

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE → GLUE
ALL FILE ON THE 2022 LIFE → GLUE



RITCHIE
KILCHIE

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE → GLUE
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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 →

RITCHIE
KILCHIE

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press play
press play



RITCHIE
KILCHIE

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

HATE CRIME
HATE CRIME

RITCHIE
KILCHIE

29
29

RITCHIE
KILCHIE



Three taps on the sky, the clouds break, a brilliant, radiant light burst forth, providing warmth, clarity, and understanding. A delicious blue yoke covers us all in omnipresent beauty, seen for the first time.

An infinite number of questions have been asked, the answers are elusive.

Time was simple, but clouds whisked simplicity away in a fast dance choreographed by confusion.

Life, in all its intricacies—effortless but shrouded in the mystery of living—we complicate; our nature sees to that.

172 Press play, and you ease into each day, turning corners that were never there before, around each bend is another challenge, brought forward in formula.

The sky appears far off in the distance—we used to know our neighbours' names—as we reach upward, their names become lost in illusion.

With each step, the sky races into the heavens, breaking us—and what was once blue begins to turn grey.

We bought it, the plan that is, and the plan, the formula, is flawed.

It claimed equality when equality is only present in spirit.

Another step, the stair fractures, but you keep climbing; you're told you must.

Some fall from the crumbling weight of the clouds, malingering in what could never be defeated, not good enough; or so they were told—soon to be shunned.

Another question—the answer ducks behind the ambition.

You climb higher as a red brick is laid upon black brick while life shoots for the skies soaring in the distance, bitterly souring the taste of the journey.

You scream, believing you have figured everything out.

You're the chosen one, privy to the unanswerable questions.

Another brick is laid as a thousand eyes look down in judgement from faceless transparent buildings scratching the now grey heavens above—you no longer know your

neighbours' names, bringing sadness instead of joy.

The connection to humanity is lost; people clawing for the same slice of reality – the answers; become victims of the pursuit as blame replaces civility.

Another blood-stained brick and those closest to blue fly past the ghettos below, often, and aptly, in the same buildings, many created by greed.

Up is not the answer, yet; you want more; with each leap, dysfunction replaces sanity, and the pursuit you've been sold begins to fracture everything meaningful.

Another day, what was once present has now vanished, growth and the race toward happiness masquerades before us subtracting purity; more meaning is discovered, and you realize abundance only exists in the matters of the heart.

You accept limitations. The sorrow of letting go allows the weight of what never could be to lift.

Another question, the answer; no longer critical, a smile breaks on your haggard face, you've cast desire to the side, allowing the essence to replace fear; the smile is infectious.

Understanding life is not the answer, living it, might be.

Another brick, the bricks are stacked so high they now replace the clouds; clouds that were never there, to begin with – you ask your neighbours' names as they soar higher up the ladder, passing the now countless burning eyes looking upward; wanting what they don't really have.

Your neighbours' smile back – you've given something priceless they have yet to discover.

Another step, another smile, grey turns back to blue – you're okay – maybe for the first time as judgement has been subtracted – only to be replaced with love.

There is no need to be burdened; you reach the sky from far below, where the bricks start stretching into the heavens above. This time you tap the clouds only once – they open with ease, and love showers downward dropping pretence, letting love into our souls, for many, for the first time.

FRIDAY, 13 MARCH 2009
FRIDAY, 13 MARCH 2009

Richard Dowrey (Ritchie Rich) is a father of two. Ritchie Dowrey is sixty-two-years of age, and Ritchie Dowrey is a friend to all. On this night, Ritchie Dowrey was celebrating his retirement.

Shawn Woodward is a thirty-five-year-old construction worker who is short in stature but sturdy in build.

Ritchie and Shawn had met only less than one hour before.

I arrived at the Fountainhead at 8 p.m.

I grabbed a seat at the bar facing the pool table and was in the company of Ritchie, Binh, 2G, and Casino Tim.

The pub was bursting at the seams with people. Binh asked Ritchie if he'd like to play pool.

Moments later, they played doubles pool against Shawn Woodward and one of Woodward's friends. I continued chatting with 2G and Casino Tim, with my eyes occasionally drifting towards the pool table.

SMASH
SMASH

174

Shawn Woodward slammed Ritchie in the face as Ritchie was rounding the table close to the pub's entrance. Ritchie dropped like a board hammering his head into the tiling near the pub's entranceway. Ritchie lay on the floor with his life in jeopardy.

Shawn Woodward stepped over Ritchie's shattered body, walked out the door and began casually sauntering away.

RVJ, Cooper, and I followed him down the street to ensure he wouldn't leave the scene. We blocked his path at the mid-point of a community garden on Davie Street, approximately sixty feet from the pub's entrance. I stepped *nose-to-nose* with Shawn Woodward. I forcefully barked at him.

Why did you do that?

He's a faggot.

He deserved it.

He's a faggot.

I'm not a faggot.

The faggot touched me.

He deserved it.

I continued.

Do you realize you may have just killed a man in his sixties?

While we dealt with Woodward, RVJ, Casino, Tim, and 2G were tending to Ritchie. Casino Tim checked his pulse.

Woodward snapped back at me.

He's not in his 60s.

Don't you want to hit me?

I grabbed his hat and threw it over the community garden fence.

You want to hit me, don't you?

Calm down, Lindsay.

I don't have to fucking calm down.

I spun in a circle.

175 *C'mon, try to hit me. Give me a reason. C'MON.*

I pulled on his belt loops.

HIT ME

He's a faggot.

He deserved it.

He's a faggot.

I'm not a faggot.

The bouncers from a club across the street rushed across the street. They detained Woodward until the police came and took him away. I walked back into the pub. I passed Woodward's friend on the way. I asked him if Woodward was his friend.

Yes, he sure packs a powerful punch, doesn't he!

Ritchie spent his retirement night in the Intensive Care Unit of Vancouver General Hospital. He wasn't expected to live, and Woodward was charged and released.

Is Woodward a coward?

Probably. Without question, he is fuelled with hatred. However, he couldn't possibly hate Ritchie; he doesn't know him. So, without question, he hates something inside of himself.

I hate Woodward for connecting the lives of many people with his forever.

Shawn Woodward, thirty-five, fit; a construction worker who knew where he was, yet; his actions have changed the course of many people's lives, associating all who've been deeply affected, with him, forever.

I couldn't help but think my friend was dead.

The Fountainhead kept humming on this busy Friday night. The air filled with despair. At least for this night, it was no longer a safe place.

Word of the assault quickly spread throughout the Gay Village.

Lindsay how could everyone continue as if nothing happened.

I don't know. What else are they supposed to do?

The police returned, searching for witnesses. Binh recounted how Woodward and his friend were pointing at patrons around the bar and asking each other which one?

176

I approached one of the Officers.

I was watching the table; I saw the punch.

I guess I should make a statement.

Please do; Woodward is claiming you assaulted him outside.

After I gave my statement, Cooper told me he never fully understood what a HATE CRIME was until now.

John G grabbed my attention.

John G, do you think I should use my newspaper connections to ensure this doesn't go away?

Yes.

When lesbian Chris heard the news, she rushed to the hospital to be at Ritchie's side, and to act as a conduit between Ritchie's friends and his family.

SATURDAY, 14 MARCH 2009
SATURDAY, 14 MARCH 2009

SPECULATION

THUD

My head slammed into my pillow.

I wanted to cry.

I couldn't find the tears.

The reports from the hospital + police weren't encouraging.

Ritchie had suffered massive head trauma.

He wasn't expected to survive.

Woodward was free.

