

AUG-SEPT  
2023

MY  
DAYS

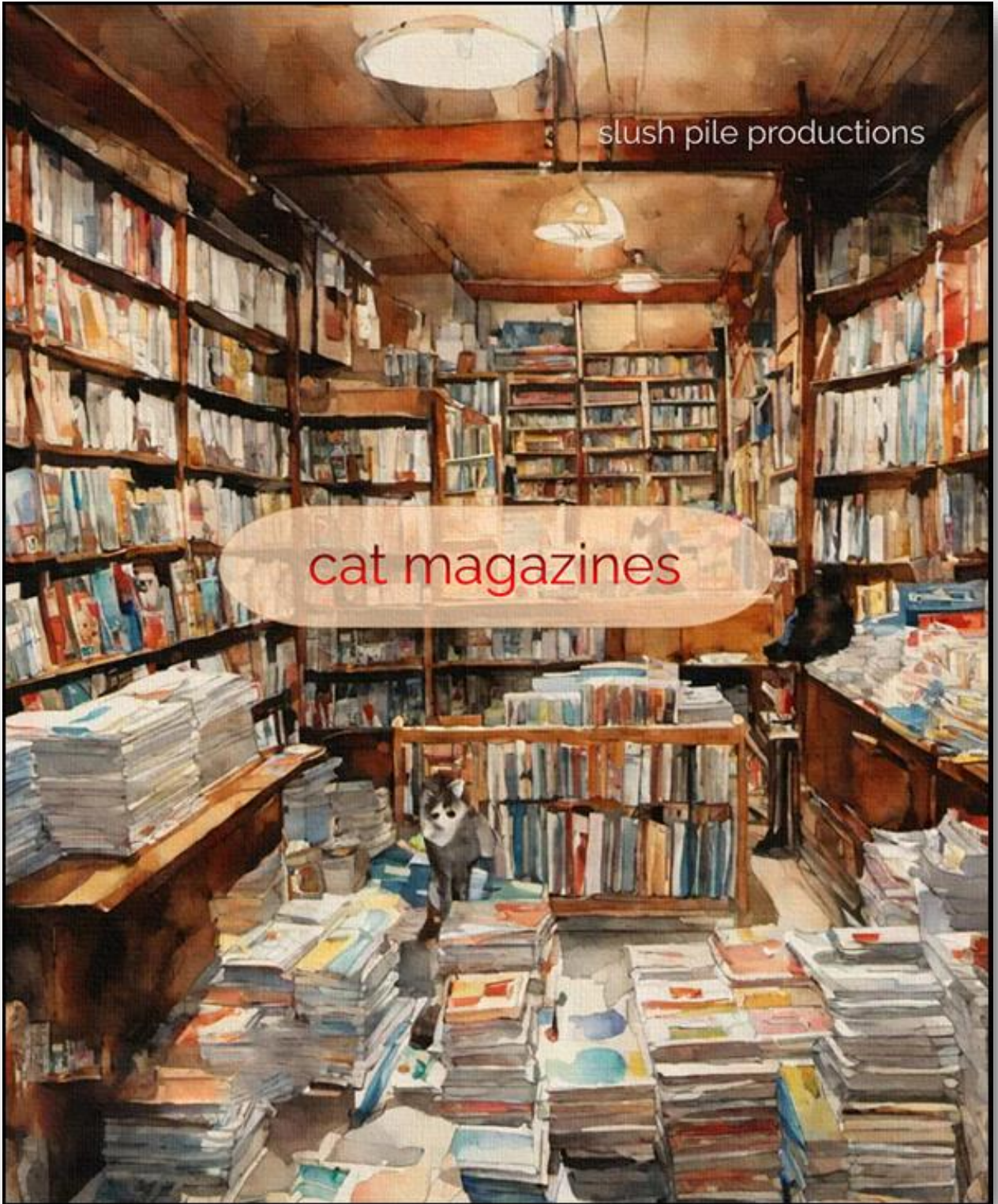
LINDSAY  
WINCHERAUK

Lindsay Wincherauk

**AUGUST – SEPTEMBER 2023**

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Lindsay Wincherauk



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MY DAYS: JULY 2023

Belinda stood at the crossroads of her life, shattered by the tragic loss of her family when they were devoured by a litter of cougars in British Columbia and disheartened by the crumbling publishing industry. As a once celebrated writer, she was now faced with the harsh reality of the changing times. Her dreams of continuing her literary career seemed distant and unattainable.

