

INGRID DOWS
AN ALTERNATE STORY PART 2
THE JET AGE



By
Michel Poulin

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A FICTION AND ALTERNATE HISTORY NOVEL

BY

MICHEL POULIN

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WARNING TO POTENTIAL READERS

THIS NOVEL CONTAINS GRAPHIC DESCRIPTIONS OF WAR, VIOLENCE AND SEX, AS WELL AS COARSE LANGUAGE AND CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS THAT ARE UNSUITABLE FOR CHILDREN. THIS IS A PURELY FICTIONAL ALTERNATE HISTORY NOVEL. THE WORDS AND ACTIONS ATTRIBUTED TO ACTUAL HISTORICAL PERSONS DEPICTED IN THIS NOVEL DO NOT REFLECT HISTORICAL REALITY.

ABOUT THIS NOVEL

This novel is a sequel to my previous novel FEMALE FIGHTER PILOT – INGRID DOWS – AN ALTERNATE STORY, and continues the saga of young Ingrid Dows, a teenage female fighter pilot who rose quickly to the rank of major general during World War 2 and who is the American Ace of aces in 1944. With Germany defeated and having signed an armistice in March 1944 and with Japan's military machine mostly destroyed, Japan is now alone, blockaded by the American Navy and slowly starving, while the United States is gradually gearing down its war effort in the Spring of 1944. Young Ingrid Dows, now 18 years-old, prepares herself for her post-war life by studying for a university degree in aeronautical engineering. The dates in this novel have a 'C' following the indicated year, denoting that this story is happening in a parallel timeline to our own timeline 'A', a parallel timeline created by the involuntary travel in time of Nancy Laplante, abducted in Canada in 2012 and then dumped in the year 1940, near London, England. That new timeline 'B' was then further split into a third timeline, Timeline 'C', when adversaries of Nancy Laplante from the 34th Century tried to kill her in 1941 'B'.

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CHAPTER 1 – BACK TO SCHOOL

10:06 (Boston Time)

Monday, June 05

Registrar's offices, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.)

Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

"Next candidate, please!"

Ingrid Dows stepped forward at the call from the Registrar's Office employee and presented her filled registration form for the Summer session at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one of the top universities in the United States in term of engineering studies.

"Good morning, sir. My name is Ingrid Dows and I want to register for the Summer session at the Engineering Department, as a first step to a four-year program in aeronautical engineering."



The male clerk discretely admired Ingrid's youthful beauty and fit body as he took the registration form and started to examine it. Finding all the required information he needed, he then checked his registration roster, to check that there were enough student slots still open in the aeronautical engineering department, although he could already say that there was still plenty of slots still available: the war may have wound down in Europe but the Japanese had not yet surrendered in the Pacific and, as a consequence, many young men who would normally come to register as students at the M.I.T. were still serving in the Pacific, resulting in rather low registrations numbers.

"You intend to reside here at the M.I.T. for the duration of your undergraduate studies, Miss Dows?"

"Yes, I do, sir! I will also take my meals at the students' cafeteria."

"Very well! How do you intend to pay for your tuition and lodging fees, miss? By cash or post-dated cheques?"

“The government is paying for my studies through the new G.I. Bill, sir. I have fought in the war and am now on reserve status for the duration of my studies here. Here is the authorization in my name from from the Army Department.”

The clerk was a bit surprised by that: he had seen already a few military members show up for registration under the authority of the G.I. Bill, which paid for higher level studies for military veterans, but this girl was the first female veteran he saw under that program.

“You already fought in this war? May I ask in what specialty, miss?”

“You may, sir. I fought as a pilot and was commissioned in the field. Since a college or university degree is a basic requirement to be a commissioned officer in the Army and since the fighting has abated significantly, the Army Air Corps is sending me here to get my degree.”

“I see! May I see your military I.D. card, miss?”

“Of course! Here it is.”

The male clerk took the card and examined it for a second to make sure it was in order and identified her correctly, then gave the card back to her. However, not being very familiar with the military ranking system, he only paid attention to her being an officer, missing the fact that the rank entry stated ‘Field Grade Officer’¹, rather than simply ‘Officer’. Entering her personal data and course choices in his registration log and adding her registration form and attachments to the pile in his ‘In’ basket, he then filled a post-registration form and gave it to Ingrid.