The Fountainhead reopened late in the afternoon.

One candle burnt brightly on the bar.

The candle upset some of the regulars.

Ritchie is not dead.

I must be the voice –

177

MONDAY, 16 MARCH 2009
MONDAY, 16 MARCH 2009

MEDIA FIRESTORM

We must be the voice –
WE MUST BE THE VOICE –

On Sunday, I sent an account of the night to my editor at 24 Hours Vancouver, Dean Broughton.

On Monday, the story broke, and the story wasn't accurate.

Police said words were exchanged between the alleged assailant, 35, and a 62-year-old man.

- **Vancouver Sun**

Another paper reported the story as a barroom brawl on Davie.

And 24 Hours reported Ritchie had an argument with his assaulter outside.

We must be the voice –
WE MUST BE THE VOICE –

I phoned Dean to express the story firmly was inaccurate, and I emailed him robustly, suggesting the need to do the story justice.

He set up a meeting with his reporter and me to straighten the record. The interview was conducted outside the pub's entranceway.

I went inside after.

The mood was solemn.

2G, Lyn and Cameron were sitting together.

Lyn dropped the news on me.

Lindsay, Ritchie died. He's gone.

The staff had been misinformed by a local news outlet.

The Province Newspaper called me to set up an interview.

TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2009

My life was about to change. When I arrived at work, I was handed a copy of 24 Hours Vancouver. I was gracing the cover. The cover screamed **GAY BASHING**.

WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2009

178

When he saw me, Mario, a worker I drive to job sites, smirked, and shouted out in a room full of temp construction workers.

Hey, Lindsay, did you go to your gynecologist last night?

Gay and construction are not a lovely mix.

The Province came out with a front-page teaser and a half-page inside.

ATTACK IN THE PUB SCENE AS A GAY-BASHING

My picture was attached to the photo.

I must be the voice –

NEXT

CFUN 1410 – The Buzz of Vancouver with Nik & Marke (Nikki Renshaw + March Driesschen).

The interview barely ended when I received a call informing me a press conference was set up for 2 that afternoon in front of the Fountainhead. The meeting was organized by MLA Spencer Herbert and Ron Stipp of Westenders Against Violence. They asked me to speak.

GAY COMMUNITY RALLIES AGAINST PUB ATTACK
GAY COMMUNITY RALLIES AGAINST PUB ATTACK

Gay community rallies against pub attack

Father of two remains in grave condition after he was struck in the head after a pool game.

- By Darah Hansen Vancouver Sun, March 18, 2009

When I arrived at the pub, the conference was in full swing. I was immediately thrust in front of the camera and was bombarded with questions.

Is Ritchie Gay?

How is Ritchie?

Would you call this a HATE CRIME?

Can you tell me a little about Ritchie?

I answered as calmly as possible.

Ritchie's sexuality is his business. No, I don't think he'll be okay. Um, I've known him for just over two years. He loves his children, golf, boating and the BC Lions. I'm not comfortable being the poster child for this cause. I think it may make my life difficult.

179

Did you go to your gynecologist last night?

We must be the voice –
WE MUST BE THE VOICE –

Back inside the pub, I was subjected to a series of one-on-one interviews with a seemingly endless array of media outlets, gay, straight, and undecided.

I felt like I was stranded alone, I felt like I was far over my head.

We must be the voice –
WE MUST BE THE VOICE –

Robin Perelle (Editor in Chief of X-tra West) conducted the final interview (Editor in Chief). A bi-monthly paper catering to the gay and lesbian community. I told Robin I was terrified of how the attention would impact my life. I felt vulnerable.

X-tra West ran a feature story on the next cover; the cover shot was of VRJ, 2G, Peter P ⁽ⁱ⁾ his partner Chris G, with me as the frontman.

- i. Peter P was attacked one block from Davie Street in 2015.

He suffered a catastrophic brain injury.

He has no recollection of who anyone is anymore.

Ritchie's life was put on hold. Woodward was free on bail as Ritchie lay comatose in Vancouver General Hospital.

At the end of the interview and photoshoot, I felt used.

I felt like I was a pawn thrust into the spotlight of a horrific event.

I felt like I was being used for political and gay agendas.

I thought they didn't care about who their agendas trampled in their wakes.

VOR, I was being thrown OUT for the whole world to see, and nobody had the decency to ask me if I was gay or comfortable being the poster boy for the cause. I felt the agenda clouded what this was about: Ritchie and his family.

Out on the street and at work, the chants rained down.

Hero.

Faggot.

Thank you for stepping up.

Hey, faggot.

Literally, every block I walked.

I hate Shawn Woodward; I hate the fucking media.

THURSDAY, 19 MARCH 2009

THURSDAY, 19 MARCH 2009

BUILDING MOMENTUM

At the end of an interview on CBC Radio (The Early Edition with Rick Cluff), Rick asked me if I thought Vancouver was tolerant?

I think we are kidding ourselves. Far too many people are distracted by the noise of the world, and to me, we've lost sight of the only two things that matter. Being consistent and decent.

PARALLEL WORLDS

PARALLEL WORLDS

Gay is limiting. It is like selecting a favourite colour and never allowing the possibility of change to enter the picture. One must conform, or they cannot be a card-carrying member of the club. Gay for agenda can come across as the beast trying to slay intolerance. Gay is often reduced to nothing more than the sexual act.

At times, I hate gay.

Am I intolerant?

Gay without the experience of straightness sometimes doesn't understand the only people in the world who are as *over-the-top* as Gay can be; are Neanderthals who've refused to evolve. I vent.

I'm not sure if the two worlds will ever mesh.

Gary, in his liberation, clinically drops on me.

Porn star cock. Cock. Sex-chat from online. Hook up stories. Swallowing. Come. Come. Come.

I'm not sure if that is liberation?

Gary, I'm afraid to mix my friends from outside the pub with anyone from inside the pub?

Lindsay, give your friends some friggen credit. You have no right to be their moral arbitrator.

VOR, thanks for your insight. I'm not sure if I agree with you.

181

Why not Lindsay? Why couldn't I hang with your friends like Wayne?

Well, Gary, believe it or not, my closest friends and I have never talked about who we've fucked in all the years of our friendship.

Maybe it's best to keep my worlds in separate beds.

Ritchie, brilliantly, had done the same thing.

PARALLEL WORLD TIMELINE PARALLEL WORLD TIMELINE

Parallel World Timeline

Ritchie loves his children, golf, boating and the BC Lions.

The BC Lions are Vancouver's professional football team.

Ritchie was a huge fan.

Tributes began pouring in from various CFL Fan Forum Websites.

THE POSTS ARE UNEDITED
THE POSTS ARE UNEDITED

WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2009
WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2009

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

Joshua

Dear God...our prayers are with you our friend

GAY WORLD

Members of gay society began working to find a way to bring this story to the forefront after the initial reports were inaccurate. A conduit was needed to spark it mainstream.

First up, the 24 Hours Cover, the Province Cover –leading into the Radio interview on CFUN –followed by the news conference as the community began to claim ownership. Finally, draped in well-wishes and a blending of those impacted. And thankful for their voice to be raised through the words of someone new.

FRIDAY, 20 MARCH 2009
FRIDAY, 20 MARCH 2009

CFL FAN'S ASSAULT STUNS FOOTBALLERS

WEST END: Avid Lions supporter allegedly sucker-punched in bar remains in intensive care

“Ritch is a legend on CFL fan forums and is loved from coast to coast,” said Jean-Guy Dauphinais of Regina. “I’ve had many great chats with him, and he’s the type of guy who would do anything for anyone, which is why I can’t believe this happened to him...”

