



Lindsay Wincherauk

MAY 2023

2

CHASING NEON
CHASING NEON

I had worked incredibly hard to deserve to take a deep breath in and relax. I had earned the right to be able to continue working hard and loyally for you as I continued down the path to the next chapter of my life and establishing a writing career in my golden years.

I deserved that.

But no.

Greedy fucking assholes do not think that should be allowed.

Instead, as I turn sixty-three, I'm being forced to repeatedly bang my head against the wall chasing jobs that no longer exist, and even if they did, no company is hiring someone sixty-three to build around. I don't have, nor could I possibly afford the necessary wardrobe. And besides, how long do you think a company will have me around when I can't take a solid shit or have to take the day off to go to the cardiologist?

No fucking wonder, they are rioting in France.

I hate you. I used to say I didn't. But I do. You hurt my family.

John G. died recently. He was my age. He was retired. I didn't much care for John G., but at the same time, hearing of his death saddened me. He was my age. He was retired. If he had worked for you, he would have had to spend his last days on this earth chasing jobs that don't exist.

THINK ABOUT THAT FOR A MOMENT.

YOUR EVILNESS HAS ME CHASING JOBS INSTEAD OF WORRYING ABOUT MY WELL-BEING.

SORRY ABOUT THE ALL-CAPS.

WHAT HURTS ME THE MOST IS YOU HAVE DELIVERED ME TO HATE.

JOHN G DIED. IT SADDENED ME.

WHEN LEO IS FINALLY THROUGH WITH YOU. I WILL REJOICE!

Don't worry too much; this is a work of fiction.

You hurt my family.

What is fair in return?

I've been put in a position that could kill me. I'm sure the fucking assholes mentioned in the previous section are so incredibly daft they are more upset at being called fucking assholes than they are about the damage they are inflicting on another human and his family.

It's my time to Chase Neon.

I am. But there are no guarantees.

I'm almost sixty-three now. Let that sink in. I'm dealing with the emotional turmoil of having my longest career given away. It's not so much that I lost the profession as it is how it was taken from me and the speed of my exit.

Within one hour of the start of a once-in-a-century pandemic, I was gone, only to have one of the fucking assholes, as he was issuing me my pink slip into poverty and uncertainty, say shit like, I'm worried we might have to sell the house my grandma gave me. When at the same time, in my world, WHAT THE FUCK, was banging at my door, alongside anxiety, depression, homelessness, uncertainty, unforgiving stress, stress-related-sickness, and fucking being a man now in my sixties with no place left to hang my hat.

Less than one hour into a pandemic, my career was given to a man who needed to be watched like a hawk because one of the fucking assholes said everyone hates him and believes he is using. And that he's fucking lazy, so you must plan his days. A man you valued so much, but yet refused to pay appropriately, so you had me have him follow me to the gas station to fill up his vehicle on the company credit card; and then saying to me, whatever you do, don't let Darren know, putting me in jeopardy, but somehow, you kept your leadership position and the man you said everybody hated, and thought was using, eventually was given my company vehicle, stripping away my freedom. Little did he know, or perhaps his ego is so large, he believed he had earned... oh, fuck off.

In the meantime, I'm left on the outside watching my life savings vanish, my hope being eradicated, my health waning, and every word I uttered attempted to be used against me for you to kiss the ass of a man you were so willing to steal from |Darren| by having me fill your friend's vehicle with company money.

What does that say about you?

I want to Chase Neon. I deserve to be able to Chase Neon without worrying. I've earned the right. Tens-of-millions in revenues generated should have seen to that without a question asked.

But no.

Instead, after months of silence, except for when clients called me to complain about one or all of you (usually your incompetence), messages I relayed, the only communication I got was, "How fast could you run a mile in your prime?" and "Did you buy such-and-such stock?" and "Are you enjoying the weather?"

Seriously, you asked a man in his sixties you just fired, how fast he could run in his prime?

Fuck Off.

I don't have a job.

I don't have an income.

I don't have a future.

What fucking stock am I buying?

Fuck.

I need to Chase Neon. I am.

Throughout life, Chasing Neon means different things.