In the midst of desperation, an unusual opportunity arose. Belinda reluctantly accepts a position writing for a “**Cat Magazine**,” an eccentric publication devoted entirely to felines. Although Belinda loathed cats, she recognized that this could be her lifeline, a chance to rebuild her writing career and regain financial stability.

Belinda’s first assignment was to chronicle the life of an adorable white Persian kitten named Mittens. Reluctant and cynical at first, she met the fluffy little creature with trepidation. But as she observed Mittens' innocent playfulness and pure affection, something began to shift within her.

Through her writing, Belinda challenged her own prejudices, examining the root of her disdain for cats. She began to recognize that her aversion was not about the cats themselves but rather an irrational fear of vulnerability and loss. Mittens became a mirror for her emotions, and as she opened her heart to the kitten, she also opened it to the world.

## Cat Magazines



**B**elinda really fucking hates cats, but not for the reason one would think. You would think she hates cats because her mother, father, and two of her brothers, Oregano and Stewart, along with her sisters Peaches and Herb were mauled to death and then devoured like ravenous piranhas eating fish food, but in this case, ravenous cougars who haven't eaten in three weeks eating cat food, not fancy, but feast-able — a litter of cougars <sup>(1)</sup> in the interior of British Columbia in 1994.

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But you'd be wrong, Belinda hated cats for a different reason: her hyper allergy to cat dander — and her desire to be one herself. And besides, Belinda thought her entire family with the exception of her third brother, you are about to find out about in the next paragraph were insufferable assholes who Belinda despised.

Belinda had a third brother, Trae, and the only reason Trae and her weren't violently mauled to death and eaten by the aggressive cougar litter is because they were excused from the trip because they had to take care of their aging grandparents living in Etobicoke because the Electrahome television grandpa Sage, bought, 135 years ago, didn't come with a remote and Sage and grandma (Kylie) needed Belinda and Trae to change channels for them.

This would be a good place to change channels on this story.

Psych.

With Trae holding the antenna firmly in his right hand | irrelevant to the story | Belinda changed the channel to CBC.

During their absence from her families tragedy, Belinda uncovered another reason to hate her parents, Bob, and Mary, because who names the first child Belinda and gives the next one on the family tree a cool name like Trae? Belinda glossed over the names of their younger siblings being Peaches, Herb, Oregano, and WTF – Stewart?

Parsley, sage, rosemary, and time.

Is that Simon & Garfunkel?

I don't know, we don't have the budget to look it up.

Silence!

Should silence have an exclamation mark?

## 1984

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Chi Chi's Mexican Restaurant started by NFL football players in Minnesota was booming, offering authentic Mexican dining, in strip malls across North America. And Kids were secretly dancing in midwestern barns, getting footloose. Natalie Imbruglia turned nine.

And Belinda was sexually assaulted while dressed up as a Siamese cat, by Chip, a schoolmate dressed up as a Pitbull, not the singer, but the vicious dog variety, at a high school dance.

And Belinda's hatred for cats grew. Not for dogs, which would somehow make sense, but once again for felines because the assault left an indelible mark on her hippocampus because being assaulted by a pit bull, while being dressed up as a cat was the only time a boy in high school had paid attention to Belinda. Instead of reporting the assault to the authorities she went home and set her Siamese cat costume on fire.

- 1) This story is an educational story because I bet you never knew a group of cougars is called a litter as they don't have a cool name like other animals such as; pride, murder, or gaggle. Of course, since we don't have a research budget feel free to doubt the veracity of this education.

1989

Chi Chi's was beginning to flounder because thousands of people had travelled to Mexico. Natalie Imbruglia was now eleven. As for Belinda, she graduated with honours from the best Ivy League School for journalism in the world. I'm not going to say the name of the school because it is not in our budget to research or GOOGLE: "BEST IVY LEAGUE JOURNALISM SCHOOL" mostly because Google didn't exist in 1989.

But you're writing this in 2023.

That's not important right now.

That makes sense.

Sure.

