



Lindsay Wincherauk

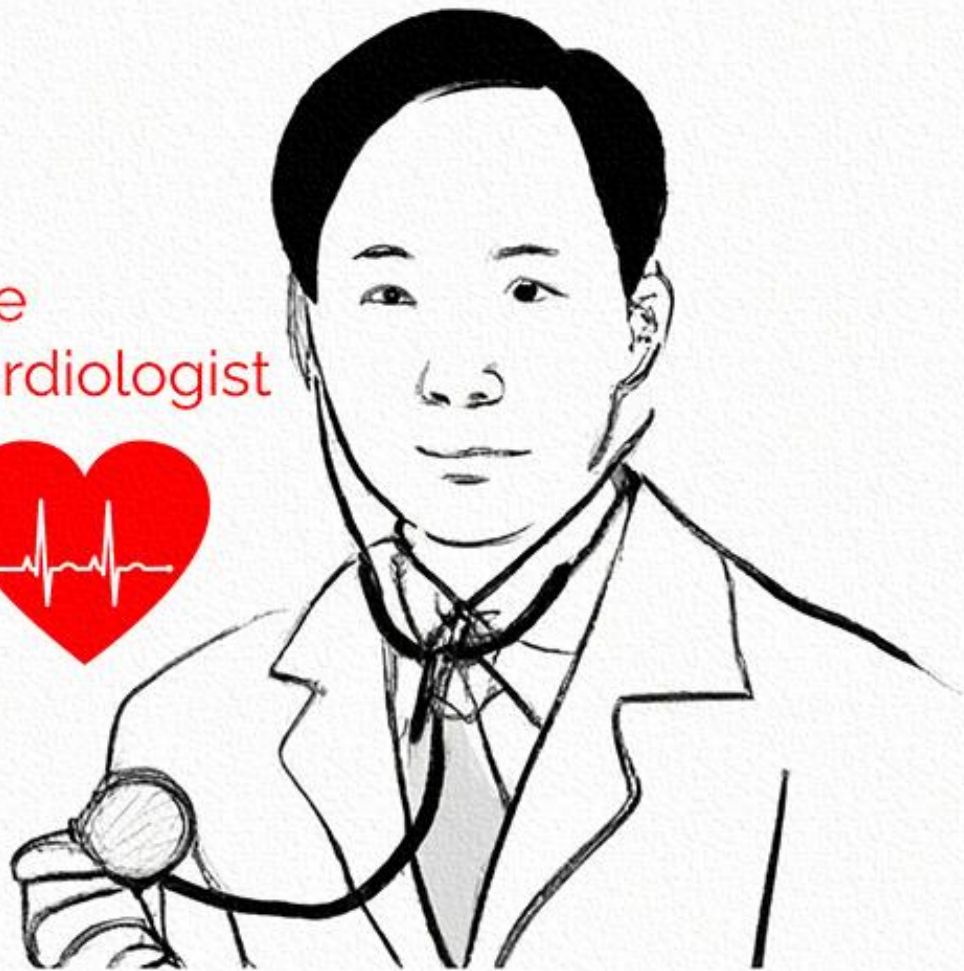
**JUNE 2023**  
JUNE 2023

2

**MY DAYS: VOLUME 1**  
MY DAYS: VOLUME 1

life on the slush pile productions

the  
cardiologist



a story by  
lindsay wincherauk

## CARDIOLOGIST PART 2 КАРДИОЛОГИСТ ЧАСТЬ 2



Thursday, June 8, 2023

**I**t's going to be a big day. I am going to find out if my heart is working okay.

Before I visit my Cardiologist, Dr. Lee, I hit the Fitness Asylum, pounding the weights, and ramping up my cardio workout's intensity. I'm dripping sweat. Going hard. I don't have a water bottle. My skin dries. Is that how you spell dries?

Yes.

Dehydration is probably not good.

### Fit Test

My recovering heart rate is too low to score.

