

# MEDIA KIT

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## FLYGIRL

by R.D. KARDON

AUTHOR BIO

BOOK DESCRIPTION

BOOK EXCERPTS

PRESS RELEASE

Q&A

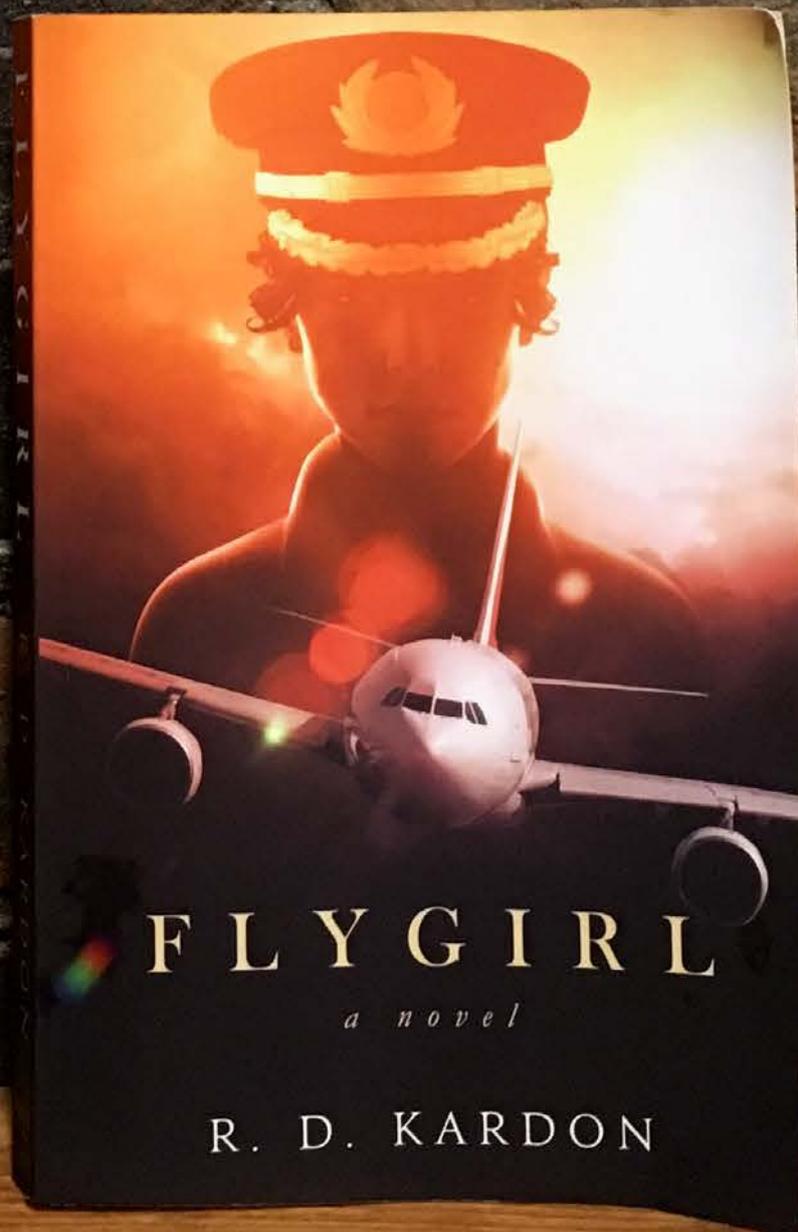
CONTACT

Published: January 2019

(P) ISBN: 978-1-947392-21-2

(H) ISBN: 978-1-947392-22-9

WOMEN'S / FICTION  
BIOGRAPHICAL  
UPMARKET / FICTION



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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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## R.D. KARDON

Robin "R.D." Kardon was a litigation attorney before beginning a twelve-year flying career as a corporate and airline pilot. She holds an Airline Transport Pilot certificate and three Captain qualifications. Her travels took her all over the world in every type of airplane from small single-engine Cessnas to the Boeing 737. Robin earned her B.A. in Journalism and Sociology from NYU and J.D. from American University, Washington College of Law. A native New Yorker, Robin now lives in San Diego, California with her beloved rescue pets.

*Flygirl*, a work of fiction inspired by her own aviation experience, is her first novel.

