

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE → GLUE
ALL FILE ON THE SLUSH LIFE → GLUE



GLUE GLUE



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 →

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE → GLUE
ALL LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE → GLUE

press play
press play



BERT
REKL

28
28

BERT
BERT



GAY BAR
GAY BAR

EPISODE 1: BERT APOCALYPSE NOW

THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2006
THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2006

Messier is a fucking fag. He should admit it, a fucking faggot.

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WELCOME TO THE FOUNTAINHEAD PUB - GENERAL POPULATION
WELCOME TO THE FOUNTAINHEAD PUB - GENERAL POPULATION

Before Cooper introduced me to General Population, I used much of my time coming up with ideas for my Opinion Editorials.

NO EXCUSES FOR ALL THAT
NO EXCUSES FOR ALL THAT

Infidelity: an ugly beast that most people must deal with.

Let us make something perfectly clear: nobody cheats by accident. It is never a mistake.

Can you imagine?

“Honey, I was walking down the street, and I tripped, and next thing you know, I was having sex. It was an accident.”

Tripping is an accident; cheating is ... CHEATING, it is that cut and dried.

SCENARIO 1
SCENARIO 1

Plays out sort of like this: you have struck up a bit of a relationship with someone at work. Every day is filled with flirting. The two of you anticipate the day when you will finally get to consummate your friendship.

BERT
BERT

ONE PROBLEM ONE PROBLEM

She has a boyfriend. Well, it is not really a problem. So, you must ask yourself two simple questions

1. Do you actually like this person?
2. And can you, in all honesty, imagine having a relationship with her?

If the answer is “Yes,” then there is no problem at all. You have to let her know that the flirting must come to a stop.

It is not fair to her boyfriend, or for that matter, to you. As long as she is attached, you will no longer partake in this behaviour. You must make this perfectly clear.

SCENARIO 1 SCENARIO 1

You or the love of your life has strayed for some reason and have spent some time in someone else’s sandbox, toy room or whatever euphemism you choose to use for the infidelity.

Your relationship may be on the rocks. Perhaps you even genuinely love the person you are with. Yet, due to your own dysfunctions, you feel trapped.

There are a few things that may happen.

First, it may be a one-time thing or something your mate stumbles across by accident.

Maybe they confront you with it because they have some hard evidence.

Or maybe someone you know, a friend, a family member or worse yet, someone who has ulterior motives, knows, and informs you of it.

If you are the one doing the cheating, you are soulless, spineless ... Please take a step back and realize what pain and suffering you are about to inflict.

Why are you about to do this to someone who you love?

A SIMPLE ANSWER A SIMPLE ANSWER

All because of your own selfishness. If you can’t keep it in your pants, then get out of your relationship.

If you are being cheated on, the answer is straightforward, but it may not be something that you want to hear.

There is almost no excuse for the disrespect, and if you are to find out, you must initially leave.

That is your only option. If you don't, you will never find the respect you deserve, and maybe you don't even deserve that respect.

“Honey, I was walking down the street, and I tripped, and next thing you know, I was having sex. It was an accident.”

Another week, more pints, more conversation; another article published, and amazingly – avoidance of the end of the bar.

LOVE EACH OTHER, AND ENJOY THE RIDE LOVE EACH OTHER, AND ENJOY THE RIDE

The world can be a terrifying place.

Everything seems to change daily.

Uncertainty in every aspect of life surrounds us.

We are all faced with one tragedy after another. You can read about plane crashes, terrorism, crystal meth, or whatever on any day.

You may be wondering; how does this affect love?

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The current divorce rate is nearing 50 percent.

Can you imagine the impact on the children?

On the one hand, no wonder relationships are struggling, and the divorce rate is so high.

We live in a world of “me” time; consumption is king.

We all need to take a deep breath and slow down. Life is moving too fast.

We need to get back to a day where we say “Hi” to our neighbours instead of fearing them.

On the other hand, it's not all bad: I'm happy; in fact, I'm individually optimistic yet, globally pessimistic.

Can we change the course of things to come?

I don't know.

We've messed it up bad.

Just think about it for a moment. The family unit is in a state of crisis; the marriage institution may fail; c'mon, two drinking buddies getting married in Ontario.

I suggest in the future, for those of you walking down the aisle, could you please uncross your fingers and take your tongue out of your cheek.

You're only screwing up your kids and, in turn, our world.

If everyone meant, *"till death do us part,"* the divorce rate may only be 20-25 percent resulting in:

1. At least a 50 percent reduction in unwanted children, in turn resulting in:
2. A smaller global population, in turn resulting in –
3. Less consumption---in turn, resulting in –
4. HOPE!

Wait for a second if that was the equation. I might not exist.

We have certainly left one messed up world for the next generation to try to fix. It's too bad that most of them come from broken homes. So how are they going to fix the world when they can't even fix themselves?

MY RADICAL SUGGESTIONS

Be aware of what is going on in "our" world.

- Look at yourself first and the people in your life who matter and try to encourage, nurture and love.
- Turn off the news (except for 24 hours).
- Laugh, smile and cry from time to time.
- Have a blast.
- Treat others with kindness.
- Make your "moments" memorable.
- Don't have kids just for the sake of it - kids aren't puppies.
- Avoid confrontations: life is too short.
- And most important, remember to hug each other.

