

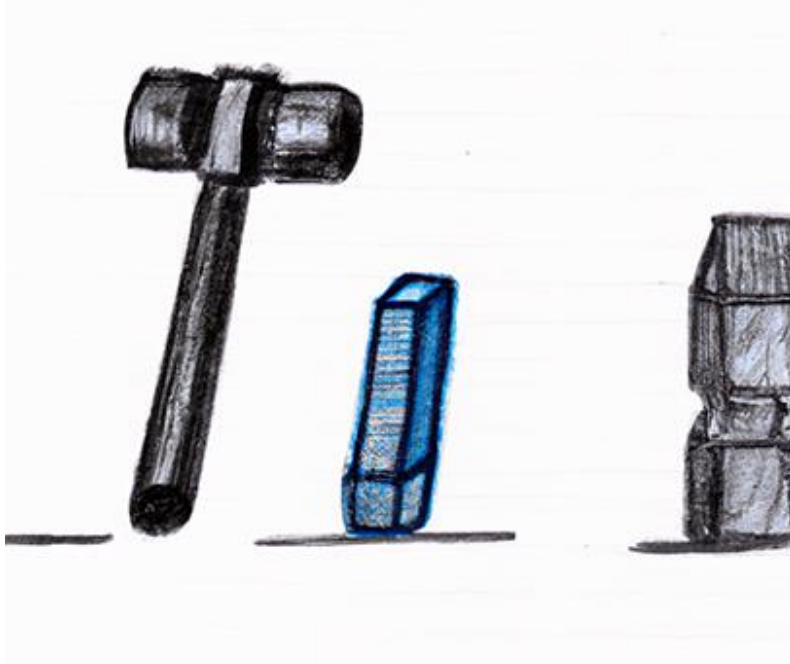


Lindsay Wincherauk

MAY 2023

2

ANTI-CLIMATIC
ANTI-CLIMATIC



3

The van comes racing up to the holding plant, smashing hard into a dumpster. Leo, the Hired Man, Jodi, Howard, Harrold, and six others—who Jaxon, Sodd, and Lyler, exploited, jump out.

Leo

Shit, we've been gone for three days; it was supposed to be three hours. Our subjects have probably been eaten away.

The Hired Man

Oops.

Leo

The best you could come up with is Oops?

The Hired Man

What's a guy to do?

Leo

Are you trying to do an Italian accent?

The Hired Man

Silence.

Leo

Who, the fuck, are you?

The Hired Man

I'm the Hired Man; you can call me Payday.

Leo

We need to turn off the strobes. We need to make our subjects pay.

The Hired Man

Soaking in acid and being a smorgasbord for the parasites is payment enough. I've got forty bullets on me. Do you know how much pain I can cause with forty strategically placed shots?

Leo puts the key in the lock, turns it, and CLANK.

Leo

There's been a change of plan.

The Hired Man

What?

Leo

We are changing course.

The Hired Man

Nobody asked me.

Leo

Do you really think this is a democratic process?

The Hired Man

They have hired me to make them suffer with lead. And then, just when they think they will survive, Bullet 38, 39, and 40 ... POW!

The Shadow Man blasts out of the strobes, flashing up into the ether.

The Hired Man

Did you feel that?

Leo

I had chills.

The Hired Man

What was that?

Leo

I think it was The Shadow Man.

The Hired Man

Who.

Leo

The Shadow Man, he's a legend whose never been seen.

Flick ... strobes off.

The Fishbowl is on the stage in the center of the stadium.

The stadium is filled to the rafters. Over 20,000 people. Every former employee who'd ever been given a raw deal. Everyone who you told your clients, every time you gave him/her a raise, they just used it on drugs and self-destructed. So, you convinced yourself by holding them down you were doing them a favour by paying them the least you could legally get away with. Seriously, you used addiction, to justify your greed... I'm feeling queasy.

And 6,000 family members whose loved ones became victims of addiction while working for the three who could only be described as monsters. The three demons were so repulsive that 20,000 people vomited all at once.

Leo

Ewe.

The Hired Man

Ewe, that's the best you got?

Leo

Double ewe.

Leo

Jodi, can you grab a mirror? I want to show our guests how their makeovers have turned out.

Fishy, fishy, fishy, today is your lucky day now that I can see what the acid and parasites have done to you Is that painful? You look Uncomfortable. Are your tummies upset? Oh my, Mr. Piranha looks like he's put on some pounds? Did he have a little nibble?

The Hired Man

Fucking freak, you look like you are enjoying this; their melted faces are disgusting.

Leo

Who are you calling a freak? You kill people for money? I'm just making the people who killed my gf suffer, a noble and honourable thing to do.

At the same time, across town, The Shadow Man interviews for a job as a mechanic at Larry's Garage.



6

Larry

You worked in the Army's Garage as a Special Ops Mechanic, working with explosives on the darkest of the dark operations. And you are applying to work here? You're hired. You can start today if you'd like. Are you even here? I sense your presence, but my imagination is running wild. See those two SUVs, the Blue Range Rover, and the Silver Mercedes? Can you run diagnostic tests on them? Once you're done, leave them in parking spots one and two; Mrs. Lyler and Mrs. Jaxon will pick them up today, after hours. Oh yeah, lock the keys inside, in the glove box.

Did it just get windy in here?

Carl, did you meet the new hire?

Carl

Larry, there is nobody but me, and you are here.

Larry

Then who did I just tell to work on the SUVs?

