

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?

SITGES SPAIN

DAY 21-24

28-31 OCTOBER 2003

SPANISH BORDER CROSSING

After visiting the lavatory, I tugged on Dave's jacket; I was perplexed. I was basking in Cathedral Face when I said, "*Dave, the toilets. Somebody stole them. There's only a pipe sticking out of the ground and a cord hanging from the ceiling. My aim isn't that good. I need to go. I can't hear.*"

SITGES

Hold a finger on the off button for five seconds, reboot, reboot again, etc.

We blasted past Barcelona, fully intending to visit in a day or two.

I was holding my need-to-go since the border.

David navigated our way into Sitges, passing the historic central quarter, skirting past its brilliant clock tower. We parked the car on the edge of a cliff overlooking a bluff. We climbed down a flight of stairs looking for our hotel.

I attempted Spanish by saying *Hola*, and I mentioned the name of our hotel.

We parked *one-hundred yards* from the beautiful hotel, *Port Sitges Resort*, two kilometres from town.

I rushed to our room. To my utmost joy, the room had a toilet.

When I exited the bathroom, Dave was already sleeping.

Sitges felt like a slice of heaven. I didn't care if we turned gay.

The thermometer was hitting mid-20s (C) when we strolled into town. Our cares drifted away. The ocean was lapping up against the city's pristine sand beaches.

Sitges dates to the tenth century. It is a gem in the Mediterranean. Speaking of gems – Marc, Vignette, and Maria took us in and embraced us.

Marc, the bartender, did not speak a lick of English; he was a clown.

Marc took the stage behind the bar putting on a delightful one-person show.

He told joke-after-joke in an overtly animated style, laughing wildly at the end of each one.

Marc pulled out a bag of tricks, match, card, coin, and trick, tricks. Then, at the end of each trick, he'd point at something, taking on the persona of the Spanish bellman from *Faulty Towers* and spewed laughter.

Maria, the owner, and Vignette, a server, best friends, lesbians, beautiful, English, about nine, maybe two dozen words. They hugged us, laughed with us (I think), kissed us, and welcomed us into their worlds, open-armed.

Lovingly, they began to ply us with booze, loosening our inhibitions.

I slurred to Dave, "*I may be a lesbian.*"

Vignette asked us in eleven broken words the reason for our trip.

I shared my story once more, "*On March 3 –*"

Vignette and Maria's jaws dropped. Tears flowed from Vignette's eyes. She trembled; the hairs on her arms were standing at attention.

My eyes teemed with tears. Vignette said I love you while embracing me tightly.

Marc continued his performance. He wrote our names on the mirror behind the bar, and then he sparked a small fire on top of the bar unintentionally.

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Vignette and Maria took us to *Sin Street*, full of clubs and bars.

They took Dave away, leaving me alone, and I sat and drank.

Upon their return, she took us to a club; I can't remember the name, so, I'll call it, the *Cherry Bar*, a friend of hers bartended there. Dave fell in love.

Baylene was supermodel gorgeous, better yet approachable, her English impeccable.

She loved us. Drinks began flowing as I shared the trip story. Baylene pulled me in for a warm embrace. We danced without a care in the world as we drank feverishly.

Night 1 in Sitges ended with me trying to decide between knee-walking, bile-puking, or floor-licking, as my preferred state of intoxication.

"Pretty, pretty, pretty –"

Dave asked me to stop stroking his hair.

We asked for our bill.

We didn't have one.



CLOSED

Maria's bar sat in darkness, empty. Maria, Marc, and Vignette were nowhere to be found.

In Spain, you eat late. We ate late.

We missed our new friends.

Baylene was working at her bar.

She told us she never wanted us to leave, and I whispered to Dave, "*Dave, my pants are happy.*"

He cringed.

I suggested she loved us because we were like rock stars on a month-long tour.

She then poured us a roster of this, and that(s), this and that(s) caught up with me.

