



Lindsay Wincherauk

JUNE 2023
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MY DAYS: VOLUME 1
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DEAD IS ALWAYS THE SOFTER ANSWER
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My thoughts have been incredibly dark lately.
You think, you entitled today's installment: Dead is Always the Softer Answer.

Why, you ask; the glumness?

I didn't ask anything.

But you were thinking it.

No.

Let me answer?

Do I have a choice?

No.

Go →

Because I'm scared.

Have you not said that already at absurdum?

Well, I am, scared – and I won't refuse to hide my emotions. I want everything I write to be raw, honest, painful, and vulnerable.

It is.

It is.

Starting over in life at 63 is a couple of towns over from daunting.

I'm scared.

Do those who intentionally placed me in this position comprehend the wrong, contemptible, and repulsive act they have committed?

You know they don't. Stop being stuck.

I'm grieving. There is no timeline. And I don't have the magic powers to erase 15 years of my life as if they never happened, especially after the financial and emotional destruction thrust upon me by people who needed to lift me up and care but instead let their ego and greed run amok. With nary a concern for the damage, they were causing for me and my family.

You will be okay.

Will I?

You just can't see it now or how, but you will.

I wish I believed you, Sparkly.

I hit the Asylum. It helps. I don't feel well. I head out to read and walk, hitting over 30,000 steps again. It helps. My fucking watch is taunting me.

This Gummy Friday might be an empty one with The Mayor and The Postman being out of town, and with 2G trying to figure out what his cat, Duncan is thinking – and oh yeah, sans the Gummies.

I can't shake the Depressive cloud hanging over me, being dragged around like a shitty kite.

I walk.

I should have a special beverage. I think.

I grab a lemon-lime soda.

Back up the steps. During my walk, Red passes me; I think Red is angry with me because after we professed to be best friends to each other, he no longer looks my way when we pass on the seawall. I think we are going through a rough patch.

I guzzle my lemon-lime soda. I'm walking up Davie Street, and a guy passes me going the other way. We pass each other daily, almost always at the same spot. Four days ago, we started smiling and nodding at each other. Today, we smiled and mouthed, "Hello." Maybe I don't need Red anymore.

I sit down for a pop. I'm alone.

Earl approaches me. The active ingredient of my lemon-lime soda is activating.

Earl asks me where the old guy I usually sit with is? "Is he sick?" Earl asks.

I'm not an old guy in Earl's mind!

I think the old guy he's referring to is The Mayor. It's funny, maybe not, Earl defaulted to if someone old isn't present, they must be sick.

I miss an opportunity. I tell Earl, The Mayor is in Camrose. Earl nods and leaves.

Why did you miss an opportunity?

Because Earl's question is fucking ridiculous. Just because people hang out together doesn't mean they know where the people they hang with are at all times, including family.

Go lemon-lime.

I've been sitting for fifteen minutes. I worked out today. I have now walked about 16 miles and my fucking watch is vibrating and telling me I need to move for my health.

I say to my watch, "Your face."

It responds with feet walking across it's screen.

From now on, I decide the only reasonable answer to the question is DEAD; he's dead, she's dead, or they are all dead.

What?

Lindsay (female) approaches me. One day I will tell the story of the first time Lindsay and I met.

Teaser.

Lindsay asks me where my posse is?

"They are all dead," I say.

Lindsay slips into silence as dread smothers her face.

I smile.

—

The following sentences may be upsetting and triggering. I suggest not reading them.

There was a bus crash in Manitoba where a semi hit a bus killing 15 elderly people yesterday.

Immediately, the news compares the bus crash to the Humboldt Bronco bus crash in 2018, which killed several junior hockey players. The news used the new crash, echoes the... in their copy.

I don't understand who comparing the crashes is for?

I'm feeling queasy.

It feels like humans cheer for the body count.

There are no **ELDERLY PEOPLE STRONG** banners being posted on Social Media.

As I'm typing this, a bus rolled over in a crash near Prince George. They took 18 people to the hospital.

A family of three died in a car crash yesterday.

Three is not enough carnage to get mentioned on the news.

I'm upset.

I'm sad for the elderly people who died.

I'm sad for the hockey players who died.

I'm sad for the family of three.

I wonder how long we are no longer talking about the 15 elderly people dying?

I don't have to wonder for long. It's the day after, and they do not mention it on the news.

The media didn't say the bus rollover echoes the crash with the seniors dying.

You can start reading again.

—

I think of a story idea where everyone you used to hang with is dead. You find yourself alone sitting at the bar. Would it be enjoyable and peaceful sitting alone?

No.

—

I decide to read. This should be good.

I'm reading a heavy book on my phone entitled: Not Here. The book warns Canadians not to become more like Americans if they want their democracy to survive.

I can't remember the last time I talked on the phone.

Every word I read, I'm not fully digesting, they are either the most fucking profound thing I've ever read, or incomprehensible, scattering like scrabble pieces falling off the screen. I won't remember any of them, even the most fucking profound ones, until I reread them tomorrow after the lemon-lime wears off.

Not even the profound ones.

Someone around the corner of the bar keeps gawking at me.

I'm not interested.

I keep reading.

Another glance.

Stop it. I already thought I'm not interested.

Another screen page, another gawk.

Gawk is an odd word.

Okay, here's the thing, the hoodie the person wearing is ugly.

I read.

The person takes off the hoodie, revealing an ironic t-shirt.