Carl

I don't know, but whoever it was is magic; Someone has already parked the SUVs in the pickup spots.

Larry

Did you feel that?

Carl

What?

A breeze?

Larry

Yes, a chill shot through me.

Carl

Me too ...

What do you think it was?

Larry

I think the new hire is messing with us.

Back at the Holding Plant

7

Leo

You guys look like you want to scream. SCREAM. Just kidding. You will slowly gain your voices back. Slowly. It's my turn to talk. You guys must be happy with the turnout. Oh. I bet you thought this was going to be quick. The Hired Man and Pop. Pop. Pop. But no, no, the plans have changed. Lucky you.

Gross, some of your faces just fell onto my shoes. Look at yourself. Aren't the three of you pretty? You don't have to answer. I think the crowd wants blood. But you know what, the acid and the parasites, I'm sure you will never be able to get over your suffering. Good on you.

Hey, would you like these plastic bags to play with? They don't say NOT A TOY, so I think they'd be safe for you. Nah., I don't want to give you a way out.

Why are you crouching over? Awe, are your tummies burning? Let me help you; drink these tumblers down in one gulp. Don't pinch your face like that. You didn't like the elixir. Weird. Who doesn't love apple cider vinegar and tequila?

This was when we planned to let everyone in the stands vent their hatred for you, but c'mon, there are 20,000 people in here, and we don't have

the time. After the last speaker, The Hired Man was scheduled to slowly bespoke you with 40 pieces of lead.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow!

But I changed my mind. You don't need anyone to tell you about the monsters you are; I'm afraid, not really afraid... oh... oh... oh... what am I trying to say? I'm overjoyed that, with your new disfigurements, you will never be able to hide who you are anymore.

On a table directly in front of the Fishbowl lay the gun, the rounds of bullets, and a collection of pliers and hammers and a blowtorch.

Leo

The Hired Man is disappointed, and he relaxed a little when I told him he was still getting paid. He asked if he could at least play with the blowtorch. Of course, was my answer.

Let's clamp your heads again and get you back to where you belong Not home ... the industry convention at the Convention Centre. Your presence will make it grand!

I wanted to go on a long diatribe lecturing and explaining every plot point of this subjective memoir. But you know what: Holding my GF in my arms and watching her die because of you saying, "pick up a treat for yourself and your GF," enough said.

THAT IS WHY THIS PLACE IS PACKED TO THE RAFTERS.

MY GF IS NOT THE ONLY ONE YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLING

Anyway, I'm out of here. Jodi will take you home soon. Mr. Hired Man, can you shut off the lights and lockup when you go?

The stadium empties. Jaxon, Sodd, and Lyler are tossed into the white van, and Jodi burns rubber, racing them to the Convention Center.

The Hired Man, after he picks up the gun, ammo, and blowtorch, to Sodd's house, breaks in, pulls up a chair in the foyer, and sits with the gun in his lap and the blowtorch leaning against his right leg.

Jaxon's Voice Scratches Meekly

Why are we stopping at Larry's Garage? Our wives are picking up our vehicles today.

Jodi

Wait for it. Wait. Your wives have arrived.

Mrs. Jaxon

Did you feel that?

Mrs. Lyler

Yes. I got chills.

Jodi

Your wives are here. Keep watching, awe, your kids are here as well.

Three kids are skipping in the park across the street.

Mrs. Jaxon

Are you coming to the barbeque this weekend?

Mrs. Lyler

I wouldn't miss it.

Mrs. Jaxon

Kids, quit making so much noise, get in the vehicles and behave.

Jaxon's Voice Scratches Meekly

I don't want my wife to see me this way. I'm a ghoul.

Jodi

Good news and bad news.

The bad: you will always look like this from now on.

And yay, **The Good:** Your families will never have to see you.

Jaxon's Voice Scratches Meekly

What?

Jodi

Just keep watching? Leo wants you to watch what's about to happen. Harold, are you filming? Fire the ignition. C'mon. Press the button.

KABOOM. KABOOM.

Jodi

Leo is going to be so happy. Except, I don't think they suffered. At least not as much as being with you.

Let's continue; I need to get you to the convention. What's that, Sodd? You want to go home? Okay, just you, buddy.

Here you go, Sodd. Do you need help with the door? You can make it.

Key inserted. Door unlocked.

Jodi

I always wait for my dates to get inside before I leave; don't you think it is gentlemanly?

Howard

Jodi, let's leave... less than thirty feet after pulling from the curb... the trees start rattling a powerful gust blows into Sodd's house. The Shadow Man lurks in the corner behind the Howard Man, blowtorch in hand.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow.

Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow. Pow!

Jodi

I guess The Hired Man needed one kill to feel good about himself.

() thinks this will be a great place to end this story. A bright future awaits with Retro and the book deal signed.

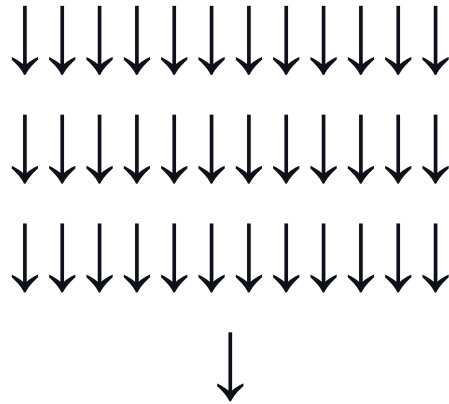
Don't you think () is an excellent name for a protagonist?