We may not be able to fix the mess; however, we can have a blast during the ride.

Two weeks pass, more pints are drunk, more conversation are shared, another article moves from sword to paper.

NATURAL DISASTERS, OIL AND DRIVE-THRU

Wow!

What a couple of months on our home planet Earth.

Let's see Iraq, terrorist strikes in London and Indonesia, hurricanes, soaring gas prices due to natural disasters and the looming oil crisis. Luckily, we save 3.5 cents per litre in the Lower Mainland – no membership required.

To top it off, before we can pick up the pieces, and our emotions for that matter, we are being told that the bird flu will wipe out a large portion of the world population, and we may not be able to do anything to avoid it.

If the birds don't get us, crystal meth will, if not us, then our kids.

If not the birds or meth, then obesity, our girth is rapidly expanding.

As if that was not enough, our beloved and respected teachers decided to bring their issues to the forefront and put those same kids on the mean streets for a couple of weeks, not that their problems aren't significant – but that's excellent timing. After all, we're all a little emotionally bankrupt, to the point where the teachers' strike may have been a pleasant distraction. Well, that and who Paris Hilton is pissed at. No wonder those *Desperate Housewives* are so popular.

Unless you're lucky enough to be counting to 54 million right now – the world can be scary. George W. is telling us: *"America is currently consuming oil at a rate where we are using 40 percent more oil than we are capable of producing."*

Whew!

141 Far too much for any of us to digest and keep a level of happiness simultaneously, unless, of course, you are still counting 53 million... 53 million and 1.

I don't know about you; I want to laugh, I want to smile, and I want to cry from time to time.

Then it hit me: A solution to a couple of the problems facing today, at least the Western world. On a day when I was stressed to the max – working ridiculous hours and still needing to find time to run errands and eat, I pulled into a drive-thru at a local fast-food joint. While idling behind nine vehicles, waiting for my sodium-enriched fix, a light went on: BAN DRIVE-THRU'S.

Just think about it for a moment. If we were to eliminate the drive-thru, roughly 330-million North Americans would have to get off their lazy butts and walk to their favourite burger joint for their fix; OK, maybe only from their cars. To carry it even further, we would eliminate all those idling vehicles. Think of the oil that would save.

Radical, I know, but it's a start.

Thanks to Gay Bar, alcohol, new friends, and reading, I began to carve out a hint of a

writing career without ever setting foot in journalism school. Life and dysfunction became my education—writing found me without me knowing it was supposed to.

Lindsay, you wrote those articles during a period where your life was crumbling around you?

Yes, I did Voice of Reason; writing helped me hide from what I needed to deal with.

Wow. Can you tell me more about Gay Bar?

FRIDAY NIGHT: REALITY BITES

What a world we live in; it is Friday night; when did it take on a different meaning?

I have many friends, whom each one is living their own life.

When we were in our teens, twenties and even our thirties, the loneliness of being an individual seemed to take on a different meaning. Now it smacks us in the face full force.

Do we conform?

Is that the answer?

I fight it, but maybe it is just how it is meant to be.

Maybe that is what is wrong with society. Perhaps that is why so many lost souls are looking for answers in alcohol and, for argument's sake, destructive chemicals— we are not winning the war on drugs.

Now the question; am I alone?

Are any of us truly alone?

Maybe we are. Maybe solitude is the point of the journey.

Fridays used to have a different meaning. They used to mean hanging with peers searching for love and trying to find our true destinies. Somehow, it changed.

Now, while my close friends retreat to their lives, to what completes them, some of us seek the answers of life from a different source; our reality has become apparent. So, we need to cloud it.

Do I have another drink?

After all, our youth clouds us to the point where we think we know the answers; having another drink is never the question—it is the rite of passage.

Youth now judges: nothing could be more fleeting. Do you remember the days where you figured you knew the answers?

The question: *when did it become vague?*

We need love, but at what expense?

Many lost souls believe if they are not alone, they're OK.

What an illusion.

Numerous lost individuals live in a world of conditions and expectations.

They are looking for validation.

It doesn't exist.

You can only validate your own existence.

Romeo didn't really need Juliet.

The tragedy of life plays out in a never-ending cycle.

Aloneness becomes one – yet one always finds a way to become alone.

The journey is all that matters.

I also need to be validated; however, I choose to do the validation. Maybe that is the easy way out. Perhaps life clouded my reality. I don't honestly know.

All I really know is that it is Friday night; I am basically happy, alone – but happy.

Lindsay, why don't you move down to the end of the bar, by Bert? That way, I'll have more time to chat with you.

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Messier is a fucking fag. He should admit it. He sleeps with men; he's a hypocrite.

Aren't you gay, Bert? How do you know Messier –

Everyone knows. He needs to admit it. He's lying?

Bert, they're retiring his jersey. Gay or not, who cares?

What does it matter to you?

Do you want to settle this outside, Lindsay?

What?

Bert, you do not want to step outside with me.

Fuzzy Nose and Toes has become a senior citizen (18+). Every morning at 4 a.m., she hops onto my bed + positions her furry black body twelve inches from my head and scans my brain for the next hour. She'd done it for the last year.

