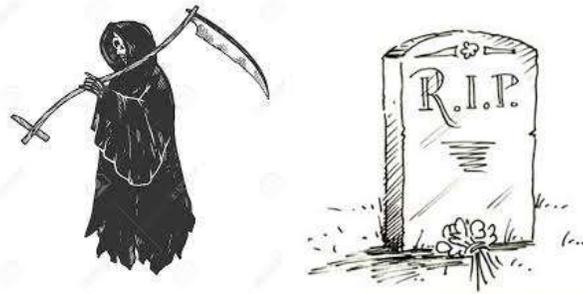


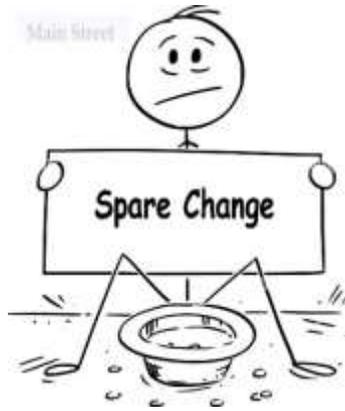
MURDERED



BY **LINDSAY** WINCHERAUK

3

YESTERDAY



CHICAGO 1984

6

I'm dying.

Strangely, I don't blame you. You are who you are. You will never be more.

It saddens me you have children.

Death is an awful way to start a day.

The clock is ticking, with the second hands speeding, uncontrollably.

Yesterday was a particularly rough day.

I don't sleep. I haven't for a long time. My mind races.

I crawled out of bed at 4 AM. and started working diligently on my future, writing, proposing, moving forward. I felt a sense of elation; I accomplished much; my words are well-received, respected.

But as soon as the high of progress hit me, wave after fucking wave of despair began slamming into me like a tsunami.

The last few years have been a tremendously tough slog. They have been for many people. I have a hunch for older people kicked to the curb; the pain might be unbearable, insurmountable, with futures wringing bleak.

I never give up; the one thing you cannot take away from me is I am a wonderful human being, kind, compassionate, adverse to lying.

As for you, you are who you are, and you will do everything in your power to delude yourself. Lies are your justification to ease your complicity + to drown away your guilt.

A drawer is opened, inside lay drug paraphernalia. Your man in charge opens up, telling me you use someone suffering from addiction to source products for you, your man in charge keeps talking.

You are no better than those caught up in the cycle of misery; you just think you are because you have money, + use a straw instead of a pipe. *Don't you want to ask your man...?*

I've heard swirling rumours about your propensity for powder many times before (more on that when I flash to the past). But the words of your man in command confirmed what I had vehemently denied when people tried to disparage you. Why? Why did I defend you? Because I was loyal.

I'm dying.

It's been a tough go; this time of year, amplifies my realities.

You see, my mother died during this time of year, I've recently been told my last sister will die any day now, another sister died on the twenty-first, and I'm facing financial ruin through no fault of my own.

About my sister, I haven't been part of my family for a long time; when my family found out I knew the truth about my beginning — **POOF**. I now am only part of the family when the time comes to share the pain of dying. I'm human; I feel misery; this time of the year only exacerbates the grief, reminding me of how fucking lonely life can be.

But why would your care?

By the way, I'm writing this for me, not you.

It's incredible how people whose default is lying believe every word uttered or written is about them.

NEWSFLASH: There are other a-holes in the world. You are not the only —

A wave rushes over me, sadness arrives, I want to cry. I can't eat, I puke when I do, and, besides, I can no longer afford food.

Another wave comes; what's this darkness, depression? I'm being swallowed; I reach for relief, pulling myself up from the precipice of doom.

I crawl out of the quagmire; I'm hurting, sharing vulnerability is strength; you see it as weakness. *Nobody wants your fucking pity*. Going through stuff reveals character; nobody wants entitled jerks to flex their perceived privilege upon others.

I've heard repeatedly spewed from the mouth of a thirty-something-year-old to a suffering soul, "Lots of people have problems." Shut up would be kinder. But when the silverware is lodged deeply in who you are, you have no comprehension of kindness.

Another wave washes over me; I question my talent. No need. I'm talented.

My unflinching integrity provided you with so much of what you have, not you.

Pause. A calm moment comes. Comedy comes from pain. I'm funny. I bring smiles to friends.

Damn it, it is short-lived, depression sits beside me once more, my comedy becomes biting, darker, brilliant – until it crosses a line into despair.

Depression takes over. I'm afraid to speak. I don't have the safety net of family, + I don't want to push people who care about me away; I do. I need to make them smile; I swallow my emotions.

Fuck you.

I'm dying.

I collapsed while walking years ago, making it to the hospital at the last moment, or grim would have taken me away. Then, disgustingly, someone like you tries to use this against people who are honest about their pain.

For the last three weeks, when I walk, I feel light, weak, floaty, like the next step, could be my last; I'm not joking. I'm fucking terrified. This is not the same as when I collapsed; it feels worse. I guess that is what happens when hope is stripped from you by people willing to slam daggers into you.

I thought you were friends, I was wrong.

I don't lie. Lying is your default.

I will never quit trying. I will never stop trying to bring light + laughter while sharing compassion + empathy with others. I am no better than anyone in pain. I am better than you.

You have children; what fucking lessons are you teaching them?

I helped you feed them, clothe them, and am partially responsible for every gift you've given them.

I'm dying.

Last night when I went to bed, amazingly, I drifted off to sleep quickly. I guess the waves of emotion exhausted me.

One cough. A fire raged through me. I felt vomitus. I clutched my right hand over my heart, holding it there with my left. Something is wrong. I've felt nothing like this before. Another blast of fire.

My cat spent the night lying beside me, purring loudly, sensing my anguish. Cats feel upset and sometimes try to heal their people's pain by purring, but when they do that, they give up their well-being by attempting to heal.

As for you, you can't even admit, what you set into motion, is monstrous, wrong, and of your fucking doing?

Last night, I lay awake in undefinable pain, afraid to fall back to sleep because I believed if I did, I would never wake up again.

I'm a great man. You cannot take that away. *You may have chosen to kill me*, but that's on you, not me.

Until I take my last breath, I will never quit trying. I am talented, and I helped give you many of the things you have.

The clock is ticking.

Maybe it is time.



I will always be a terrific, kind, compassionate, empathetic man who wants to make a difference. You can't strip me of that.

As for you, you will always be you.

The four worst people in the world in no particular order

1. Three
2. Two
3. One
4. Four



TO BE CONTINUED.
TO BE CONTINUED.

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.

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:

1. 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."*
2. 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.

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.