How do you pronounce it?

()

Grammarly Readability Score = 91

Thirty-Seven More Pages



HOME SWEET HOME HOME SWEET HOME

Our duty is done.
We've put in our time.
We want to get on with our lives.
Two years have passed.

Nobody wants a five-year-old boy.
Give it another year.
Torture
Reminder of rape
He will be adopted.

No
He's special.
Give him a home. A chance.
Treat him like he's part of you.

A final swig of coffee and a bite of a butter tart.
Flakes fluttering onto shirts.
Another sip. Another bite.
Take the boy by his hand. A bag full of clothes.
Place him in the back of the car. Like a criminal?
The engine sparks to life
The window is lowered.

We will take him until he's adopted.
Never breathe a word
Swallow the truth.
He can never know.

Heads drop in shame.
Why did we participate?
What have we done?

Can I have a dog?

NO.

OLD PERSON WALK



Move.

Must stay alive. Heart Health!

1. Royal Center, good.
2. Waterfront Center, exceptional urinals.

← Detour ←

3. Lost Lagoon. Gross.

Can I make it to the Aquarium?

4. Barely.

Walk.

Oh no.

5. Brockton Oval. Made it. Clean.
6. Lumberman's Arch. Made it.
7. Into the woods, if necessary. It's easier being male.
8. Third Beach. Hill. Pant. Breathe. Made it.
9. Second Beach. Dirty. Okay for #1.
10. Stanley Park Brewing. Beautiful.
11. English Bay. Awful. #2. No. Stall doors too low. Dignity gone.
12. Sunset Beach. Okay for an emergency.

Home. Oh my. Knees pinched together. Go elevator. Go ↑

Unlock door. Run.

13. Just in time.

Tomorrow →

The West Side?

OLD PERSON PILL MANAGEMENT

OLD PERSON PILL MANAGEMENT

New Normal

60 Pills

24,616 Steps



Arrive Home

Dehydration.

Bad.

Sip

2 Pills Morning

Pop

Swig

Oops

Went down wrong.

Spit

Flying pill

Under Desk

Pink

Pop a Second Pill

White

Google: Immediate Medial Attention Required

Overdose

Call Jim → He's 77

What type of Candy?

Hydrochlorothiazide

I look at the wall.

Saliva.

I'm going to be, okay.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

Gas Station

Dad

Diner

Mum

Outskirts of Town

Sisters Gone

Brothers Share Room



Farm Machinery

Dead Pets Inside

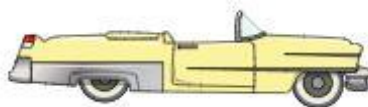
Dirt Hills

A Slough

Comic Book Submarine

A Good Idea!

A GOOD IDEA!



Mum + Dad Gone For the Night

Pitch Back

Tossed Outside

Clank

A Coyote Howls



Let me in. Let me in. Let me in.

Thirty Minutes Pass

Clank

Run Inside

Tears Blasting

Dive Under the Sofa

Cry

Shake

Lindsay, you are not one of us. Lindsay, you are not one of us. Lindsay, you are not one of us.

Mum and Dad Return



Mummy, Mummy, they say I'm not one of them?

Of course, you are, sweetie.

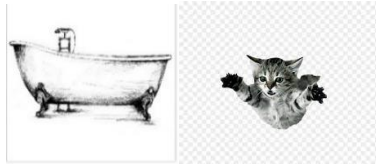
My brothers were 9, 13, and 17.

I was 5.

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NEW MEMORY
NEW MEMORY

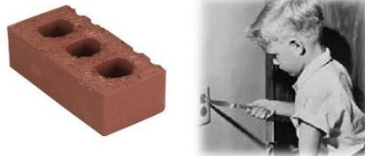
Bath Time



NEW MEMORY
NEW MEMORY

Brick to back of the head.

Hey Lindsay, stick this knife in the wall socket.



Lindsay, you are not one of us.

Do I have to be?

FINDING OUT YOU'RE OLD FINDING OUT YOU'RE OLD

6:00 AM
6:00 AM

Gosh Darn ⁽¹⁾ the internet is down.

Hello, my name is Mary, I'm in Winnipeg, what can I help you with today?

My internet isn't working.

I can help with that. What's your name and address.

Lindsay and →

What's your PIN?

I don't know.

Account number?

It's on the internet.

Phone number on the account? Great. I can help.

Great.

I just need to make sure you are not screwing her over.

Who?

Lindsay. It's her account.

I'm Lindsay.

No. You are not. Lindsay is a girls name.

I'm not a girl.

(Inaudible)

I don't know much about computers.

No problem. I'll make it simple. Do you have an ethernet cable attached to the modem and
desktop?

A what?

Unplug the modem.

Which one?

The one with a light on it.

They both have that. I'm unplugging the squarish one.

Don't do that. I will reset your modem.

Okay.

Is your TV working and Wi-Fi?

J, is the TV working? → No. Wait. It just started working.

How about the Wi-Fi?

It's working. The desktop isn't →

Where is the ethernet plugged?

What?

IS. THERE. SOMEONE. YOUNGER. THERE. I. CAN. TALK. WITH.
IS. THERE. SOMEONE. YOUNGER. THERE. I. CAN. TALK. WITH.

Hello, I'm Mary.

I'm J.

Are you, his son?

18

I can hear you, and NO he's not.