In our youth, once our innocence starts being stripped from us by the bombardment of media and entertainment, Chasing Neon represents reaching for the stars. In today's climate, when young people are asked what they want to be when they grow up, they often answer FAMOUS + RICH.

A long, long time ago, kids used to grow up watching the struggles of their parents as they tried to forge a good life for their families. Today, they get to watch their parents watch Bachelor in Paradise. Or, "We have 80s Night." "We have New York Night." "We have Abba Night." Followed by the hosts pointing a lot, as if that is something to fucking strive to be.

What chance do kids have?

Kids used to want to become a doctor, lawyer, fireman or... now...

As innocence is continually eroded, and as people grow up and start deciding for themselves what Chasing Neon means, like trying to be a creative, singer, actor, or writer,

families and friends often work hard at crushing those dreams because heaven forbid someone is fucking dreaming, so, families and “friends” start attaching chains to the dreamers pulling them violently back into the comfort zones of marginality.

You called a man in his sixties a 'failed writer' who has no business chasing his 'dreams.'

And life goes on.

Now, saddled with debt, relationships, children, and exhaustion, these things inflict upon us – there is no time to dream; there is only time to work and survive.

I used to work for a company where at a company retreat in Wisconsin; the President told me and a gaggle of us minions; a great employee is married, in debt, with one kid and another bun in the oven at home because then, I own them.

Where is the room to dream?

When this happens, Chasing Neon, takes on a different bent, alcohol, drugs, and escape, as people are drawn to places laced in Neon that dispense these medications.

When this happens, Chasing Neon, is often found at the bottom of a bottle that was once filled with regret.

6

And life goes on.

It's fucking hard.

Youth ends. People die. If not early in your life, it's coming one day. When it does, there are two paths, bitter + jaded, and becoming cynical of others or; compassion, empathy, and understanding.

Death came early in my life. I was lucky I found the latter path. You were lucky I found the latter path. How the fuck do you think I could relate so well to your clients?

Did you think your success was because of you?

I'd find it hard to believe you are that ridiculously stunted.

So, I bided my time. I let you treat me like crap. I foolishly remained loyal. Loyal. Loyal.

But what did it get me? Fucked over. Replaced.

Meritocracy, what a fucking load of crap.

What do you think happens to a man in his sixties when he loses his lengthy career?

I'll answer for you: You have potentially killed him.

Leo's got a gun.

A rich, entitled person you bilked has hired someone with several guns?

Chasing Neon in your sixties is like desperately trying to create a feel-good story.

What happens to someone in their sixties when their transportation is taken from them along with their lines of communication after giving so much to a company?

Of course, you know what happens, that's the reason for the company vehicles and phones, it is for control. How could I be so fucking stupid?

Leo's got a gun.

Well, there are no career paths forward. And even if there fucking was, without a vehicle or the wardrobe necessary, well – you fuck over good people.

It's coming for you.

You can't escape it.

I will keep Chasing Neon.

But the one thing I vow to do for myself and anyone else you've ever hurt and are undoubtedly still hurting, is destroying you and whoever you think you are.

I will only stop once I complete this mission.

Leo's got a gun.

And so does a Hired Man.

If I were you, I'd be more afraid of the Hired Man because he's working for someone far richer than you, someone you will never be.

You need to feel the pain. You need to understand entitlement bleeds the same colour as those not born into privilege.

Chasing Neon is a story about what could be.

It is a story about the underdog rising despite incredible odds.

It's about the tables being turned.

It is about justice.

What type of monster fights someone who only wanted to be treated fairly, by willfully paying hired help (a legal hitman) tens-of-thousands of dollars on not allowing the person who gave them the capacity to pay the hired help ten-of-thousands of dollars in the first place; a chance in his next chapter of life?

What kind of monsters?

Tyler

Why can't I speak? I feel the words form in my mouth. Why do you keep holding my head underwater? You aren't even asking me anything? The pain is unrelenting. Fuck, I feel my heart race. Sorry. I was doing everything Darren ordered. Fuck. My words are silent. Don't. How long have I been under the water? Am I dead? Spew. I'm alive. I know because of the pain. Why are you putting my hand on a cutting board? Fuck. What are you going to use that knife for? Keep that syringe away from me. Don't shoot more of that shit into me. Fuck. I can't move my legs and arms. I can't move. I'm mute.

