

Wendy Mitchell

“The only qualities for real success in journalism are ratlike cunning, a plausible manner, and a little literary ability. The capacity to steal other people’s ideas and phrases... is also invaluable.”

-Nicholas Tomalin

You are Wendy Mitchell, ace reporter for the Edwood High School Newspaper. Well, alright, you’re the only reporter for the school paper. But that doesn’t mean you’re not good. It’s just a small school.

You’re pretty well known around town for your journalism. San Inguon is a small town, though, and so pretty much everyone knows everyone else for something or another. But still, people talk about what a great job you do with the school paper (and the town is so small that it’s pretty much the town newspaper, too), and everyone thinks you’ll make it big in the press in a couple of years. Once you’ve finished high school and gotten a degree from some journalism college.

But you can’t wait for that. That’s too far away, five to six years at least. You want to hit the big time *now*, get your name on the by-line in a big paper like the Phoenix *Sun*. All you have to do is break a big story and send it off to them. Heck, if you get it to them fast enough, they’ll have no choice but to print your article in order to get the scoop. That’s what you need. And once they’ve gotten one scoop from you, they’ll be after you for more and more. And then you’ll be in the big time.

Of course, that’s assuming that something interesting happens here in San Inguon. That’s not really that likely. Oh, sure, there are the Research Labs, and they’re probably cooking up something dangerous (at least, Dad’s pretty sure that they’re doing something dangerous there); but General Cork keeps a tight lid on everything, so it’s unlikely you’ll be able to get your nose in their and find out what’s really going on.

And there are lots of things the other kids are doing. Of course, “J.D. Koln Wins Drag Race on I-42” is not exactly the gripping headline that the Phoenix *Sun* would want. They want something big, something that hits a lot of towns in Arizona, something with possible world repercussions.

So, realistically, at this point getting such a scoop is a pipe dream. Still, that doesn’t mean you don’t keep your eyes open. Besides, you’ve got a paper to put out.

And there are things going on, even if they don’t have international attraction. Take Mr. Memorium, for instance. He set up his little side-show or whatever it is just outside of town, and is putting on a show featuring magic and hypnotism. Now, you think he’s probably just a huckster looking to make a few bucks off some rubes (you learned to talk like that from reading a lot of Damon Runyan). So you sent Laura Fetner, your best

friend, off after dark to see what the deal was with that. It's been three days since she spied on them, and she still hasn't told you anything. She gets this weird look in her eyes when you ask her about it. You have no idea what she saw, but it must have been something really creepy.

And then there was that... thing you saw last night. You have no idea what it was; it looked like a coyote but was as big as a panther, and it ran through the construction on the new developments (which is a shortcut you always take to get home from the school paper faster). It was moving like hell on wheels, and by the time you realized that you should be scared out of your wits by such a thing, it was gone. Really weird. Maybe there's a wild creature hiding out in the mesas. Or maybe something escaped from the Phoenix Zoo. Or maybe something escaped from the Research Labs. Now, *that* would be a great story. You'll have to check and see if anyone else saw something like that last night.

And you'll have to see what Teresa's up to. Teresa Kerensky's your gossip columnist, which used to work out fine when she was just a wallflower who could overhear nearly anything because no one cared whether she was listening or not. But recently, Teresa's been making a huge mess of herself, making a pass at every boy in town, and she's causing more gossip than she's writing. You have no idea why she's gone so boy-crazy all of a sudden, but there's one thing for sure. If she makes a pass at Tony, she's dead meat.

Tony being Tony Turrelli, your boyfriend. He's cute and he has his own car, but what's most important to you is his sense of humor. He can make a joke at any time, and always sees the lighter side of everything. It's great hanging out with him. I mean, you end up taking everything so seriously, looking at everything that happens from a journalist's perspective, trying to figure out what's going on and what caused it and what it means. Tony'll just laugh at it. It really helps you to keep a perspective.

