Flygirl

Flygirl by Sherri L. Smith

Ida Mae Jones is a young African-American woman living with her family in Louisiana. Her father who taught her to fly a small crop duster has passed away, and her brother has signed up to serve in World War II. It is not surprising that Ida Mae feels caught between her family obligations and her love of flying. She learns about the Women Airforce Service Pilots -- a civilian organization that served to fly airplanes under the military with the goal of freeing up qualified men to serve in combat. The WASP pilots transferred planes and equipment from assembly plants to military bases and often trailed targets in the air for anti-aircraft artillery practice.

Not only was the WASP a highly selective group that underwent rigorous training, but Ida Mae faces even more difficulty because she knows she can't sign up as a black woman. Her fair skin allows her to pass for white, but the stress of this combined with the training proves difficult. On the positive side, the friends Ida Mae makes in WASP training are fantastic and provide support for Ida Mae even if they don't know her secret for sure.

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