I need to pee. How is that possible? I'm dehydrated.

Before I go to leak, I do push-ups, planks, and crunches.

I enter the changing room. Fuck. A guy is using the only urinal. He's leaking while working his phone with his free hand. Are we all diseased?

Rhetorical.

I go home and finish yesterday's installment's first part of this story.

It's time to go see Dr. Lee. I toss on cool shorts and a tank top that highlights I've gotten myself into stellar shape for someone with a heart condition, in my demographic. I'm trying to fool my doctor.

J says I look adorable. J then asks if my Cardiologist is Asian.

I think J thinks I have an affinity for Asians.

Do I?

How many words do you want to write today?

I'd like to keep this under 1,000.

Go →

Hello, Lindsay; good to see you again. Nice tan.

I walk a lot. I'm not sure if a tan is a healthy thing. But what am I going to do. I like the outdoors.

Take a seat. By the way, you look super fit.

Would you like me to take off my shirt?

If you are having trouble following, which I'm sure you are not, I'm talking with Dr. Lee.

Continue →

How've you been?

Well, you know. *I don't think he knows.* So, I continue, to continue →

My stress level is through the roof. Maybe I should have a sunroof installed in my place. It would be tricky because there are 17 floors above my apartment.

Your heart seems to be okay. I'm slightly concerned about your cholesterol; it hasn't decreased as much as I'd like since your last visit back in November. When did you start taking the more potent dosage of my prescribed drugs? It looks like January.

Now would be a good time to tell him about your day's eating habits.

I don't.

I don't tell him about my cheap fast-food addiction.

I don't tell him I chase the end of the day with a few pops (beers) with friends.  
I don't tell him of my affinity for the deep fryer.

I do tell him I write daily, usually hit the Fitness Asylum, move to the tune of over 30,000 steps per day, and have been battling former employer-induced crippling depression for over three years.

He asks me about my legal case.

I tell him it sucks. My former employer vowed to destroy my life for standing up for myself. It worked. I'm now turning 63 in a lifeboat about to go over the falls, and there are no paddles or life jackets onboard.

### Question Time

What kind of monsters would pay a lawyer tons of cash to punish their employee who only wanted to be treated fairly for being a lengthy model employee, threatening to send him into homelessness, and leading him to see a Cardiologist?

Rhetorical.

6

I'm sorry for what you've had to go through. The people you worked for are...

I don't want to type what he said; it was good enough for me that he understood my situation's impossibility.

I'm stressed to the max. I don't know what I'm going to do? I'm not young anymore. I finished my education in 1984. I'm no longer relevant. I'm scared. I'm afraid to share my upset with the people I know. Some of them judge. Few, if any are supportive or understanding.

I'm sorry.

Hop up here. Let's take your blood pressure. What is it usually?

I lie and say it's usually okay, like 138 over 85.

It comes back at 138 over 83. I'm clairvoyant.

If you are stressed, it is almost useless taking BP. Yours seems okay. I'd like it to be a little lower. What do you do to manage your stress?

Denial, and try to make people laugh.

He laughs.

I tell him the depression is killing me.

I show him the graphic on my phone where I'm in the top 1% of my demographic for exercise. I tell him I write, work out, and read daily to fend off the depression. I tell him I'm not sure it's working. I tell him I'm scared for my future, for my life.

If everyone fought depression like you, the world would be a kinder, better place.

*I want a burger.*

I want to prescribe you another cholesterol drug + maybe another one to tamp down your BP more.

*I want a burger.*

Can we do one at a time? Let's do the cholesterol one, by the way, I can't afford it.

Sorry.

See me in 6 months?

I'm going to live 6 more months?

He laughs.

I walk past a community garden. It is surrounded by a 10-foot fence. One of the gardeners, deemed worthy of the community, is locking the garden entrance with a chain. A man is in the garden watering flowers. Shirtless. He's in his late 60s.

How do you apply to be part of the community?