W McLellan - The Province

HERE'S PRAYING DOWREY SURVIVES ATTACK
HERE'S PRAYING DOWREY SURVIVES ATTACK

John Ferry Opinion

...I try not to judge anyone by their sexuality, which is invariably the least interesting thing about them.

Besides, nobody deserves to die like Webster, beaten by a Nazi-like gang of baseball-bat-wielding youths. Anti-gay bigotry is like any other bigotry. If you suffer from it, you should control it... before you choke on it...

THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

The intolerance of sport was colliding with the flamboyance of Gay, separated by denial. Football is a place where **Gay** is not permitted. It's there, of course, but it is hidden in the deepest recesses of the closet.

Football Fan World is a world where hordes of middle-aged, pot-bellied men mask insecurities by worshipping something they can never be.

Gay is not liberating, but it is confusing. The path to acceptance can often be punishing.

Lindsay, do you really believe that?

Sadly, I think so.

When caring is added to the equation, the gap between the worlds begins to shrink. And some of us start to realize we're not so different after all.

Ritchie was smiling and enjoying the night of his retirement. He mixed effortlessly in both of his worlds. And then—

A SICKENING THUD A SICKENING THUD

183

I can't erase the sound from my mind.

In a heartbeat, Woodward brought the two worlds together.

When the Football Fan World entered the fray, the Gay World had already been immersed in anguish for five days.

A fight between the two began with the breaking news of March 18.

THE GAY WORLD THE GAY WORLD

The initial reactions were of concern. It was once again being burdened by another senseless attack over something uncontrollable, sexuality. A safe place had been violated.

People began digging their heels in, trying to take ownership of something not belonging to only them.

Lesbian Chris immediately took hold of the family.

My role was to ensure the story wasn't lost in the fog of the night.

Some people in the Gay World dared to question RVJ and my motivations—they *can fuck off*.

Some of the community took ownership of the story to push the agenda.

FRIDAY, 20 MARCH 2009
FRIDAY, 20 MARCH 2009

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

Bomb

...Anyways having a brother who lives in the Westend (who is gay) this is a very disturbing story.... Chances are anyone who would do such a thing is a closeted homosexual who hates that part of himself so much that they go to extreme lengths to prove that they are not...

Having worked in construction, I have often wondered how many construction workers fit the above profile... I'm sure it is much higher in construction than in any other industry.

Sadly, these meatheads target actual homosexuals and any other male who is not an egotistical ***** like themselves... whether actually gay or not!!!

THE GAY WORLD THE GAY WORLD

How's Ritchie?

What you did was brave?

Thank you, you are a hero!

Hey, faggot.

My coworkers don't know what to say; so, they pretend nothing changed silently.

RVJ and Lindsay are doing this because –

Fuck off.

I'm just Lindsay.

What you did for the community is honourable.

I did what I felt was right. I'm troubled the community didn't care about how throwing me OUT to the world has fucked up my life. I don't think many people understand how that feels?

2G wails he held a dying man's hand.

Ritchie is not dead.
RITCHIE IS NOT DEAD

I'm afraid of work. I'm scared to visit construction sites, a vital part of my job.

How's Ritchie?

The CBC asks me to contact Ritchie's family.

My only way to do so is through lesbian Chris. She believes JVR and I are pushing our own agendas. So, I'm pissed off at her.

Chris, CBC, would like to speak with the Dowrey's.

Hello, Lindsay, I'm not mad with you, just so you know. And about the CBC, no, I will not allow it to happen.

Chris can fuck off.

SATURDAY, 21 MARCH 2009

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

Downtownbrown

I would love 5 minutes alone in a dark alley with the stupid piece of **** that did this to Ritch.

185

SUNDAY, 22 MARCH 2009

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

Gerry

I've met Ritch many times and had tail-gate brews with him many times. If he is gay, I sure didn't know it, and quite frankly I don't care. But if I didn't know he was gay, then it strikes me as ridiculous to consider that he was "in your face" and provoking any kind of reaction from the fellow who assaulted him.

THE GAY WORLD

I drafted a letter for the Dowrey family highlighting the CBC request. When I arrived at ICU, a nurse told me they had no record of Ritchie.

When I had called on March 19, a nurse shared disturbing news.

Ritchie is still in a coma.

It doesn't look promising.

He has no pain threshold.

He is posturing.

He is retreating into a near-fetal-like position.

When I called on March 20, I was told I had been put on the visitation list.

And now, he's vanished. My mind jumped to death.

THE PROVINCE BACK CHAT

Readers are horrified at the attack on avid Lion's fan Ritch Dowrey at the Fountainhead pub. The man who allegedly attacked Dowrey is said to have claimed he punched him because he was a "faggot."

Posted by Roger

Yes, it is too bad that the guy got hurt, but every time someone who is gay gets beaten, it is a "hate crime."

People who are hetro get punched every day and it doesn't get the media hype.

Why the double standard?

The problem about sueing somebody is that they have to have money... I highly doubt that someone who sucker punches a senior in the head because he lost a pool game and then run out yelling "He was a fag...He deserved it" actually has enough (if any) money to pay for the care of someone.

186

SECOND VISIT SECOND VISIT

OrangeShoes99

During my hour with Ritch, I talked football with him. During this time, he did have some facial expressions...opening his mouth, curling his lip, partially opening an eye. The biggest lip curl came when I bellowed Bwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaana. (I am not kidding).

WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 2009 WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 2009

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

THIRD VISIT

OrangeShoes99

UPDATE: I am absolutely thrilled, to announce that Ritch came out of his coma this morning!

I knew that Bwaaaaaaaaaaaaa call would get his heart rate going enough to say enough is enough!

THURSDAY, 26 MARCH 2009
THURSDAY, 26 MARCH 2009

THE GAY WORLD

How's Ritchie? How's your friend?

SICKENING THUD
SICKENING THUD

NAKED EYE

ROBIN PERELLE

A man walks into a gay bar in the gay village, belatedly realizes he's surrounded by fags, sucker punches one of them into a coma, then casually saunters out.

If you're waiting for the punch line here, don't hold your breath. There's nothing funny about this man's decision to walk into that bar. There is only the sickening thud he left in his wake...

"I felt like I was going to throw up. I felt ill. To tell you the truth, I've felt ill ever since..."

I don't blame him. So, do I.

It's St Patrick's Day, and I'm standing at the counter in the Fountainhead Pub. Gregg Gillis, Dowrey's pool partner, points out the empty spot at the corner of the bar where Dowrey should be standing —

— Dowrey's laughter is contagious, Gillis says. "He laughed a lot about a lot of stuff."

I notice the past tense. I don't correct him —

It's staggering.

One minute, Dowrey was enjoying an evening like any other. Among friends, in a space that was supposed to be safe, a place supposed to be ours.

A powerful punch knocks him flying backwards into a coma the next minute.

"I was the man who held his head when..." Gillis trails off, his voice catching...

"I can't sleep. I can see his face constantly. Feels like a loop — it's looping through my eyes. I was holding his head," he repeats...

"I just don't understand it," Wincherauk says. "I don't understand how anybody in this day and age could be upset if someone touches your shoulder or bumps you on the street."

It's the hatred he simply can't fathom. Neither can I.

"How can people not understand that we're all connected?" Wincherauk asks me. "Even if you have a crappy upbringing, I don't understand it. I think we're supposed to be decent — consistent people and decent human beings..."

At least "what happened to him happened so fast. Before that, he was happy and enjoying the night," Wincherauk says.

