

MY **LIFE** ON THE SLUSH PILE

MY SISTER IS MY MUM

A META-MEMOIR



BY **LINDSAY** WINCHERAUK

Goodbye Bernice + Sadie

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE



A story about finding yourself after accidentally discovering your life started with a lie.

Not every day do you meet someone who watched both of his parents die from The Big C and laid them to rest, only to discover sixteen years later that they weren't his parents after all!

It's like being reborn as a whole different person.

ABOUT A BOY



*A boy is born in a secret place. A dark place. A sad place.
His Mother is his Sister. Making her his Sister + his Mother.
His Father is his Grandfather.*

His Grandmother is just his Grandmother.

*His Brothers used to be just Brothers. But then it is discovered they might be Uncles as well.
That turned them into Brunkles.*

*His Sisters used to be just Sisters. But then it is discovered they might be Aunts as well.
That turned them into Sisaunts.*

*The boy is never meant to know the truth because his birth brings with it, shame.
How could any of them be, okay?*

Especially, the boy and his Grandmother?

WHO AM I GOING TO BECOME?
WHO AM I GOING TO BECOME?



GOODBYE BERNICE + SADIE

JAMAICA → REGINA → SASKATOON → EDMONTON → CALGARY

15 DECEMBER 1989-14 FEBRUARY 1990

In December 1989 Bub, and I returned from our second trip to Jamaica, she had left her socks at home.

Bub was to return to Saskatoon. I landed in Regina to be greeted by a bone-freezing, lips-stuck-to-the-light standard -40 Celsius. My car refused to start for the next week. I had to eventually have it towed to a garage to thaw.

I hated selling insurance. My disdain for insurance ended my career at the sixteen-month mark. I loved my cadre of hard-drinking Regina friends. My liver was not fond of them.

DECISION TIME

- No Job
- No Girlfriend
- A Dying Liver
- Most of My Friends were Moving West
- It's fucking -40 Celsius

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West it was going to be, but how far?

OPTION 1

Edmonton = Brother + SISTER-IN-LAW + Nieces + Aunts + Uncles —
— was a possibility.

OPTION 2

Calgary = 3 Sisters + 1 Brother + 1 BROTHER-IN-LAW + Close to Banff

I decided to let the thermostat decide.

Before my departure date, I returned to Saskatoon to organize my life. When February arrived, I loaded my Acura Integra with my worldly possessions, including my white cat, White Cat, and launched my odyssey.

Corrie & Vern, Darryl & Rhonda, and Barb escorted me to Edmonton where -36 Celsius erased Option 1.

Tearfully, I bid my friends adieu, and moved on, skating my way toward Calgary. I visited my relatives, Bev & Garth, and their daughters, my nieces, Shannon, and Aimee. I stayed with Bernice + Sadie, who had now entered their early fifties. I had made several trips with friends to Calgary and Banff over the years and avoided contacting them each time.

Could you find another place to stay? We need the house for the relatives.

Calgary's decision wasn't weather-related.

Flash to the future: Turn on the tube. The Simpson's are on. It's an episode featuring Patty and Selma.

Flash backward: Middle-aged + live together + single + both worked for AGT + chain-smokers –

– what are my other options?

OPTION 3

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Vancouver = Wes

VALENTINE'S DAY 1990

CALGARY TO VANCOUVER

I was desperately trying to sleep on my sisters' sofa bed. I was feigning sleep at 5:30 AM when Bernice + Sadie flanking my sides, puffed hard on their fags. I cracked open my eye(s), a haze of smoke rivalling a blues bar rolled over me like a dense fog, smothering me. Bernice + Sadie bantered over top of me. Their words hung in the smoke.

MacGyver is one hot tomato.

I couldn't agree more. Richard Dean makes me –

I don't think Lindsay will ever amount to much.

I couldn't agree more. Lindsay will never be as good as his older brothers.

He should give up and live with us.

Unfortunately, only the first two sentences were embellished.

The last time I saw this pair was when the door closed behind them when they left for work.

