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Mayday!: A History of Flight through its Martyrs, Oddballs, and Daredevils

David Darling

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The wonder of flight has long captured the human imagination. In this beguiling history — ranging from the first aircraft to astronauts and beyond — David Darling tells the stories of the true-life adventurers whose wonder has translated into bizarre contraptions, magnificent achievements, and, sometimes, startling folly. Readers will discover outrageous attempts to fly like a bird and fall from the edge of space, as well as meet Napoleonic ballooniste Sophie Blanchard and her daredevil husband, the real “X-Men” who flew the supersonic experimental “X-planes” for the U.S. Air Force, stuntman Lincoln Beachey looping-the-loop in a pinstripe suit, and, of course, The Rocket Man himself: Yves Rossy, who in 2006 was the first person to cross the English Channel using a jet-pack. Eccentric and reckless, Darling’s daring cast of dreamers is guaranteed to entertain and inspire.

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