

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE
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MY SISTER IS MY MUM

A META-MEMOIR



By **LINDSAY WINCHERAUK**

Let's Meet Gail

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE

МЛЯ ГИФЕ ОН ЛИСГУШ ІЛГЕ



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.

Let's Meet Gail

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?



Let's Meet Gail

LET'S MEET GAIL

VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

28 JULY 1990

Love has a way of rearing its beautiful head at the strangest of times.

In Vancouver, Wes was now my manager at Carlos & Bud's. Wes enacted a unique managerial style; every staff member + customer was to be sufficiently pickled on a nightly basis.

To ensure his mandate was met, he filled a cleaning bottle with tequila and then he'd go table to table administering quick bursts.

~~Cleaning Liquids~~ Tequila + Ten Cent Chicken Wings =

Lindsay, after eating, I don't know, a gazillion wings, including: 'so hot that they'll slaughter your intestines placing them in a fiery grave only to force hair to grow on your eyeballs,' and umpteen blasts of Jose Cleaning Fluid Flavoured Tequila. I woke in the middle of the night sweating profusely. You'd never guess what I saw: I opened my drapes; thousands of wingless birds were pecking at my windows. How do they know where I live? What was in the spray bottle? Save me!"

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I suggest you take a moment to grab a bucket.

On this night, Gail meandered into Carlos & Bud's. Upon sight, I was in love.

Gail was enticingly gorgeous, ridiculously gorgeous, gorgeously gorgeous.

Wes approached me and ordered me to shotgun a beer.

"Wes, look, over there, girl, table, over there, pretty, likes, hair – "

Wes immediately beelined to her table. When he returned, he had great news to share with me.

"Seed (my nickname), her name is Gail, you are going out with her in a month or so."

FLASHING BACK ONE WEEK

I blew my knee apart during the inaugural Carlos & Bud's Flaming Hoops two-on-two Basketball Tournament. It was the third time I blew my left knee apart – and the fourth significant trauma to my knees.

INJURY #1

THE SETUP

- There was an Exhibition offence versus defence hockey game in the summer between my first and second season with the Saskatchewan Huskie's Football Team.
- I can't skate. Not entirely true. I skate with my ankles turned outward with the skates nearly parallel to the ice.
- I blocked a shot at our blueline and took off like molasses on a two on zero breakaway. By the time I reached the other blueline, every player on the ice had caught up to me. When I passed the faceoff circle, I snapped a pass cross-ice to my teammate (also a feeble skater).
- He snapped a pass right back to me.
- I fired the puck into the top corner with the goalie sprawling desperately to make the save.
- GOAL!!!
- I fell into the boards.
- The teammate who passed the puck to me also fell into the boards.

The goalie saw that I had scored and screamed, "FUCK." So, I scored this beautiful goal at the start of the Second Period. Simple math extrapolates to, at that scoring pace, I would score a hat trick every game. Throughout an 82 game NHL schedule, I would achieve 246 goals per season. Maybe I was playing the wrong sport?

On my next shift, I landed a devastating body check on the team's safety, MS. I was feeling cocky. During the change, a two hundred-fifty-pound linebacker was skating at full speed with the puck, with his head down. He was being chased by an equally sizeable offensive lineman. My plan was to lay a brutal body check that would undoubtedly send the linebacker into next week. At the last second, *a terrible idea* raced through my mind. It was too late to abandon my plan. The linebacker and lineman plowed over me like a small speedbump. My knees slammed into the ice, splitting downward.

For the next three months, crutches were useless, except for standing because I blew up both knees.

ADULT SURGERY COUNT

3 x Left Knee
1 x Right Knee
1 x Appendix
1 x Dr. Babs
=
6 Total

FIRST DATE

VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

24 SEPTEMBER 1990

I discarded the crutches with the enticingly, gorgeously gorgeous Gail just in time for my date.

Gail was a twenty-three-year-old nationally ranked rhythmic gymnast.

She was in her last year of psychology at UBC.

She was adopted.

Her parents were Japanese.

Gail was half Japanese.

I don't think I'm Japanese.

Her parents disapproved of me.

"Hello, sir, it is a pleasure to meet you," my hand extended.

Gail's father refused to extend his hand; instead, he turned and walked away.

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That's okay, Lindsay. You are a charming man; you will win them over with your charm and ambition.

Do you really think so?

No.

In the meantime, I think I'm turning Japanese. I think I'm turning Japanese. I really think so.

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—shielding 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.