

“Once More With Feelings”

A new story by Night Hawk
© 2004 by *(the)* Night Hawk

Chapter 8: When Patti Met Wendy

A dark haired girl came running when the nun called her name. She had hair so dark it looked to be black, and her skin was so pale I instantly thought of how I must have looked when Ann had found me passed out on the kitchen floor.

“Wendy, this is Patricia,” said the nun. “It looks like you two have a lot in common.”

I looked at Wendy and thought, not likely. She was about 5 foot 5 and still had baby fat on her. She did have bigger boobs, but that could have been from the extra weight. Her face looked pleasant enough, even taking the shiny braces into account.

“Wendy is here on a special gifted students program,” the nun explained. “That’s why I had you placed in her dorm room. Both of you seem inclined towards the more difficult courses.”

“Wendy, Patricia is starting the year late, and we are counting on you to help her catch up on what she has missed.”

I could see the polite smile on Wendy’s face but felt no warmth behind it. I suppose that if it had been me, I wouldn’t be too thrilled hearing I was going to have to baby-sit the new kid on the block.

“Well, I’ll leave you two to get acquainted,” said the nun and promptly left.

“I’m sorry they forced this on you, Wendy,” I said. “I didn’t ask for somebody to hold my hand. I guess they think we’re helpless without them.”

Wendy actually laughed.

“Clueless is more like it,” she said. “I can give you a tour of the school after supper if you like, show you where your classes are.”

“Now that would be helpful,” I said. “Nearly as helpful as pointing out the cafeteria and a place to have a bath.”

“Food I can point you to. Actually, all you need to do is follow me. It’s my one weakness, but a bath? Only if you’re sick. Don’t you know that lying in warm water leads to temptation of the flesh?”

She said it so seriously I thought I had been hooked up with a religious zealot. Then she couldn’t hold it in any longer and burst out laughing. “You should see the look on your face,” she said. “Priceless! But it’s true about the baths. Injuries only.”

“You really had me going there for a minute,” I said. “All that stuff about temptation of the flesh.”

“Yeah,” she sighed. “As if having a bath will tempt the flesh. I swear that Saturday confessions are nothing but girls confessing to adultery. There’s not much else they can do in this prison that could be considered a sin.”

“Adultery?” I asked. “How’s that possible?”

“Are you sure you’re really a Catholic?” Wendy asked.

“Kind of lapsed,” I said hoping that would avoid further questions.

“Well, you won’t stay lapsed here,” said Wendy. “First period is religion, confession every Saturday and Mass every Sunday. But in answer to your question, masturbation is one of the serious sins and falls under the Adultery clause.”

I spoke before I thought. Something I was going to have to watch in the future. “How can anything that brings that much pleasure be a sin?”

Wendy turned beet red. “I wouldn’t know about that.”

I instantly clued in. “So,” I said quickly, “I take it that your visits to the confessional are really quick. You just tell the priest about how much dope you smoked through the week and how many bottles of sacramental wine you managed to swipe and drink.”

She laughed again. Wendy had a very pleasant laugh. I sat down at the end of my bed so that I didn’t have to be looking down at her all the time.

“Ooops,” she said. “No sitting or lying on the beds except for sleep and only at night. That might lead to temptation as well!” She was smiling as she said it.

“I guess this means my only place of refuge left then is the shower and the toilet,” I said laughing.

She laughed with me. “Nah, if you listen carefully at night, you’ll hear all kinds of sinning going on!”

We slowly walked to the community area. I hadn't noticed before that there were some regular chairs there as well. We sat down.

"So, what do I call you?" asked Wendy. "Patricia is so formal."

"I know," I replied. "My folks call me Patti, and the only friend I had used to call me Pete."

"That's cool!" she said. "Do you mind if I call you Pete?" For a shy girl, she was fairly brimming with words. I mentioned this to her. She sighed and slumped a bit in her chair.