Fuzzy has a Master Plan. I found her manifesto lying on the coffee table. Fuzzy laid out in detail her plot to eliminate me. Three-hundred pages of scratched-out plans, all ending in three words.

He feeds me.

LIG I66C2 UJG

FLASHING BACK ELEVEN YEARS TO MY EX-FLATMATE KEVIN

Lindsay, my friend David, he's a genius.

His marriage ended.

He's in the bad place.

Can he crash at your place for a while?

Home alone, I'd grab a nap on the chesterfield. Every time I napped over three weeks, when I opened my eyes – David would be sitting in a chair, twelve inches from my head, elbows on his knees, his face cupped in his hands – staring at me.

One night, which turned into several, I'd drift off to sleep in my room, the door slightly cracked. Anyway, on these nights' uneasiness would slip into my dreams. I'd ease open my eyes to find a silhouette coming into focus. David would be standing outside my room – staring directly at me.

David had to go.

ADOPTION

WOMAN DEFENDS DECISION TO GIVE BIRTH AT 60

A TEN-YEAR OLD CHILD SUES CLINIC BECAUSE HE'S TOO YOUNG TO WATCH HIS MOTHER DIE.

One of those headlines is fake; can you guess which one?

Frieda Birnbaum, who just had twins, says she wants to be a role model.

Birnbaum is believed to be the oldest woman in the US to give birth to twins.

Wasn't Nicholas fifty-six and Rebekah forty-six when you were born, Lindsay?

Birnbaum and her husband of thirty-eight years...The procedure was deemed a success. For some unknown, non-sarcastic, reason this story struck a chord with me.

What a selfish-bleeping–

Speaking from experience, it sucked watching my parents die.
Birnbaum claims she wants to be a role model.

What age is OK, 40 -50 – 60 – 100?

Who the fuck is she a role model for?

Why do people in the first world think they can have whatever they want?

Lindsay, because they have money.

Doesn't anyone think of the children? Fuck.

BACK TO FRIDA BACK TO FRIDA

She may be a great mother. But at the end of the day, she needed in-vitro to pull off this fantastic procedure. Doesn't that scream something out loud and clear.

Maybe, but we are supposed to deal with the cards dealt. I hope that when Frieda's time is up, someone is standing by to pick up the pieces. I don't think a role model would forget to think about that.

Lindsay, you seem angry.

I am. It is no fun watching your parents die, no matter how much they loved you.

NELLY JIM NELLY JIM

He's on the list of the Top 5 most annoying people I've ever met. Gay Bar is his watering hole.

His voice is nasal.

His voice is grating.

He works in conflict resolution, however; Nelly encourages conflict every chance he gets.

Lindsay, why are you wasting your time typing about him?

I showed him a business card I had designed. I had just found out about my-again-living-mother's pending demise.

Your design sucks. Who cares that your mother is dying?

Three-hours later, he'd pretend to apologize

At the corner of the bar sat Bert + a large, dishevelled man + Nelly Jim. I entered the bar and sat to Nelly's left. Nelly began whining.

So, you don't think lesbians should have children?

Excuse me. What?

I overheard your conversation yesterday. Do you want to explain why?

What are you talking about? I don't want to have this conversation.

Why shouldn't they be allowed? I want to know your views.

Jim, I'm not in the mood to have this conversation. Maybe we all need to play the cards we're dealt. Perhaps we're not supposed to have everything we want?

That's nonsense. Why not?

Stop talking to me. You are a condescending asshole.

You seem to feel strongly about this topic. Why?

Jim, I don't think sixty-year-old women should have kids. Maybe gays and lesbians should abstain as well. I don't know. It's just a thought.

That's stupid.

Jim, just because we want doesn't mean we should. Nobody thinks of the kids.

Are you a Nazi?

What? Fuck off and stop talking to me.

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Nelly turns to look at the four men sitting at the bar.

This guy doesn't think we should have kids.

In unison, they chanted.

I want kids. I'd be a good father. I took care of my nephew once; it was fantastic.

Bert chimes in.

Nobody should tell gays they can't have kids. We'd be better fathers than –

Nelly looked back at me.

Jim, stop fucking talking to me.

Let's ask the girls next to you what they think?

I moved to the other head of the bar. Unfortunately, I was still within earshot.

Kids are great. I have a niece. She is fun when I have her for one or two hours. Nobody should tell us –

I leave the bar, and the large, dishevelled man starts following me.

I stop at a convenience store.

The man follows me inside.

He's mumbling.

I glance his way.

He's mouthing *Nazi*.

He lines up behind me at the counter.

Tonight, you are going to die, Nazi.

You don't think I should have kids.

You'll learn.

You will pay.

I sneezed twice.

You probably think you're the only guy who's ever sneezed. You will pay the ultimate price tonight.

The clerk looks at me and looks concerned.

Are you going to be, OK? Do you know him?

I'm not sure. I don't know him.

I sprinted across the street. He screamed at me.

You can't get away.

I will find out where you live.

You are going to die tonight.

I started running.

The following day, I leave my building to head to the gym. When I hit the sidewalk, the man from last night crossed my path.

NELLY JIM: PART 2

I pull up a seat at the bar, and Nelly sits next to me.

Oh, hello.

