

MY LIFE ON THE SLUSH PILE
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MY SISTER IS MY MUM

A META-MEMOIR
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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?

WHO AM I GOING TO BECOME?
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WAYNE

VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

FEBRUARY 1994-MAY 1996

Wayne is a great man and a better friend.

With the torrent of the madness of the Hotel California completed with the closing of the CSI Investigation, I landed a career with Mutual Exchange Canada (MEC).

At MEC, I brokered deals between companies using a virtual currency called a Trade Dollar. To simplify it for you, bartering meets technology.

MEC is where Wayne and I met. A portion of our remuneration was in Trade Dollars. Several drinking establishments accepted Trade Dollars. Wayne and I began Chasing Neon nightly.

My role in our friendship was as the conversation starter. If I hesitated, I'd be reprimanded.

"Lindsay, you're blowing this for us. Go talk to those girls now."

I'd accept my role. Often, during midsentence, Wayne would join in.

"Hi there. Do you like expensive things? Do you like travelling? You do. Great!"

On most nights, Wayne would unassumingly hang in the background mixing in with my support network effortlessly. That was good enough, at least for the time being.

And then —

RASTAMAN VIBRATIONS WITH WAYNE + GREG: MAY 1996

Greg and I had scored flights to Jamaica for \$290 Canadian. I told Wayne about the deal. He informed us he was coming with us to Jamaica' mon' the next day.

Drive to Seattle - Meet Olympic Figure Skaters and Swedish Girls at the Airport - Red Eye to Minneapolis - Play Xarcon (Video Game) @ Airport - Greg's light beach reading: *The Gentrification of Nazi Germany* - Montego Bay - Taxi to Negril - Countless Red Stripes - Barb B' Barn Hotel.

We were flying by the seat-of-our pants, drunk, sans reservation; I negotiated for the room. The Barb B' Barn front desk clerk started at \$1,500 each for fifteen nights.

I negotiated, *"You can do better. I've stayed here before. What's your current occupancy. Is that the occupancy at the other hotels? You know, we can take our chances up and down the beach. Great. \$600 total for the three of us? We'll take it."*

It was time to talk to girls.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT: WHAT NOT TO DO IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

1. Do not start out blithering drunk.
2. Do not leave friends alone when they are not familiar with the country's customs.
3. Do not invite strangers into your hotel room while blithering drunk.
4. Do not fall asleep (pass-out) on the beach with all your money and identification on you (Greg) or in the chair outside your hotel room's door (?)

Luckily, we escaped unscathed.

VACATION HIGH LOW POINTS

Greg and I packed three-hundred-pounds of luggage, each.

Wayne brought one blue shirt.

On the second day, we met a hot girl from Ontario. She was hanging with three heavy-set, gruff girlfriends.

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I was interested in Ontario.

I went to the washroom, and upon my return, Greg was dating her.

Wayne drank and laughed.

Something stung me, causing my temperature to spike. The gruff girls disappeared into the jungle with Rastafarians. Greg's gal moved in with us.

Wayne drank and laughed.

Greg and *Ontario* checked in on me every twenty minutes with my fever hitting critical. Waking me each time.

Wayne drank and laughed.

His shirt began to change colours.

In the spirit of friendship, the following section has been deleted.

Wayne drank and laughed.

My health returned. I determined *Ontario* was off mentally, Greg disputed my arguments.

Wayne drank and laughed.

FAST FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

One year later: Greg was studying at McGill University in Montreal. *Ontario* contacted him and said she was dying of cancer and asked him to return to Jamaica to marry her.

Then, in an instant of male bonding, the three of us became more than acquaintances. At the Negril Country Club, Wayne was about to golf for the first time.

Wayne had rented clubs. After twenty minutes on the driving range, a course worker approached us to call us to the first tee.

Wayne casually stated to the worker, *"I think I might be left-handed."*

Greg and I competed intensely on the course.

Wayne not so much, he asked his caddie, *"Is it okay to use a tee on every shot?"*

"Yeah, mon. Irie, no problem," was the answer.

The scent of Ganja wafted through the air.

Wayne asked his caddie, *"Where should I aim?"*

"Mon. Irie mon. Mr. Wayne, aim for the blue patch in the sky right about, now mon!"

We became family, sharing life, death, marriage, and birth from that day forward.

THINKING INSIDE THIS BOX: THE SECRETS TO A LASTING FRIENDSHIP

All that really matters is to be there for the events from the last sentence.

The rest is nothing more than noise.

ONE LOVE

Mancy was the Rasta version of Keith Richards, born with a spliff in hand. Not a day under two hundred. Wayne, Greg, and I were far off the beaten path in a jungle cottage. Mancy and four of his Rasta buddies were packing gigantic *spliffs*. With each toke, the air filled with the fragrance of *high*.

"BOW" was shouted by one of the Rasta's as he slammed a domino onto a table, breaking it in two.

Wayne pointed at me → and announced, *"My friend has ties with Satan."*

"Bumba clot, ras clot, we believe in da power of Rastafari, Hailie Sallase. G'wan boi. The devil has no place here. We will git –" One of the Rastafarian's chanted.

"BOW," another domino shattered. Smoke filled the room in a thick, dense fog. We were experiencing contact *highs*.

Mancy was babbling in his own *patois* to Greg, a beautiful young Jamaican woman sauntered out of a back room. Reggae music pulsed.

"You, not de Devil' mon, 'that's good."

Wayne smirked.

"G'wan' mon '. You like. She's sweet like candy. Me sista. G'wan boi. Don't be shy. You may have her for 200 J. She is yours. Sweet like candy. G'wan boi. Touch her."

One of the Rastas offered his sister to Greg.

A blip passed, and Greg refused the generous offer; instead, he walked into the woods, with Mancy following close behind, wielding a machete.

"BOW, Devil, Rastafari!"

Another domino shattered. Then "BOW," shattering pieces flew through the room.

Greg and Mancy returned; Mancy had taught Greg how to cut hashish.

My hand began to morph into different shapes.

One love, one heart, let's get together and feel alright –

The room filled with music, with the volume increasing with each beat.

We danced; one hand raised in the air. The three of us + four Rastafarian + Mancy + the Sista, all marching to the sound of a Jamaican God, one-two steps forward - one-step-two-steps back - reaching toward the sky. At that moment, we all became one. Culture married culture.

One love, one heart –

TRIPS END...RETURNING HOME...

Greg and I decided it was best to join Wayne drinking and laughing for the remainder of the trip.

Wayne ate all three of our breakfasts every day, and he drank copious amounts of alcohol. Wayne only weighs one-hundred-forty pounds. His consumption was so massive, deceased alcoholics became squeamish in their graves.

We met sisters from Chicago, an ageing Super Model from Spain, and of course, Jamaican beauties.

My friend network was complete with a combination of new friends and old ones: Life was *GRAND*. The pieces were interchangeable except for the one continuous piece that was barely holding it all together.

ME.

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.