*I can't help you. Find a younger person to come look at your cable Miss... I mean,
Lindsay.*

J, I'll go to the fitness asylum.

Work Out. Come Home.
WORK OUT. COME HOME.

Still not working.

Phone the cable company.

Hello, I'm Tom, what can I help you with today?

Twenty minutes later the internet is working again.
TWENTY MINUTES LATER THE INTERNET IS WORKING AGAIN.

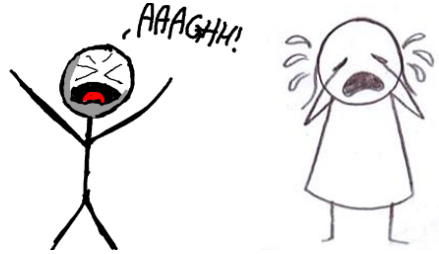
Check bank.

My first Canadian Pension Plan deposit has been made.

Am I old?

1. You started this poem with Gosh Darn, so, maybe?

PORCH LIGHTS PORCH LIGHTS



Why isn't dinner ready? I work hard.

I slave hard in the diner. Dinner will be ready soon.

Is it too much to ask? I feed the family.

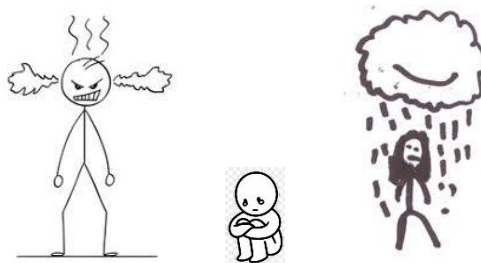
Why did you buy the new car. We can't afford it.

I'll do what I want. I'm a man. You need to do more.

Why are you crying?

If we didn't have the damn kid. We'd —

Stop it. It's not his fault.



Mommy don't cry. I'm sorry.

Daddy see what you've done, leave her be.

Lindsay you're not one of us.

Get out of here. Go outside and play with your friends. Get out of here.

6:59 PM
6:59 PM



20



I got to go; Mum flashed the porch light.

7:16 PM
7:16 PM



21



We got to go; Dad flashed the porch light.

7:17 PM
7:17 PM



22



I got to go; Mum flashed the porch light.

7:20 PM
7:20 PM



23



I got to go; Wah, porch light flashing.

7:27 PM



24

Mummy! Daddy!

11:59 PM
11:59 PM



25

Mummy! Daddy! Anybody?

ONE HUMAN ONE HUMAN

Tell us a story.

Storyteller

One Human
ONE HUMAN

Sixty years old. A pandemic hits

Freaked out

Career gone.

Why?

Greed

Livelihood replaced by fear, uncertainty.

Nowhere to go

Nowhere to turn

Upset

26

Tell us a story.

Storyteller

'The Man' doesn't like the story.

'The Man' only sees \$\$\$

Humanity is an inconvenience.

'The Man' destroys.

A complicit friend breaks hearts.

'The Man' lashes out.

Adding chapters

'The Man' screams innocence as he destroys a life.

LIFE? DEATH? FOR. A.
LIVING. LOVING. HUMAN.
HUMAN

ONE.
ONE

HUMAN SNAPSHOTS HUMAN SNAPSHOTS

BACK TO THE LADY PROTECTING HER KIDS BACK TO THE LADY PROTECTING HER KIDS

I'm having dinner at one of my closet friends house. I love him, his wife, his mother, and three children (my godchildren) deeply. They are fabulous people. Lifetime friends. Smart. Compassionate. Kind.

I don't want that housing development in my neighbourhood.

I cringe.

The lady protesting it said ridiculous things, I say. She talked about the dangers to her children of homeless people moving into the hood.

Think about that: homeless people moving in?

I suggest she only cares about property values.

I try to understand. I'm teetering on the edge of homelessness.

I need to pause. Be delicate.

We don't want to see homeless people in our city, on one hand.

While, on the other when we provide housing, we still demonize.

I don't want them moving in because there is a school across the street and when they move in the drug dealers will show up.

Don't give children drug money, I think.

I cringe more.

All homeless people aren't on drugs. And besides, this is not a thing – the roving drug dealers – and even if it was, they are already everywhere – do you remember high school?

I'm bubbling.

My friend's (a friend) wife adds, I think we need to get the people in trouble help, so we can integrate them back into society.

As? I ask.

Don't you think it would be more prudent to understand the cards aren't fair for everyone, and some people can't integrate. What are they going to do?

I wish I had "Fucking Faggot Woman" in my debate arsenal – there is no assimilation left for her – it's tragic – I think the only humane thing that can be done, is housing, nutritious food – and help with neurosis.

Haven't we been failing at trying to fix people – well – forever?

Are everyone in the tent city going to be competing with me for an invisible job at Foot Locker?

I'm terrified about my future. I'm 62. Broke. And if I become homeless, apparently, I'm going to have to fend off drug dealers.

HUMAN SNAPSHOT HUMAN SNAPSHOT

LANCE

The agency phone rings.

One of the agency's workers, a 28-year-old, Lance, is jonesing at a worksite.

On the phone is a Safety Officer. The worker was capable before lunch –> after –> motor functions were failing him.

The site wants him gone. The driver is 45-minutes away. The site slides the worker into a cab, sending him on his way; he becomes the cab driver's burden. He comes down; he's, okay?

