET And who are you?

BUD I thought you'd never ask. *(To audience.)* Ladies and gentlemen of the worldwide press! Boys and girls of the global media! Guys and gals who, um, write things down or record stuff for TV or radio or the internet! Let me introduce myself! My name is Bud and I'm an environmental activist!

COPEs A environmental what?

BUD Activist!

VIOLET What does that mean?

BUD It means I stand up for mother nature! It means I protect planet earth! It means –

VIOLET It means you're very irritating.

COPEs Oh, hey, I think I've heard of you! You're that really young protestor! Bud in the something...

BUD Yes, that's right. 'Bud in the Mud', the world's youngest activist. I'm sure all you reporters have heard of me too. And yes, it's true, I am pretty fantastic.

But it never hurts for everyone to be reminded just how fanatastic I am...and how I got this way. So join me on a trip down memory lane, won't you?

(Over the following, COPEs may produce some props to help illustrate the story; music could be played; or the story can simply be narrated.)

COPEs Ever since he was born, Bud was drawn to / protest!

VIOLET Copes!

COPEs Yes?

VIOLET What are you doing?

COPEs I'm helping with the story.

VIOLET You're *my* co-pilot.

COPEES Yes but you told me to help you with all the guests.

VIOLET Not him!

COPEES But you did say *all* the guests.

VIOLET He's –

COPEES And you're never wrong...are you?

 (*VIOLET is stumped.*)

COPEES Ever since he was born, Bud was drawn to activism!

BUD My mother was a protester!

COPEES That's someone who tries to stop something they think is wrong.

BUD She camped outside fields to stop them being drilled!

COPEES She tied herself to trees to stop them being chopped!

BUD She wrote some really quite strongly-worded letters.

COPEES And got them signed by thousands of people!

BUD My father? He wrote protest songs.

COPEES Music with a message!

BUD He played guitar and harmonica.

COPEES And sang!

BUD At protests, he'd play to keep people's spirits up.

COPEES Because at protests, when it's raining and cold and the police are screaming at you, people can get sadder than the saddest sad thing.

BUD An activist Mom and a musician Dad.

COPEES Being a protestor was your fate!

BUD If you believe in fate.

COPEES Exactly!

BUD Which I don't.

COPEES Oh.

BUD And my parents didn't either.

COPEES Oh?

BUD Because they split up!

COPEES Divorced?

BUD Couldn't stand each other.

COPEES Oh, right.

BUD And Mom moved all the way to the north end of town!

COPEES This sounds sort of familiar.

BUD And Dad moved all the way to the south.

COPEES I bet you had to travel back and forth visiting them?

BUD I spent a lot of time on my bike.

COPEES Hours and hours?

BUD But that route through town, it took me past the airport.

COPEES This airport?

BUD And it got me thinking.

COPEES About all the flights?

BUD And all their pollution.

COPEES So you thought you would protest the airport?

BUD Not just the airport. (*Points to VIOLET.*) You!

VIOLET Me?

BUD Yes!

VIOLET What did I do?

BUD You started an airline.

VIOLET So?

BUD So, young people shouldn't be flying *more*! They shouldn't be flying at all!

VIOLET What?!?

BUD Airplanes pollute the sky and ruin the planet!

VIOLET Oh really?

BUD And young people like us, when we grow up, we'll have to live on that ruined planet.

VIOLET People need to fly, you know.

BUD (*Chanting*) Violet Skies! Full of Lies!

VIOLET I've only got one plane, stop picking on me!

BUD (*Chanting*) Violet Skies! Full of Lies!

VIOLET Okay, I've had enough of you. Copes! Get him out of here. That's an order.

COPEs Sorry, Bud. She's the boss.

BUD I'm not going anywhere!

 (*BUD ties himself to one of the trollies.*)

 Not until you shut down your airline.

VIOLET That's not going to happen.

BUD Well good luck taking off in that plane with me in the way!

VIOLET I could just run you over.

BUD Ha!

VIOLET I'd squish you like a banana.