Equipped with her honours degree Belinda managed to land prestigious jobs at "Time," "Life," and "Newsweek Magazines," penning several award-winning articles. Belinda even won a Pulitzer Prize for her cutting piece on vicious dog breeds and how cats are responsible for their anger. She even appeared on "60 Minutes" on several occasions where her infectious personality and her camera savvy had the critics calling her the next Leslie Stall.

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Stop. I think I spelled Stall incorrectly; I mean annunciated Stall incorrectly, because I'm walking and narrating this story into a word document.

I'll try again.

STH al.

Come on, Wordy, not all capitals.

Fuck, not "capitals."

Wordy, why is there a break between STH and AOL?

Work with me voice recorder.

Why did you type AOL? Don't you think it is a tad archaic?

Stahl. Stahl. Stahl.

What is Michael Keaton doing in this story?

I'll continue.

Belinda's life was soaring, except of course for the lack of love and the fact she hated her family, and of course, her hatred for cats, but other than those small issues, her life was grand.

Excuse me?

Yes.

It's 1989.

So?

Her family didn't get eaten by the cougars until 1994.

Your point is?

Continuity.

Do you think this story needs continuity?

Probably not.

I'll go on →↓

Belinda got married. To Travis. Travis turned out to be an insensitive dink.

They had one child together, after Belinda had miscarried seven times. A child they named Sidebar.

In 1992, on a dark stormy night, Belinda and Sidebar escaped Travis's wrath in the cover of a hurricane while Sidebar was DJ'ing, at a peeler bar. Did you know peeler is spelled 'ee' not 'ea'? Now you do.

## 1994

Belinda's family is vacationing in the interior of British Columbia.

Belinda and Trae, and Sidebar, are in Etobicoke changing television channels.

Oregano approaches what appears to be a cute little bunny rabbit, but in reality, it is a cute baby cougar in a bunny costume. Before Belinda's parents notice the deception the rest of the litter arrive, and the scene left behind can only be described as really gruesome. "Really" because it really was. Now Belinda and Trae were the only two left in the family.

That was okay because Belinda hated her family almost as much as cats.

I'm sitting down on a park bench narrating this story.

A family is walking by. I must stop talking, I don't want them to think I'm crazy. I look to my right, there is shirtless man walking by with man boobs, his own. I remain silent hoping Wordy will pick up the voices of the family and insert them into this story. Wordy doesn't. I feel alone. Maybe I should hold my phone closer to them so they can be part of the story. They look at me funny. It doesn't work.

I'll go on →↓

Belinda doesn't like Sidebar. Which is shocking because she had seven miscarriages.



## 2004

Initially this was 2001, but I changed it for continuity reasons.

Do you even know what continuity is?

I'll go on →↓

Belinda's life is in shambles. Natalie Imbruglia's song "Torn" is now seven years old. The last time Belinda appeared on "60 Minutes" was in 1999. Her last award-winning article about "dreaming while writing" was also published in 1999. Belinda's life was crashing down. She wanted her mommy.

Belinda started looking for new writing gigs. Her efforts were in vain.

One year, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten years passed.

## 2014

The publishing industry, much like Belinda's life, was in turmoil. Every day a newspaper or magazine folded. It was a horrendous time to be a writer. Natalie Imbruglia's "Torn" was now twenty-one years old.

Belinda landed four gigs as executive editor for prestigious newspapers which all folded, the day before she was to start. This left Belinda reeling in uncertainty. She kept blasting out resumes. Finally, a break.

Somehow, with the publishing industry in tatters one area of publishing was booming with 985 magazines all thriving: Cat Magazines.

Belinda scored a gig writing for the magazine →↓

OH MY GOD YOU'RE SO CUTE  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
LOOK AT YOU  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
OH MY GOD YOU'RE SO CUTE  
CATS

Which most people would think is an excessively long title. Belinda's business cards were printed, in a small font.

Lindsay Wincherauk

On her first day at work, Belinda was assigned to follow around →↓

OH MY GOD YOU'RE SO CUTE  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
LOOK AT YOU  
YOU'RE SO CUTE  
OH MY GOD YOU'RE SO CUTE

ADORABLE WHITE PERSIAN KITTEN, MITTENS

→ a house cat, an adorable white Persian kitten named, Mittens, chronicling his days. Needless, →

Why do people preface what they are going to say with needless?

→ to say, Belinda was being swallowed by depression.

Dovetail, the editor, instructed Belinda, Mittens would have to live with Belinda and Belinda would have to chronicle Mittens every move.