“Here you are, miss: you are now registered for the Summer session in our aeronautical engineering department. You may now go next door to the students’ accommodations office, to get a room at the Bexley Hall.”

“Thank you very much, sir.”

Ingrid, satisfied, walked out of that office and went next door to the students’ accommodations office. She had given to the male clerk the minimum information needed to be accepted, while keeping for herself the details which could have pointed to him who she was really: the first ever fighter pilot in American history and one with the

¹ Field grade/Flag officer: Designation for category of officers of General (Brigadier General, Major General, Lieutenant General, General) or Admiral rank levels (Rear Admiral, Vice Admiral, Admiral) in the American military. Other categories of American officers are ‘Senior officers’ (Major, Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel) and ‘Junior Officers’ (Second Lieutenant, First Lieutenant, Captain).

rank of major general, attained at an obscenely young age. However, the reason she had given for registering at the M.I.T. was the legitimate one: to keep her rank and further advance in the Army Air Force as a commissioned officer, she needed to obtain a college or university degree. Since for her to go study at the Army War College would make no sense, as its doctrines and tactics she had proven to be irrelevant to modern warfare thanks to her own combat exploits, she had elected to get a degree in aeronautical engineering, something which would go nicely with her love of flying and, with luck, would one day make her fly a plane of her own design.

In the students' accommodations office, Ingrid found a single female clerk serving a single female student, with no other students present. The low number of students at the M.I.T. didn't surprise Ingrid much: this simply reflected the fact that many young men were still serving in the military, while university attendance by women was not what the future decades would see. The tone of the exchange between the clerk, an overweight woman in her late forties, and the female student, a teenager with pale brown skin and long black hair, immediately caught Ingrid's attention.

"But a two-occupancy room costs a lot more than a single-occupancy room, madam. Can't I pay as single-occupancy, even if I am in a double-occupancy room?"

"No, miss!" replied in an unsympathetic tone the clerk, a white woman. "Either you find yourself someone ready to share your double-occupancy room in order to split the cost of the room or you pay the full price. As for single-occupancy rooms, they are already all booked."

Ingrid's expression hardened on hearing the claims from the clerk: she had read in detail the rules, policies and list of amenities of the M.I.T. and she knew for a fact that a single student didn't have to pay the full price of a double-occupancy room, even when there was no second occupant. She thus strongly suspected that the clerk's attitude towards this black girl was the product of racism. Walking quickly to the clerk's desk and stopping next to the young black woman, Ingrid put her registration form on the desk while giving a hard look at the clerk.

"I will take the second bed in that room, madam. You may now register both of us together."

The clerk threw her a nearly scandalized look on hearing that.

"You would be ready to share a room with this...girl?"

Now certain that racism was at play here, Ingrid bent forward while resting both of her fists on the desk.

“Did you mean to say ‘nigger’ instead of ‘girl’, madam? If that’s the case, then I will signal your attitude to your senior manager. We are in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, not in Mississippi or Alabama, madam. Please register us as dual occupants, now!”

While Ingrid didn’t raise the volume of her voice, she did put a tone of authority into it, something that she was accustomed to do thanks to her military service as an officer. Understanding that she would not be able to screw around with Ingrid, the clerk took both her registration form and that of the black girl and read the names on them, then wrote them in her registry before searching in a large keypress on the wall behind her desk and taking two sets of keys, which she put in front of Ingrid and of the black girl.

“You now have Room 419, on the fourth floor of Bexley Hall. You may now pay for your room. Here is the bill for it.”

Not thanking the female clerk, Ingrid grabbed her set of keys before paying cash for her accommodation. Seeing that the young black woman, who was maybe nineteen years-old, was nearly emptying her purse in order to pay for her part of the room, Ingrid stopped her with a gesture of the hand and took more money out of her wallet, paying the full price of the room, to the shock of both the girl and the clerk. Ingrid shut up the girl in advance with another gesture of the hand and made sure that the clerk signed and stamped a receipt for the room, receipt which she grabbed before turning around to walk out with the black girl. The latter however stopped near the door of the office, time for her to pick up two large suitcases and a briefcase lying against the wall. Again, Ingrid came to her help by grabbing the biggest and heaviest suitcase while smiling to the girl.