Four others weren't so fortunate, for two of them (?) destiny found: in a poor choice.

YG

29

A young guy, YG, enters the office, desperate for work. His work history is looked up. It's not good. Three shifts: first, the Super phoned to say he was useless; second, didn't make it to the job, "I sprained my ankle on the way;" third, it doesn't matter, it wasn't a favourable review.

As his performance review is being explained to him, the look on his face is not new. The words fall on deaf ears; his reality skewed – by his very existence.

And, besides, you overdosed in front of our office. We had to slam needles in you to resuscitate you. We can't employ you.

His face turned flush. Something was finally registering.

YG

"I know, it was embarrassing."

Embarrassing, it was embarrassing – a funny choice of words? What were you going for: tweaking, twitching, chasing hallucinations, foaming, frothing –? It's only embarrassing when it reaches overdose?

MARKETING LESSON
MARKETING LESSON

Yes.

Yes, drug dealers prey upon people who are down-and-out.

The shitty drug dealers, do.

The successful ones go where the real money is – people with money – the Jaxon’s of the world.

I’m not going to Google any of this.

As for the ones preying on those of us in trouble, it could be argued: they are far more compassionate than those who don’t want homeless people to no longer be homeless in their neighbourhood.

HUMAN SNAPSHOT
HUMAN SNAPSHOT

AB

AB is entertaining. Maybe awkward would be a better descriptor.

AB is 6-foot, shaved head, white-washed to the point of opaque; affably enjoyable.

He once came in after trimming his hair; he had missed 3 or 4 patches. He didn't care.

He is also attempting to transition from pasty to Filipino. AB knows 11-words of Tagalog, chirping them often. It sounds dumb.

AB has found love twice on Christian Filipino (grifting) Dating Sites. The first was pure love: costing thousands until pure, ended. The Driver pulled up a web search: 99% of these sites are scams. The Dispatcher printed a copy and gave it to AB. It angered him.

He now has a new bride and several children; they'll meet one day, at least that's the plan.

JY works for the Agency. He is Filipino. AB will soon be more so –

JY

AB, why were you 40-minutes late for your job yesterday?

AB

I missed my stop. I was thinking about the Philippines, and I fell asleep.

AB exits, he's sent to a job.

He's regularly sent to work sites.

The agency often takes the clients where AB has been sent to lunch.

JAXON
JAXON

He, allegedly, snorted cocaine by the bucket full.

He sent down-and-out people in to the mean streets to pick him up opiates.

He partied hard with rock stars. He's a fan of divorce.

At the same time, he called the people who made him rich (off the sweat of their backs) disposable garbage. Some might say, he's mentally disorganized.

One thing for certain, he creates homelessness.

How you ask?

His unquenchable thirst for exploitation. He's a bad man. The problem.

He doesn't think so – he believes he's been put on this earth to wallow in the misery of trying to constantly prove he deserves to be the asshole he has become.

Harsh?

No.

It could be argued: Homeless people don't need to fear the drug dealers. What they need to fear more are the people who profit off keeping them homeless.

I'm out.

Why did you do it?

I'VE WORKED AS
I'VE WORKED AS

DJ	BARTENDER	LANDSCAPER	OPINION EDITORIALIST (1)
TELEPHONE SOLICITOR	BAR MANAGER	COACH	CONSTRUCTION WORKER
CORE SAMPLE TESTER	BOUNCER	EVENT PLANNER	HAIR PRODUCT HUCKSTER
MOVIE + TV X-TRA	EDITOR	BOOK REVIEWER	HUMAN RESOURCES GURU
BOOK REVIEWER	HUMORIST + COMIC + AUTHOR		

33

SOON-TO-BE-A-DIFFERENCE-MAKING-BEST-SELLING-AUTHOR
SOON-TO-BE-A-DIFFERENCE-MAKING-BEST-SELLING-AUTHOR

(STBADMBSA) → with much more to come!
(STBADMBSA) → with much more to come!

(1) OPINION EDITORIALIST 2005-2008 → 24 HOURS VANCOUVER
(1) OPINION EDITORIALIST 2005-2008 → 24 HOURS VANCOUVER

HUMAN SNAPSHOT HUMAN SNAPSHOT

JODI G

Jodi G is a steroid-abusing, opioid-using, alcohol-swilling, profanity-spilling, violent racist. He is a terrifying man; his strength is an asset on construction sites – when he keeps his trap shut.

Suppose a worker seeking work shouts out racist, homophobic, misogynistic or anything highlighting an “ism” in the agency’s office. In that case, the driver does not hesitate to shut the conversation down. Stamping the worker unemployable for the day. When Jodi espouses his disgusting blame-the-world-for-who-I’ve-become views –

– the driver shamefully cowers.



At 9:10 A.M... the driver was left alone in the agency’s office; the next co-worker was scheduled to arrive at 10.

The office door opened and then slowly creaked shut. The desk is offset from the work counter, not allowing a view of the entrance. The driver glanced up to see who’d come in – 5-seconds passed – nobody arrived at the counter – the driver took a deep breath and relaxed – alone once more.

When he looked up again, a few seconds later, the counter gate opened. Jodi G stomped behind the counter. He paced to within two feet from the driver, swaying. He pivoted and stumbled; the driver pivoted out of his way. Sweat poured from his skin. Filling the air with a toxic acidic stink. Jodi mumbled. His cheeks pulsed in such a way it looked like his face was trying to swallow itself. He tweaked so violently his face looked pixelated. He mumbled more, stuttering, agitated, confused; yet, strangely full of purpose. The only words the driver could make out were – “I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I must; I must, I will. I’m sorry.”