Leave me alone. Never talk to me again.

I'll talk to –

Fuck off.

ENTER 2G

He sits on my other side.

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I must agree with Jim about gays and lesbians.

What? Don't you usually start with hello? You weren't even there; what the fuck do you agree with? I was fucking stalked because of Jim.

You know I'm a dad, right?

What the fuck does that have to do with anything? 2G I'm sick of the 'you don't think like the rest of us' bullshit. I'm not part of your fucking team. Are you even interested in the original conversation?

Yes.

Maybe we're supposed to simply play the cards we've been dealt and stop being so fucking selfish. I don't know. It's just a thought. Maybe in time, it will change. It doesn't mean I don't think gays and lesbians would be great parents. There is always adoption. Perhaps that's the right choice?

My scars cut deeply into my soul. I believe I would be a brilliant father. However, I'm north of forty. My cards have been dealt. And I spent much of my youth watching my parents die.

DAYS LATER

Derrick is a beautiful man.

He was the Fountainhead's General Manager.

His drag name is Coco.

Derrick, may I have a word with you? A few nights ago, Nelly put me in a precarious position. I was followed home. I was –

I'll speak with Jim. I don't know why these guys feel the need to challenge you. You are always happy, cheerful, friendly.

Two days later, Nelly walked out on a tab. When he returned to settle, he fought with Derrick and the Pub's owner Michel. When Nelly retreated home, he posted a rant on Craigslist insulting Derrick and claiming the Fountainhead was named after an Anne Rand Book, claiming the name has Nazi ties.

BARRED INDEFINITELY

JANUARY 2009

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BELLFLOWER, Calif: A single mother gave birth to octuplets through in-vitro fertilization – increasing her child count to fourteen.

GRANVILLE ISLAND ON SATURDAY – M4M – 35 (VANCOUVER)

I saw you eating a sausage in the crowd at Granville Island, and it made me kind of hot. I looked at you, and I saw you checking me out too. You were wearing a blue coat and green glasses and carrying a bag, and you were standing with a girl (your hag??).

Lose the cock block, and next time I might say hi to you.

22 FEBRUARY 2009

THE FOLLOWING EVENTS TOOK PLACE BETWEEN 12 JANUARY 2006 – 19 APRIL 2009

Dinner theatre was about to begin. Before it commenced, RVJ shared a pleasant thought with me.

Lindsay, your craziness seems to be checked by decency, whereas Bill is mentally trapped.

Do you think that's pleasant? I'm confused.

Gay is not a choice. Gay is not a disease, but it may be a curse.

Lindsay, do you really think that?

I don't know. I haven't made up my mind.

I have no desire to be gay. I just want to be me. I thought my experimentation of the early 2000s was just a passing fancy. Then I met fucking Trish (Jason). After that, I was supposed to understand. I don't.

Am I gay?

Who cares? I never bought the team jersey.

I believe gay is far more emotionally violent than straight has the capacity for. I do think gay condemns themselves with the same beliefs that are thrust upon them by those who lack tolerance. *I hate the word tolerate.* I do believe it judges with a vengeance. It needs to define by category.

I'm not gay. I'm just me.

COMING OUT COMING OUT

I don't know what that means?

Last night I stumbled into an encounter. It was void of the safety net of care. When it was over, GUILT paid me a visit. *What is the point of pleasure without love?*

I think I know who I am?

I understand many things in life are beyond my control.

Could my sexuality be a product of deceit and pain?

EXPOSURE EXPOSURE

I'm vulnerable.

I lay naked.

Each day brings with it a glimmer of hope.

I hit snooze.

Nine minutes more.

I must embrace the day.

I need to turn my dreams into reality.

I begin moving.

Is my life formula flawed?

Am I a pawn?

Do my masters have my best interests at heart?

I can't hit snooze anymore.

I'm lost.

Who's scripting the next scene? Why are the scenes fucking repetitive?

ACTION ACTION

We act.

BACKGROUND BACKGROUND

We obey.

We rarely question the direction.

In the beginning, my parents decided on my path. They instill themselves into who I will eventually become.

They lie to me.

I'm alone.

I resist who I'm becoming.

I know I'm different.

I want to fit in.

I need to breathe.

I don't want to be a secret.

I don't want to be broken.

I must be strong.

I want to be loved.

I don't want to fall.

I fall.

I claw my way upward.

I'm different.

I'm unique.

I'm scathed but not broken.

I have a responsibility to share.

I like who I am becoming.

We can't hide from dysfunction.

I need to let my family go.

Time drifts by and is responsible for loving, sharing, holding, caressing, nurturing, and supporting.

We need to expose our vulnerabilities and allow love and forgiveness into our hearts!

BACK IN THE BAR BACK IN THE BAR

A British bloke, Curtis, and RVJ, plop down on stools beside me – Gary sits to my right.

Gary shares a clinical story about his sex life.

When I masturbate, I come right into the toilet.

Ewe.

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Curtis shares a story about a friend in pain.

My friend went on two dates.

The guy got sick.

My friend spent the next several weeks watching him die.

It fucked him up.

If someone told me, they were dying on the second date; I would've –

Saved by an email from Bill Murray. It was the first time he's ever emailed me.