I'm going to do my best to amount to something.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LEARN —
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LEARN —

YOUR LIFE WAS NEVER YOUR OWN?
YOUR LIFE WAS NEVER YOUR OWN?

WHO IS LINDSAY WINCHERAUK?

Lindsay Wincherauk is a fearless writer. He has published two books and has had more than eighteen OPEDs appear in major commuter newspapers. Lindsay wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father (who wasn't his father) worked as a mechanic. His mother (who wasn't his mother) worked as an excellent chef in a diner. In fact, his birth was in a secret place where | society deemed | unfit mothers were sent to give birth in isolation – shading families from shame. If the babies survived being born, usually, they were sold to wealthy Americans or adopted out to farm families.

Lindsay's life began with a lie.

Despite Lindsay's perilous beginnings, starting with deception, Lindsay knew no better and went through life excelling at things, usually in two-year stints. Be that athletics (hall of fame, record holding, one-eyed quarterback), scholastically, career-wise (generating more than \$70 million in revenue for one company), socially, + without question: creatively!

Lindsay's challenging beginning instilled in Lindsay heaping doses of compassion and empathy. Lindsay's life starting out as a lie gave him a keen sense to spot BS from miles away. It also provided him with a dry sense of humour and an understanding those born with silver spoons in their mouths will never be self-aware enough to understand (or admit) their good fortune.

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During Lindsay's work career, he was well-liked by all coworkers. Lindsay was also well respected by his diverse collection of clients, developing several fantastic friendships, primarily because Lindsay is known for his unflinching integrity and ability to hold conversations on most topics.

Lindsay's life mantra is:

The most valuable part of life is the fabulous people we meet during our journeys. If you treat people with respect (leaving judgment at the door), and more importantly, by opening doors for those less fortunate or who can't speak up for themselves, you are living a good, compassionate life. Making money at all costs is not the only thing mattering. Life can be difficult + devastatingly unfair.

Lindsay believes sharing vulnerability is what makes us human. Lindsay will never shy away from being honest about his pain.

Lindsay also believes we must stand up for ourselves, + more importantly, for those who are too burdened by the injustices of life, they can't find the strength to stand up for themselves.

SOME THINGS LINDSAY IS MOST PROUD OF ARE WHEN:

- A sixty-year-old employee of his, who had entered a point of life where life had become more struggle than joy (it happens to all of us as we age), said to Lindsay, “I must thank you. I’ve listened to how you treat people, + by listening, I’ve learned so much about compassion and patience. Thank you. I consider you a great friend.”
- Another employee who was struggling with addiction thanked Lindsay for his kindness, presenting Lindsay with a Christmas card from him and his girlfriend. Tucked inside the card: lottery tickets.

LINDSAY WINCHERAUK, compassionate, empathetic, well-read, kind, blessed with unflinching integrity, humour in balance, loved by coworkers + friends alike.

Lindsay will always stick up for the underdog. Lindsay understands there are countless older people suffering job loss because COVID gave some companies an opportunity to – Lindsay thinks it is essential to draw attention to this life-threatening issue by being the voice for those too broken to speak up for themselves.

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Lindsay is currently pitching four manuscripts to publishers and literary agencies. One of the manuscripts (he can’t talk about) will blow the roof off the predatory practices of – Lindsay is writing relentlessly and is also pitching OPEDs and short stories, fiction, + non to literary magazines around the globe.

Lindsay has appeared on Breakfast Television, radio programs in Montreal, + several others in the Vancouver area. Lindsay has also been a featured guest on CKNW + CBC, both on several occasions. And Lindsay was a vital witness of a Hate Crime. This led to the first Hate Crime conviction in Canadian legal history, resulting in him being a speaker at an Enough is Enough Rally (anti-violence rally) with dignitaries, politicians, law enforcement, and community leaders in front of a crowd of approximately five thousand.

Lindsay was the **#1 MIXED-TAPE DJ** at the **UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN** for most of the nineteen-eighties, a fact bringing him joy.

Lindsay resides in Vancouver.