VIOLET & COPEs (*Simultaneously to the audience member from banana-enthusiast.com.*)
 Which I love, by the way.

BUD You wouldn't crush me!

VIOLET You'll have to move at some point, you can't stay there forever.

BUD I will if I need to! Activism is in my bones. I've stood in the sun, I've slept in the snow, and I've meditated in mud.

COPEs Ohhhh so that's why he's Bud in the Mud.

BUD I *will* stop Violet Skies. You know why?

VIOLET Why?

BUD Because I never lose.

(VIOLET and BUD stare each other down.)

VIOLET Ladies and gentlemen of the media! I apologise for this little hiccup in the schedule. But he'll be gone soon enough. And I know that because I'm...never...wrong.

COPEs *(Trying to work it out.)* So...wait a minute. If she's never wrong, then he's going to lose. But if he never loses, then she must be wrong. But if she's never wrong, then he's got to lose. Except...this is giving me a headache.

VIOLET Behind me, ladies and gentlemen, is the first airplane in the fleet of Violet Skies!

BUD *(Chanting)* Violet Skies! Full of lies!

VIOLET The plane is filled with things so incredible you couldn't even begin to imagine them.

BUD *(Chanting)* Violet Skies! Full of lies!

VIOLET Who'd like to see it? Who'd like to see the first airplane designed especially for young people?

BUD *(Chanting)* Violet Skies! Full of lies!

VIOLET Then come with us. Come aboard!

(VIOLET and COPEs transform the playing area into the interior of an airplane, leaving BUD 'outside' the action. As they do, BUD takes a guitar out of the trolley and begins gently strumming over the following)

TWO

- COPES Welcome everyone! Enjoying that new airplane smell? (*S/he breathes it in.*) Ooh it makes me a bit weak in the knees, that does. I love a bit of new airplane smell! (*Breathes it in again.*)
- VIOLET Copes!
- (*COPES snaps out of it, a bit embarrassed.*)
- What's wrong with you?
- COPES Nothing Violet! Just pointing out the lovely...lovely...smells, the delicious scents, the tempting, alluring, attractive aromas of new airplanes. (*Unable to control it, s/he breathes in deeply.*)
- VIOLET Stop that!
- COPES (*Embarrassed again.*) Sorry.
- VIOLET Sometimes you're just weird.
- COPES (*Hopeful.*) Good weird?
- VIOLET No. Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome on board VS1.
- COPES That's Violet Skies 1.
- VIOLET Yes I'm sure they know that.
- COPES Sorry.
- VIOLET And I'm glad you've all found your way into the correct cabin of the plane.
- COPES This cabin here is for young passengers only.
- VIOLET But don't worry about any grown ups you're travelling with, they're safe.
- COPES That's right!
- VIOLET We have them all crated and tucked away comfortably beneath you in storage.
- COPES With the luggage.
- VIOLET And the dogs.

COPEs And the toilet tanks.

VIOLET Down there they can do all the things that adults like to do on planes.

COPEs Like working on their laptops.

VIOLET Boring.

COPEs Or reading big sheets of newspaper.

VIOLET Annoying.

COPEs Or falling asleep and snoring.

VIOLET I hate snoring!

COPEs I think you may have mentioned that.

VIOLET No, I REALLY hate snoring! And I –

(BUD's guitar playing builds as he breaks into song.)

BUD *(Singing.)* The skies may be violet,
 But they're crossed with white trails,
 Not clouds, no that's poison!
 Now the troposphere fails.

And we say...

Violet skies,
 Why all the lies?
 Don't close your eyes
 As the planet sighs.

(The guitar goes back to gentle strumming.)

VIOLET Anyway...

COPEs Anyway, down in storage, your grown ups will be happy and
 comfortable and out of the way so you can enjoy the perks of Violet
 Skies.

VIOLET Like your seats!

COPEs Notice how they're just the right size for young people?

VIOLET And how they tilt this way...

COPEs Go ahead and try it.

(COPEs encourages the audience to tilt in one direction.)

VIOLET And how they tilt that way...

