

**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?*

SAVE ME  
2VAE WE



# CHOCOLATE LABRADOR

MUNICH GERMANY

21 OCTOBER 2003

**M**unich's *Vanilla Lounge* is chic. It fills nightly with beautiful young people, with their dogs in tow. Dogs in tow, foreign to most North Americans, in Europe, it brings civility.

The *Vanilla Lounge* is, how would one say, Vanilla: Crisp lines, a cleansed white décor. Beautiful servers. Alluring ambience.

Dogs are allowed inside, a constant reminder of responsibility, soothing the soul. This was our last night in the care of Greg and Silvia.

Dave and I had spent four days with them in Munich. We took a day trip to Salzburg, Austria. Our time together was a wonderful break from my new realities, a time to regroup, to feel loved.

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**3:45 PM**

Greg and Dave sat with me along the sidewall facing the bar. Two hours prior, Wayne called. The Great Reveal was upon me. I was going to find the identities of my birth parents. An incredible number of my life pieces were about to be shattered with a more significant number to be found, with one phone call.

I was emotionally fucked up.

Wayne tried to reach me the night before.

*Seed, I picked up your mail. There's an official document from Alberta Vital Stats. Call me.*

Three beautiful girls entered the lounge and sat down in a cushioned section to our left; four tables separated us. A Chocolate Labrador settled at the base of their table. It drifted into doggie dreamland.

A chain of men approached the women, attempting small talk as they crouched down to pet the Lab. Each one would turn and walk away, shot down. The Lab never opened its eyes or lifted its head.

I ordered a Melon Martini and asked our server the time.

My nerves were frazzled.

## 4 PM – 7 AM VANCOUVER TIME

It was time to phone Wayne – avoidance was no longer part of the menu.

The previous hour, I tried to deflect my feelings, pondering if my father could be Mick Jagger, Richard Branson, a clown –

Greg called me a fool and said for Branson to be my father, he'd have been eleven when I was born.

Fiona answered my call. She said Wayne was walking the dog. She'd have him call when he came back.

I pondered more. I hoped my mother was going to be a sixteen-year-old girl. I wanted to move on, unknowing.

Tears began cascading from my eyes – my life was about to change, to be ripped apart.

As the tears flowed, I intuitively knew the mystery I hoped for would not become my reality. It couldn't be. There would have been no reason for the decades of lying by my family if it were. I came to the foregone conclusion that I would become privy to a dark family secret. And I was the main character.

I couldn't stop crying.

## RING. RING. RING.

Greg answered. *"Yeah, Wayne, he seems okay. We'll take care of him today."*

Tears were blasting from my eyes, I whimpered, shaking uncontrollably. The world around me disappeared. I can't describe what it feels like to sit waiting to hear the truth about your life. A fact withheld from me for forty+ years. There are no words that can depict what it is like to watch your parents succumb to *The Big C*, only to find out they weren't your actual parents.

*Why did they all fucking lie, for all these years?*

I was drowning in my misery, crushed by anxiety and uncertainty.

I looked at Dave. His face was flush; he, too, was crying.

Greg passed me the phone. *"Hi, Wayne, I'm sort of okay."* My voice cracked.

*"Your father's name is Kirk Bliner. It says he's a mechanic from Picture Butte, Alberta. I'm not sure; it is kind of scratched out."* I felt a moment of relief. *"Your mother's name – "*

*Bernice rushed into my mind, and my heart stopped, anybody but her.*

Wayne read the name, causing my tears to intensify, becoming critical. I dropped the phone onto my lap.

Greg reached over and grabbed the phone. He was crying. He then softly told Wayne they'd take care of me.

Dave hugged me tightly into his arms.

Greg assured the staff of the *Vanilla Lounge* I would be okay.

I cupped my hands over my face, peering at the crowd from the corner of my right eye. The Chocolate Lab lifted his head slowly. He leisurely rose and then sauntered across the packed lounge toward me.

I uncupped my hands; the Labrador was directly in front of me. I looked through my blurry eyes at him. He tilted his head, forlornly glared at me, and then, with the utmost of tenderness, licked my face and sat down in front of me.

On this day, he took care of me. I wasn't sure who would take care of me, every tomorrow, after that?

## WHO IS LINDSAY WINCHERAUK?

Lindsay Wincherauk is a fearless writer. He has published two books and has had more than eighteen OPEs 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.

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