"But I'm highly allergic to cats." Belinda pleaded.

"So." Dovetail retorted.

"My allergy could kill me."

"Do you want the job or not?"

Belinda was in no position to say no so she placed Mittens in a cat carrier, hit the drugstore where she bought two pallets of anti-histamines and headed home to start her new life with Mittens.

Where was Sidebar during all of this?

That's not important right now.

So, I'll go on →↓

Mittens is bleeping cute.

Mittens followed Belinda everywhere, purring.

Belinda, along with Mittens and Sidebar, like to bask in the sun and pass their days away in the park across the street from their home. Sidebar like many kids for unexplainable reasons, loved to chase birds, all types of birds, giggling, as the tormented them.

On this fate infused day, Sidebar was chasing pigeons. The leader of the pigeons, named Pig, had grown tired of being chased by kids, and decided to make an example of one of them. Unfortunately, for Sidebar, he was in the wrong park at the wrong time. He chased Pig, pig ran, he chased again, Pig ran, chased, Pig led Sidebar down an alleyway. Belinda and Mittens watched from the sidewalk, which happens to be the name of Sidebar's cousin. Sidebar chased Pig once more, a little further down the alley. Sidebar was greeted by 32,987 birds of all varieties including 2 murders of crows, and with Belinda, Mittens, and several other families watching, in the spirit of Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds" – Sidebar was pecked to death in a really, really, gruesome manner.

One would think watching this horrendous scene would be unsettling for Belinda, but in reality, she never really liked Sidebar to begin with because he reminded her of Travis – and because Belinda is an awful person.

Mittens purred.

[A Flashback to |insert date|](#)

Belinda's mom, did I give her a name? I can't remember, I could go back in the story and look, I don't want to, so, Belinda's mom, used to take Belinda on long strolls when Belinda was a toddler. AND. EVERY. BLEEPING. DOG. THEY. PASSED. Belinda's mom in true white woman fashion would stop the owners and ask if she could say hello to their dogs. Before the stopped owner could answer, every fucking time, Belinda's mom would break into a doggy voice and begin playing the role of middle-aged white woman and dog, having a two-way conversation.

When she finished her one woman furthest-off-Broadway play, Belinda's mom, called out, "Belinda, where are you? Belinda. Belinda. Belinda."

Another dog owner would start walking by, "Aren't you the cutest. You sure are. OMG."

Belinda was accepting candy from a stranger.

Belinda's mom would rush up to Belinda, tell her she was being bad, and then tell her to stop, even though Belinda wasn't doing anything, and then tell Belinda if you don't stop, I will embarrass you, in front of all these people.

EVERY. BLEEPING. DOG. THEY. PASSED.

I'll go on →↓

2024

Doesn't exist.

Continuity.

Impossible.

This is a futuristic story.

Mittens and Belinda have been together for ten years and somehow Mittens was still a cute little ageless kitten.

Belinda kept writing.

"Torn" was now twenty-seven-years-old.

A mother, and what I would have to guess to be a four-year-old child, approach me. The mother tells her child who is doing nothing other than being a child, to stop what she's doing, or she'll embarrass the child in front of all these people.

The child looks at her mother and says, "I don't know any of these people."

Why did you include that in this story?

That's not important right now.

I'll go on →↓

Belinda?

Yes.

Why do you hate cats and not dogs?

Because the story is entitled "Cat Magazines."

That makes sense.

I'll go on →↓

I think I may have to go pee.

I'm back.

I peed on a tree.

Are you okay?

Who?

You?

No.

Thanks to Mittens cuteness Belinda had written several award-winning Mitten's stories.

- Mittens smokes a cigarette.
- Mittens drives a car.
- Mittens accidentally kills a mouse he'd been playing with and becomes a serial killer.
- Mittens first day at school
- Mittens. Mittens. Mittens.

Seven Mittens movies are made. Each one a blockbuster.

Why did you underline the story titles?

Because I got tired of quotation marks.

Everywhere Belinda goes Mittens follows. Belinda sits on the couch watching a streaming service, the program she's watching causes Belinda to become aroused, Mittens sits beside her purring softly.