"I usually am very shy," she said. "I don't turn 14 until the end of the month. Most of the kids at the last school I was at ignored me because learning comes so easy to me. I can tell you a dozen different ways to say 'browner' and at least 50 different ways to say fat."

I felt for her. "You're not fat, Wendy," I said softly. "You're cuddly, and the sad part is that you'll probably lose that cuddliness in a couple of years."

"From your lips to God's ear," she said.

"Oh, I'm sure She's listening," I replied, and the look of shock on her face was a true Kodak Moment.

"Do you believe that, too?" she asked. "Of course we can't ever say it out loud, but there are a lot of people who believe God is both male and female." For the next hour, we discussed the philosophy of what God was and if God still paid attention to what was happening on Earth.

I finally ended the discussion stating that I knew for sure that God was still alive and that She had a wicked sense of humor. "Maybe one day I'll tell you how I know," I said.

That seemed to satisfy her and then I started asking about the rest of the inmates.

Wendy explained that most were in the visiting hall with their friends or parents.

"Why aren't you down there?" I asked.

"My folks have a dairy farm north of Delhi, it's a long drive for them," she said. "I've got four older brothers, and the youngest is 25. I don't think they expected to have another child, I think they were looking forward to getting out and being on their own, and then I appeared. I know I was an accident. It's not that they don't love me, but with the farm and all, I doubt that I'll see them at all before the end of the semester."

“You sure aren’t an accident, Wendy,” I said. “You just came later because the time for smart girls to do some good in the world is just starting. If you had come earlier, you wouldn’t have the opportunities you’re going to get.”

“You think?” she asked, a hopeful smile on her face.

“I know it!”

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

The bell for supper rang once, and Wendy explained the bell system to me. “The first bell is a five minute warning. It’ll ring twice when it is actually time to eat, so we might as well get a move on now.”

The food was better than what I had been subjected to at the hospital and having had my share of exotic foods in my former life; this kind of regular standard fare would suit me fine. I steered Wendy away from the buns and suggested fruit instead.

I’d noticed she had become withdrawn as we entered the cafeteria and I could see where the nun had concluded Wendy was a shy girl. One on one with someone like me, she blossomed, but in the company of others, her supposed peers, she became a wallflower.

The school itself, while big in size, was small compared to my first high school. Physically huge and imposing, it housed only 600 students, and over half of these were daughters of rich families. As I took in the information that Wendy whispered to me, I realized why meals weren’t an orchestrated affair with the pomp and ceremony of heavy-duty prayers.

It was easy to see the class structure of the school – the social classes that is. Some of the girls carried themselves with an attitude that reeked money, wearing uniforms tailored to enhance their developing bodies, but still within the dress code, or obviously expensive casual clothes. I learned that some had come from across the country, their families impressed by the school’s impressive reputation, even if their offspring weren’t of the same caliber academically. Others were more like Wendy and me, here on one kind of scholarship or another, or from families who were going without to ensure their daughter had the best education they could afford.

The rich girls had real rooms, sharing two to a room - even those in grade nine, while the plebs had to make do in the dorms. It didn’t impress me. I had known rich bastards, and good people who had nothing, and remembered with amusement the stock market crash of the late seventies that took those rich people by surprise. Overextended on credit with risky investments, they were left penniless when their loans were called in – and then it happened *again* in the 90’s with the dot-com crash! And the scandals of cooked books and creative accounting just added grief to their woe!

Nah, they could stuff their snobby attitudes – I didn't need them as 'friends.' I had a goal, which was to do as well as I possibly could, and I was beginning to look forward to being here watching the culture of the 70's in the body of a 14-year-old girl and with the mind of a 45-year-old man.

After we ate, and I ate sparingly, determined to keep the slim figure I had inherited, Wendy and I went for a tour of the school and the grounds.

The halls were neat and clean as were the lockers. No graffiti here. I looked into the different classrooms I would be in and was surprised to see how few desks occupied the large rooms. I could see why St. Ursula's turned out such good students. There'd be little chance of staying inconspicuous in a small class size and teachers would know their students and their progress by heart.