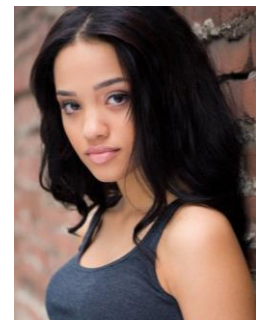
“Let me help you with that, miss.”

The black girl was too stunned by Ingrid’s helpfulness to protest and spoke only once out in the hallway.

“You are too kind, miss. Why did you help me like this?”

“I helped someone in need: it is as simple as that, miss. Also, I can’t stand racism and I make it my business to combat it whenever I encounter it. By the way, my name is Ingrid Dows and I just registered to study aeronautical engineering.”

“And my name is **Betty Woods**. I came to the M.I.T. to study biology. Thank you so much for your help, Ingrid.”



"You're welcome!" replied Ingrid while shaking hands with Betty. "Let's go take possession of our room, so that you could drop those bags in it before we go collect our school books."

"Uh, what about your own bags, Ingrid?"

"They are in my car, which is parked near Bexley Hall, on Amherst Street. We will go to our room first and drop your bags there before I will go get my things out of my car. Then we will go collect our school books. Let's go!"

Going down to the ground floor of the institute's administrative building, they walked along the large main hallway until they went out via the entrance on Massachusetts Avenue. There, they crossed the street and used the sidewalk to walk to the nearby Bexley Hall, which was also situated along Massachusetts Avenue. Both teenagers looked for a moment at the four-story brown brick building, which formed a 'U', with a rather narrow central entrance ground.

"God, I hope that they have an elevator in this building: my bags are quite heavy and I don't want you to sweat on my account, Ingrid."

"Bof! Some physical exercise will do us good, Betty."

To Betty's relief, they found out that the building had one elevator, an old model made to lift furniture and other cargo rather than passengers but which proved its usefulness then. Once up on the top floor, they found that Room 419 occupied the northeast corner of that floor and gave a view of both Massachusetts Avenue and of the adjacent student center in the Stratton Building. The room itself was of reasonable dimensions and contained two single beds, two work desks, two large closets, two chests of drawers, a bookshelf and a small but fully equipped bathroom. Dropping Betty's suitcase in the middle of the room, Ingrid went to look outside through one of the windows.

"Alright, I will go get my things out of my car while you start unpacking, Betty."

"Please, let me help you with that, Ingrid." pleaded at once the black girl, making Ingrid nod in response.

"As you wish, Betty."

Going down via the main staircase of the building, both girls then walked to the nearby corner of Amherst Street with Massachusetts Avenue and turned on that side street, with Ingrid finally stopping next to a dark purple convertible with its canvas top up.

“My car, a **1940 Dodge Deluxe D14 Convertible**.” she said proudly. “I recently bought it in a Boston’s used cars dealership. It is still in good shape and has only a low mileage on it. I was told that the dealer bought it from a young war widow who didn’t know how to drive and whose husband was recently killed in combat over Europe. It’s not the most sports-like car but it does an honest job at letting me drive around.”



“What a sad story.” said Betty, obviously referring to the young widow. “So many young men have died in this horrible war.”

“Way too many, in fact, with some women dying as well. I myself saw too many deaths while serving with the Army Air Force.”

Betty snapped her head towards Ingrid on hearing that.

“You fought in this war, Ingrid? What was your specialty?”

“As a pilot. I flew many types of planes, including helicopters.”

Betty nodded her head at that, thinking that Ingrid had been a female ferry pilot. She thus didn’t ask more questions on that subject and watched as Ingrid unlocked and opened the big trunk of the Dodge, then started pulling out first a military kit bag, followed by a military-issued foot locker, a suits bag, a large leather briefcase and, finally, what looked furiously like a rifle case. That last item immediately attracted her curiosity.

“You own a rifle, Ingrid?”

“Yes! I also have four handguns, all legal, of course. I will show them to you tonight, after supper.”