Sounds a little like a car crash, doesn't it? One minute you're okay, the next you're flying unexpectedly through the air, your life suddenly cut short by a freak accident. Only this was no accident. This was malicious.

This was an act of violence In one of our spaces.

Against one of our own...

I don't care what happened at the moment, immediately before the punch.

Maybe Dowrey bumped into the man who decked him.

Perhaps he brushed up against him.

Perhaps he even slapped his ass.

(NONE OF THE ABOVE HAPPENED)

Nothing justifies what happened next.

Nothing

I applaud Wincherauk for having the courage and presence of mind to not only follow the man out of the bar but to ask him point-blank why he did it.

I glance back at Dowrey's empty spot on the counter.

188

There's a Canucks game on the TV.

He should be here.

He never misses a game...

The fact that he's lying in a coma instead is unforgivable.

And must be punished.

If this isn't a hate crime, I don't know what is.

"HE'S A FAGGOT. HE DESERVED IT." WITNESS

COMMUNITY MEMBERS DEMAND COURT TREAT FOUNTAINHEAD GAY BASHING AS A HATE CRIME

COVER STORY: Jeremy Hainsworth

He was represented by lawyer Joel Whysall who says his client "is shocked and embarrassed" by the media coverage of the case.

"The notion that it's a hate crime," Whysall says, "he's not that kind of person.

"Whysall says his client is not gay and had been to The Fountainhead on "a number of occasions" with construction worker friends. The father of two lives with his common-law wife, he says...

Whysall says he's been told by Crown the case will not be prosecuted as a hate crime.

We must be the voice –
WAS MUST BE THE VOICE –

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

West Coast Blues Fan

If anyone is interested, there are a bunch of Ritch's friends and supporters meeting at the Fountainhead Pub tomorrow (Friday) in Ritch's honor.

THE GAY WORLD THE GAY WORLD

FRIDAY, 27 MARCH 2009

I returned to the hospital, letter in hand, and delivered it to one of his NICU nurses whose mission was partially completed at the checkout at Shoppers Drug Mart.

Are you Lindsay? Thank you! You are a hero in the community!

189

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

FRIDAY, 27 MARCH 2009

FOURTH VISIT

OrangeShoes99

...when I started to talk to him, he turned his head and looked at me. I can't tell you how great that felt. I even thought I saw an effort to smile at one point. I gave him a thumbs up and started rattling off names of people who were thinking of him and pulling for him across the country. ...At times he seemed to respond to my voice... He can't follow you across the room with his eyes.

I bellowed a couple Bwaaaaaaaaanaaaaaas to keep the fight going inside him. :)

I have been told this morning by a family member that **he smiled at the nurse this morning.**

That's our Ritch, always making the best of things!

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD
FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

SATURDAY, 28 MARCH 2009

—

Mickey03

That's wonderful to hear that he's making a comeback. I have a joke all lined up about this, but I'll wait until our buddy is totally out of the woods.

Say Hi to him for me if you will.

Cheers!

Mike

Mike

(BTW, how did the get-together go last night at the pub?)

THE GAY WORLD
THE GAY WORLD

WEDNESDAY, 1 APRIL 2009

Hello, Lindsay, I'm Murray Bilida, we've organized a rally for this coming Sunday. We'd like you to speak for five-minutes. The lineup are politicians, doctors, police officers, community leaders, educators, drag queens, and hopefully you!

190

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD
FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

SATURDAY, 4 APRIL 2009

First Visit: New Visitor

...It took a moment, but I think he recognized me, he cracked a few smiles and his eyes lit up from time to time. He seemed to enjoy the Flames losing last night and the Canucks having a chance to take first place...

SIDE STORIES
SIDE STORIES

155

Had taken a back seat.

My first action to kick it back into gear was to place a wager with Greg in Germany to see which one of us could get rid of our goo-guts.

Lindsay, do you think this story fits?

VOR, life doesn't stop moving.

FUZZY NOSE + TOES

At 18.5 years of age, my precious kitty developed an unsightly cyst on her hindquarters; surgery was necessary. The Vet told me it was no big deal, and for seven-bills, she'd be as good as old.

THE GAY WORLD RALLIES

SUNDAY, 5 APRIL 2009

RITCHIE GOES GLOBAL

GAY-BASHING SUSPECT: 'THE FAGGOT DESERVED IT.'

by Kilian Melloy

EDGE Staff Reporter (Boston Massachusetts)

A 62-year-old man assaulted in an alleged hate crime in a Vancouver gay bar remains in hospital care.

An April 5 article at Xtra.ca reported a crowd numbering more than 2,000 showed up to protest that same day in the city's West End.

Dowrey, who was described in the article by Wincherauk as still being "nonresponsive" at that point, was the demonstration's rallying point.

Wincherauk called for vigorous prosecution of the suspect, garnering approval from the crowd when he said, "If this crime is not punished accordingly, we all lose something."

Added Wincherauk, "We must be the voice because, at this time, Ritchie cannot speak for himself."

"So, each one of us must ensure that his voice never goes silent."

Denise Norman, a cousin to Aaron Webster, who died in 2001 following a savage beating from several people armed with golf clubs and baseball bats, said, "Having rallies like this tells people our community is no longer going to suffer in silence.

Another person to address the assembly was Spencer Herbert, a gay politician.

"Have you had enough?" Herbert demanded.

"Are we going to send a message that the violence must end?"

Inspector John deHaas, of the Vancouver Police Department's diversity department vowed, "The Vancouver Police Department will continue to aggressively investigate all instances of hate-motivated violence," the article said.

“Gay bashings must stop,” DeHaas went on, promising that Dowrey’s assault would be handled as a hate crime if the evidence warranted.

“The underlying homophobia must be eradicated,” deHaas added. “It is cancer.”

Activist Velvet Steele phrased her sentiments with more bluntness.

“Fuck! I’m mad! I am pissed off!” the article quoted Steele as saying.

“We need to get together and formulate a game plan, so this can stop,” said Velvet Steele.

Others asked if the GLBT community had had “enough” in their speeches.

MY TALK MY TALK

I feel honoured to have been asked to speak at today’s rally.

I’ve come a long way over the last decade. I have experienced substantial adjustments in how I think, behave, and treat others.

I’ve lived in Vancouver for twenty years – the last sixteen years downtown.

Nine years ago, I was afraid to walk down Davie Street because I thought, what if someone I knew were to see me.

During that period, the first few times I ventured into a pub on Davie, when people asked me my name, I’d say either, “Mike or Mark.”

Why?

Because I thought if word got out that a Lindsay was in a pub on Davie – my life would come crashing down.

Fortunately, I quickly realized how ridiculous that was.

About six years ago, I Bartended at a couple of bars in another Lower Mainland City; the only thing the regulars knew about me was that I live in Vancouver. Because of that, a large portion of them, at both pubs, immediately dubbed me “Fag” and for several months, every single time they’d order a beer, they’d say, “Hey Fag, can you get me a beer.”

On two occasions, the taunts were so extreme that the police would escort me to my car at the end of my shift.

At one of these pubs, my coworkers would occasionally come into Vancouver and meet me for dinner; if I suggested a restaurant on Davie Street, they would refuse to go because “They didn’t want to go to a Gay restaurant.”

Over the years, I've attended several Pride Parades—for the longest time, I didn't understand the importance of the parade. I thought of it as nothing more than political posturing and promoting a gay agenda.

Then one year, instead of watching the parade, I watched the crowd and observed: 500,000+ people: young, old, gay, straight, black, white, Chinese, American, Native, Vietnamese, German, Spanish, Australian... all enjoying themselves on a fantastic day in a beautiful setting and on that day, I realized how lucky we are to live in such a fantastic city.