Of course, it's not like you love him or anything. You just like hanging around each other, giving each other a different spin on what's going on, and occasionally going up to Lover's Lane to fool around. But if there's anyone you think you could love, it's Dr. Randall Rourke. He is *such* a hunk. He came to town to take over Dr. Ferngreen's practice a couple of years ago, and he is absolutely gorgeous. Not to mention intelligent, witty, and devoted to caring for other people. He is absolutely incredible. You're tempted sometimes to make up news just to get a chance to interview him.

Today should be an interesting day, anyways. Dr. Angela Bailey is supposed to start working on the archaeological dig just to the south of town; you'll have to contact her and find out what's going on. Then there's the Sock Hop tonight, which will be a great source for the gossip column. And then at six, the Research Labs are giving a presentation on some of the projects they've been working on for the last year. That should be interesting. And, of course, there's the drag race between J.D. and James Daniels at two. Not that you'll put that in the paper; dragging's illegal, and you don't want

to get any of your friends in trouble. But you never know; there might be a huge accident that you'll be the first reporter on the scene for. That would be great.

But you think this entire gang thing is getting a little out of hand. J.D., who has been the school bully for years, has this gang called The Killers. Well, James, being the upstanding young citizen-type he is, had to start his own gang called The Good Guys to try and stop J.D. from causing too much mischief. But the two gangs have been going at each other almost constantly. Not fighting as in physical stuff (although it looks like it might come to that), but constant insults, pranks, and now this drag race. Someone might get hurt. And while that would be great for the paper, it would be really bad if it were one of your friends. Or Tony.

Stock Quote: "Can I quote you on that?"

Mannerisms: Wendy is a very driven, determined person who wants nothing more than to be a famous reporter. There are very few things she'll stop at in order to gain her chance for fame.

People You Know:

J.D. Koln: School troublemaker and leader of the Killers. He's a bully and a ne'er-do-well. Needless to say, he causes a lot of news in town.

Robert Sherman: One of the Killers. He seems too normal to hang out with J.D. and Nick. Still, everyone thinks he's the brains behind The Killers.

Nick Kernesky: The third of the Killers. He's the muscle for the organization. Not real bright, but really big and strong. He's extremely overprotective of his sister Teresa, and has beaten up quite a few of the guys who took her passes seriously.

James Daniels: Class president, valedictorian, and captain of the football team. There has to be something he's hiding... no one's that perfect. If he wasn't going out with Laura, your best friend, you'd look a little deeper into his past. But doing that now would just upset Laura. He's the leader of the Good Guys.

Timmy Carroll: Class geek. Really into science and all sorts of boring stuff. He's one of the Good Guys, too, not that he could hold his own in a fight against any one of the Killers.

Tony Turrelli: Your boyfriend, the class clown. Always making a joke or pulling a prank. He's one of the Good Guys.

Mark Sturvin: Son of Harold Sturvin, the richest man in town. You know Mark is up to something- no rich kid is ever sane. Look at the Rockefellers. You're sure there's a good story in him somewhere.

Mary Jenkins: J.D.'s girlfriend. She's nice, cheerful, and full of life. You can't understand what she sees in someone like J.D.

Teresa Kerensky: Your gossip columnist. She's normally a bit of a tomboy, but she's gotten into boys in a major way recently. It's very strange.

Catherine Thomas: A very non-descript girl.

Margaret Smith: The class bubblehead. You have no idea how someone so clueless has gotten through high school without having to repeat a grade. She's a major

lust object for most of the boys, though, so you wouldn't doubt that she gets them to tutor her and help her cheat on tests.

Laura Fetner: Head Cheerleader at Edwood High. She's normally perky, funny, and a bit of a daredevil. But she's been awfully quiet lately. And she still hasn't told you what she saw at Mr. Memorum's.

Dr. Randall Rourke: The town doctor. An incredible hunk. You're in love. You just know it.

Goals:

1. Find out interesting things to write about for the school newspaper. Investigate everything. Find out who's behind what, who's up to what, and what everything means. Show no mercy. Get to the bottom of everything, and find out before anyone else.

2. Learn about what journalism is really like. Rumor has it that a reporter from the Phoenix *Sun* is here to get information about the town Iguanafest. Find out what she's doing, and get as much information from her as you can about being a real journalist. Pester him or her constantly in your attempts to both learn about how journalism really works, and then scoop them with your stories.