“Okay! What can I carry for you?”

“You can take the briefcase and the suits bag.”

Once the trunk was locked back, Ingrid and Betty, now quite loaded down, returned to Bexley Hall and used again the cargo elevator to get up to their room, where they dropped their luggage in the middle of the room. While Betty blew out air in relief, she noticed that Ingrid seemed not to have strained herself much. She thus looked up and down Ingrid’s lean and fit body, noting that her arms were quite muscular for a girl.

“You seem to be quite fit and strong for a girl, Ingrid.”

“I am, Betty. I exercise every day and I certainly am going to use the sporting facilities at the M.I.T., including its pool.”

“Talking of pool, did you notice in our schedule that we will have to pass a swimming test as one of the conditions to be admitted?”

“I have and I am not worried one bit about it. And you, do you know how to swim, Betty?”

“Me? Of course? My parents often brought me to the coast or to a lake for some beach time in the Summer. Shall we go get our school books now?”

“Yup! Let’s grab our briefcases for that.”

Getting their required school books at the M.I.T.’s book depot took a good hour, as the file of students there was fairly long. Going back to their room first, in order to drop their heavy briefcases, the two girls then went for lunch to the food court of the Students Center, next door to Bexley Hall. While getting served was no problem, many of the students eating at the tables around the table chosen by Ingrid and Betty fell silent and looked at them crossly when both sat together. While Betty did her best to ignore that, Ingrid didn’t and stared back hard at the three teenage boys sitting at the nearest table, who were looking scandalized at seeing a white girl sit with a black girl.

“Hey, busters, how about you mind your own business and stop playing the KKK² cadets?”

Two of the three teenage boys, while angered by her remark, did avert Ingrid’s stare but the third one, a big and muscular boy, did reply to her in a harsh tone.

“And what are you doing, eating with a nigger, girl?”

“What I am doing is exercising my constitutional right of assembly, a right tens of thousands of our young men are presently fighting to defend, often at the cost of their lives. The M.I.T. is officially an integrated, private learning establishment, so if you don’t like seeing me with black people, then you are free to leave the M.I.T., you racist asshole.”

² KKK: Short for Ku Klux Klan, a notorious and powerful White supremacist and racist organization widely present in the United States from the mid-1800s to the late 1980s. The KKK often intimidated, attacked and even lynched or assassinated the black people they accused of not keeping to their ‘proper place’.

The big boy's face reddened with anger at her insult and would have jumped out of his chair if not for one of his friends, who held him down by one arm.

"Don't let her anger you, Rick: she's not worth the trouble."

The said Rick did sit back but threw a last hateful look at Ingrid.

"Next time I see you with that nigger, then I will teach you a lesson, bitch."

"Then you will be the one to be taught a lesson, buster. So, do your best to avoid me."

Both surprised and unsettled by her assurance, the said Rick then decided to move to a farther table, surprising both his two friends and Betty, who spoke in a low voice to Ingrid.

"Wow! You are one cool, fierce girl, Ingrid. That guy was nearly twice your size."

Ingrid looked back at her and replied in a near whisper.

"Here is something I didn't tell you yet: I am a fighter pilot and I killed dozens of men in combat, so it will not be a cowardly bully like that guy who will scare me."

"You, a fighter pilot? Then you must have been part of the famous Fifinellas, right?"

"Yes, I was, Betty. Well, enough about that: let's eat while our food is hot. Then we will go back to our room and organize our things there."

With no organized school activity scheduled for them until next week, at the start of the Summer session classes, Ingrid and Betty returned to their room after the lunch and unpacked their things, storing them in their closets and chests of drawers and suspending their clothes. While she was suspending her dresses in her closet after taking them out of her biggest suitcase, Betty noticed that Ingrid kept the clothes she had in her suits bag in it, suspending the whole bag while keeping it zipped up, while she did suspend separately a few dresses and coats.

"Uh, you are not taking your dresses out of that suits bag, Ingrid?"

"No: my military uniforms are in that suits bag and I prefer to keep them out of sight."

Seeing that Betty seemed ready to ask her more questions, Ingrid then took a decision and stopped her unpacking for the moment.

"Betty, I think that we need to talk. Let's sit down on our respective beds."