Every day, for nine years + this yet to be existing year, Belinda and Mittens were inseparable. Don't get me wrong, Belinda still hated cats, but since she had developed a dependence on high dose anti-histamines her hatred became bearable. Her career though, had deposited her on a dark depressive ledge. Every day at work she would return to the office, retreat into her office, and burst into tears because she used to write cutting investigative pieces, and now she was writing stories about Mittens crossdressing.

With tears pouring from Belinda's eyes, precious little Mittens would hop onto Belinda's lap, look lovingly into her eyes, and give a soft little "mule" or "mow, or whatever it is that cat's say. Wordy, listen more carefully please.

Nine years had passed + part of this fictitious one, and Belinda's hatred for cats was beginning to wane.

This is non-fiction?

That's not important right now, so, I'll go on →↓

Belinda took mittens to an off-leash cat park because those exist. Pig was there. Pig and Mittens were engaged in conversation when Belinda drifted off on her beach towel only to be barked out of her sleep by intense growling nearby.

Belinda burst out of dreamland, her head had spun three-hundred-fifty-eight-degrees when she spotted a pit bull, which bore an eerie resemblance to Chip, growling and salivating thirty-six feet away at the base of a hemlock tree.

“Oh no. Oh no. Oh no.” Belinda said to no one.

Michael Keaton showed up.

Belinda sprung to her feet and rushed over to Chip. Mittens was cornered. Belinda shrieked. An ornamental owl came to life and flew away. A man dressed up as Mickey Mouse walked by. Chip chomped down on cute little Mittens back. Belinda began to cry. She also began throttling Chip with her fists. Chip clomped onto Belinda’s arm tearing it from her body. This scene is really, really, really, gruesome. Mittens was bleeding and lying motionless. Pig arrived with how ever many birds I typed before and they took over for Belinda, pecking away at Chip. Chip succumbed.

Belinda’s tears were flowing like a raging river. She picked up her detached arm with her other arm because that needs to be said, and she gently picks up Mittens, swaddles her in her other arm and starts running toward the nearest Animal Hospital. Unfortunately, the hospital is near the finish line of the Vancouver International Marathon, and it was marathon day.

Belinda started sprinting toward the Animal Hospital. Belinda had never run before, well, maybe six yards once. Belinda ran and ran and ran. The Vancouver International Marathon had started one hour before, and Belinda got caught up with the other runners. Belinda kept sprinting, blasting past the other runners, finishing the marathon in 47 minutes, crossing the finish line in what officials thought to be 1:47:00.

Regardless of whether the runner was male or female, one armed or two, swaddling a dying or dead ageless kitten, or not, a new and unbreakable world record had been set!

Little did Belinda know, she didn’t have to run the entire marathon course because, as a murder of crows fly, the Animal Hospital was a mere five blocks from the off-leash-cat park.

Fortunately, the cat surgeon had been a guest star on the hit TV Show “The Good Doctor” and before he/she/they/them/her/ ... turned to save Mittens he reattached Belinda’s arm, administered 493 stitches, and performed 13 surgeries in a timeless time vortex.

Did this really happen?

That’s not important right now.

Mittens was in trouble. He flatlined 17 times. Belinda performed 17 hours of CPR on Mittens and just as the good vet was about to say “time of death” -Belinda, out of desperation tried one last thing, human mouth to cat mouth resuscitation, which magically worked.

Mittens kitty eyes slowly opened, and he looked at Belinda, let out a faint meow, coughed up a small fur ball, and then drifted off to perhaps, nevermore.

Mittens although not being near any woods, wasn't out of the woods. For the next three days Belinda sat beside Mittens cat pillow and creepily stared at Mittens. At the end of these three torturous days, finally, Mittens miraculously opened his little eyes and peered deeply into Belinda's and with the softest kitty voice imaginable, with a single tear leaking from his left eye, and said, I repeat, not meowed, but said, "Mommy, I love you."

Belinda began sobbing. On this day, Belinda's hatred for cats came to an end.

Three days later, Mittens was well enough to go home. On the way home Belinda stopped in a shady part of the city to purchase off-market, anti-histamines.

Oh →

What?

→ I forgot to tell you; Mittens would have to be in a full body cast for the next week.

Three days, because I like typing three, later, Belinda took Mittens with her to work. When Dovetail saw the body cast, he immediately fired Belinda for no reason other than I typed it.