DINNER THEATRE PRECURSOR DINNER THEATRE PRECURSOR

RVJ showed me a string of text messages from Bill.

Bill to RVJ

*You are so done. Fired.
Your hair is stupid.
Your cock is smelly.
Have a lousy fucking day, asshole.*

BERT-APOCALYPSE CONTINUED
BERT-APOCALYPSE CONTINUED

*When did Bert's Apocalypse begin?
It started the day when he said he had two children and never spoke of them again.
I did invite him to two Christmases.*

*What will you be serving?
The whole spread. I'll even serve chips.
Who serves chips at Christmas? That's ridiculous.*

I miss Donnie.
I MISS DONNIE

I'm a man named Lindsay. I'm blind in one eye. I miss people when they're gone. How lucky am I?

*I'm a man named Lindsay; my last name is Win – **CHER** – auk.*

Could penning this story be anything other than destiny?
COULD PENNING THIS STORY BE ANYTHING OTHER THAN DESTINY?

TARGET
TARGET

*Hello Cooper.
Hello, Lindsay did you miss me?
Lindsay, on the way to work, I saw Bert standing in front of PJ's. He was hammered. Smoking. When I passed him, he was stuffing \$20 into his jeans. He told the guy he was talking with he'd pay him back on payday.*

Word spread around the bar in the form of mumbles.

I guess he'd found a new set of targets at PJ's.

Lindsay, remember you can't use my name in your book? Can I grab you a pint?

Remind me why I can't use your name.

Because, if you do, you may as well put a target on my head. I'm Sicilian. I'd be hunted down and exterminated. Your writing about a Gay Bar. That wouldn't cut it. You'd have a target on you as well. One of my uncles would come searching for a guy named Lindsay.

Fair enough.

Fair enough. What do you mean fair enough, Lindsay?

Shut up, Voice of Reason.

What can I call you?

I'm serious.

You'd be signing our death warrants.

Metro-sexual is OK.

Gay is like the plague.

Sicilians view gays and n...s – as the ultimate sins.

Being associated with either, marks you for extermination.

It's just the way it is.

BACK TO BERT BACK TO BERT

I don't know why they call it football.

They don't do anything with their feet.

Soccer is football.

This is bullshit; they shouldn't be allowed to call it football.

My name is the first on the list for the pool table. It's mine. Give me the cue bitch.

Bert, calm down.

This is bullshit. These lesbians have no right to jump the line.

Nightly, Bert quested for memory loss with drinks.

My drinking had nothing to do with it – I was fucking wrongfully dismissed.

*Hey, Bert, if you are in a jam, you could always move into my spare room.
Why the hell would I ever want to live with you?*

*Fuck, Lindsay, are you insane; are you reading what your typing?
Later, hey, is it OK if I shorten your name to VOR?*

Gary asked me how my day was?

Fuck, you can speak if you don't talk about yourself. Bert screeches at me.

Bert turns his focus to the woman next to him but doesn't know her.

*He makes me sick, he always –
Gary, I don't think I'm allowed to answer your question.*

DAYS LATER

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*Lindsay, can you help get me a job? I've always wanted to work in construction.
Sure. Come in, and I will move you to the front of the line.*

DAYS LATER

Lyn informed me of something upsetting her.

Bert came to me for money. He said you got him a job. He said he needed boots, a hard hat, and some other stuff.

Lyn, we provide the equipment for free.

I took him to the store. At the last minute, he told me what you just told me.

Bert never made it to his second day of work. He called.

Lindsay, I can't make it to the job. A woman collapsed at the bus stop. I had to offer medical assistance. If I didn't, I could be arrested.

He started selling expensive enemas.

*Can you lend me money? Something horrible has happened. I'm in a jam.
I need cash, I get paid soon, thanks, please!*

Gary, I think Bert might be a magician. No job, yet; he can afford to drink daily. He borrows. He lies. He drinks.

At least he knows not to ask us. He asked me to buy him a drink once. So, I bought him a coffee.

HOWIE ENTERS THE BAR HOWIE ENTERS THE BAR

Howie belongs to a TALL-PERSONS-GROUP. *Seriously, Howie grew up in Windsor, Ontario, a tunnel's drive from Detroit. Like Gary, alive and standing are his only requirements for love.*

2G would often massage Howie's back while Howie watched hockey.

Ewe.

Howie would express an opinion. 2G would rub his leg.

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Harry believed Howie was plotting a grift.

Fuck, I don't know about Howie. I think he's up to no good. Plops in here; + fits in easily.

Something is fucking up with that.

Nobody fits in like that.

It's a tough crowd.

What do you think?

REALITY CHECK REALITY CHECK

Howie hit hard times.

His marriage ended.

His dogs died.

He suddenly found himself on the outside looking in.

It had become time to reconstruct his life.

He just wanted to belong somewhere.

BACK TO BERT BACK TO BERT

Test him. He's a fucking cheater. Michael Phelps is a fucking cheater.

They're all cheaters, test them all.

Hey Howie!

Test the fucking cheaters.

Bert, you don't know that.

All fucking Americans are cheaters.

HOWIE CHIMES IN HOWIE CHIMES IN

Bert, why do you keep screaming at the TV?

Because everyone knows Americans' cheat? They even cheat on the tests. Swimming and the Olympics aren't what they were meant to be.