One block later, I walked past a site close to St. Paul's Hospital that had become an open-air drug den and sleeping ground for homeless people. One block from the community garden.

The area has been surrounded by blue fences.

Earlier in the day, they were pressure washing the sidewalk where homeless people sleep in front of Tim Hortons.

I guess those in the throes of homelessness and addiction had been forced to find a home and participate in society. Apparently, blue fences scream empathy and compassion.

I'm sad.

I stop to read. I'm reading a book about what it's like to be black in America entitled; I'm Still Here.

I hit the streets and walk and walk and walk. My mind clears. What the fuck am I going to do, I'm turning 63 in 40 days, and I need to earn an income. I've sent out over 40 resumes. Do you know how many responses I've gotten?

Rhetorical.

I'll answer.

Three, all people trying to scam vulnerable people. As I type this, I received a job offer from the YMCA of the USA. I hadn't applied. I live in Vancouver, BC, Canada.

8

It's a beautiful day.

I sit down with The Mayor.

We speak about the community garden and the blue fences.

The Mayor leans right; I lean left.

The Mayor thinks the area needs to be cleaned up.

I tell him I agree, but...

But...?

Yeah, but many people want it cleaned up because they need to believe they are better than those suffering. They need to think that they fucking made better choices. I find that ignorant.

I tell The Mayor; life doesn't work like that. Sometimes, no matter how hard you try, nothing works. It is exhausting having to say this. I remind him I'm fucking screwed, and I don't know what to do. I ask him not to judge me when I'm broken, homeless and drug-addled. I tell him life is



fucking fragile.

He doesn't like hard conversations.

I think they are vitally important.

Dean

Is dying.

The Mayor says I worry too much about Dean.

Dean is dying.

He says Dean is doing fine. He's trying.

I tell him I find his words offensive, and what does a dying man trying even mean?

Dean's okay.

He's dying, I say again.

We have no right to try to opine about what that is like. I tell The Mayor I'm lucky Dean is my friend. Don't get me wrong, I love The Mayor, not so much when he speaks like this. I don't care that he is turning 80 soon, I have a fucking cardiologist, I had a fucking stroke.

I tell him it disgusts me 2G has decided he doesn't like Dean, and The Postman has jumped on the 'don't like bandwagon.'

Dean is doing fine.

Shut up. Did Dean tell you some days he doesn't get out of bed most days? Did he tell you he doesn't want to die. Did he tell you he's scared. Did he cry in front of you. I'm exhausted.

You know Mayor, I get it, Dean could already be dead, and we can't do a thing about it. But I refuse to be cold.

Topic Change

The 65-year-old in the community garden was shirtless. I don't think people should walk around shirtless in the city.

Look what you are wearing, some people might be offended by you wearing shorts and a sleeveless shirt.

*Now you are being a dink.*

I'm tastefully dressed. I just don't like it when people walk around shirtless. Actually, I don't care; let people walk around however they want; it means nothing to me.

*I don't call him a hypocrite because he was saying women shouldn't wear yoga pants last week.*

Maybe it's wrong to talk about people dying because The Mayor is turning 80 soon. So, I ask him if it upsets him.

He says no, and then says, he might only have 5 years left.

I don't like today's visit.

I get home.

When I go to bed, I can't sleep. I have pitched many story ideas to the media regarding older workers losing their careers, and the stress is life-threatening and unbearable. There have been zero bites. I guess the story isn't sexy enough, or older people aren't necessary.

### A Light Flashes

10

**J, I'm going to blow the whole fucking thing up. I will write the media with a story idea of me live-streaming my death on Canada Day – 16 days before I turn 63.**

You may wonder if I have mental health issues?

Let me answer for you.

**NO.**

Let me answer for you.

519 words over. 522 if you count the last three. 529 if ...

||


Grammarly Readability Score = 87 (back-to-back-to-back days)

Grammarly Readability Record = 99 (May 1, 2023)

## SKYTRAIN СКЛІКВІН



3 PM.  
I'm 20.  
We were in Burnaby.

You were a 

I am one too.