I asked Dave if I was dead. I then decided the hotel would make a good resting place. I left. I stroked Dave's hair three times on my way out the door. I began walking.

Left foot, right foot, right foot, right foot, left foot; neat, sort of a circle. I think the hotel is by water, no, it is boats. Try again. Right foot, right foot, right foot, forget it if the hotel is by water, why am I walking uphill?

Strange, no beaches, houses instead, and funny-looking mutilated trees. I'll keep going. Hey, I'm sitting down. Maybe I should fly. *I believe I can fly.* Flap, flap, flap, I can't. Must come up with a solution; booze makes me drunk. Flap –

"*Car. Raxi.*" Chuckle, I said raxi. What's a raxi?

Cool, a cab.

I wonder if I can talk. Lindsay, use your words, "*Boats,*" the cab began to move.

My mind raced.

The back seat belongs to me and me alone. Get out of here. Here comes the emotional train wreck. Why am I crying?

All the crap wasn't my fault. Remember, I didn't write the plot. Quit crying, Lindsay. Okay, forget it, let it out.

Hey, I know you; you're my reflection thingy. NYC, London, and you're smiling at me; why? Look at me; I'm a drunken emotional mess. *I'll be okay*, are you drunk?

My core is, what is my core?

Where are you going, *be happy?*

The chemistry changed. My reflection began to fade away. It turned into a million brilliant lights, and in an instant, shot into the night sky, leaving behind a trail of –

My cab driver looked over his right shoulder, pointed to the left, smiled, and said, "*Boats*," I paid the fare. He offered another smile and sent me on my way with –

"Be happy."

HEAVEN FOUND IN A GAY PARADISE

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SITGES

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28-31, 2003

I looked out the window to the Marina; the sun-blasted through. I snapped a picture. The shutter only partially opened.

The calmness of Sitges led to immediate recovery.

Dave wanted to stay in Sitges.

I asked him if he wanted to go to Barcelona.

He said next trip.

- He wanted to relax.
- He wanted to eat.
- He wanted to drink.
- He wanted to have a gay old time.

THE RAIN IN SPAIN

REBOOT AGAIN

I asked David what I owed for last night's bill.

"Zero," was his answer.

I gasped as I covered my mouth. I looked at Dave's boots; OMG, they were destroyed. So I asked what had happened.

He shared a heartbreaking tale full of long pauses.

He asked me how I had made my way home.

I told him on the wings of an Angel.

He finished his story. It involved a lesbian, the beach, nudity, and rising tides.

I tried to calm him. I suggested three months' pay was washed away in a moment of dirty, sand-encrusted, sea lapping, lesbian –

He asked me to shut up.

On this early Thursday afternoon, the Spanish sky looked fierce. The darkest clouds I'd ever seen were surrounding Sitges. I had only seen clouds this ominous once before.

GOING WAY BACK (1985)

Whitey and I were returning to Saskatoon from Edmonton. We spent a weekend looking for lesbians to have sex with. Anyway, I looked out the window to the north and said, *"Hey Whitey, those are the darkest clouds I've ever seen."*

He disagreed, so; I rolled his side of the car.

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BACK IN SITGES

The sea was angry. The God of Fine Italian Footwear, Aldo, showed his displeasure for Dave's carnal lesbian pursuits by slamming the sea violently into Sitges shoreline. It would slam into the break walls, spring upwards, at times flying forty feet in the air, spraying flecks of water in a fashion, blasting in the air like fireworks. The rage-full display was astonishing. As the day progressed, the clouds thickened, threatening to release a deluge of water on the city below. Amazingly, not a single drop of rain fell.

I must pause. A few paragraphs back I spoke of snapping a picture. I said the shutter only partially opened. I have no idea why I placed that lazy writing in this story, so please disregard. I could take it out, but I don't want to.

TRAINS

"What happened? Why weren't you open yesterday?"

Five candles illuminated Maria's bar, providing an intimate glow.