What are you talking about?

Swimming in the original Olympics was done in the nude. The new suits are the only reason they're faster. They are all cheaters.

157 *Bert, way back then, they didn't permit women to watch the competitions. Do you think we should go back to those days?*

Bert, I don't think I can watch football anymore. I think the players should play in –

Fuck off, you know I'm right.

Hey, Bobby, I'm short till payday; can you slide me a few dollars?

Why do you keep subjecting yourself too – ?

VOR, I'm self-medicating.

MELTDOWN: FRIDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2008 MELTDOWN: FRIDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2008

I arrive at the bar at 6 p.m.

ACTION ACTION

Bill Murray is slosed.

RVJ is prepared for a verbal onslaught.

Rod is poking Bill.

Sitting next to them is a lesbian from Ottawa named Chris, sporting a leather cowboy (?) hat.

THE SHOW BEGINS THE SHOW BEGINS

RVJ, you are nothing more than a fucking slut.

I don't want anything to do with you anymore.

You use me all the time.

I can't take this anymore.

Bill pirouettes three-times. Chris interjects.

Bill, calm down.

This is the last time.

You are done.

You no longer exist.

You're a slut.

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You use me all the time.

Bill pirouettes again, searching for allies. RVJ focuses on his phone, and Allan to Bill's left interjects.

Bill, calm down.

You're no better than John. You can fucking have him. Fuck him. He's dead to me.

Bill –

Lindsay, you don't understand. He uses me. You need to –

VOR, I don't need to understand.

You don't understand. He's a fucking user.

Look, Bill, this won't work on me. You're fucking up. Let the rest of us celebrate the season in peace and quiet.

You can fucking have him.

Bill, look at me.

You must go.

You need to go.

Forty-seven times trying to reach him, "I met this six-year-old child with this blank, pale, emotionless face, and the blackest eyes; the devil's eyes [...] I realized what was living behind that boy's eyes was purely and simply...evil."

Mike Myers, he's not, but what lay behind Bill's eyes was insurmountable pain created by the need to control what he cannot; without realizing the control that drives him rests in the confines of his wallet; co-dependant is not descriptive enough.

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You can have him. (insert a bunch of private information I had no business knowing to stomp out any interest in RVJ, I don't have).

Bill, you had no business telling me what you just told me.

Lindsay, promise me you won't get together with him.

Dude, you're delusional. I think you need to quit drinking. And I'm not qualified to fix you.

DINNER THEATRE CANCELLED — ?

THE NEXT DAY
THE NEXT DAY

RVJ, your cock smells.

TWO DAYS LATER
TWO DAYS LATER

RVJ, I'm done with you.

TEN SHOWS LATER
TEN SHOWS LATER

You're a whore.

BACK TO DECEMBER 19
BACK TO DECEMBER 19

Bill, stop it.

You are affecting everyone.

You must leave.

If you don't go, I will physically remove you.

I'm not kidding.

Bill grabbed a six-pack of beer and pirouetted five-times before heading out the door.

THE SHOW CONTINUES
THE SHOW CONTINUES

Lindsay, do you think he made a mistake doing Groundhog Day?

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VALERIE APPROACHES ME
VALERIE APPROACHES ME

He's mental.

He's mental.

I'm not mental.

Valerie quit pointing at Construction Tim. Stop it.

He's –

Stop fucking pointing. What do you want to happen?

He's mental. He's mental.

Fuck, Valerie. Now you. Everyone is just trying to relax. Stop it. Tim's gay. He doesn't want to be your friend anymore. You need to –

He's –

Valerie rose and pushed me to the side.

I'm not mental, fuck you.

Valerie invaded Tim's space and grabbed his arms.

Fuck off.

Valerie, stop it –

Tim gently pushed her away. Valerie, like Bill, pirouetted through the air. She dropped to the floor by the pool table, waiting for a chalk outline.

Bert springs to action and takes her pulse; Joanne and I look at each other and speak in unison.

God, she's faking.

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Did Valerie survive?

VOR, she regained the consciousness she never lost. She was propped into a chair by the pool table. RVJ, Bert, Panama, Panama's ex Doug, who Panama is stalking, all rushed to her side.

Doug does laundry – Panama falls out of the drier.

Doug goes fishing – he pulls Panama out of the water with his lure.

I retreat to the washroom and shed tears.

DAYS LATER

I owe you an apology.

Bill, fuck off, I'm full.

Bill slumped into his beer.

Minutes later, RVJ and Rod arrived.

Bill starts acting out Valerie's fall.

WTF?

RVJ approaches me.

Lindsay, don't say a word about what I'm about to tell you, OK? Panama has been charged with attempted murder. He went over to Doug's while Doug was at work. He was packing a boning knife. Doug has a friend staying with him. Just a friend. Panama blames the friend for the breakup.

Jesus, what happened.

He knocked the friend to the ground, put his hand over his mouth, and he held a knife to his throat. He told him he was going to kill him. He stabbed him several times. Doug's friend got up and started running. Panama kept lashing at him. He missed his heart by less than an inch.

DAYS LATER

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Lindsay, I thought if there ever was to be a murder attempt, it would have been Bill killing – I think you need to escape Gay Bar.