Were a, oops, you're not dead, yet.

Sunglasses on  grooving.

I think, you're not dead, yet → you got on @ 22<sup>nd</sup>.

I sat by the window, dreaming of – you.

Cool sweater, I wanted to say, but you likely wouldn't have heard me – are you ~~deaf~~ deaf, yet – yet?

Metrotown was your stop.

Today, mine as well.

**I SAW YOU → A MISSED CONNECTION ↓**

**MISSING PERSON ↓**

**YOU NOW ~~ARE~~ WITH ME, FOREVER.**

**Gotta Run, My Dear → there is a new train on the platform.**

17 JULY 2012

VANCOUVER   TO BELLINGHAM WASHINGTON 

**W**here are you coming from? Citizenship? Where do you live? What was the reason for your trip?

Bellingham. I'm Canadian. I live in Vancouver. I was gone only for a few hours. I'm on holiday.

Why did you go for only a few hours?

**ME**

White. Fit. Shorn head. Casually attired. I'm wearing shorts + a tank top, + flip flops - driving a Toyota Matrix.

**Border Agent**

Who did you see?

**Me**

Nobody?

**Border Agent**

Who did you see?

Asked seven more times.

**Me**

Nobody.

Replied six more times.

**ON THE SEVENTH WHO DID YOU SEE?**

**Me**

I don't understand the question. Can you ask me something else?

**Border Agent**

Who did you see?

**Me**

The counter guy at Jack in the Box <sup>(1)</sup>.

**Border Agent**

Don't they have fast food in Canada?

**Me**

Not Jack in the Box.

**Border Agent**

Don't get smart with me. What did you buy?

Asked 10 times.

**Me**

A six-pack.

Answered nine times.

### ON THE TENTH WHAT DID YOU BUY?

**Me**

What's wrong with you?

**Border Agent**

What did you buy?

**Me**

Oh, I forgot, I bought a coke, but I drank it.

**Border Agent**

What's in the trunk?

**Me**

A gym bag with shorts, a shirt, and a pair of shoes.

Pop the trunk. You weren't lying.

**Me**

Who did you see?

### I REMAINED SILENT

**I remained silent.**

**Border Agent**

Pull over and declare your purchases.

**I PULLED OVER.**

**I DECLARED MY SIX-PACK.**

**JACK IN THE BOX + MALL TRAIN.**

**WHEN I CAME OUT, TWO FEMALE BORDER AGENTS HAD SEARCHED MY EMPTY CAR**

**Me**

Just so you know, that was the worst border experience I've had.

**Female Border Agents**

Sir, we're protecting you.

**Me**

From?

**Female Border Agents**

The bad people.

I'm not a bad person. I'm driving a Matrix.

Sir, the bad people aren't the ones with tattoos anymore. They look just like you. Or like soccer moms.

**Me**

Wow.

**Female Border Agents**

And besides, Sir, everyone lies at the border.

**Me**

I don't.

**Female Border Agents**

Everyone does.

**Me**

I didn't.

**Female Border Agents**

Everyone.

**Me**

I'm not everyone.

**Female Border Agents**

Sir, we're keeping the bad people out.

**Me**

No offence, the bad people are already here. Everywhere. No country is bad people free. Except for Alberta, apparently, Alberta is rat-free.

**Female Border Agents**

What?

**Me**

Never mind.

**Female Border Agents**

Welcome to Canada, have a great day.

- 1) I decided to try Jack in the Box (it was tasty). Afterward, I went to Bellis Fair Mall. I hate malls. I hadn't been to Bellis Fair since 1989 with Wes when we visited to see if the mall had a library. A train was being driven around the mall (not on tracks) by a fifteen-year-old (?) girl during this visit. She looked bored to the point of harming herself. In the last car of the train sat a man with his six-to-eight-year-old (?) son. They were both obese. They looked suicidal. I decided to go home.