

My LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE

My SISTER IS MY MUM

A META-MEMOIR



BY LINDSAY WINCHERAUK

My FATHER'S FAMILY

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE



A story about finding yourself after accidentally discovering your life started with a lie.

Not every day do you meet someone who watched both of his parents die from The Big C and laid them to rest, only to discover sixteen years later that they weren't his parents after all!

It's like being reborn as a whole different person.

ABOUT A BOY



*A boy is born in a secret place. A dark place. A sad place.
His Mother is his Sister. Making her his Sister + his Mother.
His Father is his Grandfather.*

His Grandmother is just his Grandmother.

His Brothers used to be just Brothers. But then it is discovered they might be Uncles as well.

That turned them into Brunkles.

His Sisters used to be just Sisters. But then it is discovered they might be Aunts as well.

That turned them into Sisaunts.

The boy is never meant to know the truth because his birth brings with it, shame.

How could any of them be, okay?

Especially, the boy and his Grandmother?

MY FATHER'S FAMILY

CALGARY ALBERTA

JULY 1970

For the most part, Dad's family was invisible. We never visited them. They never visited us. The only members of Dad's family, I remember, were Mary & Bill Lupasko, an aunt and uncle. I remember this pair to be sharp and disjointed with twisted minds. They came across as friendly, but their demeanours were brusque + unkind.

The Lupasko's resided in Calgary, close to Bernice + Sadie.

Nicholas told me the Lupasko's bloodline traced back to the Romanian Royal Family, and Nicholas would have been a Duke.

I boasted about this often to classmates, and my boasts were met with brutality.

"Here's what we are going to do. We are going to beat you senseless. Royal family. Sturby Place. Your family is nothing more than gutter trash. What a joke."

Because of space, the Lupasko's took me in on this vacation while the rest of the family stayed with Bernice + Sadie.

I hated Aunt Mary. Aunt Mary donned wing glasses resembling an evil librarian; she chain-smoked Export A cigarettes. Resulting in a scratchy, grave voice. Her eyes were a piercing black.

By the time of this visit, my anti-smoking campaign had worked on Mum. But, Aunt Mary, the fucking devil, dragged Mum into grips of temptation, and Mum would sit alongside Mary, chain-smoking. My heart fibres strained.

"Lindsay, we've set up your bed in the basement. Right next to the furnace, water heater, pantry and Mitten's litter box."

"Auntie, the steps are so steep and narrow – " The steps were nothing more than planks, angled at twenty-five degrees, less than two inches wide, climbing about two feet apart. *" – I'm terrified to go up and down them. I don't want to fall."*

"Don't be a sissy. You will be fine."

I'd slide down on my butt + climb up on my belly. There was no railing.

Aunt Mary relished in my fear. She'd send me down the perilous flight of stairs several times per day to pick up ingredients for dinner. Laughing at me during each trip.

Every night we'd eat out. When we'd returned to their home after dinner, Mary would bark at me to take the dinner ingredients back to the pantry.

WHO IS LINDSAY WINCHERAUK?

Lindsay Wincherauk is a fearless writer. He has published two books and has had more than eighteen OPEDs appear in major commuter newspapers. Lindsay wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father (who wasn't his father) worked as a mechanic. His mother (who wasn't his mother) worked as an excellent chef in a diner. In fact, his birth was in a secret place where | society deemed | unfit mothers were sent to give birth in isolation – shading families from shame. If the babies survived being born, usually, they were sold to wealthy Americans or adopted out to farm families.

Lindsay's life began with a lie.

Despite Lindsay's perilous beginnings, starting with deception, Lindsay knew no better and went through life excelling at things, usually in two-year stints. Be that athletics (hall of fame, record holding, one-eyed quarterback), scholastically, career-wise (generating more than \$70 million in revenue for one company), socially, + without question: creatively!

Lindsay's challenging beginning instilled in Lindsay heaping doses of compassion and empathy. Lindsay's life starting out as a lie gave him a keen sense to spot BS from miles away. It also provided him with a dry sense of humour and an understanding those born with silver spoons in their mouths will never be self-aware enough to understand (or admit) their good fortune.

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During Lindsay's work career, he was well-liked by all coworkers. Lindsay was also well respected by his diverse collection of clients, developing several fantastic friendships, primarily because Lindsay is known for his unflinching integrity and ability to hold conversations on most topics.

Lindsay's life mantra is:

The most valuable part of life is the fabulous people we meet during our journeys. If you treat people with respect (leaving judgment at the door), and more importantly, by opening doors for those less fortunate or who can't speak up for themselves, you are living a good, compassionate life. Making money at all costs is not the only thing mattering. Life can be difficult + devastatingly unfair.

Lindsay believes sharing vulnerability is what makes us human. Lindsay will never shy away from being honest about his pain.

Lindsay also believes we must stand up for ourselves, + more importantly, for those who are too burdened by the injustices of life, they can't find the strength to stand up for themselves.

SOME THINGS LINDSAY IS MOST PROUD OF ARE WHEN:

- A sixty-year-old employee of his, who had entered a point of life where life had become more struggle than joy (it happens to all of us as we age), said to Lindsay, “I must thank you. I’ve listened to how you treat people, + by listening, I’ve learned so much about compassion and patience. Thank you. I consider you a great friend.”
- Another employee who was struggling with addiction thanked Lindsay for his kindness, presenting Lindsay with a Christmas card from him and his girlfriend. Tucked inside the card: lottery tickets.

LINDSAY WINCHERAUK, compassionate, empathetic, well-read, kind, blessed with unflinching integrity, humour in balance, loved by coworkers + friends alike.

Lindsay will always stick up for the underdog. Lindsay understands there are countless older people suffering job loss because COVID gave some companies an opportunity to – Lindsay thinks it is essential to draw attention to this life-threatening issue by being the voice for those too broken to speak up for themselves.

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Lindsay is currently pitching four manuscripts to publishers and literary agencies. One of the manuscripts (he can’t talk about) will blow the roof off the predatory practices of – Lindsay is writing relentlessly and is also pitching OPEDs and short stories, fiction, + non to literary magazines around the globe.

Lindsay has appeared on Breakfast Television, radio programs in Montreal, + several others in the Vancouver area. Lindsay has also been a featured guest on CKNW + CBC, both on several occasions. And Lindsay was a vital witness of a Hate Crime. This led to the first Hate Crime conviction in Canadian legal history, resulting in him being a speaker at an Enough is Enough Rally (anti-violence rally) with dignitaries, politicians, law enforcement, and community leaders in front of a crowd of approximately five thousand.

Lindsay was the **#1 MIXED-TAPE DJ** at the **UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN** for most of the nineteen-eighties, a fact bringing him joy.

Lindsay resides in Vancouver.