"Uh, okay!"

Going to her bed and sitting on it, a curious Betty waited for Ingrid to do the speaking first, which she did while looking into her eyes.

"Betty, I told you the minimum about me at first for a number of good reasons, the biggest being my wish to be able to study here without attracting undue attention on me. First, though, you must promise me that you will not repeat anything that I am going to tell you or show you to anyone, including your family and friends."

"I promise to keep mum, Ingrid."

"Good! First off, I am a fighter pilot who is now on reserve status in order to pursue a degree, as required to become or stay an Army officer. I will be serving during weekends and holidays with the air unit based at Logan International Airport, in order to fly enough hours to keep my pilot's aircraft qualifications. Once I will have graduated from the M.I.T. with a degree in aeronautical engineering, I will be fully reactivated as a combat pilot in the Army Air Force and will thus continue my military career. Second, I did not want to show you my uniforms because I didn't want for you, or anybody, to see what rank I hold. Well, here is the big surprise for you: I am a major general, with two stars on my shoulder pads."

Betty opened her mouth wide on hearing that.

"You? A major general? But that's impossible: you are way too young for such a rank."

"Normally you would be right, however my story is not an ordinary one, Betty. You said that you knew about the Fifinellas. What do you know exactly about them?"

"Well, I read in the newspapers that they are the only female air combat unit in the United States and that they fought both in the Pacific and in Europe. I..."

Betty then finally realized who Ingrid really was and stared at her with wide eyes.

"My God! You are the famous 'Lady Hawk', right?"

"Bingo! Now you know that I don't get intimidated easily and don't back up when threatened. So that big bully at the cafeteria better stay away from me...and you, for his own sake."

"Wow!" could only say Betty. After a short pause, she smiled to Ingrid. "Could I see your uniform, Ingrid?"

"Now that you know who I am, of course."

Getting up from her bed, Ingrid went to her closet and took out her suits bag, then lay it flat on her bed before unzipping it, exposing her walking out uniform, complete

with two stars on her shoulder pads and with multiple rows of medal ribbons on its left chest, with a pilot's wings insignia above them. Fascinated, Betty caressed the medal ribbons while staring at the uniform, to then look at Ingrid with renewed admiration and respect.

"Ingrid, you are the stuff of legends, truly."

"Even more than you think, Betty. I have another big secret to tell you about, a secret even more fantastic than being a fighter pilot and a general."

"What could that possibly be, Ingrid?"

"I can remember my past incarnations, all 7,000 years' worth of. Only one other person benefitted from such a gift: my adoptive mother, Nancy Laplante, the Canadian time traveler from the year 2012, who was killed by the Germans in 1941. Don't ask me how or why I got that gift: I simply don't know. Those 7,000 years of past souvenirs make me able to speak dozens of languages, many of them extinct, like Old Sumerian, Attic Greek, Mandarin Chinese, Norse and Old English. They also make me a very mature girl, with many varied past life experiences and skills. That is partly why I was able to rise so quickly in rank despite my young physical age."

"Only partly? What else helped you to rise to major general rank?"

"Something that is a talent of my own: without bragging, I am a certified tactical and strategic military genius, something I used to screw both the Japanese and the Germans in air combat. I also happen to have a genius-level I.Q., which was tested as being 151. But let's drop this business about me. What about you, Betty?"

"Me? There frankly is little to be said about me, apart from the fact that I have been interested in biology since my preteen years. My parents live in Boston, with my father working as a warehouse forklift driver and my mother staying home to raise my two youngest siblings, who are respectively sixteen and thirteen. I myself am nineteen. That's about all that I can say about me, Ingrid."

"That is enough for me, Betty. The fact that you passed the entrance exams and qualifications required to study at the M.I.T. proves that you are a bright girl, while I sense that you are also a decent girl."

Somehow, Ingrid's last remark created some mental turmoil within Betty's brain, a turmoil Ingrid's power as an empath picked up. That power, like other powers, had started to emerge after her mind had been opened to the souvenirs of her past incarnations in 1941 but she was still exploring its limits, as in the case of her other powers. However, Ingrid refrained from inquiring about the feelings she had detected

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