“Are you okay?” the driver asked.

Jodi had a sheen about him, caused by the sweat dripping from his face. He stood up, staggering toward the driver, and said once more – “I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry. I will get you help. Are you okay?” the driver asked.

He called for help. Jodi’s life story was about to end by overdose. A man to be feared had been reduced to a broken, hate-filled shell of himself.

Jodi apologized once more and spat out, “I need to do this.”

The driver heard tapping on the front door. He walked from the desk to the door, unlocked it, in marched two paramedics.

Jodi stood up, looked at the paramedics, his face swallowed by defeat, his twitching slowed. The paramedics knew him by name. They administered an injection that quickly brought Jodi back to a semblance of living. They escorted him to the door, asking him if he'd like to go to the hospital. He declined, turned left, and began zigzagging north up Main Street.

Moments later, the dispatcher returned to the office. The driver shared the morning story. The dispatcher went to the video surveillance feed and replayed the event. When Jodi had entered the office, he paused, scanned the room, slowly paced to the counter, glanced at the driver (without being seen), returned to the front door, and locked it.

The agency rarely leaves office staff alone in the office.

Jodi G is (was?) a steroid-abusing, opioid-using, alcohol-swilling, profanity-spilling, violent racist.

HUMAN SNAPSHOT HUMAN SNAPSHOT

BRYCE

Bryce is an incredibly polite, normal looking and behaving worker, Bryce, is sent out for his day. A **GOOGLE** search of his name uncovers: **DISTURBING**. Back in his day, several years ago, he faced a manslaughter charge. He dragged a dead body around for several weeks; the body was discovered when his neighbours reported the toxic odours pouring out of his apartment.

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Mary had a seizure on a site.

Umpteen workers have been accused of theft on work sites.

The agencies regularly reimburses for the losses.

Agencies spends a lot on lunches, sports tickets, and if they get a client in the right situation, lap dances.

The workers (almost all) are nothing more than afterthoughts.

If a worker is hurt on a site. Because of the conflict-of-interest between the clients and the agencies (the agencies want the clients to keep using them) – agencies do everything in their power to have the workers' claims denied.

YOU HAVE A SPECTACULAR ASS YOU HAVE A SPECTACULAR ASS

A voice floats over my head as I walk down the street.

Beautiful colour.

I don't turn to look.

Thank you.

I think he's talking about my shorts.

How long did it take you to get that colour.

My whole life. I have a vitamin D deficiency. It's not a skill. I walk a lot. It's called skin damage. I've been damaging since back in the day when baby oil and foil was suntanning gear.

You have a spectacular ass.

...

I'm looking at it right now.

...

I refuse to look back.

I turn left at the next corner.

A crow ... crows.

A witness?

I meet up with friends.

Three women had been assaulted the night before, one of them stabbed, by a stranger.

I share my story of my spectacular ass.

Should I report it? I was assaulted.

It's no big deal. He was complimenting you.

It made me feel uncomfortable, off balance.

Was he cute? Gary asks.

He probably has mental issues, another friend adds.

So, his compliment means nothing because he's mental – and if he's cute....? I add

What if I had been a woman?

HUMAN SNAPSHOT HUMAN SNAPSHOT

SARAH

Do you remember the 55ish woman who was found sleeping in the building during the one-in-500-year-storm?

I recognized her.

She worked for the agency I managed for a decade and a half. She was homeless when I worked with her. Apparently, she's still homeless. Every day she'd show up at the Agency's office, begging for work. She was a good worker. Being female in a male-dominated, often uneducated, work environment, is daunting. Sarah, who, with each passing day, wasted away. Her eye sockets began sinking into her skull. While in the office, she tried to wield her ageing sexuality to her advantage, thinking it would score her gigs. The reports sites gave the Agency about Sarah was that she was a good worker who often ventured into sexual innuendo because she felt that was her only path forward.

Another year slipped by, with Sarah creeping slowly to inevitability. Her demise glaringly apparent. Sarah was in trouble. To the Agency, her screams for help repeatedly fell on deaf ears. The only thing the Agency cared about was if Sarah could work a whole day.

Agencies play a considerable role in the dehumanization of people on the edges of society.

Agency owners and operators rarely look past their own entitlement to show a level of compassion or empathy.

A worker like Sarah is only profitable for the agency as long as she can work. Sarah has no safety net. Sarah became reduced to tears in the agency offices on several occasions after sharing stories of sexual abuse and the misogyny she faces daily. The agency, instead of caring, doubted her words – leaving her with nothing more than her sexuality as her only tool.

It's a busy Monday morning at the Agency. Fifty or Sixty, primarily male workers, are looking for work. The front door opens. A sketchy woman walks into the office and announces, "Blow Jobs. Two dollars."

Half of the room empties, following her out the door.

BROKEN GLASSES 
BROKEN GLASSES

My original mother died on **December 12**, 1987. (long story)

An ex-flatmate of mine died on **December 12**, 2019.

My last remaining sister, who wasn't really a sister, unless she really was my sister, died on **December 12**, 2021. (long story)

I'm dying now.

On the day my sister, who wasn't... died, I met with friends for a few hours. Somewhere on my way home, I lost my prescription glasses. Devastating.