(COPEs encourages the audience to tilt in the other direction.)

COPEs Try it out!

VIOLET And how they have this lever in the front?

COPEs See, it's just right there.

(COPEs grips an imaginary lever in front of him/her and encourages the audience to do the same.)

VIOLET This lets you get the experience of flying the plane yourself!

COPEs Or you can use it as a joy stick to play one of our *seven hundred* video games!

VIOLET All projected on to a big screen right in front of you. It's...

(Again, BUD's guitar playing builds until he breaks into song)

BUD *(Singing)* There's Carbon dioxide,
There's noise and there's soot,
Oxides of nitrogen!
What nasty output.

And we say...

Violet skies,
Why all the lies?
Don't close your eyes
As the planet cries.

(The guitar goes back to gentle strumming)

VIOLET Anyway...

COPEs Tell them about the food, Violet!

VIOLET Have any of you ever eaten on an airplane?

COPEs Yuck!

VIOLET I'm sure those other airlines are doing their best, but really, how good can you make food way up in the sky?

COPEs Not very good by the taste of it!

VIOLET That's why we at Violet Skies have a very simple policy.

COPEs Our menu is 100%...

VIOLET Candy!

COPEs And 100%...

VIOLET Pop!

COPEs They don't go bad.

VIOLET They don't need heating.

COPEs And they don't stink up the plane!

VIOLET It's –

(Again, BUD's guitar playing builds until he breaks into song.)

BUD *(Singing)* The skies may be violet,
 But they're crossed with white trails,
 What hope for the children,
 If our protest fails?

And we say...

Violet skies,
 Why all the lies?
 Don't close your eyes
 As the planet dies.

(The guitar goes back to gentle strumming. Over the following it slows down and fades out as BUD falls asleep.)

COPEs Aw, that's actually quite sad!

VIOLET Anyway, onto the feature of Violet Skies I'm most proud of.

COPEs A brand new device.

VIOLET Built especially for us.

COPEs Built especially for those with...curiosity.

VIOLET Are any of you curious?

COPEs They're journalists, they *must* be curious.

(VIOLET and COPEs begin taking 'The Whistle' out of one of the trolleys. This is a large, hollow, flexible tube that remains connected to the trolley; it should look a bit like an overly large hose for a vacuum cleaner.)

VIOLET When I'm flying, I know I get curious about what's going on down on the ground. I look down and I think, What it's like in that town? What's the breeze like in that field? What does the water feel like in that lake?

COPEs But usually, the plane's too high.

VIOLET Or there's clouds in the way.

COPEs Or we're just moving too fast.

VIOLET But that's not a problem any more!

COPEs Ladies and gentlemen, I give you the The Whistle!

VIOLET The Whistle will whistle up the essence of any place we fly over!

COPEs Flying over Italy and want some pizza?

VIOLET The Whistle!

COPEs Flying over Florida and want some orange juice?

VIOLET The Whistle!

COPEs Flying over the Sahara desert and want some sand...for some reason?

VIOLET This surface to air Whistle can get it all!

COPEs But Violet, will it whistle things down as well as up?

VIOLET It certainly will. How do you think we get rid of all the candy wrappers and pop bottles?

COPEs Whistle them down!

VIOLET But to really appreciate The Whistle, we need to be flying.

COPEs And right now, we can't.

VIOLET Because of that Bud!

COPEs Yea.

VIOLET He's very quiet all of a sudden.

COPEES Do you think he gave up?

VIOLET Let's go see.

(VIOLET and COPEES transform the playing space back into the outside of the plane. BUD, who is still asleep, is in the action again.)

COPEES Look!

VIOLET Is he...asleep?

COPEES I'm not sure.

(BUD snores; VIOLET cringes.)

COPEES Okay, I'm sure now. He's out cold!

(VIOLET and COPEES sneak over to the trolley where BUD is asleep.)

VIOLET Correct me if I'm wrong here, Copes –

COPEES I will.

VIOLET Remembering that I'm never wrong –

COPEES Right.