It is a city that doesn't "tolerate" people; instead, it welcomes all with open arms.

A city, especially in the heart, where people are free to be who they are—without judgment.

A year ago, I was fortunate enough to share my home with an ESL student from Korea; we became great friends; during his stay, I was appalled by some of the racist comments directed his way.

I learned much from my friend; I realized most people on this planet are just trying to get through their days—hoping to find happiness and love along the way.

I concluded: we are all connected, and it is essential for us to talk to each other because if we do, we'd understand there is no reason to hate.

193

As part of my evolution, I've determined friends are just that, friends. They're not gay, straight, black, white, burgundy, covered with furry tentacles, or anything else—other than friends, and as a result, I've dropped their tags.

That brings me to about a month ago and the Fountainhead Pub—as many people know; the Fountainhead is a neighbourhood pub. What makes it a great place, as I've mentioned before, everyone is welcome; it's a place where everyone can feel safe—and being on Davie, it is gay-friendly.

Having said that, gay or straight, or anything else just doesn't matter—there is no judgement or pretence.

In fact, the staff and ownership reflect the diversity, treating everyone with consistency and respect.

Three months ago, when I awoke, five words kept spinning in my head: voice, wings, light, darkness, and warmth. A few minutes later, I put them together and came up with this:

We must be the voice for those who've screamed loudest, so loudly they can no longer find words. Their screams become deafening encrusted in silence. Silence brings peace – noise distracts to clarity.

We must share our wings with those who have fallen. Broken by the weight of solitude and the pressure to be. Our wings must lift up, allowing the strength to fly again to be found; never losing sight, some aren't meant to soar – our wings provide humility.

We must provide light from the sight of one eye – our vision offers tranquillity as purpose becomes pure.

Grace lay with ego in the darkness of shadows – masked as humble sharing spirit with calm. The shadows are draped in safety as darkness closes and then bursts into dawn.

We must provide warmth to those burdened by cold – cold brings with it meaning; warmth comforts the soul.

We must embrace who we are, believing the mystery of self will unfold in the simplicity of living.

We must never allow the path to break – as we all bellow loudly; accepting our voice, wings, and light, will evolve into one.

I shared this with a few people; one of them happened to be my friend Ritchie, who is still lying voiceless and nonresponsive in the hospital.

In a heartbeat, his life and the lives of his family and friends have changed dramatically.

Because of a senseless violent act by a thirty-five-year-old "GROWN UP" man – a man who is a father of two himself – our dear friend will never be; the same again, if he survives at all.

For the past three-weeks, Ritchie's fall and the sickening sound of his head hitting the tiling have played over-and-over in my mind; worse yet, the vile, disgusting words the assaulter spewed afterward have tarnished my views of humanity.

This crime isn't about Gay or Straight – Ritchie and everyone else's sexuality is their own business.

This crime to me is about someone coming into a fantastic place where everyone is welcome, and because of his own hatred and intolerance, lashing out for no explainable reason and stealing some of the safety from all.

The fact of the matter, if this crime is not punished accordingly, we all lose something.

Ritchie is a father, and he's everyone's friend, a pat on the shoulder is about as extreme as his touches are; whether he is gay or not is irrelevant, as no one should be targeted just because of who or where they are.

Anyone could have been the victim on that tragic night, me, any of you, a tourist visiting our city – anyone.

Finding positives from this horrible event is challenging. Still, like the parade, today is one of them – it shows the tremendous spirit of our city, it's what makes it brilliant – most of us care – meaning we are indeed all connected and we are never alone.

And brilliantly, as I mentioned before, *"we must be the voice – "* because Ritchie, at this time, can no longer speak for himself and therefore, each one of us here must ensure that his voice never goes silent.

My entire being quaked violently during the whole speech. I thought I was going to collapse. In the end, I understood the importance of the day. Most of us are connected. We are never truly alone.

After my speech, many people approached me and shared their own personal horror stories and thanked me for having the courage to speak eloquently for them.

I cried.

The media frenzy went national.

Interview. Interview. Interview.

OUT went national.

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

Gerry

I haven't answered this until now because I wasn't sure how much to say and what would be appropriate (the whole gay thing), but here goes anyway:

The artwork and some of the patrons there clue you in pretty fast that you are in a gay neighbourhood. Not everyone was obviously gay (to me, anyway). Later in the evening it seemed a bit more of a "gay bar" but not uncomfortably so...

The pool table where the incident took place is right at the main entrance, so that area is a bit congested as people come and go. It was a bit chilling to be right there where Ritch was hurt. Our waiter was a friendly person... ..He also said "We've all known Ritch for ten years and we still don't know if he's gay or not" ...

iso-55

Bottom line is it shouldn't matter if Ritch is gay or not though, right? It's his business. I don't know if he is & I don't care.

Jay64

I grew up in a small town in the prairies, and I remember going down to the states as a child and gawking at all the black people because I had never seen any before... However, in my teen years I moved to Winnipeg and after awhile I got use to seeing black people and after a while longer, I never even noticed if a person was black or any other race for that matter.

If you have never seen two men kiss or hold hands, it will make you a little squeamish... However, if you see it repeatedly over and over again, it does not seem anymore disgusting then when you see a man and a woman slobbering all over each other...

ArgoDave

Yeah, no sh*t, eh? It's not like I'd ever take a shower with the guy...

Bomb

So are you trying to say that you would take a shower with a guy as long as he is straight!!!

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD
FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

MONDAY, 6 APRIL 2009

196

Bomb

...I said what I said because of the ridiculousness of his statement...If he meant a household shower ...I do not believe I'd shower with any male unless he was my young child...

iso-55

Let's not forget this thread is about our friend Ritch lying in hospital fighting like hell to recover & not about discussions of homosexuality...

Bomb

I actually paused before I posted my last statement for the reasons that you stated... However, after some thought I decided to post it...If we chose to live in ignorance and refuse to talk about these types of issues, then we will continue to have attitudes that allow for what happened...

ArgoDave

...For the record I have nothing against gays, I just don't have any inclinations whatsoever along their lines, and no matter how good a friend one is, I was wouldn't take it any farther than that...

FIFTH VISIT

OrangeShoes99

...There are some things I am certain of. Ritch knows his name, and when you say his name, he looks at you... ..Ritch smiled at me several times yesterday and is **very active with the nurses. Every time they come in, he gets energy and gets excited.**

All in all, a great visit, and Ritch keeps making progress.

Road Dog

Good to hear Ritch continues to improve. The initial prognosis was very dim, but he is defying those odds with his progress.

FUZZY NOSE + TOES

Six inches of her cyst was cut away from her underside. She became conehead. Fuzzy was alive but in sad shape. Life Six had been granted.

WEDNESDAY, 8 APRIL 2009

24 Hours reported 2000+ people attended the rally. The story said Ritchie will probably be a paraplegic.

197

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

OrangeShoes99

The media knows squat. I've had reporters calling me telling me that they have heard Ritch was still in a coma. No family member has been told that Ritch will be a paraplegic. He continues to improve. That's all anyone should be reporting at this time.

THURSDAY, 9 APRIL 2009

FUZZY

RING. RING. RING.

Sorry, to tell you, Fuzzy has an aggressive type of kitty cancer. We think we got it all. But it will likely come back. The Vet will tell you more when you come in to have the sutures removed.

GAY WORLD
GAY WORLD

NEW EDITION OF X-TRA WEST IS RELEASED

READERS LETTERS:

KEEP STRAIGHTS OUT OF GAY BARS

NEXT UP, ROBIN PERELLE:
NEXT UP, ROBIN PERELLE:

WHERE'S WALLY

Robin Perelle contributed a piece questioning the justice system and BC's Attorney General, Wally Opal, on why there is a reluctance to use the "HATE CRIME" provision.