And besides, Dovetail is an incredibly odd name, for a man, or a human, or an anything, other than the tail of a Dove. You may wonder how Dovetail got his name.

I wasn't.

You read this far.

He got his name because of his parents insatiable love for dove ass.

That's a thing?

That's not important right now.

*I'm all out of faith.  
This is how I feel.  
I'm cold and I am shamed.  
Lying naked on the floor  
Illusion never changed.  
Into something real.  
I'm wide awake and I can see.  
The perfect sky is torn.  
You're a little late.  
I'm already torn.*

Thanks Natalie.

Reeling from being fired, Belinda began walking Mittens home, future uncertain when a man approached her. The man's name was Fernando. Fernando was dressed like a predator.

This is odd.

Shut up.

For the next several months, Fernando and Belinda embarked on a rollercoaster ride of a relationship. Despite Fernando being on his second wife and having children.

Fernando promised to leave his wife for Belinda, but Belinda intuitively knew Fernando is a voracious liar with an equally voracious appetite for cocaine, and people who voraciously use cocaine tend to stretch the truth. Belinda didn't mind. She drank in the attention.

At the same time, she had started a relationship with a man named Sam, but only pronounced "S" "a" and "m" are all silent and it sounds more like a name starting with a "K" and ending with an "e", who was winding down his first marriage, and also had children. He also professed undying love for Belinda.

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It was the first time she was playing two suitors at the same time.

Fernando invited her to a barbeque at his place. To Belinda's dismay →

Where was Mittens during this time?

Sleeping.

→ Sam showed up at the barbeque.

"Fernando, Fernando, what's she doing here?" Sam asked Fernando.

"I'm seeing her."

"Me too."

They both started giggling.

This upset Belinda.

"Boys." Belinda gave them come hither fingers, much like Pig, the pigeon did with his feathers to Sidebar.

They followed her into the woods. Fernando and Sam did a couple of rails of cocaine.



They came to a large flat boulder.

“What is this place?” Fernando asked as he tweaked.

Belinda pulled a machete from her purse. One hour later, Belinda served Fernando and Sam to the guests of the barbeque on skewers.

When Belinda returned home that day, remorseless, Mittens greeted her at the door, Belinda thought Mittens was hungry, so she filled Mittens dish. Mittens wasn't hungry, he just wanted to talk. Belinda's love of cats grew.

Oh, I almost forgot, sweet revenge had been served. At the barbeque, Belinda discovered Fernando and Sam, ran and employment agency that preyed upon people who were struggling. Trae worked for Fernando. Trae lost his life working for Fernando because Fernando sent Trae into the mean streets of Vancouver to pick him up drugs and never returned because he had been bludgeoned to death in a drug deal gone wrong.

Fernando didn't care.

Close your eyes.

Because what I'm going to type next is gross.

Okay.

Sweet justice was served in the stools of Fernando's BBQ's guests.

Mittens hopped up onto Belinda's lap and they began binging the Netflix series “Outer Banks.” Belinda, being the honest cat lover, she had become, fully understands all cats are psychopathic alien serial killers in the same vein as anyone who had ever been given a Chia-Pet as a gift. And the only reason cats, don't turn on their loving, often delusional owners, is because cats do not have opposable thumbs.

## 2025

Mittens began acting weird, blasting around the house, bouncing off walls, this behaviour went on for three weeks. Belinda called the vet. This was normal behaviour for a pregnant cat the vet told her. Belinda discounted the vet's words because Mittens is male.

At the end of the three weeks, Mittens ran around seemingly out of control for 3:14 before hopping up onto the bed. Belinda was losing her mind. Until → Mittens birthed 14 of the cutest kittens ever to be birthed by a male cat named Mittens.

Belinda couldn't find the strength to give the kittens away.

## 2026

Mittens offspring presented Mittens with 27 grandchildren.

Isn't this a bit incestuous?

No. Leroy a amorous Tom cat lives three doors down.

Mittens also presented Belinda with 14 more kittens.

So, let us get this straight, Mittens and Leroy, the offspring and Leroy → never mind.

Belinda couldn't find the strength to give the kittens away.

## 2027

27 more grandchildren + 17 great grandchildren + 7 more children, are born.

Belinda couldn't find the strength to give the kittens away.