VIOLET Correct me if I'm wrong here, but Bud in the Mud looks like he's asleep.

COPEES He does.

VIOLET And correct me if I'm wrong –

COPEES I will.

VIOLET Remembering that I'm never wrong –

COPEES Oh, yea.

VIOLET Correct me if I'm wrong but it looks like Bud the dud has only tied himself to this trolley.

COPEES Right?

VIOLET And nothing else.

COPEs So?

VIOLET So this trolley has wheels.

COPEs Okay?

VIOLET Which means...

(VIOLET pushes the trolley with BUD still asleep on it.)

We can get him out of our way!

COPEs And take off with VS1!

VIOLET And show all these journalists how amazing Violet Skies is!

COPEs And then they'll write great reviews!

VIOLET And then we'll have lots of passengers!

COPEs Where should we put him?

VIOLET On the plane.

COPEs On the plane?

VIOLET On the plane.

COPEs Isn't that risky?

VIOLET You know what they say, Copes: keep your friends close and your enemies closer. And I want Buddy Boy here as close as possible.

(Over the following VIOLET and COPEs transform the playing space back into the inside of an airplane. When it's ready, VIOLET gets into position to 'fly' the plane for takeoff.)

COPEs *(Officious.)* Ladies and gentlemen the captain has informed us that the cabin is now closed and we'll be taking off shortly.

VIOLET *(As if on a headset, speaking to a control tower.)* Site clearance, Violet Skies one ready to copy IFR.

COPEs Please ensure your seatbelts are fastened.

VIOLET Site ground, Violet Skies one ready to taxi IFR.

COPEs Please ensure your seats are in an upright position.

VIOLET Site tower, Violet Skies one ready for takeoff.

COPES And if you want know what it feels like to fly the plane just grab your lever!

VIOLET I'm blasting the engines!

COPES Feel your head fly back!

VIOLET We're speeding down the runway!

COPES Feel the front lift up!

VIOLET And away...we...go!

(The company – with the help of the audience if possible – create the noise and movement of an airplane taking off.)

THREE

VIOLET Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the violet skies. We've just reached our cruising altitude of 32,000 feet.

COPEES In a moment we'll begin our in flight service of candy and pop.

VIOLET Until then, sit back, relax, and think about this amazing experience... and all the amazing reviews you're going to write.

(BUD snores; VIOLET flinches.)

COPEES *(Noticing BUD.)* Did he sleep through all of that?

VIOLET I guess what he said about standing in the sun and sleeping in the snow was true.

COPEES Maybe he *can* sleep through anything.

(BUD snores; VIOLET loses it.)

VIOLET *(To BUD.)* WILL YOU STOP SNORING!

(BUD wakes up, startled.)

COPEES Or maybe not.

BUD Where...where am I?

VIOLET You're 32,000 feet up in the air.

BUD What?

COPEES Heading south by south west.

BUD How can that be?

COPEES Well between south and south west is a direction called south by south west.

BUD I don't mean that!

COPEES Oh.

BUD I mean the plane! How can I be on this plane in the sky?

VIOLET We brought you on board.

BUD How?

VIOLET Don't worry about that. What's done is done. Now that you're here, why don't you untie yourself and enjoy the flight?

BUD I'll untie myself. But enjoy the flight? Never!

(BUD unties himself from the trolley.)

COPEs But this will be the best flight you've ever taken!

BUD Best flight? Only flight!

VIOLET You mean you've never flown before?

BUD No way!

VIOLET But how can you protest something you've never even done?

BUD I don't have to do it to know it's wrong.

VIOLET That means you've never looked out of an airplane window!

BUD Obviously.

VIOLET Well I think you should...

COPEs Come with me Bud, let me show you something really special.

(COPEs guides BUD to a 'window' where he can look out.)

VIOLET Ladies and gentlemen of the press, did you know that people all over the world have dreams about flying?

BUD *(Looking out.)* Look how small everything is!

VIOLET That's because for thousands and thousands of years the only way we could fly was in our dreams.

BUD *(Looking out.)* We're above the clouds!

