

JUST DON'T STEAL + I'M NOT CHINESE WHEN I DRIVE

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MONDAY

DF is usually the first into the office.

This Monday was no different. DF often tries small talk as a way to...manipulate...us... his managers.

Maybe he's just being nice.

No, manipulative.

Constantly asking about our home life—fishing for special treatment with questions about the weekend, mostly nothingness masked as interest.

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Mr. Dispatch

Hey, DF, do you write the answers down?

Mr. Dispatch

DF, how was your visit with your family this weekend? – The dispatcher asks.

One would think of a simple question.

DF

I didn't get to see them much.

The bus took fourteen-hours.

It broke down.

That sucks, Mr. Dispatch adds, feeling sympathy for DF's ordeal.

The trip should be only five hours, Google says.

Yeah, fourteen hours, stupid Chinese driver, the bus broke down, he tried to fix it himself.

My Turn

Okay, DF, how do you know the driver was Chinese?

Can you tell the subtle differences between Asian cultures?

Fuck.

DF

Okay, he's Asian Canadian?

How do you know?

DF

Doesn't matter; they're all shitty drivers.

DF, wow... did you know when I make bonehead driving manoeuvres, I'm not Chinese.

I don't think he understood.

TUESDAY

WC is selected for a job. The job is literally two short straight lines from the office. About thirty minutes transit time. He is given a map. He's taking a destructive path in life.

Two hours — thirty minutes later, he returns to the office.

WC

I couldn't find the site.

I lecture him.

He doesn't care.

WEDNESDAY

WC signs in for work. He boasts to the dispatcher he got laid last night. I hear his bluster from my desk in the back office. I hold my opinion to myself.

He's selected for a job.

He's driven to the site.

One hour later, I answered the phone. The voice on the other end is pissed, and WC disappeared from the site.

I hang up.

I'm pissed.

It's time to cut WC loose — he's doing more damage than good.

He's been employed for one month, and his record is being swallowed by restrictions.

THURSDAY

WC signs in for work.

Mr. Dispatch

Maybe this isn't the right fit for you. I don't think we can employ you anymore.

WC

It's not my fault. I told you I don't like digging.

Mr. Dispatch

You need to look for work elsewhere.

WC

I told you I don't like digging.

My Turn

I leave the back office and move to the counter.

Here's the thing, WC. I heard everything you said yesterday. Nothing about digging – you bragged about getting laid.

WC

I was just kidding. That's my sense of humour.

My Turn

Well, it's not funny.

This is a place of business.

Nobody fucking cares about your sexual conquests.

It makes you sound stupid.

There are seven-point-five billion people on this planet.

You're not the first to get laid.

You're boasting is childish and boring.

WC

I was...

My Turn

I don't care.

You're an adult.

We are about to end your employment.

I'm not sure where the lower lot in life will be for you.

WC

I used to be paid \$25 per hour.

My Turn

That's not where you are now. I don't know what issues you have going on. I hope you get help. But if you keep fucking up, down is your only direction. We find you the work. It is your job to step through the door we've opened for you – work – impress – make things better for yourself. Every time you fuck up, you make our jobs more challenging, and you screw others out of work because we lose clients. ⁽¹⁾

Silence

I return to my desk, the phone rings, and a new client orders two workers.

WC is selected.

He works the full day.

He's asked back on Friday.

FRIDAY

WC comes in for his repeat. He stays boast-free.

I hope we don't have to fire him next week.

TIME TO DRIVE

SJ needs a ride.

We're down a driver.

I pick up the slack.

SJ's speedy. He kicks his conversation into gear.

SJ

Fuck, the site I was on yesterday, the weirdest thing happened. I was sent home. I... I... I... it was raining, hard. After my break, I borrowed a raincoat. I returned to work. They... they... they... were watching me. I work hard. I work hard. I work... he, one of them, they, he... came up to me. He accused me of stealing his raincoat. I was wearing it. That's not stealing. It upset me. I told him... no... I stressed... telling him... I take great pride in not stealing.

He stopped to breathe.

My Turn

May I offer you a suggestion?

I can. Okay, here goes: Just don't steal.

SJ

What?