That's better, but still not interested.

I keep reading. Fuck. Profound.

The person takes off their ironic t to reveal a funky tank top.

Hmm. That's better.

Another glance. I smile this time.

I read.

I look over again. The person is now naked.

Okay, I'm now interested.

Margaret Atwood walks by.

Of course, I don't think this is really happening.

We are now married. Not me and Margaret Atwood, but me and the naked person.

I wonder if J knows.

I read another page, took a sip, and the only sensible question to ask now, plops down on a park bench in my cranium.

When revealing your vulnerability, when do you become attractive, and to whom?

Whom is not here?

Whom forgot his bread yesterday; J and I will be eating bread tonight.

Next Thought

Jesse's Girl by Rick Springfield is playing on the Pub's soundsystem.

Jesse is the server on duty.

Jesse approaches.

I had better share my thoughts and tell him a story idea.

Jesse?

Yes.

Imagine you are a musical artist.

Okay.

Are you imagining?

I said okay.

Good.

Now imagine you wrote the perfect pop song, like Jesse's Girl.

I hate that song.

Stay on point, Jesse. Imagine Jesse's Girl; is timeless and has been the Number 1 song on the Billboard Charts for the last 3,120 weeks. Your popularity never wanes. You have an illustrious career, playing concerts every night.

You've written tens of thousands of critically acclaimed songs, but the only thing your fans ever want to hear is Jesse's Girl.

Jesse's Girl will most likely be played at your funeral.

Would that be heaven or hell?

What do you think, Jesse?

How long has Jesse been at the other end of the bar?

Who was I talking to?

OMG, the naked guy now has his insides on his outside. Gross.

What am I thinking now?

I know.

Go →

I'm contemplating proposing a book concept to literary agents and publishers about a writer who sends out innumerable queries seeking approval only to repeatedly be rejected. Usually crushed by form rejections. Still, he never quits trying because he intuitively knows the world needs to examine his mind.

Another rejection arrives.

The writer dies.

27 publishers and agents find his writing on his website, leading to offers to publish and represent his estate...

The writer has his estate ghost the publishers and agents.

They need me; I don't need them.

Ed Sheeran?

Sort of.

Yoko Ono?

She is a fantastic person.

What are you going to call the book?

Query.

I don't like that title.

Neither do I. I know I'll call it THE GREATEST BOOK TITLE EVER.

I like either PENIS or TAKE OF YOUR HOODIE or, oh, oh, oh, I know, GHOST WRITER.

Sparkly?

Yes.

You are not helping. I am going to go now.

Where?

I need to work on Lindsay's Last Month's June Issue.

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See you later.

See you later.

Sparkly?

Yes.

We will be okay. I'm not sure how, but we will be. I have too much to give.

Sparkly smiles.

It makes me happy to hear that! I love your raconteur-ing.

Sparkly?

Yes.

Dead is always the softer answer.

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Grammarly Readability Score = 82.

Grammarly Readability Record = 99 (May 1, 2023)

KNOCK. KNOCK.
KNOCK. KNOCK.



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KNOCK. KNOCK.
I DON'T HAVE A FUCKING DOOR
I'M HOMELESS

My Days

MY DAYS

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CONTINUED

I gulped. I. Would. Never. Say. To. A. Friend. With. An. Audience. Words. Like. That.
I decided at that precise moment what friendship meant to me.
Am I being a dick?

The Postman then barked; Ed Sheeran is a garbage artist (I like Ed Sheeran).

The Sayer held his hands to his mouth and snickered because he thought I had just been burned.

I asked, why are you laughing?

Tennessee (46) kept ranting about his love of Anne Murray and that I've taken things too far.

I tell them I'm not enjoying their gang and choose not to talk for a bit.

For the next 20-minutes, the three of them, led by Tennessee, started making terrible puns directed at me, using the Tragically Hip in the puns. They kept poking me to speak.

When I didn't, Tennessee, would say things like, *One might say he (me) is being Tragically Hip right now.* And on and on and on – this continued for 20-minutes.

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The next day, I saw Tennessee. I suggested he didn't understand the conversation and that this childish feud we were engaged in had nothing to do with music, and the initial screaming at me, *Name 3 Hip songs*, was, if there were things beyond juvenile, this was it. So, I suggested he knew it upset me 6-years ago, so why would he stir the proverbial pot again when he saw the book?

His response was to bang his hand on the bar and scream at me for 15 minutes without me uttering a word.

I've made my decision.

It has been over 900 days since they (the people I worked for) turned my life upside down, thrusting me into an uncertain future. My friends know how difficult this has been for me. But yet, they choose to agitate me and then have the audacity to say I'm sensitive.

You are fucking right; I'm sensitive. My friend Hee Haw has Parkinson's and thinks he will die soon. I'm now 62 and have suffered a stroke. I don't want to compete with him for the same job I don't want.

FLASHBACK APPROXIMATELY 11 MONTHS
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My last remaining sister (aunt) is dying.

I'm upset.

I'm holding emotions close to my chest.

My future is uncertain.

The case is lingering.

I'm fucking 61.

As much as I'm holding emotions close to my chest, I can't hide the despair on my face. I feel like crying. And then, Tennessee says to me, Do you think before your sister (aunt) dies, you can get her to tell you who your father is?

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I gasp.

And did you know when you turn 65, you can take classes at UBC for free? He adds.

I feel much-more-very-so-all-alone.