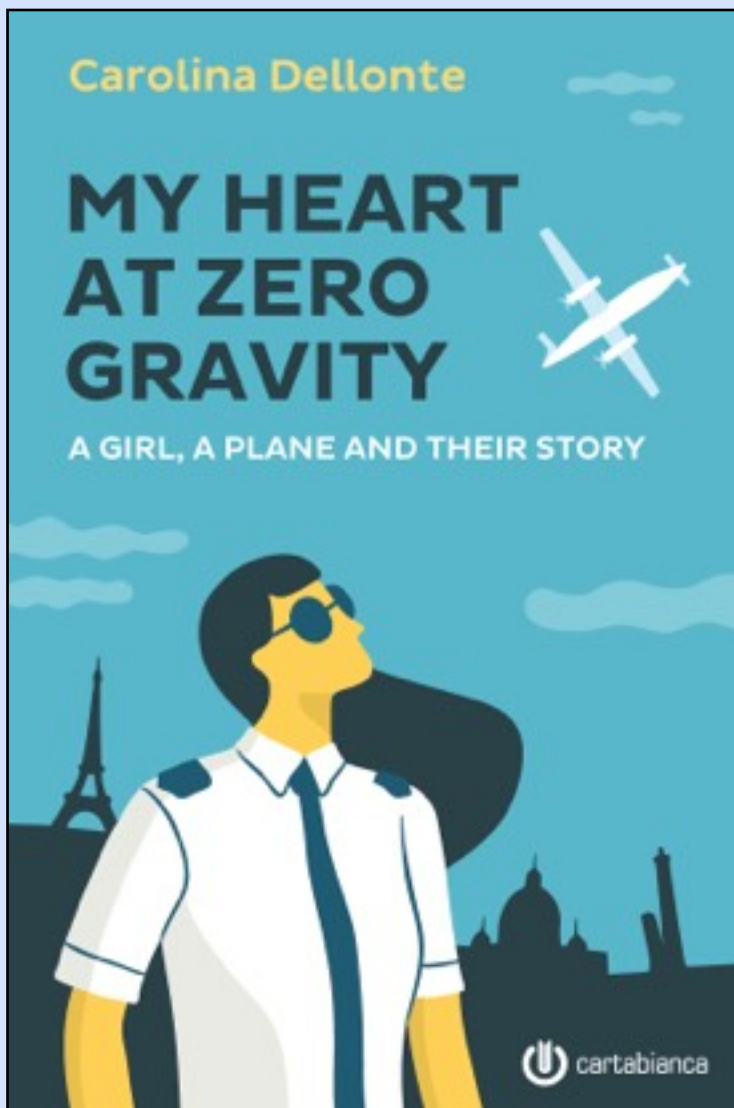


Book Review

My Heart at Zero Gravity: A Girl, A Plane and Their Story

By Carolina Dellonte

Reviewed by Laura Smith



"My Adventure Flying a Piaggio to the African Desert" was a delightful article in the August 2014 issue of *Aviatrix Aerogram* written by Carolina Dellonte. Carolina is an Italian pilot who flew a Piaggio P180 for two different European executive airlines and the article was an account of one of her work trips. For the *Aviatrix Aerogram* Production Team, the article presented a new challenge as Carolina's first language is Italian and hence we spent a little extra effort on the editing to try to capture Carolina's authentic voice. We even left a little Italian in the article (with the English translation in parenthesis) because we felt it was a nice embellishment to the work.

Carolina has now expanded her story by writing a book, *My Heart at Zero Gravity*, first published in Italian and now available in English as an e-book. I found it interesting and enjoyable to read about a different type of flying experience in a part of the world far away from what is familiar in my own flying career. For those of you who wish to embark on reading the English version, I do have a small critique (I really don't even want to call it that but I bring this up because, as someone who has now done years of editing, I have come to value editing as a true art and likewise feel that the same can be said of translation) in that some of the language

is what I consider to be technically correct but could have used a little more polish. As a reader, I simply recommend a little patience and appreciation for the challenges of writing and translation so that you can allow Carolina's story to shine through.

One of the things that Carolina beautifully conveys is her love of flying. I know that is a love that we all share but each of us makes a different quest to obtain that desire, that dream. From her writing it becomes abundantly clear that Carolina is a dedicated professional with a never-ending love of learning. She shares the realities of a pilot's life: an unpredictable work schedule; the fun adventures contrasted with the less pleasant circumstances of constantly being away from home; the sexism she encountered but also the support she received as a woman pilot; and tales of intriguing characters she crossed paths with, including passengers and a mixed bag of Captains.

I know I would so enjoy meeting Carolina in person because she has such a keen mind with avid interest in diverse subjects such as science, history, mythology, and more. She cleverly weaves some of these diverse subjects into her story, making it all the more compelling. I truly felt that I was reading about a kindred spirit when she revealed: "I am a good person, sometimes naïve, generous, but I am also stubborn and most of all, I hate injustice. Such a fiery rage surges up inside of me which, in all of my life, I have just barely been able to control, and that rage surges up not only for the injustices that I suffer, but for all the injustice I see around me, especially if my loved ones are hit."

For many years, Carolina thrived in her career. Unfortunately, she hit some severe turbulence when her company came under new ownership. It is heartbreaking to read about the mobbing (bullying) she endured and how it impacted her well-being: "The most painful thing is that you feel all alone, most of the time vulnerable and unappreciated. Mobbing should be officially recognized as a kind of personal violence, just like the physical kind." Carolina valiantly fought for justice but in the end had to make a significant alteration to her professional goals.

My Heart at Zero Gravity is a captivating tale of the triumphs and struggles of a contemporary woman pilot. Carolina Dellonte has gifted us with her story and I highly recommend that you open this book and your heart to what she has shared.