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# ABOUT THE BOOK

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## FLYGIRL

*a novel*

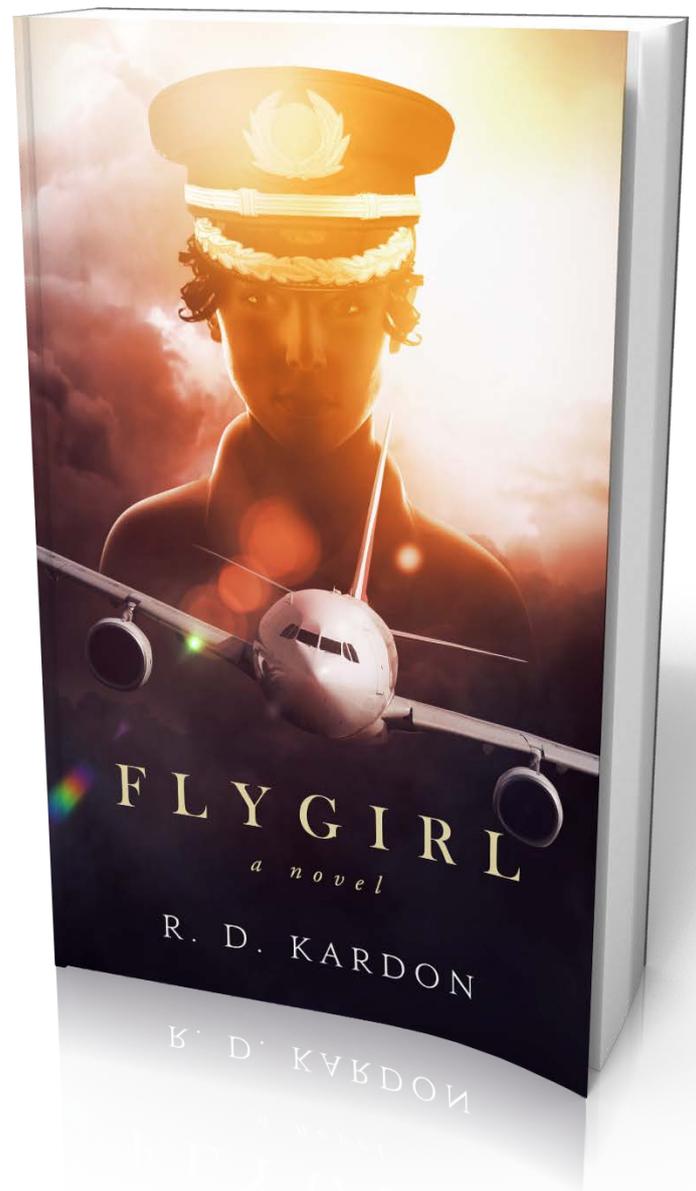
R.D. KARDON

It's 1997. Women stand beside men in combat and fly fighter jets. Pilot Tris Miles is not content with her job as a First Officer for tiny Clear Sky Airlines. She wants to be a Captain—the only way she knows to prove her worth as a pilot and atone for a deadly mistake.

To further her career, Tris accepts a prestigious job with Tetrix, Inc. But her dream of becoming pilot-in-command twists into a nightmare.

As the company's first woman pilot, she encounters resistance, marginalization, and harassment on a daily basis. Fortunately Tris has one thing her co-workers can't deny—skill.

When Tris finds herself in a crippled airplane thousands of miles from home she must prove she can lead. With her career on the line, can Tris earn the respect she's been craving? And if this is the end, can she find the strength to forgive herself?



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# BOOK EXCERPT

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## EXCERPT I

TRIS LOST ALL visibility as the airplane pierced a thick slab of fog. She slid her focus from the miasma outside the cockpit window to the flight instruments in front of her. They were her eyesight now. She trusted them. They told the truth.

She scanned the gauges and smiled. Tris heard their silent language; woman and machine entwined in the exceptional conversation of flight.

“Clear Sky Two-Five-One, cleared for the approach,” the Columbus, Ohio approach controller announced over a scratchy connection. Tris nodded to Captain Danny Terry, sitting two feet away in the left seat. His jaw clenched as he worked the radios on their last flight of the day.