Every day, or daily, for grammatical efficiency, the litters of kittens would bring a bounty home for Belinda to prepare for breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks. The bounty consisted of → mice, squirrels, three coyotes, salmon, eight kamado dragons, an annoying kid named Bently, nary a bird; because Mittens forbade it because of his deep fondness for pigeons.

And that is how Belinda <sup>(2)</sup> became the greatest cat lady in the annals of cat lady history.

This story was entirely written while I strolled through Stanley Park talking on my phone.

My cat Hana approves of this story.

- 2) If for any reason you are offended by this being a cat lady story, simply change all of the names to names that do not offend you. If you really are offended, please tell me why you read this far? Go on now. Tell me. That's what I thought.

I promise to work on his piece until it is perfected which will probably be thirty-five years from now.

Just so you know, this story was narrated by a 63-year-old man, who walks close to 20 miles daily, or every day, if you do not care about grammatical efficiency, showering himself in Vitamin D until the point where his skin colour can only be called: damaged.

2028

Needing to find gainful employment Belinda takes a job at → √ ↓

OMG!  
Can ↓  
I SAY Hello to Your Dog?  
Who's a Good Boy.  
You're a Good Boy.  
OMG.  
He's So Cute.  
What Kind is He?  
OMG.  
Dog Magazine.

In the meantime, a person on the news just said that people setting fires in a tinder dry forest during a drought is unsettling.

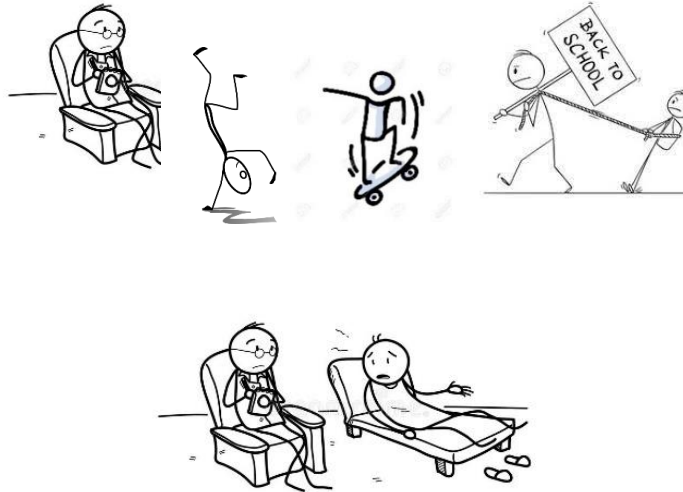
And, also on the news, three newsreaders just did a story about WW2 bombers being on display somewhere in America. The newsreaders made "Phew. Phew. Phew" sounds while dropping their hands like they were exploding bombs. One of the newsreaders was (is) Japanese-American.

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I'm not sure what was more upsetting, WW2 bombers being on display → or...?



## A 60ish-Year-Old-Man Being Unemployed at 60 (Shrink Speak) (Part 2).



Breakdancing. Do you think I could start a career breakdancing at my age?

Oh. Oh. Oh. How about skateboarding? Maybe I could go back to school?

Well, I suggest, NO. NO. NO. Do you want to talk about your last employment?

No. Why would I want to talk about a place where it was decided I'm not worth the effort to...?

Do you mind if I switch to your font colour—

Doc, if you don't mind. I'm going to let it all out, ramble a bit. I think it is important I share my dreams, my fears, my uncertainty. I'm not the only one who has been ushered into the same boat. What's it like to be deemed expendable at 60—during a once-in-a-century pandemic, you ask? I can only speak from my perspective. What I do know is there are a whack of people out there who are terrified of what is coming their ways when the pandemic is over—most of them are barely hanging on now. Most of them fall into an aging demographic where every day is unreplaceable.

I hope my sharing helps others facing debilitating challenges due to having their livelihoods stripped from them prematurely, know others are cheering for them. As for me, I needed another two or three years to set up my future.

What's it like to become unemployed prematurely, you query?

For me, it is bleeping scary as hell. Right from the get-go mental health gets eviscerated. It feels like a door slammed violently shut in your face creating a scenario where you doubt everything. You don't know who to trust, depression, maybe a better word is a languishing feeling swallows you, and dormancy creeps in because when what's happening slams into your reality, and you realise you only have so many tomorrows until life will inevitably begin unravelling. If your career was a long one, some soul searching might reveal that although your list of talents is extensive—