After the tour of the school, we hit the grounds. There was a large football size field with a paved track around it. It made me realize that nowhere in the options had there been a phys-ed class. I asked Wendy about it.

"Physical fitness is not worthy of a credit," she said and went on to explain that after the last class of the day, the girls were expected to take an optional hour either in some sport or visiting the retired nuns who lived in the cloistered convent which stood next to the grand chapel. It was one of those 'character-building' things they imposed on the students 'for their own good.'

"And which option do you choose?" I asked her, knowing full well this option was anything but.

"I've been visiting with the old nuns," Wendy said dejectedly. "Look at me, do I look like the athletic type?"

I stopped and looked her over with a critical eye. "I guess that depends on the sports available," I said.

"There's not a lot of sports for girls here," she said. "Europe has all kinds, but all we have is field hockey, volleyball, basketball and track."

"Field hockey?" I asked.

"Yeah, if they can find enough girls willing to have their shins smashed."

Ouch... I could feel the pain of that. "Well, you could certainly play volleyball," I said to her.

"Yeah, as if," she snorted.

“I take it you don’t know how,” I ventured.

“It’s not just that,” she said. “After practice, we’re expected to shower in the gym.”

“And...”

Wendy blushed that bright crimson again. “I don’t do naked well in front of other people.”

I laughed which only got her mad. “You of all people should understand that!” she said.

I had to think for a moment before I clued in. “Oh, you mean because I’ve got no tits?”

“Well, I wouldn’t have put it quite that bluntly,” she said blushing.

“Oh? Are you one of those prissy girls who calls them breasts or mammaries?” I asked with a smirk.

“No! I just don’t think of them like that. I call them boobies if you must know!” she retorted.

I was laughing with genuine glee - Wendy showed her emotions so easily. I realized that the entire time we had been talking we had been walking around the track. I think we were on our second lap and it felt good not being tired or winded. “So, unless you want to spend the next three years visiting old nuns, how about you and I learn to play volleyball? Then we can get naked in the showers afterwards!”

“You are so nasty!” said Wendy with a big smile.

We continued walking for another hour. I looked at the high wall that surrounded the entire property. It was covered with vines and shrubs but it was pretty clear that there would be no easy way over these walls. There were a total of three gates to the entire place, which covered about six acres of land. There was a service gate at the rear for deliveries, the main front gate which was far enough from the school so anyone thinking of sneaking out would be easily seen and the one for the chapel which remained closed most of the time according to Wendy.

While we had been walking, Wendy had given me her impressions of the teachers. Most of them were nuns, but there were a few regular teachers as well. It did sound like they were well qualified though and I looked forward to the morning.

As we returned to the dorm, I asked Wendy which bunk was hers and she said she was directly across from me. She had chosen that one so that she could change into her

nightgown in privacy. She was still teased about it by the other girls, especially the ones who had developed early and liked to flaunt their bodies.

“Fuck ‘em.” I said which had Wendy giggling all the way back.

~~~~~ //

Wendy had been right though. Quite a few caustic remarks were thrown in her direction as she went into the bathroom to change. I didn’t care one way or another; the wardrobe provided more than enough privacy for me to slip out of my clothes and into my pajamas. I hadn’t bothered to pack nightgowns since they would be more of a hindrance on those nights I needed to scratch my itch.

Wendy came out, still blushing, wearing what could only be kindly described as a grandmother’s flannel nightgown. I went in to brush my teeth and take a leak and when I came out, I started my 100 count on my hair. I had already planned to save my makeup for weekends when I might have visitors, and didn’t see much need for it during the week when all that would be around would be other girls. As I brushed my hair, I noticed Wendy glancing at me every now and then.

In my first life, I wouldn’t have given a girl like Wendy a second look. She was obviously a smart girl, but without a sexy figure, she would be overlooked by both boys and men. But I had been honest with her when I said she was cuddly. Looking at her from my older point of view, I realized I had missed out on a lot of great girls when I had been younger. Cuddly was really nice.

I gave her a wink and then crawled into bed just minutes before the lights went off. I had spent the last 15 years mostly alone anyway, so I had no problems missing anyone. I thought of Mike and Ann who were probably missing me right now, but the time I had spent in the hospital must have given them an idea of what the house would be like without me. Then my mind drifted to Einstein. I wondered how his day had gone and if he was settling in.