MORE THAN 2,000 RALLY IN THE VILLAGE
MORE THAN 2,000 RALLY IN THE VILLAGE

COVER STORY

JEREMY HAINSWORTH

"If this crime is not punished accordingly, we all lose something." Wincherauk continued to loud applause.

"We must be the voice because, at the time, Ritchie could not speak for himself. So, each one of us must ensure his voice never goes silent," Wincherauk said...

...as the crowd marched down Davie and crossed Jervis St, Chad Walters reached out his hand to his boyfriend. Together, they stepped from the sidewalk and into the march.

Walters' boyfriend is Michael Croteau. Croteau and his ex were assaulted in a Kamloops bar two years ago.

The man convicted in their case was fined \$500 last month, but the judge said insufficient evidence to apply the hate crime designation.

Croteau weeps as the crowd moves towards Denman St.

"I've just been through all this shit, and it feels great to see people out doing something," he says...

"It's fucking ridiculous that in 2009, in our own community, in our own bars, we're getting attacked..."

The Fountainhead bashing is "an encroachment in our territory—an enclave where you're supposed to be yourself and enjoy the people in your community..."

Bert Holden also knows Dowrey from The Fountainhead Pub. He did not

see the assault but attended the rally.

"I'm here to support my good buddy. It could easily have been me," he says.

"If they don't designate this as a hate crime, [then the section] shouldn't be on the books," he adds. "So, it's impossible not to see this as a hate crime."

Garth McLean also knows Dowrey and echoes Holden.

"If [prosecutors] don't recognize it as a hate crime, they need to re-educate themselves and go back to law school," he says...

In another story in X-tra West:

Neither Woodward nor his lawyer Joel Whysall showed up for their scheduled appearance in court on Apr 15.

His client is "very concerned about Mr. Dowrey's injuries," Whysall says.

"It certainly was unexpected, the extent of the injuries," Whysall says. "We're just hoping Mr. Dowrey continues to improve as much as possible..."

...WOW what a visit!

Ritch was extremely interactive with me yesterday. When I arrived, he was sleeping, but gave me a huge smile when he woke up. Ritchie smiles when anyone comes in the room. I think he likes the company.

The real positive experience of this visit was Ritch initiating the interactions. His trach tube has been removed, and he was "talking" to me the whole visit. I now have no doubt that he understands things... ...I said to Ritch "You have two months to get better until football starts Ritch". He smiled, and I said you'll be there, he shook his head no....I said, "Don't give me that crap Ritch, you'll be there and I'm getting you a seat on the field right behind Bwaaanaaaaa!" He laughed!!!! Hard! He understood that, otherwise why would he laugh?

...He seems genuinely moved by the attention he's getting. **He lights up when the nurses come in the room. (Ritch knows how to throw on the charm)**

West Coast Blues Fan

Great news Brian.....I can hardly wait to see him when he gets out of there.

Your reports are certainly a great lifeline to those of us on the road and those in other provinces.

Please let him know he's still in our prayers and thoughts daily and we're looking forward to him returning for the first 'gater of the year.

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

SATURDAY, 11 APRIL 2009

Wow, Brian, your visits make me more and more optimistic for Ritch... ... It's thrilling to see he is making improvements every day. :)

OrangeShoes99

I hope all of you still understand this is going to be a long journey for Ritch, and there are still serious hurdles to overcome. I don't want to give people the wrong impression either...

FUZZY NOSE + TOES FUZZY NOSE + TOES

200

Fuzzy is dying.

I love you Fuzzy.
I LOVE YOU FUZZY

She wags her tail.

I love you.
I LOVE YOU

She wags it again and begins faintly purring.

I start to cry.

LYN LYN

Lindsay, can we go for a walk. I'm not well. I've had a stroke.

GAY WORLD GAY WORLD

Woodward won't be charged. I doubt he'll do time. I've seen this all before.

That night at the pub Cooper went to the back office to take a phone call. When he returned, the pub's mood became euphoric.

Ritchie is out of his coma. Doctor RJ just told me he opened his eyes and looked at him and said Hey, RJ, how are the Canucks doing?

High-fives flew around the room.

WEDNESDAY, 15 APRIL 2009

Woodward's court appearances were being delayed – to see if Ritchie would die. His defence lawyer screamed out.

MY CLIENT IS SHOCKED AND EMBARRASSED.

CFUN 1410 called again and asked if I thought forgiveness could ever be granted, Woodward?

Well, probably not, as it would take a monumental shift in the way he thinks. And besides, with two children of his own, I think he is set in his tracks. You know his crime was a HATE CRIME; it couldn't be anything else. The thing is, he couldn't possibly hate Ritchie; he doesn't know him. So, Woodward probably is attracted to men, and he hates that in himself. So, he lashed out at someone he perceived to be gay.

Larry from work listened to the interview and called me after.

It that man didn't hate you before; he does now.

201

It was time to visit Ritchie, I was hopeful the visit would be spirit lifting. I flashed back to Football Fan World.

"I am absolutely thrilled to announce that Ritch came out of his coma this morning!"

"I have been told this morning by a family member that **he smiled at the nurse this morning**. That's our Ritch, always making the best of things!"

"Ritch smiled at me several times yesterday and **is very interactive with the nurses. Every time they come in, he gets energy and gets excited.**

"He lights right up when nurses come in the room. (Ritch knows how to throw on the charm). ..."

"Yesterday, he was moving his whole leg."

"He lights right up when nurses come in the room. (Ritch knows how to throw on the charm) ..."

"The whole time I was there, he talked."

I drove to the hospital with lesbian Chris and 2G.

Yep. Ritchie. Last name, just a second. He's supposed to be in CIU.

Chris, his first name is William. And it's ICU.

We have the password.

I know the family.

They told me he was here.

2G phones Ritchie's daughter Carolyn.

Carolyn, we can't seem to find Ritchie.

Chris is still talking.

He was in CIU. Okay, he's not here; we'll leave.

Lindsay, he's not here; let's go.

Just wait; I'll figure it out. I think he's in the neurology ward now. Not ICU.

He was.

He smiled when he saw us.

He smiles at everyone.

He didn't know us.

202 *I flashed back to my father's deathbed.*

The reported visits didn't prepare us for reality.

THURSDAY, 16 APRIL 2009

Lindsay, you know what everybody thinks you are?

Jody, I don't care what you think.

MONDAY, 20 APRIL 2009

For a moment, Ritchie's eyes became crystal clear.

I'm not doing very well.

I feel very ill.

I don't want to live anymore.

FUZZY NOSE + TOES

I was able to remove all her tumours. There is no guarantee it won't come back; however, she should still have some time left.

Fuzzy is not dying!

THE GAY WORLD
THE GAY WORLD

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2009

THE FOUNTAINHEAD'S 9TH ANNIVERSARY: RITCHIE FUNDRAISER

Lindsay, this isn't all about you.

What?

It's not about you –

When did I say that?

I hated your talk.

You got it all wrong.

You talked about you.

It was supposed to be about us.

What? I never talked about me. Do you want a copy of what I said? Why are you doing this? Do you care how I feel?

203

You missed an opportunity.

Fuck, John G, this is the first time I've witnessed someone almost be killed and then be asked to talk about it. I visit him every day. How many times have you?

You didn't talk about the experiences of others-about my experience.

John, I can't possibly talk about something I don't know.