VIOLET We had to look jealously at birds and think, why can't we do that?

BUD *(Looking out.)* Look how blue the sky is!

VIOLET But today, when we get on an airplane, we become birds. Our ancient dreams come true.

BUD *(Looking out.)* It's wonderful.

VIOLET So, ready to give up on all this silly protesting?

BUD Give up?

VIOLET Now that you've seen what flying is like.

BUD Just because flying gives you a nice view doesn't mean it's okay.

VIOLET You can get more than a 'nice' view from flying. You can get a spectacular view. I tell you what, Bud, you give me somewhere you've always wanted to go, somewhere you've always dreamed of seeing, and I'll fly you there.

BUD Really?

VIOLET Anywhere you want.

BUD I know where: the Pacific Ocean.

COPEs The Pacific Ocean?

BUD And even more specific than the Pacific, I want to see the North Pacific Gyre.

COPEs A gyre? What's that?

BUD A gyre is when different currents come together to make a gigantic, sloshy whirlpool. I've always wanted to see that.

VIOLET Then it's off to the North Pacific Gyre for us. And when we get there, we'll use the Whistle to capture the essence of the place.

BUD Great.

VIOLET Then I'm certain you'll change your mind.

BUD No I won't.

VIOLET Yes you will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will. Because I'm never wrong.

BUD I won't. Because I never lose.

VIOLET You will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will!

BUD I won't!

COPEs Anyway...

As this conversation continues, Violet will chart a course for the North Pacific Gyre. It's a short 23 hour flight, so make yourselves comfortable.

Oh and if you want to get the sensation of flying the plane, please grab your levers like this...

(S/he mimes grabbing a lever.)

And feel it turn this way....

(S/he mimes turning one way.)

And feel it turn that way...

(S/he mimes turning the other way.)

And oh, look! We're there! It's funny how 23 hours just zips by! I wonder how those two are getting on?

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will.

COPEs Pilot!

VIOLET Yes co-pilot?

COPEs I believe we're there.

VIOLET Oh! So we are.

BUD The North Pacific Gyre!

COPEs Just looks like a bunch of waves to me.

BUD Water in every direction.

VIOLET Amazing, isn't it?

BUD It is amazing. But I wonder what it's like down there in the water?

COPES Probably frothy, salty, sea.

VIOLET Let's find out!

(VIOLET and COPES get The Whistle into position.)

VIOLET Right, are we ready to whistle up a little of the North Pacific Gyre?

COPES Ready!

(There is a whistling sound. And then, from the end of The Whistle, a tube or bottle is produced containing little bits of plastic.)

COPES And here it is!

VIOLET What's that?

COPES What?

VIOLET That! That's not sea water it's...it's...

BUD Little pieces of plastic.

VIOLET What's going on?

BUD What's going on is the North Pacific Gyre is becoming the world's biggest garbage dump!

VIOLET That's not what it looks like from up here.

BUD No, but take a look in there. *(Re: the plastics.)* This huge area of ocean is filled with tiny pieces of plastics just like this.

VIOLET And *this* is where you wanted to come?

BUD To teach you a lesson.

VIOLET I'm not dumping plastics into the ocean.

BUD Aren't you?

COPES Um, Violet?

VIOLET What?

COPEs We do kinda send the pop bottles and candy wrappers down The Whistle.

VIOLET But only a teensy, tiny, little bit.

BUD It all adds up.

VIOLET And besides, candy needs wrappers. Soda pop needs a bottle.

COPEs A plastic bottle!

VIOLET So it won't break on the plane!

BUD If you stopped flying planes, you wouldn't need any bottles at all!

VIOLET Okay, you've had your little fun with the North Pacific garbage dump. Copes!

COPEs Yes!

VIOLET Where should we take Bud to give him a truly stunning view?

COPEs Oh, I've always loved the endless green of a huge forest. The smell is almost as good as a new plane.

BUD That sounds good!

VIOLET Great!

BUD How about we see the boreal forest!

VIOLET Then it's off there for us. This time I know you'll change your mind about flying.