~~~~~ //

“Wake up, sleepyhead!”

I could hear a voice but for a minute couldn’t place it nor could I remember where I was.

“Pete, it’s time to get up!” said Wendy with some urgency. “You don’t want to be late on your first day!”

I opened my eyes and smiled at Wendy. “Hi! I guess I was more tired than I realized.”

She smiled back and said that we had to get ready for breakfast and then off to class. I crawled out of bed and pulled one of my uniforms out of the wardrobe and put it on the bed. Then I went to brush my teeth and empty my bladder. By the time I got out, Wendy was already dressed. It amazed me how a girl could manage to get dressed under a nightgown, but she had done it.

I opened the plastic bags up and inspected what I had to deal with. A white blouse, wonderful, a blue jacket with the school crest embroidered on the front over the heart, a plaid skirt, and plain low heel black shoes along with white socks. Fashion could have used a lift here.

With a sigh, I slipped off my pajama top and struggled with the bra, which started Wendy giggling. "I suppose you don't wear one often," she said.

"Nope" I said as I finally got the padded cups into place. "As a matter of fact, I don't ever remember wearing one before last week."

"Oh, that's right," she said. "Sister Margaret said you had suffered from amnesia."

"Does everybody know that?" I asked. I wasn't annoyed or upset; I just figured I could probably get away with more mistakes if it was common knowledge.

"I'm sure all of the teachers know, and everybody in this dorm knows, so yeah, you can be pretty sure that by the end of the week everybody will know."

I nodded my head. "Good, then I won't have to explain it to everybody." I started to pull off my PJ bottoms when I remembered to tell Wendy to bring her gym suit with her today.

"But I thought you were kidding," she sputtered.

I knew that what bothered her most was the teasing in the showers, so I decided to let her see that between us girls, we had nothing that other girls didn't. I skinned off my bottoms and took my time slipping my panties on. I made a joke about adjusting my balls, then slipped on the skirt. This was the easiest thing to do. I was still having problems with the reversed button pattern on the blouse, but it didn't take me as long as I thought it would. I tucked the blouse in, slipped on the jacket and then brushed my hair quickly and tied it back with an elastic. I had found some in my bedroom when I was trying to figure out what Patricia had been like. The socks and shoes went on, I made my bed and we were out the door.

Breakfast was good. There was a decent assortment of everything from bacon and eggs to waffles, cereal, toast, and juice. But no coffee!

Once again, I steered Wendy away from the carb heavy breads and piled her tray with grapefruit, fresh fruit, two juices, and a helping of eggs and bacon. "You're going to need this," I said. Wendy just accepted my word. I'm sure she had her doubts, but I didn't give her a chance to argue.

When we made it to our homeroom for the morning religion class I was introduced as a late starter who had just a week ago been at death's door. I thought that was pretty dramatic, but then again, I didn't remember it either. Before I was allowed to sit down, the nun asked if anyone had any questions they wanted to ask me about such a harrowing experience.

Most of the questions were basically the same that everybody asks a survivor of a near death experience. No, I didn't see a tunnel of light. No, I hadn't heard my name called, but yes, after the experience I believed that God's hand had set me on this path. That seemed to make the teacher very happy and I didn't know it at the time, but she would bring this up with the principal and I would be retelling this story over and over for the next few years.

With a smaller class size, and a surprisingly open minded teacher, discussion was pretty lively. I guess that in a religious class there really isn't much you can do in the way of homework other than remember important dates and people, but the nun even allowed discussion on whether Lot's wife had actually been turned into a pillar of salt or if that was just a metaphor. I found it interesting and paid attention. This was, in my mind, how school should be, challenging the students instead of stifling them.

