

My **LIFE** ON THE SLUSH PILE

MY SISTER IS MY MUM

A META-MEMOIR



BY **LINDSAY** WINCHERAUK

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?

IT STARTED WITH A LIE

Eyes crack open, greeted by a dark world void of embrace. A whimper turns into a cry into wailing.
Where is everyone? Why am I alone; what is this place?

The World.

The first moments are priceless; the first moments are swept away, spiralling into oblivion, never to be captured.

The wailing ceases, with nobody present to hear, to care. They are burdened by the shackles of shame. They can't fathom an insurmountable wall is being slammed in front of someone who cannot climb.

This is not birthright.

The days slip by, blending into solitude. My caregivers (?) are trapped inside a vicious cycle of fretting about the opinions of people who don't matter.

God shouts the child is unwanted, unworthy, a shame to all.

A grifter scoops up the souls of those willfully participating in the lie and tucks them away in a compartment filled with denial, to be shaded in marginality.

1 The baby survives, and everything necessary for healthy development is wiped clean from the slate, leaving the lost child without direction.

The baby is a boy; he's unwanted.

The years slip by. The boy screams, "*LOOK AT ME.*" His cries are muted because the people he needs to hear him the most reside inside the original lie. It's not their fault; it is – their silence rings complicit.

As the child grows into a man, it becomes abundantly clear: he will always be a child. He will always crave being held. But he will repeatedly push what he needs away. Shame has taught him he is not worthy. His cries will never be heard.

The lies fester with each passing year, becoming a reality for many. The lies become opaque.

As for the boy, the lie is everything; only he is not privy to its magnitude or existence.

Something is missing.

Try. Try. Try. Accept.

He doesn't know what he is accepting. His norm has been cast in a stone of deceit.

He thirsts for the purity of love – a love he has yet to define.

His parents grow ill. A long journey. A battle with cancer. He quakes in fear while he looks on as the devil steals their last breaths of life. He's lost. Alone again.

In the wake of the debilitating realities of loss, he doesn't understand. He never belonged.

Another year passes, the boy is loved; he pushes it away.

Why? Because he's broken, feels unworthy, unlovable.

The boy finds comedy in pain, bringing laughter to others. He finds success in short bursts, excelling at many things, making him rounded. What's hidden in his past constantly lurks, torments, threatening to destroy whatever might be next.

Nearly two decades blast by with him accomplishing much and nothing at all.

His voice is loud, and his words have meaning; the definitions are yet to be found.

He travails to become a good man. He succeeds.

Just as he accepts life is his journey to navigate, he steps up to the baggage counter to be told everything he thought once was, was never as it seemed. He becomes privy to the lie. His life is torn into shambles with nobody from his beginning present to help him cobble it back together into manageable chunks.

"Sir, come back. You can't store your baggage here."

"I don't want it. It's not mine. It is filled with deception. It is swarming with solitude. I'm not strong enough to endure. Keep it."

"Sir, that's not how life works. You must take it with you. It will haunt you forever, but; I can see in your eyes that you are meant to survive, find understanding, and thrive. Now, go, go forth, become who you are meant to be. Your voice, your narrative, belongs to many. You have been blessed with the gift of individuality and, you must be the voice for those who struggle to speak up for themselves. Your pain and heartache will never leave you; embrace the lessons they will bless you with."

The road fourth is a difficult one. The isolation is relentless. There is a pattering in the boy's mind, a boy who has grown into a kind man. He accepts it as his duty to share his pain and rise using comforting words. His words are not his alone.

A man is supposed to be strong. A man is supposed to overcome emotion. A man is supposed to be hardened. And the boy who is now man – is – hardened.

Because when he shares his pain, he is often met with, *"A lot of people were...."*

Each time he hears those words, he cringes, the pain intensifies, and he feels alone once more.

It's all bullshit. A man can never be a man until he discounts the manacles, draping emotions with manly limiting perceptions. He needs to cry. He needs to speak up. He does. His glorious cries are not, only, his own.

This is my story. I choose to share it with you. Beauty comes from the strength of vulnerability. We grow when we cry.

IT ALL STARTED WITH A LIE.

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.