Panama enters the bar and begins playing pool.

Bill Murray enters the Pub.

Michel, the owner, asks for a few words with him.

VOR, I told Michel once I'd given up masturbating. I told him I had a service. Michel gave me a book to read. He asked me to find the meaning of the book. The book was garbage. I won't bore you with the details. Except the protagonist found Buddhism. He gave up everything from his past. When I finished, Michel asked my opinion. I told him it was about overcoming hardship. He told me I was overthinking. He asked if I remembered telling him I don't masturbate. So the main character gave up masturbation. That's why I asked you to read it.

Bill, we need to talk.

Bill walks out of the Pub without beer.

DINNER THEATRE CANCELLED

THE NEXT DAY THE NEXT DAY

I run into Bill and RVJ on the street.

Hey, Lindsay. I'm taking a three-month break. It's my decision.

VOR, Doug feels sorry for Panama. So, he kicked his guest out of his home.

BERT, THE FINAL ACT BERT, THE FINAL ACT

2G, I broke my arm today.

That's nothing; both of my arms are broken.

Gary, have you ever golfed? No? What's that 2G?

My sister, she's the Head Pro at a significant course in Pasadena. She played on the LPGA tour.

Gary, how many master's degrees do you have? Two. Impressive.

I have four. That's two more than you, Gary.

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Lindsay, you know how I suffer from vertigo, don't you?

Yeah, (unsuspecting couple), I was rushed to the hospital, something was wrong with my calves.

I spent four days in intensive care.

Vancouver's best doctors were monitoring me.

I was frustrated in ICU.

I wanted to watch the hockey game.

This is funny; I got in trouble with the nurses; you won't believe what I did. I walked out of the ICU, came here, and slammed four-pints.

What was the diagnosis?

Apparently, I developed a very rare condition in my calves, only found in the highest calibre Olympic athletes after rigorous training.

Bert was forced to move into a low rent dump in Vancouver's notoriously drug-infested Downtown East Side.

Last night I picked up a straight guy who robbed me.

Lindsay, let me buy you a beer.

Thanks, Harry.

Lindsay, where'd your beer go?

Bert took it, he's drinking it now.

Darren, I need a loan.

I can't make rent.

My landlord stole from me.

ENTER LYN ENTER LYN

Enter Lyn

Bert, I can offer you a job with the WEBSITE. The pay's decent.

Thanks, Lyn, Beer, please!

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Darren, I found a new place; the rent is \$2200, and May I borrow your truck.

Hey, Lyn. Can I get an advance for my new place? Add it to my tab. Beer, please.

A SHORT FLASHBACK A SHORT FLASHBACK

VOR, Darren told me his truck was stolen. Insurance gave him a loaner for a month. Two days after he reported it stolen, he told me he found it. I asked him where it was. He said he went to park the loaner. Then, looked to the stall to his right. His truck was resting there.

At least he didn't drive drunk.

On the other hand, Bert smashed Darren's truck into a pole.

Lindsay, if an opening in your company comes up, let me know. Test him. Messier is a fag. Test him.

Don't you have a job?

INTERVENTION INTERVENTION

Lindsay, do you think we should do an intervention on Bert?

No. What's the fucking point. Don't pretend you care about him.

We could confront him.

Stop it.

He's screwing up at work.

Lyn, what did you think would happen?

INTERVENTION DECLINED

THE LAST STRAW THE LAST STRAW

Michel, this is uncomfortable; Gary's food was delivered, Gary was in the washroom. Bert began eating Gary's food.

Bert, we must talk.

BARRED INDEFINITELY

165 *Lindsay, Bert is looking better these days; he's not drinking as much, and he's even doing his job most days.*

Wow aren't we supposed to do our jobs every day.

12-19 APRIL 2009 12-19 APRIL 2009

I'm not gay; now what?

I'm being followed.

I cross the street.

My stalker crossed the road.

I become hard.

I'm having trouble hiding my erection.

I enter a grocery store.

My stalker is there.

My erection grows.

I pick up a bunch of bananas.

I make my purchase.

I'm one block from home.

I look across the street at my stalker.

Fuck me is mouthed. I—

On Sunday, Gary trolled the online personals searching for sex.

VOR, he told me he fulfilled his desires. A couple altered by chemicals invited him over.

To my left sat Chris. He was broken by the collapse of a twelve-year relationship. He was seeking advice.

Until, of course, the direction didn't suit what he wanted to hear.

He says his relationship was perfect.

Chris kept pouring his hardship on heavily.

Gary is edgy.

He is vying for attention.

He's flustered.

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He tells me he only had four hours of sleep.

He stated it emphatically.

He then, in clinical details, shares the details of the night.

He tells me they're great guys.

He tells me one day they are going to grab Thai food together.

VOR, I was exhausted, depressed, bored.

Chris wanted to be saved.

I asked Gary if he felt a twinge of guilt.

He claims he's guilt-free.

He repeats they are going for Thai food.

I can't be gay.

I hate it.

There is nothing grounding in it.

VOR, Chris kept whining. Gary told me, straight after sex, he went to Easter Sunday Mass.

MONDAY
MONDAY

John G, Casino Tim; they're both wearing plaid shirts. 2G is on one side of them, Toby is on the other, and Toby is angry.