"The power had been shut off because we couldn't make the payment. We don't need it; Marc is borrowing the power from a neighbouring business. So, we'll be, okay?"

We hit Baylene's bar once more. A Brit joined us at the bar.

He told us except Londoners; everyone else is a commoner: in the whole bleeping world.

I asked him, "*How does it feel to be the Americans of Europe?*"

The beverage train began to chug down the tracks.

The conductor from the past chanted once more:

NEXT STOPS

- *Happy, followed by Funny –*
- *Charming, then Pretty, Pretty, Pretty –*
- *Further down the line, I Love You Guys –*
- *Then, the town of Slur –*
- *Finally, in the tragic city of I Can't Make Out a Word He's Saying Try Touching His Tongue I Think He Maybe Speaking in Braille –*
- *ICMOWHESTTHSITHMBSB – for short, all aboard.*

I mouthed, *I must go now*, and *bye-bye* to Dave and I walked away *slurrily*.

Hmm, I don't remember seeing trains before. Trains don't go through water. Maybe I should walk across the tracks; no, I die if I do that. Flap, flap, flap, still can't fly. Singing will help. *Papi, Papi, papa don't preach*. I suck. Great, an overpass; why am I crossing it? Oh yeah, I'm going back to the hotel. Stop walking. Stop walking. Stop walking. STOP! Good. Now listen. Quit thinking, brain. Turn everything blank and listen. *Chicken tastes good*. BLANK! I said, Swish, Swish, lap, lap, ocean over there; if I make it to the sea, I'll find home, *excellent work brain and ears*.

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HALLOWEEN

DICKY, DICKY

Hello, where did everybody go?

Four days walking in the same place was fantastic; David was right; downtime is good!

Dave had fallen for Baylene. Or perhaps, he needed rehab. Casting rehab to the side, it was time to explore.

Kindly insert your own castle – beach – architecture – and vacation story: | [HERE](#) |.

We stopped for lunch at a sports bar named, *Especialitats*, where I ordered eleven cokes.

Post lunch, Dave returned to the hotel and searched for the answers to unanswerable questions.

The streets emptied, and Sitges turned into a ghost town. I became panic-stricken.

I rushed into a hotel and asked the clerk what was going on?

He said, "*Siesta*."

How Dave and I missed *Siesta* for four consecutive days is a mystery to me?

Seeing I was no longer concerned with alien abduction, I continued searching. *El Horno* is a hilarious name for a bar, I thought.

Suddenly, I was no longer alone. A Spanish woman appeared from nowhere, swathing her arms across my shoulders. Two guys followed closely behind.

The Spanish woman was snapping drunk; she grabbed my crotch and began chanting "*Dicky. Dicky.*" while licking her lips.

I said to her, in amplified English, I don't speak Spanish.

I became semi-erect. My new street acquaintance continued grabbing my package. My *Dicky. Dicky* was wanted. She licked her lips in a frantic circling motion, darting her tongue in and out of her mouth.

I looked to the skies hoping for aliens to take me away, now.

FLASH FORWARD

KITTY, KITTY

VANCOUVER

12 OCTOBER 2006

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Every day at precisely 5 PM, Fuzzy Nose & Toes rises from her catnap on my bed and heads to the sofa. She jumps up and glances toward the computer where I'm penning this story. Then, I go over to the couch and turn on the TV. I usually watched Urban Rush, a local talk show that once teased me with the possibility of being a guest.

I lie down. Every day, Fuzzy sits directly in front of me. She meows between three to five times then gently licks my left cheek. She then turns, takes three cat steps, and lies down alongside my left thigh. Finally, I drape my hand across her back. She begins to purr loudly.

At exactly 5:25 television clock time, she rises and hops off the sofa, turns and meows. I get up and leave to go to my crap job. We have repeated this ritual Monday thru Thursday for five months.