My Turn

Just don't steal. Not stealing isn't something to be proud of.

SJ

Since you put it that way... can you stop somewhere for me to get a coffee?

SJ began to slow down.

SJ's coherence was starting to wane.

Randomness began to control his words.

SJ

Red, sky, apples, whoa... going left. I'm not. Where? Things. White van... tractor.

My Turn

You just said white van... oh my.

COFFEE STOP: I DRIVE A BLUE EXPLORER: I PARK RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE DOOR

SJ exits the store. He stumbles toward the Explorer. He veers right. Three paces later, he looks left. Surprise adorns his face. He gets in.

I couldn't find your vehicle.

BACK IN THE OFFICE

Mr. Dispatch asks DS if he's looking for work.

SJ

Not today, remember yesterday, I told you I'm having chest pains. Well, I still have them.

Mr. Dispatch

Go to the hospital. You don't mess with that shit.

DS

I'm seeing my doctor on Tuesday.

My Turn

DS, can I, make, a suggestion? Okay, good. Go to the fucking hospital. Time to wing it: You're in a tricky demographic. Forty-five... sixty... is when people drop dead from heart attacks.

DS

I lost three friends in the last few months.

My Turn

*So, you know. Here's the thing. When we're in this age range, it's time to cast aside some of the things you did when amid the invincibility of youth. So, when we hit this age range, and we haven't got a handle on nutrition and a sizeable reduction in the consumption of vice... tick... not breathing. What makes matters worse is our mirrors have been lying to us for a long time... until the day you realize you're no longer Teflon. And those lying mirrors sometimes trick us into trying to get back youth – **NOW** – by jumping into unsustainable **CROSS-ANYTHING**, which also leads to fatal problems as your heart strains with... Go to the fucking hospital. Don't add your name to the number count.*

He sat in silence.

TIME TO DRIVE

RJ and IK need rides.

I like RJ. IK, I don't know. RJ at times unpacks mind-numbing narratives. Today was to be one of those days.

Early in the drive, he used the word exacerbated. He used it correctly. This brought a smile to my face.

My Turn

RJ, that's the first time that word has been said in this vehicle.

Ten minutes into the ride, RJ decided to share with me his life events that have ravaged his esteem.

RJ

My self-esteem takes a beating when gay guys hit on me.

My Turn

What?

RJ

When gay guys hit on me, it upsets me. I feel less about myself.

My Turn

Where the fuck, are you hanging out?

RJ

Mainly, the ones that won't take no for an answer... the aggressive ones; why would they think I'd be interested?

IK

If a gay guy hit on me, I'd be flattered. I'd know I'm looking good.

RJ

Not for me. It makes me feel bad.

My Turn

RJ, what you are suggesting doesn't exist unless, of course, you're in a known gay establishment. Even then... it takes a lot of guts to hit on someone. I am positive the gays don't aggressively hit on strangers on the street.

IK

Is it okay for guys to aggressively hit on women? Women are constantly bombarded with advances from Neanderthals.

My Turn

One trillion to one. Those are the numbers of times women are hit on aggressively compared to the one straight guy who believes he is so desirable to gay men that the ones with the most prominent stones will step out of insecurity to risk safety to... doesn't happy... okay a trillion times to once. And besides, why the fuck would it impact your esteem? Don't answer. Evolve.

RJ

My esteem also takes a beating when fat girls hit on me.

Why would they think I'd be interested? It upsets me.

I put on my Chinese mask and began guffawing.

My Turn

White Van

DAY'S END - UNWINDING AT HOME

Click on MSN

FIRST STORY

The US Launches missiles at a Syrian airbase after chemical weapon attack

The Pres. was horrified by the pictures of innocent children dying after the attack. This horror resulted in action. *"They crossed many lines..."* he said. Really... you're in your seventies; it took you this fucking long to realize many lines are being crossed every day. {_____} I couldn't type what I think of you. You disgust.

Are the surviving children allowed to come to safety?

The world knows your answer. If the world is correct, your feigning heartache was shallow.

SECOND STORY

British Dad Fined for Taking Daughter Out of School for Disney World Trip.

1. I was talking like a judgemental jerk.

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.

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.

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.