"Tyler, my girlfriend, died while I held her in my arms. After Darren gave us money for a fucking treat. The fucking treat that killed her. You are getting off easy.... I'll tell you what, I'll let you go once you get off the junk. I'm kidding. | snicker |"

Leo turns and walks away; the Hired Man follows closely behind, turning the lights off and leaving Tyler inside the darkness in his soul.

In the meantime, I will continue Chasing Neon, despite some fucking assholes working inside a meritocracy who don't understand what merit even means.

Do you think Darren is so fucking delusional in thinking his name is the reason for his success after being absent for almost twenty years? He couldn't possibly be that deluded, could he?

Darren's biggest fear is his scam being uncovered.

I'm a man in my sixties, albeit a man of fiction, and I am responsible for revealing to the world what these people really are.

I've lost much.

They must lose more.

You hurt my family.

I must hurt... nah... you do that already yourself.

What divorce number are you on? Have you given up half yet?

Leo will be back soon.

So will the Hired Man.

Every part of Chasing Neon is written in a stream of consciousness. It weaves between dark, light, absurd, hopefully comedic, raw, honest, as honest as fiction can be – often on the same page.

Only a monster in real life would believe anything in this work of fiction is about them.

That tells you all you need to know.

Then the end is near.

Is this what therapy is?

Oh, Todd. Todd. We're coming for you. Does your wife know you are a proud family man? Are you going to tell us about your fuck pad again and then ask others if they have stories of conquest to share? Do you really think that is what friendship is? Do you really think that makes you interesting? Do you really think people want to hear about your boners?

The readers will await your response.

Now go on, think about it, and as you do, why don't you hang out at a high school and try to encourage students to cut class and come and haul rebar.

Did you really suggest that?

You did?

And you graduated from university. Wow! A business genius.

HEADLINE NEWS HEADLINE NEWS

9

Yesterday at the local High School, a representative of |Company| was detained and taken in for questioning when he was found roaming the halls asking students to come with him, skip class, and earn minimum wage doing dangerous, backbreaking work on a construction site hauling rebar.

When questioned, the representative said the company COO instructed me to approach students at the school in order to recruit workers, he said to entice them even more, promise a ham sandwich and a Coke as a bonus at the end of each workday.

But of course, this is fiction because there is no way in hell a proud family man would ever suggest such a thing.

Hey kid, over here, by the van, come with me, I've got a ham sandwich and Cola in the glovebox.

Hey readers, are you enjoying your ride?

If this were real, don't you think it is imperative for others to know?

You do. Great!

More to come.

Grammarly Readability Score = 93

HUMAN SNAPSHOT
HUMAN SNAPSHOT

FIRED @ 59
FIRED @ 59

Before I get back from the can, I'd like to share with you what it is like to have your career taken from you at 59 years of age.
You're almost 62 (am).

I know. The courts are allowing the people who replaced me to delay my case in order to send me into homelessness.

Is it working?

Yes. The people, I worked for, assume no responsibility for fucking over someone who gave them fifteen years of his life.

Yuck.

That's all you have to say.

Fuck.

That's better.

An email arrives: You're next transaction may be declined.

Fuck.

Another email: You're next transaction may be declined.

Mother fucker.

Another email: There has been a change in your credit rating.

Fuck. Fuck. *Fuckity*. Fuck.

I want to eat.

You can't afford it.

I want to have a drink.

Get a job. I heard London Drugs is hiring.

My friend is in a similar boat. He's turned 67 recently. He's considering suicide. He's been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

Nobody wants to hire me. They don't say it, you can just tell. It's emotionally draining thinking about my situation daily.

I tell him London Drugs is hiring. He says he'd prefer death.

Twenty-eight months have passed since I got tossed out with the bathwater.

The worst people in the world continue being the worst.

There must be worse people.

Shut up. This is my orbit.