“Gear down,” Tris commanded. The landing gear groaned and clicked as they lowered into position. Locked on final approach, the turboprop glided toward the runway, a concrete slab somewhere below them. Its twin engines spun in sync on the airplane’s wings. Tris monitored every bump and twitch of the plane. She answered each with a tap of the controls.

*Flying is a series of small corrections.*

Tris nudged the yoke to bank the airplane left, the plastic coated steering column cool beneath her hands. She thought of all the ways pilots measure movement: degrees of heading, feet of altitude, ticks of the clock. Always counting up, down, until the next critical moment. As Clear Sky 251 slid toward the ground, Tris counted down.

Then she saw the flash. Just for a second, an amber warning light flickered.

“Danny, check the gauges. We had a caution.”

“Five hundred,” the airplane’s synthesized altitude alert announced. Tris checked the altimeter. So close to the ground and they still had zero visibility through the late-summer glare.

“I don’t know,” Danny said as he scanned the gauges. “Wait. It’s the oil pressure on number one. The needle’s going crazy. It could be nothing, just a blip.”

Or the number one engine could be about to fail.

“Ok.” She’d need full power on both engines to climb if they couldn’t land—and she might not have it.

*...excerpt continued on next page*



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# BOOK EXCERPT

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## EXCERPT I continued

“Nothing in sight.” Danny squirmed forward in his seat to catch the first glimpse of runway lights. His breath grew more labored with every foot of altitude they lost. He wouldn’t see the runway until the very last second, if at all—right when Tris would decide to land the plane or thrust it back up into the soup.

“Roger.” Tris stayed focused and in control. As seconds passed, the plane slid lower, lower, in a stable descent. The only sounds were the whir of spinning dials, the click of needles, the white noise of flight. Tris eyed the altimeter, her hands soft but firm on the power levers.

Danny’s hand twitched behind hers; a backup. He strained to see the runway. Decision time loomed a few feet away.

The caution light blinked again. Tris had to keep her eyes on the navigation gauges. The closer the airplane got to the ground, the more sensitive those indicators became. If she strayed off course, even a little, she’d lose all guidance and have to climb, or else there was no telling where they’d hit the ground.

She felt Danny’s hands move closer to the controls, protecting them in case she faltered.

She didn’t. Tris saw the runway, dead ahead.

“I’ve got it,” Danny said quickly as he keyed the mike. “Columbus Tower, Clear Sky Two-Five-One, runway in sight.”

“Roger, Clear Sky Two-Five-One, Runway Two-Four, cleared to land, wind two-five-zero at three knots.”

“Landing,” Tris said. She looked outside, blinked to focus, and kept the plane moving straight along the runway centerline, edging toward the earth. The altimeter registered field elevation just as the plane’s rear wheels softly touched the ground.



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# BOOK EXCERPT

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## EXCERPT II

Tris watched a 747 on final approach above her, its four engines hanging off of the wings, massive gear assembly down. It probably moved at 160 knots, but it appeared to float toward the runway. The majesty of this enormous jet had awed Tris ever since she was a little girl.

Grandpa Ed had introduced her to flying. On Sundays, he would come over early and have breakfast with Tris and her parents. Her mother would make blueberry pancakes that had a secret ingredient Tris still didn't know.

"Let's go, Princess Patricia. Let's see the miracle of flight," he'd say as he wiped his mouth and drained his cup of black coffee. She'd jump up from the table, kiss her parents goodbye, and run out to Grandpa's truck.

They'd make the two-hour drive from the tiny town of Pittston to the big-city airport. Tris would watch the cornfields roll by, as Grandpa's old pickup bounced along with his hands locked in the ten-and-two position on the steering wheel.

When the terminal doors opened, she would run to the plate glass window looking out over the ramp, pressing her nose up against the glass and trying to rub it against the bulls-eye tip of a 747 parked at the gate. White with a red stripe, the letters "TWA" painted on the side.

"Grandpa, it's so big. How can it fly?"

He'd smile down at his only grandchild. "That's the miracle, princess."

Now, whenever Tris saw a 747 in flight, she could almost feel the calloused warmth of Grandpa's hand on hers. Those days at the airport, with her hand in his while she stood nose-to-nose with the gigantic jet, were the moments she treasured from a childhood that always seemed too short.