BUD No I won't.

VIOLET Yes you will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will. Because I'm never wrong.

BUD I won't. Because I never lose.

VIOLET You will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will!

BUD I won't!

COPES Anyway...

As this conversation continues, Violet will chart a course for the boreal forest. It's a short 32 hour flight, so make yourselves comfortable.

And if you feel like flying the plane again you can just grab your levers...

(S/he mimes grabbing a lever.)

And feel it turn this way....

(S/he mimes turning one way.)

And feel it turn that way.

(S/he mimes turning the other way.)

And oh, look! We're there! It's funny how 32 hours can just zip by! I wonder if those two are...

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will.

COPES We're here!

VIOLET Oh! So we are.

BUD The boreal forest!

COPES Look at all those trees.

BUD Can we fly over that swamp over there?

VIOLET Whatever you like.

BUD I wonder what it's like down in that forest?

COPES Probably earthy, woody, piney, leaves.

VIOLET Let's find out!

(VIOLET and COPES get The Whistle into position.)

VIOLET Right, are we ready to whistle up a little of the boreal forest?

COPES Ready!

(There is a whistling sound. And then, from the end of The Whistle, a tube or bottle is produced containing black sludge.)

COPES And here it is!

VIOLET What's that?

COPES What?

VIOLET That! That's not piney, woody it's...it's...

BUD It's oil!

VIOLET What's going on?

BUD What's going on is the boreal forest is becoming a huge oil pit!

COPES You mean, that's not a swamp?

BUD A toxic swamp! The trees and ground and grass have been scraped away so yucky, sludgy oil can be sucked up from the ground.

VIOLET And I suppose this is another stupid environmental lesson?

BUD That's right!

VIOLET But I don't use yucky, sludgy oil.

BUD Don't you?

COPES Um, Violet, our plane *does* run on jet fuel which *is* kinda made from that.

VIOLET But only a teensy, tiny bit.

BUD It all adds up.

VIOLET And besides, planes need powerful fuel. They can't run on electricity or sunlight!

BUD If you didn't fly, you wouldn't need fuel at all!

VIOLET Okay, I've had enough of this. I'm going to take you somewhere with such a spectacular view, you'll want to become a pilot yourself!

BUD And where's that?

VIOLET We're going to the arctic circle.

BUT Oh, I've always wanted to see that.

VIOLET Then it's off there for us. This time I know you'll change your mind.

BUD No I won't.

VIOLET Yes you will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will. Because I'm never wrong.

BUD I won't. Because I never lose.

VIOLET You will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will!

BUD I won't!

COPEs Anyway...

As this conversation continues, Violet will chart a course for the arctic. It's a short 47 hour flight, so make yourselves comfortable.

And if you feel like flying the plane again you can just grab your levers and...

Oh, you know what to do! I'm so exhausted, I think I might just have a little lie down and –

Oh? What? We're there already? It's funny how 47 hours can just zip by! I wonder if those two are...

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will.

BUD No I won't.

VIOLET Yes you will.

COPES We're here!

VIOLET Oh! So we are. Now look out there Bud and tell me that's not spectacular! See the snow!

BUD Wow.

VIOLET See the ice!

BUD Wow.

VIOLET See the crystal blue water!

BUD All of it is just...wow.

(VIOLET and COPES get The Whistle into position.)

VIOLET And when we put down that Whistle, you'll see just how clear and clean that arctic water is!

(There is a whistling sound. And then, from the end of The Whistle, a tube or bottle is produced containing clear, clean water.)

Look at that!

COPES It does look pretty clean and clear!

BUD That's true!

VIOLET And the view of that arctic ice and sea is pretty spectacular, right?

BUD It is.

VIOLET Ah ha! So I'm right!

COPES She's always right.

BUD Except...

VIOLET Except?

COPES Except?

BUD Except there's one small problem. There's not *supposed* to be any water down there.

VIOLET What?

COPEs What's going on?

BUD What's going on is the planet is warming up, melting all that ice!