VOR, she is angry about what happened to Ritchie (Next Chapter). She won't shut up.

I turn.

John and Casino Tim are boasting about their sex-filled weekends.

Tim is married. They both think boasting is interesting.

Gary entered.

VOR, three grown men, were flexing sex stories. It makes me sad.

Toby needed to talk. I told her to stop talking. I told her our pain for Ritchie is not a fucking competition.

Gary announces he's going for Thai food.

VOR, I told him I hope he has a great time fucking eating.

167 A man walks past the pool table, and Toby grabs him and shouts at him.

Punk, why are you wearing Hells Angels gear?

Cooper evicts her.

DOCTOR RJ ENTERS
DOCTOR RJ ENTERS

He claims he has a huge cock.

I banged sixty-nine women, one more than my dad.

He parades over to 2G, an earshot away from me.

Ritchie's family wants him to have visitors now. You must call his daughter to set it up first.

VOR, a day earlier, I almost forgot.

RJ told me my visitation privileges were revoked.

He barked at me that I wasn't even gay.

He swore I had an agenda.

He challenged me, saying I was trying to gain something.

He told the family to remove me from the list.

I stopped his rambling.

I asked him why a man with his intelligence would use it in such misguided ways?

He snapped at me, why don't we head to my place, and I'll fuck you hard.

VOR, earlier that day, the gayest of the gay, Guy, came up to me and said my speech at the rally was powerful. Well-written. He added, why didn't you look at the fucking camera. Are you an idiot?

TUESDAY TUESDAY

2G, have you talked to Ritchie's daughter? Ritchie seems to have disappeared.

No, we've been playing phone tag. What do you mean he's disappeared?

As soon as you hear something, let me know, OK?

VOR, a man, tweaking on meth, approached. His skin is pallid. He's frail in a how snorting crystallized chemicals deliver a person to way – he's upset. So, he asked in a plethora of ways if Ritchie was, OK?

Next, an inebriated man walks in. He asks me about Ritchie.

The tweaking guy looks.

The inebriated man whines, I played pool with Ritchie. This is not right. And on and on and on.

VOR, what the fuck does RJ think I could possibly be gaining?

WEDNESDAY WEDNESDAY

2G and Lesbian Chris asked me to meet them at the Pub. Chris is ripping drunk. We are going to meet Ritchie. After we visit, we head to the Pub to be greeted by Cameron and Lyn. They want an update.

Out on the street, people I didn't know alternated between calling me a hero or a faggot.

THURSDAY-FRIDAY-SATURDAY-SUNDAY

The days all blend together. I promise myself I will never go to Gay Bar again. I go. I lie to myself.

Hey, Lindsay, we're going for Thai food one day?

CONSTRUCTION TIME ENTERS

He often talks about floating. Tim is intense. Floating helps him relax. Tim expresses to an acquaintance named Simon and me, he needs a BF. I suggest to him dropping his intensity might help with his quest. I mean, maturity is overrated. Tim says he'd settle for a fuck buddy.

I hate gay people.

Tim tells me a ton of women in Kitsilano have fuck buddies. I'm not sure why he's telling me? I question his claim.

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You don't know anything, Lindsay. You're not as smart as you think you are?

I've had enough of gay.

The next day I transported four workers to job sites. Before work, I did a radio interview about Ritchie. One of the workers heard it.

VOR, Jody, a worker, expounded that he thinks whoever struck out at Ritchie was likely molested as a child. I told Jody to stop talking. VOR, because of the media attention, everyone now thinks I'm –

Since the incident on March 13, VOR workers and clients have been looking at me differently.

Gary finds a love interest online, and they go on several dates. Gary continues trying to sabotage his new interest by hooking up with others online.

VOR, on Sunday, Gary shared his conquest.

He told me I was right.

The conquest expected him to pay for dinner.

He said he felt like a number.

He said he felt like a schmuck.

He told me they went to his place, and when he went to take off his guest's shirt, he noticed a scar on his abdomen. His guest's mood changed; he pulled his shirt back on. Gary told the guy he looked just as cute with his clothes on. The guy bolted. Gary said he felt guilty.

In November 2007, when I received the news, my father wasn't my father and my father figuritively died for a second time.

2G offered his opinion.

What did you expect; you knew the odds were fifty-fifty.

GERMAN KURT GERMAN KURT

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In a heavily accented manner, Kurt often shared a tale-after-tale of his youth, foreshadowing that Kurt wins \$50 million in the lottery one day. Kurt and I regularly shared Sunday beers.

VOR, I loved one story the most. Every day upon rising, his grandmother would make tea, grab the paper, scour every page, drinking in the news and heartache of the world. For fifteen-years, the routine never changed. One day, Kurt's family realized it was always the same paper. When they asked her about it, she coyly said a paper is always the same template of misery and control. So, there is no need to read todays.

MAYBE TOMORROW I WON'T GO TO GAY BAR.
MAYBE TOMORROW I WON'T GO TO GAY BAR.

Lindsay, you must; I can't wait for the next episode!

WHO IS LINDSAY WINCHERAUK?

WHO IS LINDSAY WINCHERAUK?

Lindsay Wincherauk is a fearless writer. He has published two books and has had more than eighteen OPEs 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.