Tris's dad died when she was eight. Her mother was adrift after that, sometimes forgetting to cook or clean. From time to time when Tris walked in the door after school, her mother stared at her like she was an unexpected visitor. color picture of how they looked from the air, like a postage stamp glued to the middle of the city.



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# BOOK EXCERPT

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## EXCERPT II

Her mouth went dry. She swallowed twice and shimmied her seat to loosen the grip of the shoulder strap that locked against her chest. As she checked the street signs for her next turn, Tris daydreamed about flying the Astral for Tetrax all over the world.

"Look where I am, Grandpa," she'd say from ramps in Europe, Asia, maybe even Africa! Well-paid coverage crews slept in five-star hotels with lengthy sits in high-end vacation destinations at the ready in case the executives they flew changed their plans. And this job promised the most important benefit: the chance to become a captain without having to wait for her seniority number to come up.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Acorn Publishing, January 2019

ISBN 978-1-947392-21-2



## Flying The Not-So-Friendly Skies

San Diego pilot bases debut novel on her experience  
integrating an all-male flight department

Before San Diego author and attorney Robin “R.D.” Kardon came up with the idea for **FLYGIRL**, her debut novel about a female pilot breaking the blue ceiling, she lived it. In the vein of Barbara Kingsolver and Chris Bohjalian, Kardon’s cockpit confessional has been hailed as “an astounding peek behind the scenes of pilot life.”

Long before #MeToo, Kardon became one of the first female pilots to integrate an all-male corporate flight department. Her novel, which takes on issues of sexual assault, hostile work environment, and professional betrayal, is drawn from what she experienced and witnessed in the 1990s.

“The novel is inspired by actual events rather than based on them,” explains Kardon. “My goal was to realistically recreate the discriminatory environment, harassment and challenges I faced as a female pilot. It is only through an examination of our past that we can help shape a better future both on the ground and in the air.”

Kardon decided to write a novel rather than a memoir so she could create a fuller portrait of a female pilot in this era by incorporating the experiences of other women. “I’ve been told it’s a good story so that’s the first and foremost reason to read it, but people will also learn a great deal about what female pilots like myself went through just a few decades ago.”

International bestselling author T. Greenwood says the story is written with “authenticity and heart” and “examines one tenacious woman’s struggle to survive in a vocation dominated by men who want nothing more than to see her fail.”

Kardon was a commercial pilot for 12 years and says she always enjoys talking about aviation in general, and how to succeed in the male-dominated field. “I encourage women and men to explore careers in flying whether it’s as a pilot or other crew member, dispatcher or controller. From the 1990s to today, it’s been a bumpy ride, but every year women get more of the recognition they deserve.”

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# Q&A WITH R.D.

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**How does *Flygirl* relate to challenges women in the workplace face today?**

It's very relevant to those challenges. Even in the time of #MeToo, so many traditionally male-dominated industries still hold the vestiges of unfairness. We've all faced impossible choices like Tris does, and I hope anyone feeling marginalized can draw strength from Tris's path.

**Were any of the characters in the book based on real people?**

*Flygirl* is inspired by actual events I either experienced or observed during my 12-year professional flying career. Each character is an amalgam, including Tris, designed to convey the emotion, and sense of time, place, and environment. That said, *Flygirl* is a work of fiction.

**What is the primary message of the book?**

My goal was to tell a good story well. So, the first message is "here is a book you can enjoy spending a few hours with." The underlying message of *Flygirl*, is, however, about fairness and love, and to think about whether our choices truly bring us closer to what we want.

**Do you have to be a pilot to understand the technical terms in this book?**

Not at all! In fact, most early readers have enjoyed learning more about what goes on behind the scenes in aviation.

**How long did it take you to write this book?**

Either 25 years, or 4. I actually started jotting down notes for this book back in 1994, when I got my first corporate flying job and started to see and hear some things that seemed strange. I wrote 83 pages, printed them in WordPerfect on some old blue note paper, and carried those pages around with me until I got serious about finishing the book in 2015.

**Tell us about your career change from lawyer to pilot?**

This was one of the most difficult periods in my life. I worked full-time as an attorney to pay for flight training, and it took me 18 months, studying every night and flying every weekend to earn my flight instructor ratings. That's when I quit the law and started flying full-time.

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# CONTACT R.D.

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