That's okay; I had a backup pair, only suitable for reading. If I wore them every day, stuff like walking → the world turned into a drinking and driving advertisement → so, I chose to live life while not reading, in low definition. It fucking sucked.

Buy some glasses.

The money is running dry. So, I can't justify it.

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ONE. TWO. THREE. UMPTEEN BOOKS ARRIVE.
ONE. TWO. THREE. UMPTEEN BOOKS ARRIVE.

It's now April 2022. I've been walking around in a foggy depression for five months.

On this day, I escape my home after sending out proposals, to go read. I forgot my glasses. That's okay. I bite the bullet; I buy a pair of reading glasses (\$17). The great thing is, I wear them daily. I could see again! The world became brighter.

I'm dying.

June 1, 2022. I am meeting with a friend. While chatting, I pull off my glasses. I hear a snap. The arm cracked. Shit. I wanted to fucking cry. I have glue at home.

Maybe I can fix them?

I pick up the glasses, and the left arm breaks off.

Tears start scratching my eyes.

I feel sick.

I can't afford to see.

I'm scared.

EAT?
EAT?

SEE?
SEE?

BREATHE?
BREATHE?

My stomach turns. *I must-see.*

I now understand why people are holding glasses together with tape.
When they do, they're judged poorly. And they're fucking poor.

My friend says can't you get new prescription glasses?

I consider sniffing the glue.

Not to worry, I will never give up. I'm smart. I'm turning fucking sixty-two in July.

I'm dying.

I can't catch my breath.

I bought the cheap reading glasses; I couldn't fucking afford.

If I give up writing, I'm already dead. That's what London Drugs is, death.

I'm not qualified to work there. Steve's words lacked context.

A fifteen-year career gone; severance never paid.

PARAPHRASED FROM A BOOK I'M READING (SENT FROM A PUBLISHER)
PARAPHRASED FROM A BOOK I'M READING (SENT FROM A PUBLISHER)

I'm an Influencer. It's like being a sixty-two-year-old intern.

In the book, a lawyer decides to chase her dreams instead of working as a lawyer for a large firm. She wants to make a difference. She says she doesn't care if her client is being sued by a former employee for wrongful termination because... because "our" client is a scumbag. She continued to say that they were going to court because her client refused to settle (strategizing to destroy the employee financially), even though the client could easily pay the amount the ex-employee is justified in asking for.

DOES THE BOOK MIRROR MY LIFE? DOES THE BOOK MIRROR MY LIFE?

I've been called by a 'legal hitman' → **a failed writer who has no business chasing my dreams.** I'm fucking turning sixty-two. The 'hitman' said I should have been pursuing a career in the industry; I was just tossed out from, with the bathwater (fired from): to mitigate the losses of those who tossed me out. **During a pandemic. As I am about to hit sixty-two.** After a heart MRI. As I'm receiving \$460 per month on Canada Pension. Yes, **PENSION.**

IMAGINE IMAGINE

Interviewer: Why did you leave your last job?

Me: I can't talk about it.

Interviewer: Why didn't they find you valuable enough to keep? How are your great grandkids?

Me: Thanks for allowing me to waste your time. I'm going to go repeatedly smash my head into a wall. I will let myself out.

I never felt old before, but now I do. A fact solidified when I called my cable provider, and first, the technician on the line wouldn't believe I was a man because my name is Lindsay. And then, she asked if there was someone younger in my home, she could talk to about my connection issues. Seriously.

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I can't breathe. I'm dying.

I believed if you always did your best, were loyal, and worked hard, it would count for something.

It didn't.

The place where I was employed did not care when five people in my life died **(including my mother).** (long story). **Not a single day off.**

They didn't care when I had a fucking catastrophic stroke. **Not a single day off. Nor was it suggested.**

They, without question, didn't care about me when they got rid of me, without paying me out, using the pandemic as shade.

I turned sixty.

I turned sixty-one.

I'm turning sixty-two soon.

Depression is assaulting me.

I keep trying.

And writing.

And pitching.

And reading.

And desperately trying to breathe.

I can't eat tomorrow because I chose to see.

Every asshole out there who believes homeless people aren't trying → fuck off.

FOOD?
FOOD?

DIE?
DIE?

LONDON DRUGS?
LONDON DRUGS?

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I live in a world where **COVID** is far more compassionate than the people I used to work for.



BUBBLE BATH BUBBLE BATH

I must believe everything will fall into place.

I suffer from debilitating insomnia and depression. I don't anguish over my efforts. They are undeniable. I work at my craft at least twelve hours a day. **Failed writer. No business chasing your dreams.**

Trying to thread a needle at sixty-two...the thread is thick; the eye is shrinking.

I will keep trying.

Throw in broken glasses.

I will keep trying. I keep trying.

I DRAW A BATH I DRAW A BATH

When I was a little boy, maybe six, a year after escaping (?) the clutches of a home where unfit mothers were sent to birth illegitimate children.

By this time, I've known the people I am being cared for by for about one year. My first memory is of my three brothers (?) chanting, "Lindsay, you're not one of us," → when I was five. A story for another time.

Anyway, I loved bath time. We were a struggling family, so we didn't have the luxury of a bubble bath. My baths were usually just tepid, hard water, without soap. I still loved it.

One day, mum bought three bars of Zest.