COPEs Are you saying all those lakes and rivers aren't supposed to be there?

BUD It's all supposed to be ice. But thanks to greenhouse gases it's getting too hot and becoming this. (*Re: The bottle of liquid.*)

VIOLET But *I* don't make greenhouse gases.

BUD Don't you?

COPEs Um, Violet, our plane does release some greenhouses gases.

VIOLET Which ones?

COPEs Oh, remember that song? (*Looks at BUD; sings.*) There's...

COPEs & BUD
 (*Singing*) There's Carbon dioxide,
 There's noise and there's soot,
 Oxides of nitrogen!
 Such nasty output.

VIOLET Okay, enough! Enough singing and enough arguing with me. Maybe my plane does release some greenhouse gases. And maybe my plane does use some yucky, sludgy oil to make its fuel. And maybe we do use plastics for our bottles and wrappers. But the truth is, my Mom lives on one coast of the country and my Dad lives on the other. If you closed down all the airlines, I'd have to choose one of my parents and hardly ever see the other. Do you think that's fair?

BUD Well...

VIOLET I know your parents live in the same town but what if one of them moved far away? Wouldn't you want to fly out for a visit?

BUD Well...

VIOLET You're not saying families should be broken apart, are you?

BUD Well, no, but...

VIOLET But what?

BUD I don't know.

(Suddenly, all the actors react to a huge 'bump' in the air.)

COPES Whoa!

BUD What was that?

COPES Something's wrong with the plane!

BUD It feels like we're heading down!

COPES And it feels like we're speeding up!

VIOLET Let me check the controls – uh oh.

BUD Uh oh?

VIOLET Uh oh.

COPES Uh oh?

VIOLET We spent so much time up here flying from place to place...we've run out of fuel!

BUD What does that mean?

VIOLET It means we're going to...it means we're going to...

COPES It means we're going to crash!

FOUR

VIOLET *(To BUD.)* This is your fault!

BUD Me?

VIOLET If I wasn't flying you all over the place, we wouldn't have run out of fuel!

BUD You brought me on board!

VIOLET You blocked my runway!

BUD This is your fault.

VIOLET It's yours.

BUD It's yours.

VIOLET It's yours.

COPEs *(Loud; s/he's completely lost her/his patience.)* OKAY THAT'S IT! We've had just about enough of you two! All day long we've had to listen to you fighting and bickering and flapping your big traps...and look where it's got us! This situation, it's *both* your faults. So *both* of you had better fix it.

VIOLET But how?

COPEs You had no problem telling everyone how amazing and fantastic you were earlier on! So, now is the time to be amazing and fantastic. Do what you're good at! And do it now!

BUD What we're good at...?

VIOLET Well, I can fly airplanes.

BUD And I can organise protests.

VIOLET Which is just a lot of hot air.

BUD It's not.

VIOLET It's wasted breath.

BUD It's not!

VIOLET It is.

BUD It's not.

COPEs Wait! Air...breath...that could save us! Violet, you can fly the plane.

VIOLET If I had power, yes!

COPEs And Bud, you can organise people.

BUD If I had a cause I was passionate about!

COPEs Well how's this for a cause: staying alive!

BUD I'm passionate about that!

COPEs Good! (*Re: the audience.*) Well I need you to organise all the journalists here. They're going to give the plane some power!

VIOLET How?

COPEs The Whistle!

BUD The Whistle?

COPEs The Whistle!

VIOLET The Whistle?

COPEs You said it yourself Violet: we can whistle things up, as well as down. So if everybody on the plane can breathe out blasts of air at the same time, it will give the plane a bounce up!

VIOLET And slow us down!

COPEs But Bud, Violet: we need you two to work together. Will you?

VIOLET I...suppose.

BUD Okay.

COPEs Now hurry! There isn't much time!

(VIOLET gets into position to 'fly' the plane while BUD moves The Whistle so it's facing the audience.)

BUD (*To audience.*) Okay everyone, ready?

COPEs Violet?

VIOLET Ready!