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD
FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

OrangeShoes99

I saw Ritch tonight, and I am happy to be able to report more progress. He has good colour; his hair has grown back. **He's starting to be a little more of a brat with the nurses.**

Ritch is starting to get his spunk back. **He dropped the F-bomb, gave the nurses a little grief.**

Gerry

That's great news, Brian. Thanks for the update.

Every report shows that Ritch is having some improvement. Keep fighting, Ritch!

blink

Go Ritch go! Truly amazing progress. :)

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY, 27-29 APRIL 2009

Fishman

What act of violence isn't a "hate crime"?

I have never understood how an act of violence against someone because of their race, religion, or sexual orientation is any more a "hate crime" than the same act of violence against anyone else. None of it is acceptable, no matter who is the victim, they are all "hate crimes."

Anonymous

The reason such distinctions are made are for reasons like this....

What if you were to come home from work and some guy had your wife bent over the kitchen table... and both of them were just having a ball....

YOU in reaction grabbed a gun and shot both of them to death....

204 In comparison, a guy goes to a bar in a gay neighborhood looking to beat down a homosexual....he finds that homosexual and kills them.

Do you and that guy deserve the same treatment?

Fishman

The concept is clearly beyond your grasp.

I am saying both deserve the same level of punishment. Either both are "hate crimes" or none are, they are just the same level of violent crime.....can you seriously not understand this?

Of course, from your two examples, cue back to what I just said in regard to premeditated. One would be first degree murder, while the other would likely be second degree or manslaughter. There are already legal definitions that gauge crimes.....tacking on some "hate crime" tag is simply bullchit!

RITCHIE VISIT RITCHIE VISIT

THURSDAY, 30 APRIL 2009

His feeding tube was removed. He looked up at me and said.

I think I must eat for my mum!

FRIDAY, 1 MAY 2009
FRIDAY, 1 MAY 2009

Cameron and I met Ritchie's ninety-year-old mother, and his cousin. Ritchie's cousin took me aside to share thoughts.

The media attention has been hard on her. She's having trouble with the whole gay thing.

His mother spoke.

I'm not a young lady anymore.

This added ten years.

I'm staying alive.

Carolyn cries all the time.

Curtis is strong.

Thank you for visiting.

It is good that he has friends.

As for the reports of the visits---I could no longer handle them; therefore, I entered their world. I created a moniker VanDusen and posted:

205

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD
FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

VanDusen

...what I'm going to share with you is not pleasant and is likely to be met with an unfavourable response.

I have been a friend of Ritchie's for many years now and have been fortunate to have been able to see him a handful of times in the last weeks; and my experience during my visits, although, somewhat encouraging, must be met with guarded optimism.

Over the past ten days, I've seen very little if any improvement, and in my opinion, based upon his only words that were not jumbled, things are not hopeful.

Yes, Ritchie can move one leg; however, the movement is involuntary, and therefore, the nurses place pillows around it to assure he does not hurt himself.

During the visits, there is no recollection of who I am, and when words are used to prompt a response (Canucks, Lions, the names of several friends), he remains vacant.

As for his weight, he must be down in the neighbourhood of 40+ pounds and if you do the math, he was only around 130 pounds to begin with—

I think it is crucial, as we must never lose sight of what Shawn Woodward has done to our friend—

Like said, in the times I've visited, I'm not seeing the same progress as the other visitor; I

can't even begin to fathom what it would be like to be trapped in your thoughts but not being able express what you are feeling.

As for a positive visit, on April 30, I went alone, and for the first time in seven-weeks they had taken out his feeding tube and tried to feed him—it was resisted—when it was suggested he needs to eat to regain strength—ten-minutes later he asked to try to eat again, and I think he said, *"I must eat for my mum."*

I have now seen him on over twelve occasions. Every occasion, except one, they have been consistent. It is lovely that so many people are "posting" after hearing the news about his progress. I hate to be the bearer of bad news. The progress is slow. And the "bleeper" who did this to him has altered the life of many people forever; we must never lose sight of that fact.

This is one of the hardest things I have ever typed — Ritchie will never be the same again — his family and friends will be left to deal with that, and whatever sickness prompted Shawn Woodward to do what he did — regardless of who Ritchie is, he's an amazing man.

He doesn't deserve his friends to marginalize his existence by pretending he is flirting with the nurses.

Have a great day, and please pray for Ritchie and his family.

SATURDAY, 2 MAY 2009
SATURDAY, 2 MAY 2009

OrangeShoes99

Well, I guess I should respond. I am sorry that your visits have not been encouraging. I have seen Ritch since he was nonresponsive and in a coma.

I take offence to the fact you accuse me of marginalizing his existence... ..I have certainly never tried to mislead anyone with Ritch's progress or his lack of progress. I've tried to keep things positive and shared sometimes when Ritch has laughed when the nurses have come in...

GAY WORLD
GAY WORLD

Continued to search for solutions.

I was asked to speak again, but I declined by not responding to the request quickly enough.

Afterward, back at the pub, Michel, the owner, said it was my fault Ritchie's sexuality became public knowledge, claiming that in the initial media scrum, I slipped up by suggesting Ritchie might be gay. He said Ritchie's family's pain rests on my shoulders.

WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 2009
WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 2009

190

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD
FOOTBALL FAN WORLD

OrangeShoes99

I last saw Ritch on Sunday, and needless to say, not much has changed. Ritch is like a confused child. Some days he's in a good mood, tells stories (garbled, but he tries). Some days he's not in a good mood and seems very frustrated and uncomfortable. He likes visitors, I think, but most of the time, he has no idea who you are...

...I think at this point, we can expect the progress to plateau a little bit, as therapy will attempt to retrain him to speak, walk etc.

It's hard to see Ritchie like this. To see someone so full of life and loved to have a good time, reduced to what he is now. The Bastard who did this cannot be punished enough.

MOTHER'S DAY
MOTHER'S DAY

SUNDAY, 10 MAY 2009

207

TYPING THE WORLDS TOGETHER
TYPING THE WORLDS TOGETHER

Wednesday, 13 May 2009

The Gay World steps onto the field, fighting for acceptance, claiming every injustice in its path. Pushing agenda.

The Football Fan World enters the fray, denying one of their own could possibly be on the other team.

One horrific event mashed them together.

Gay claims Ritchie – caring jumps forward – his tragedy speaks to so many that have happened before.

I made one phone call, sent one email, and everything began to sprint out of control.

We've just passed Mother's Day.

I'm ninety-years-old.

This has aged me ten-years.

His daughter can't stop crying.

I'm staying alive for my son.

She kisses his cheek.

Most of FOOTBALL Fan World decided to remain, distant hiding behind keyboards.

The game will be short-lived and lose steam without something more than prayers for recovery, a purpose larger than Gay needs to be found.

False hope is reported.

Gay organizes a rally, with love and tolerance jumping onto the field.

Nobody identifies themselves as from the other side of care.

Gay raises money for the family, and the media helps bring the story to life.

This tragic event is much larger than Ritchie's.

I want to cry.

I need to cry.

I can't.

I don't call myself gay, I was OUTED to the world; I had to evolve in one hour!

Football Fan World tried to step into the **Gay World** to show support, and an account of the visit was posted.

208 I haven't answered this until now because I wasn't sure how much to say and what would be appropriate (the whole gay thing), but here goes anyway:

...not everyone was obviously gay (to me, always) ... Later in the evening, it seemed a bit more of a "gay bar," but not uncomfortably, so...

