

MY **LIFE** ON THE SLUSH PILE

MY SISTER IS MY MUM

A META-MEMOIR



BY **LINDSAY** WINCHERAUK

GOODBYE 2003

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?

BREAKING
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GOODBYE 2003
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VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

27 NOVEMBER-25 DECEMBER 2003

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Dr. Saulnier

"Lindsay, it's great to see you. I thought when you left, I may never see you again. I was worried you might snap."

Me

"Snap. I assure you I did. If it weren't for David travelling with me, I probably would have crashed the car into a brick wall. My family life is still screwed up + vacant. I'm still fucked up about Trish."

Dr. Saulnier

"Lindsay, who do you blame?"

Me

"Nobody. I'm not sure if my family can be family anymore. Unless they acknowledge, everything is different for me now. The way I see it, brothers can no longer pretend to be brothers."

Dr. Saulnier

"Amazing. Absolutely amazing."

5-10 DECEMBER 2003

A painful cyst formed on my right hip. By December 10, it had doubled in size and began talking. This freaked me out.

I hobbled the five blocks to St. Paul's Hospital.

My cyst took a cab.

After my examination, the emergency room doctor asked me, *"Do you have plans for the day."*

My cyst answered, *"This is crap. I want to get out of here."*

- Tests were taken
- A large needle was displayed

- A surgical procedure was performed.

The tests came back negative.

The Big C left, defeated.

UPDATED ADULT SURGERY COUNT

6 x Left Knee

1 x Right Knee

1 x Appendix

1 x Eye

1 x Shoulder

~~1.5 x Amateur Lobotomy~~

~~1 x Dr. Bab's~~

1 x Exploratory Ass Surgery

1 x Cyst Removal Biopsy

~~1 x Emotional Dismantling~~

~~1 x Life Reconstruction (ONGOING)~~

=

GRAND TOTAL OF 12 SURGERIES ADMINISTERED BY MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS.

ENOUGH ALREADY

15 DECEMBER 2003

Dr. Saulnier (laughing)

"You had surgery two days ago. Wow. Was it serious? I mean, all surgeries are serious."

Me

"What's next?"

Dr. Saulnier

"You don't need me. I'm in awe that you have your emotions under control. I'm amazed you don't blame anyone. Lindsay, you are the right amount of messed up. The right amount of angry. You don't need to see me anymore."

GOODBYE 2003

Me

"I'm a great actor. Nothing more. I need –"

He wished me well and sent me on my way.

17 DECEMBER 2003

I was visiting Dr. Musial to have him remove my surgery gauze.

Dr. Musial

"Lindsay, I speak of you often with my colleagues. Not about your chest hair. Your story is the most incredible story I've heard. It blows them away. Don't worry, I never use your name."

Me

"I don't mind if you use my name. How do you think I'm doing?"

Dr. Musial

"It's remarkable, Lindsay. I don't understand how you could be, but I think you will be okay in time."

I'm a terrible liar. But somehow, I fooled both doctors, everyone else for that matter.

343 I escaped by writing, cranking out page-after-page of my first book, I avoided life.

CHRISTMAS DAY

My life crumbled in front of me. I had been orphaned in a sense for the last thirteen years. Baby of the family, what a crock of shit.

Every year I'd cook a complete meal with all the fixings, friends would drop by—I avoided the phone at all costs.

My ~~brother~~ Don usually came to town to spend Christmas with his wife's family. He'd call to say he was in Vancouver, returning home most times without seeing me, providing me motive to avoid the phone.

Not once did they extend an invitation for me to join them.

I became great at pretending to be okay; if I was invited to Christmas celebrations, all but twice, I declined.

In denial, my Christmases became stress-free. I began to love the day, mostly the visits from friends.

This year, darkness paid me a visit.

Christmas had been changed forever.

I knew the truth; my family didn't think I did; I wasn't one of them.

Wayne and Fiona visited.

I pretended more.

They left.

They seemed concerned.

I was alone.

I slammed back every beer in my fridge, drank bottles, bottles of wine. I reached out to Trish. Trish returned emptiness.

I punished myself with misery.

A thick blackness filled my home.

Out of all the nights where Grim Reaper had a chance, on a night where I would've given in, I passed out.

WHEN I ROSE THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE SUN WAS SHINING.

I WAS STILL ALIVE.

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I STARTED THE LONG CLIMB ONCE AGAIN —

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.