My next three classes were all in the English department. English Lit was a blast. Instead of teaching Shakespeare, the teacher, one of the few male teachers on the faculty, had us study contemporary writers. Thankfully in my previous life I had read some of War and Peace, so I wasn't *too* unfamiliar with the classics and not too far behind the class when it came to the reading assignments.

English Comp was just one room over and I met up with Wendy again who was taking the same class. The nun was a stickler for the rules of writing and grammar and had us edit selected pieces from various newspapers and magazine articles. Half the class was spent on discussion of whys and how's and the other half on practical experience.

This might be the only class to actually make me think and work. On top of all that, we also had to work on our penmanship and learn how to use a typewriter, which in itself was not a bad thing as I had previous experience on a keyboard, but the IBM Selectric typewriter was a monster. No spell checker on these babies! So, I learned to slow down and reduce my typos.

The English option that I had selected was basically public speaking. It was a very small class for those who thought that one day they might need the training for speaking to groups of people, and included kids older than my current 14 years. I was pleased to hear that this class included school trips to radio and television stations. Public

speaking had always been easy for me, and except for the annunciation exercises, lessons in posture and such, it was going to be a real easy credit. I knew how to project my voice and when to pause for effect. The big term assignment was to write and deliver a ten-minute speech at the South Western Regional Public Speaking Contest.

At lunch, I once again took charge of what Wendy should eat. “Damn, Pete,” she said. “Can’t I have any bread?”

“Yes, but not for the next few weeks, Wendy,” I said patiently. “And then it will be whole wheat. White refined flour isn’t good for you.”

“And all this fruit. I’m liable to turn into one,” she said before she realized the double meaning, and blushed.

I just laughed and said, “You wish!”

Lunch was quickly over and it was back to class. Wendy and I were in the same math classes so we spent the next two periods together as well. I liked the idea that Wendy shared the same goals as me when it came to taking as many advanced courses as possible. She was shy in the discussion part of the class, but when it came to answers, the teachers were quick to call on her, and she invariably had the right answers. With a boost to her self-esteem, she would really become a force to be reckoned with in the future.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

History was... well it was as I expected: Easy for me because I did know it, interesting in the discussion part, but not as challenging as the math classes. I was halfway through my last period when the intercom beeped and I was told to go to the principal’s office.

I knew I couldn’t have done anything wrong yet, so with an apology to the Geology teacher, I gathered up my books and left the room. I dropped off my text books at my locker and took a quick step into the bathroom to make sure that I looked presentable and then entered the “Principal’s Office.” In that other life, I had done this many times, but never under friendly circumstances.

Sister Elizabeth Ann saw me immediately after I announced myself to the secretary. I couldn’t tell much about her size or age since she preferred to wear the old penguin suit that covered most of her body, but she did have a very pleasant smile.

She stood up and extended her hand, a surprisingly strong grip. “Hello, Patricia,” she said. “I hope the first day hasn’t been too hard on you.”

“Not at all, Sister,” I replied. “I feel invigorated. The teachers have been very nice and the level and degree to which they will teach a subject is unbelievable!” I knew

I was gushing but it was true. It had been a very pleasant day, and if this is what I had to look forward to for the next three years, I certainly wouldn't complain, and I wouldn't waste the opportunity this time either!

"I'm glad to hear that," she said. "I had a chance to talk to a few of your morning teachers at lunch and they seem to feel you are well up to the course load you have taken on. I had been a bit worried because you chose such a strenuous selection."

"I think I can handle it without any problems, Sister," I responded. "I can't remember if I had any difficulties at St. John's or not, but I feel like I'm absorbing it like a sponge."

She laughed. "It must have been awful to wake up and not know anything about your past. How is it coming along? Your memory, that is."