If I did not get up at 5 PM and go directly to the sofa, Fuzzy would come over to me, swat my legs several times, and head back to the couch. She'd then glance my way and scream at me, in cat.

I've now shared this story with you as well as a few dear friends. While sharing, I couldn't help but think I'm a grown man, full of potential; yet I'm getting my tender moments of love and affection from my cat. After this realization, I recoiled in the fetal position in my room, weeping like a frightened schoolgirl. Later that night, I ordered a hooker. ⁽⁸³⁾

Except for my shorn head, in no way do I resemble: Vin Diesel, some people think: I do. Halloween was upon us with nothing to wear. So, I wore pants and a half-tucked shirt. Sitges rocks, gay friendly might be part of the charm. After escaping with only a few grabs of my crotch, I returned to the empty streets of Siesta.

I rounded a corner. I gawked into a stores window. From behind me, I heard voices sharing a hint of Spanish. The voices were chanting "Vin" repeatedly, ending the chants with, "Diesel."

I glanced over my left shoulder; a young couple was smiling at me.

"Hola, Vin."

My costume was money.

I smiled back at them and casually sauntered away.

At 11 PM, Dave and I sat at *Al Fresco* for a memorable dinner. We met the manager earlier when we stopped in for a drink. That night he spent a significant portion of the evening with us as we dined. He treated us like royalty.

Dave and I retraced the last few days with incredible fondness. We cherish the love sent our way from everyone we met.

- Marc and his bagful of tricks.
- Baylee's intoxicating beauty, kindness, and expensive (free) drinks, the storm clouds that remained dry, downtime, and Siesta, all magnificent.
- We spoke of Maria and Vignette, their graciousness, heartfelt wishes, and their warm embraces.

Before visiting Baylene, they had joined us at a small bistro for drinks the night prior. Together, we watched German performers sing Credence Clearwater Revival and Simon & Garfunkel to perfection. The audience joined in the song. Later we found out we were amongst several generations of the same family on a special night, a family reunion.

Dave presented Maria and Vignette with Canadian flag pins.

They burst into tears holding the pins to their hearts.

Back at Baylene's bar, the party started once more.

Drink. Dance. Smile. Enjoy.

It would be sad leaving — four days had secured a lasting place in our hearts.

Once drunk, I slurred my goodbyes, hugged my new Spanish friends tightly, and exited

stage left. Dave stayed with Baylene. I decided I wanted to go to a club. Vignette led me to some product just before I vacated the bar.

I asked the pharmacist, "*How much for two?*"

He suggested four.

I accepted his suggestion. He charged me 4€.

Everything toxic we consumed in Sitges appeared to be free. Leaving may have been our only hope for survival.

Inside the club, the warmth of the chemicals began scorching through me. Wave after wave of bliss and euphoria rushed over me, sending me to a heavenly state. Dance entered my veins.

I danced.

I heard angelic voices serenading my name, "*Vin, Vin, Vin Diesel.*"

I looked to my right; the couple from the street was dancing next to me, smiling.

We danced together; four hands began caressing my body. Our movements were in perfect synchronicity with the beat; they kissed, they stroked –

At ten the following day, I told them I needed to leave. I politely assured them I needed to go as my hotel's checkout was in one hour, and I was driving to Paris today.

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They shoved a piece of paper in front of me, requesting my autograph.

Once clothed, they snapped photos of me. They took a selfie of the three of us together.

One of them handed me a pen, and I sat down and searched for something to write.

Thank you for an incredible passion-filled night, and I had a fabulous time.

You helped to make Sitges a place that I'll never forget.

Wishing you all the best for the future –

With much love & many kisses,

Vin Diesel

Their names were Sonja and Samuel; Spain worshipped me like a celebrity for one night.

The contents of the evening's activities will forever remain **VAULTED**.

83. No hooker was solicited by me on that night or any other night—that I can recall. Besides, you'd have to be a fool to think hooker sex would provide tender moments of love and affection, wouldn't you?

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.