BUD *(To audience.)* Okay everyone, on the count of three, I need you to breathe out really hard directly into The Whistle! One...two...three!

(BUD moves The Whistle around trying to catch everybody's breaths.)

VIOLET Whoa! That's pretty good, it slowed us down a bit, but I think we need another one!

BUD *(To audience.)* Okay everyone, same thing again on the count of three! Really hard this time! One...two...three!

VIOLET Wow that's really good! We're getting really close to the ground now, one more blast should do it!

BUD *(To audience.)* Okay everyone, last chance to save us from crashing! As hard as you can! One...two...three!

VIOLET Here comes the runway!

COPEES Hold on everyone!

VIOLET Here we go!

(In the similar way that the company created the noise and movement of a take-off, now they use those same techniques to create the landing. The landing is bumpy, but successful.)

COPEES We made it! We made it! We're back on the ground!

BUD *(To audience.)* Well done everyone.

VIOLET *(To audience.)* That was some great work.

BUD And, ah, Violet that was some good... *(Incomprehensible.)*

COPEES I'm sorry, what was that Bud?

BUD I said that was some good flying.

VIOLET Well, thanks. And, Bud, that was some good... *(Incomprehensible.)*

COPEES I'm sorry, didn't quite catch that Violet?

VIOLET I said that was some good organising.

COPEES What a team you two make when you work together. Wouldn't it be a great story for all of the world's media to write about how the two of

you overcame your differences, saved us all from a disaster and started agreeing on everything!

BUD Well...

VIOLET I guess that would be a great news story.

BUD (*Extending a hand to VIOLET.*) What do you say Violet? Are you willing to give up flying?

VIOLET (*Pushing his hand away.*) What? No! My parents are too important to me.

BUD Oh.

VIOLET Are you going to give up protesting?

BUD No! The planet is too important to me.

VIOLET Well then.

BUD Right.

VIOLET I guess the story they'll have to write is that you can't help the environment *and* keep on doing things like flying.

BUD And they'll have to decide which one of us is right.

VIOLET So...I guess this is...goodbye.

BUD Goodbye.

(*VIOLET and BUD start to walk away from each other.*)

COPES Wait! Okay, maybe I was being a bit too hopeful, moving a bit too fast. What if...what if the story our journalists take away is that you two overcame your differences, saved us all from a disaster and just started listening to each other. Not arguing! And maybe not agreeing! But definitely listening.

BUD Well...

VIOLET I suppose we *could* listen to each other.

BUD And we did do a good job when we worked together.

VIOLET We saved the plane.

COPEs So let's make *that* the story they write about! (*Goes the audience member with the 'Business Times Daily' press pass.*) In the Business Times Daily, they'll say you listened to each other.

VIOLET (*Goes the audience member with the 'Airline Enquirer' press pass.*) And in the Airline Enquirer?

COPEs They'll say you cooperated.

BUD (*Goes to the audience member with the 'Review of Unnecessarily Large Glasses' press pass.*) And in the Review of Unnecessarily Large Glasses?

COPEs They'll say you made a good first step.

VIOLET (*Goes to the audience member with the 'banana-enthusiast.com' press pass.*) And banana-enthusiast.com?

COPEs Well...they...they're really only interested in bananas.

 (*VIOLET and BUD square up to each other.*)

VIOLET (*To Bud, holding out her hand.*) Listen to each other?

BUD (*To Violet, taking her hand.*) Cooperate?

VIOLET & BUD Deal.

 (*They shake hands and continue shaking hands.*)

VIOLET You'll change your mind first.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will.

BUD I won't.

VIOLET You will!

 (*COPEs gets the guitar.*)

COPEs Anyway! (*S/he plays a chord.*) How about we celebrate this good news? (*Sings.*) The skies may be Violet...

 (*BUD takes the guitar and they start again.*)

ALL The skies may be violet,
The ground may be mud,
But the future looks bright

Now we're talking to Bud!

And we say...

Violet Skies,
We've opened our eyes!
Working together
The planet survives!

(Repeat as necessary.)

(End of play.)