

**My LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE**

**My SISTER IS MY MUM**

**A META-MEMOIR**



**BY LINDSAY WINCHERAUK**

**MONEY FIGHTS**

# 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?*

# MONEY FIGHTS – YEAR 7

SASKATOON SASKATCHEWAN

1972

**M**y parents' joint income allowed us to move away from subsidized housing. We were moving on up to the North Side. For \$14,000, they bought a three-bedroom bungalow in Sutherland; we were moving from the grips of poverty to a lower-middle-class neighbourhood east of the University. Sturby Place may have been the wrong side of the tracks, and you would think lower-middle-class would be a climb up society's steep ladder. It wasn't. The right side of the tracks associated with our new home resembled the Rockefellers, whereas; we were still residing on the bottom rungs of poverty.

I was to attend Evan Hardy Collegiate, a school, at the time, stocked full of silver spoons.

**LIFE TAUGHT ME A VALUABLE LESSON:** Climbing class is a futile experiment.

Dad kept swilling scotch and chain-smoking fags. Unfortunately, I'd still harp on him daily. Eventually, after a lung collapsing, he quit instead of dying.

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**A lie.**

He still stole moments to smoke in the bathroom. Every time he did, my heart shattered a little more. I hated him for his unbreakable selfishness.

With Nicholas once again on the recovery treadmill, Mum stepped up to the virtual plate and once more became the family's sole breadwinner. Mum was now 58. Dad 68. I was 12.

Little did the family know, Nicholas's failing lung signified the beginning of the end.

The bell rang, and **Round 7, Year 7**, was about to kick into an evil sickening rage.

Dad had ample time for his anger to brew because of his inability to work. After his treatments ended each morning, he sat and stewed, waiting for Mum to return from work so he could unfurl his ire. Dad would bellow. Mum would cry. Dad would fly into an apoplectic fury ending in a threat of violence. Mum would cower in the corner of the kitchen, and Dad would begin smashing himself in the head with his clenched fists.

Brian and I sat ringside.

When Dad finally tired from his appalling nightly performances, Brian would rush to Mum's side to comfort her. Occasionally, Dad would find another gear and begin shouting at Brian, threatening to punish him.

**“STOP IT. STOP IT. STOP IT.”**

I'd scream at the top of my lungs.

*GUILT* entered the fray, firing its two cents into the battle; Lindsay, *you are responsible for this; there would be no financial burden without you. Without you, the weight of financial stress would lift.*

I sat next to Donald at the kitchen table. Donald came home for a short visit; dad was percolating a foul mood—about money. I glanced to my left to witness a steak knife blasting through the air. The knife sliced the air passing Donald's left ear by mere inches—slamming into the wall, sticking the blade vibrating like a tuning fork.

I laughed. I don't know why.

My father's shortcomings were on full display for me to drink in—*what's the opposite of a role model?*

His shortcomings overflowed with insecurity, lacked empathy, dripped victimhood, and were draped in an ugly ruthlessness.

**LESSON 2:** Never mind.

**Could someone please pay attention...to me?**

*“HEY, LOOK AT ME.”*

I needed to escape from the toxic nightly turmoil. I needed to avoid being an unwilling participant in the fights. Sports became my freedom. I wanted to live up to Don. I wanted a taste of what it was like to be a golden child. Intuitively, other than the knife event, I knew Dad worshipped Don and golden for me was nothing more than a fantasy.

First, I pursued baseball. I excelled. I became an All-Star Second Baseman on a City Championship Team. I would look up into the stands; my family was always vacant.

I'd beam with joy when I returned home from games. Nobody appeared to care.

## 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.