"Well," I paused for real dramatic effect. "I'm not sure why I only seem to remember certain things, Sister." I looked around to make sure nobody was within earshot. "I don't think I was a bad girl," I whispered. "I kissed a boy when I was twelve, and tried a cigarette last Easter, and even had a taste of wine, but I don't think any of those things would cause me to lose my memory."

She smiled at me with a truly heartwarming smile. "I'm sure that you weren't a bad girl either Patricia. I've seen your school records and they show you as a model student. These slight transgressions you mentioned, I'm sure that everyone at your age has tried them as well."

"Well, Sister," I said, "I think I was real lucky to be able to come to St. Ursula's. I think it was a gift from God."

The smile nearly disappeared and her eyes narrowed a bit. "Why do you think that, Patricia?" she asked.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Sister," I said quickly, "I wasn't suggesting that God granted me any favors, I just thought that it was a gift for my parents." I looked at the floor as I continued. "You see, Sister, I don't know why I remember what I remember and it's been really hard on them. And my Mom thinks it's her fault that I nearly died, and every day that I have to relearn something about my life, well, I think it reminds them... I think they sort of feel responsible for what happened to me."

It didn't take much acting on my part to say this, as it was basically the truth. I really liked Mike and Ann, but I had no memories of ever having spent time with them and I was fourteen! For all intents and purposes, I had only met them for the first time when I woke up in the hospital.

The smile had returned to Sister Elizabeth Ann's face when I finally looked up. "Sister Mary Francis mentioned at lunch time that she thought your beliefs had deepened

with your accident. She was quite moved by your speech. A lot of girls would take advantage of a situation like this and talk about lights and tunnels, but you said you had experienced nothing like that, that you had just basically woken up with a firmer conviction.”

I remained silent, wondering where this was heading.

“Sister Margaret said she had assigned Wendy to be your guide while you adjusted here. I assume Wendy has explained all the rules to you?”

“Oh yes, Sister,” I said. “Wendy has been fantastic. She’s a really nice girl. I hope she and I can become friends.”

This seemed to please the nun. “I’m sure the two of you will become good friends. Now you know about our after school options?”

“Yes Sister,” I said. Then I figured I might as well go for broke. “I was wondering, Sister...”

“Yes Patricia?”

“Well, I don’t like to ask for any special privileges, but the doctor said I still had to take it easy for a while...”

She interrupted me, “Do you want permission to skip on the after class activities until you feel better?”

“Oh NO, Sister, I know I was good in sports and I know I can’t just get back into them without practice and stuff. I was just going to ask if it was okay for Wendy to help me and sort of keep an eye on me till I’m fully recovered.”

“What did you have in mind, Patricia? Your school record says you were active in volleyball, basketball, baseball, and track. We sure could use a good athlete on our teams.”

“Well,” I said, “since I can’t run yet, I thought I would spend an hour of just fast walking around the track and then maybe an hour of volleyball since that’s the season now, and it wouldn’t take too much running.”

“You want **TWO** hours of *physical* activity?” the nun asked. “Oh my, you most certainly are a determined girl. I don’t recall anyone ever asking for extra time. Is Wendy up to it? It might be you who has to keep an eye on her.”

“We walked around the track for nearly two hours yesterday,” I said, “and she had no problems, and I asked her to help me with volleyball and she agreed.” Well, she didn’t actually say ‘no.’

I was clearly confusing the nun, but in the end she gave her consent as long as it didn't affect our grades. I assured her that we would never let that happen; after all, education came first.

~~~~~ // ~~~~~

Wendy couldn't believe her ears. On one hand, she was pleased to be doing something other than visiting the retired nuns, but there was still the part about the gym shower that bothered her.

"That's why I asked for the extra time, Wendy," I told her. "Everybody will be out of the showers and doing something else when we take ours and I won't make fun of you." But it was a good thing she couldn't see the visions in my head. They were just wishful thoughts of course, but I couldn't shake the image of soaping Wendy's fresh virginal body from head to toe.

***To be continued...***