Bath Time. I hopped in before the tub filled. I grabbed a bar of Zest, and, with my right hand, started rubbing it frantically on the bottom of the tub. A soapy skin floated to the surface. When I got the Zest worn down, I held it under the tap. If I was lucky, a few bubbles formed. I was blissful. I loved my baths. Except for the time, one of my brothers (?) threw our cat into the tub with me. At least that wasn't as bad as when the same brother encouraged me to stick my dinner knife into the wall outlet.

I hop into my bath. The water is steamy. I pour a heaping helping of bubble bath into the water. The tub fills with glorious bubbles. I'm in heaven. New glasses. Trying. Trying. Trying. For a moment, I feel at ease. Everything will work out. I was a model employee. Karma will take care of me.

My calm ends. Tears roll down my cheeks. Despite being birthed illegitimate, I've survived.

I worked hard.

I never gave up.

I've earned having luxurious bubble baths.

I think that's the reason for the heaping helpings.

I continue to cry. I'm turning sixty-two, soaking in a bubble bath, with the tears pouring from my eyes. And yet, the SCUM floated to the top, SCUM that threw me out with the bathwater.

WHY AM I CRYING? WHY AM I CRYING?

Because I never quit trying. I can't afford the cheap glasses I bought. Two years and my life savings have run dry. Life on the street will be a death sentence for me and for my eleven-year-old cat, and my relationship. The tears won't stop.

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I did nothing wrong.

The SCUM rises to the top. If I lose everything, they think they will have won.

What does it say about a company when their most senior employee ends up homeless?

I'm not the only person who's been deposited in a soap-less tub.

I will never give up.

I have written over 240 'THOUGHTS ON BOOKS' because I'm a respected Influencer.

I butter another book. Who am I kidding? I can't afford butter.

TIME OF DEATH



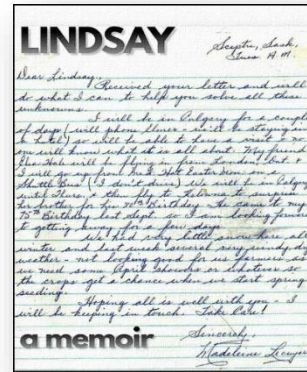
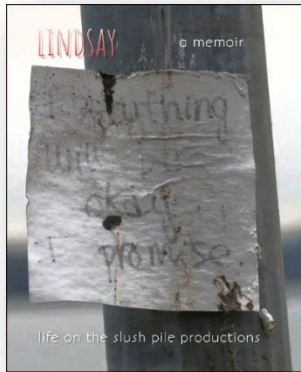
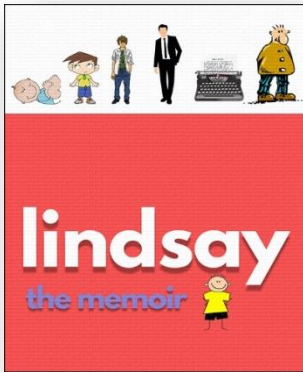
This story is harsh. It is meant to be. I have to believe I will be okay, make it through this mess. But I must admit, I'm scared. \$460.00 per month sees to that. I don't want to be homeless. I am now reaching the point where 'hanging on' is no longer an option. A product of being in your sixties is quite often: **you are on your own.**

Are you still here?

Great.

I hope you can relate to this speculatively fictitious memoir, and the journey through the life of ().

Chasing Neon started as the third in a series of memoirs from the mind of me Lindsay Wincherauk.



A shocking and heartwarming collection of stories about a child's search for identity after accidentally discovering at age 43, the parents he watched die were not his birth parents.

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15 Sections. 106 Stories. A dark family secret, religion-fuelled shame, and pain-derived humour; cobbled together to make one whole in an extraordinary ride through a shattered life.

A unique, riveting, intensely personal, and exceptionally candid memoir. An extraordinary account of an extraordinary life. Deftly written, complex, thoughtful, and thought-provoking.

... ..

Little did I know, fifty-six years later, I'd be meeting my mother for the first time as my mother, at the side of her deathbed.

... ..

Not only is this memoir rife with family drama. But it is also the only memoir with a motorcycle crash in Jamaica, an attempted coup in Panama involving Manuel Noriega, a brush with the Dalai Lama in a Vancouver food court, eating breakfast with The Thing from the Fantastic Four, and a two-on-two basketball game with Fox Mulder.

... ..

GLUE GLUE



The powerful follow-up to Lindsay - The Memoir.

It starts with Lindsay meeting his mother for the first time, as his mother, as he stood alongside her deathbed where he said hello, and goodbye.

Glue shifts deftly between the present and past as Lindsay continues cobbling the missing pieces of his life together. 36 interconnected stories examining the pains and joys of living – trying to make sense of it all.

Along the way life is enriched by an exchange student.

Lindsay meets his father only to have to tell him two weeks later he isn't his father.

And then, he witnesses a gay bashing, leading to becoming a key witness and in a true Harvey Milk moment, giving a speech in front of a crowd of 5,000+ about ending senseless violence.

The case resulted in Canada's first Hate Crime designation.

And then he meets his mother.

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A story about a **man** trying to find himself after his parents come back to life.

And then, he witnesses a gay bashing.

And then, he suffers a catastrophic stroke.

And then →

Chasing Neon

Originally it was going to be a memoir about trying to define the future, but in the process understanding life is meant to be lived in the present, because you never know when a helicopter will fall from the sky – it morphed into a genre-defying examination of living and suffering and searching for the strength to go on!

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That's all that's got for yesterday.

Tomorrow, I'm going to start writing the next story ...