...Our waiter was a friendly person who was, as I said earlier, happy that we were there. He told me later in the evening that he had known Ritch for about ten years... He also said, "We've all known Ritch for ten years, and we still don't know if he's gay or not." ...I only mention that because we should not assume that Ritch is gay or not...

Denial of what may be and about what should not matter in any way, dances through the account of a perceived venture into the **GAY WORLD**.

I'm saddened to realize how far the world is from accepting people for who they are.

What the fuck, did he expect to witness in the pub?

Why does gay and straight need to chastise Ritchie for life only his to live?

It sickens me that phrases like, "(the whole gay thing)" "but not uncomfortably, so" and "I only mention that because we should not assume that Ritch is gay, or not."

Ritchie is a great man, a friend to many; his sexual proclivities do not warrant an ounce of effort on the field.

But straight in its own need to pat itself on the back—missed the opportunity to do right, instead of rallying together with Gay—they focused on trying to avoid accepting the realities in the story.

The above posting started a **FOOTBALL FAN WORLD** virtual firestorm and debate on the potential of Ritchie's sexuality having played a role in what happened. Love for the man—turned into *"It's not like I'd ever take a shower with the guy..."*

My life moves on—I'm sick—I hate to work; I'm afraid to go to job sites.

My workmates grant support as if it needs to be given. They also showed me videos of bikini-clad girls dancing on a boat.

The straight world keeps battling about how Gay is not part of them, and it is also sprinkled with reports of how Ritchie is progressing; the reports bring more hope.

209

Fuzzy becomes ill.

I love you Fuzzy.
I LOVE YOU FUZZY

She wags her tail.

I go to the gym with a tear in one eye.

To me, the comments about stepping into the **GAY WORLD** as a show of support for Ritchie reek of laziness; I find them disgusting.

For someone to act as if they are progressive and then post such a guarded mixed message about their experience in the **GAY WORLD**—serves little purpose, and without understanding his actions, only divides more.

I don't understand the point of homophobia, racism or hate. What is the outcome for those who are trapped in their narrow interpretations of what is the right way to live, if you're a confident, dubbed, acceptable way, by you; do you get all of the food, water, Gap clothing, all of the Big Macs and Starbucks?

I'm allowed to visit Ritchie; I go, it devastates me, I go, again, and again, and again – Cameron, on most trips, joins me – his optimism helps smooth out what I can't help but see.

Cameron's optimism is rooted in his own survival – 69,000 volts shot through his body, accompanied by 1,090 amps – frying him both inside and out; he miraculously survived – he sees a miracle in Ritchie.

I see a man who's already been dead.

The **Football Fan World** updates on Ritchie's condition reek of false hope. I guess that is his way of guarding his own emotions.

I'm angered by the embellishments. I must find a way past my anger.

Every time we step into Ritchie's prison at the hospital, I leave defeated. I've witnessed the at times slow, painful laborious process of death thousands of times as I watched both of my parents, who weren't my parents succumb to relentless, unforgiving illnesses.

I don't see life in his eyes. I see a tortured reminder of the injustice thrown his way in a single punch.

I see a prison where his mind cannot, and likely will never ever compute again, who he is, or even find the map to who he once was.

210

I see a man who died on March 13, and I hear a world hiding behind the hope of him making a triumphant return.

I see a mother who wants more than anything for her wonderful son to flash the brilliant sparkle that used to shine brightly in his eyes, to shine once again.

I see a portion of a family drained by tragedy, not understanding, or accepting that if Ritchie is gay, it doesn't change who he is or who they are. I don't understand the fear of coming forward to share their agony.

As much as I don't want Ritchie to die, I don't want to see him live the way he is. *I feel guilty for those thoughts.*

Selfishly, and after another hour of evolution, I realized why so many can't find the strength to visit Ritchie – they don't want to remember the painting they'd likely see.

I've made the step, and there is no turning back; at first, each visit burdened me – with each additional trip, I still see the inevitable outcome; Ritchie is going to die, it may be tomorrow, next week, or in ten years –

I need to cry.

I never fully understood the magnitude of our friendship. It was a friendship discovered in The Fountainhead. But, somehow, in our interactions, we became connected, mutual love and respect were found.

Gay or not, who cares? What matters is the essence of his soul.

Why did I have to be a witness?

I can't sleep. My mind races to events from my past.

On a spectacular summer day @ English Bay, two or three years ago. A group of teenagers were stomping on a young man's head; girls included, punching, kicking, punching, and kicking—blood dripping from the man's head as he cowered in fear.

Hundreds of people were sitting on blankets, watching.

I approached, and from a distance of a few feet, lowered my voice and said, "*Hey, what are you doing? He's had enough. You should stop.*"

They stopped.

The young man ran away to safety, bleeding profusely.

A girl who was involved approached me, shouting, "*What fucking business is this to you? We'll fuck you up.*"

211

She was in her mid-teens.

You need to grow up. And you need to get out of here; this will not end well for you if you do anything else.

She ran away.

Numerous people came and thanked me.

You were so brave, everybody else was just watching.

A couple of weeks later, I walked down Davie Street around 11 p.m. Then, across the street from a convenience store, a young man was smashing an older man (60+) into the Money Mart's windows.

I stopped, looked around, nobody else was on the street; I then paused and thought, damn it, I must do something.

I calmly stated, "*Hey, what are you doing? Hey, you, you best stop.*"

He stopped.

And then he shouted in rage at me, "*What the fuck do you care; do you want a piece of me?*"

The older man got away.

Calm remained a constant

Look, you don't want a piece of me.

He ran away.

A week or two passes, I'm walking home from The Fountainhead. In front of a 7-11—a man was stomping on another man's head. Numerous people on both sides of the street were watching from a distance. I stopped. I crossed the road.

Excuse me. What are you doing? You need to stop it now.

What?

He stopped, and the other man ran away, bleeding.

The assaulter screamed at me again.

What?

He began to move toward me.

Go home.

He paused, turned, and ran away.

IT'S TIME TO END THIS CHAPTER IT'S TIME TO END THIS CHAPTER

212

I'll continue to visit.

I'll continue to pray for a miracle.

I'll continue to be his friend.

I'll continue to evolve.

FOOTBALL FAN WORLD and **GAY WORLD** likely will never share the same playing field, despite the fact; they are already on it, both worlds refuse to accept that fact.

This story, this event, and life are much larger than any single event; there must be a purpose hidden in destiny.

Life has brought us to a beautiful place that is clouded behind in misery; it has delivered us a confusing yet brilliant message.

We must evolve.
KAS UNN2E 600106'

A nanosecond before the senseless punch, Ritchie was happy. He was living life the only way he had come to understand he must.

Life is precious.

Everything that is, can be taken away in a heartbeat, we must never lose sight of that.

We need to cherish every moment we have together – regardless of our upbringing – and our ingrained views of the world. With the unrelenting fear of the unknown, we must open our minds to the possibilities that difference brings beauty, as opposed to being imprisoned by our limited views of what is accepted as usual.

As time goes by, we must realize the world doesn't belong to us. It belongs to the next child and the next child after that and –

We must stop defining one another, allowing growth to be pure.

Ritchie helped me to drop some of my pettiness.

Shawn Woodward altered Ritchie – but as Ritchie slowly moves on – he's teaching us all how important it is to embrace life, and along the way, to embrace and take care of each other. Accepting that our journeys, although intricately tied together, belong to us all.

As much as I will never stop going to see him for as long as he's here, I will never forget his infectious smile and the sparkle in his eyes.

I thank Ritchie for being part of my destiny.

We must be the voice –
WE MUST BE THE VOICE –

WHO IS LINDSAY WINCHERAUK?

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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.

387

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:
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- 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.

388

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.