

LINDSAY WINCHERAUK



ON THE SLUSH PILE

MY SISTER IS
MY MUM

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LIKE TICKETS

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.

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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?

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SQUARE PEGS. ROUND HOLES.
2007 BE BE? BOUND HOLES?



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LETTERS TO ED
LETTERS TO ED

+
+

SPARE PARTS
SPARE PARTS

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VANCOUVER BRITISH COLUMBIA

27 MARCH 2006

DEAR ED ⁽⁹⁷⁾

How are you doing?

I hope this letter finds you well; I owe you a huge thank you; you saved me from me.

THANK YOU

You're probably wondering how you could have helped when we haven't even met.

Just knowing you're out there reading these letters is enough. Writing to you is helping me immensely. I'd like to ask you to come along with me for a while. Who knows, perhaps you can help me change the course of my life?

Since I started writing newspaper articles last June, I have usually carried a notebook to capture life unfolding in front of me in real-time. Lately, I've been jotting down the random thoughts entering my mind to add to the memoir I'm writing – more on that later. ⁽⁹⁷⁾ Now that I write letters to you, Ed, I feel like you are a newfound friend to share thoughts with, and I feel less alone. That means a lot to me.

Before we get to what grinds my gears, I'd like to crack open a small window into my life to help you understand who I am. I will start with today's events.

Work sucks. The only good part about it is I don't have to pretend to like it. The job description doesn't include faking enthusiasm. You see, I work at a labour agency. Part of my job is to drive construction workers to job sites. Sometimes they stink. Sometimes they're still drunk from the night before. Anyway, it just is what it is, as they say.

Today at work, I was offered a pair of tickets to an NHL hockey game, the Vancouver Canucks versus the Los Angeles Kings. Immediately after accepting, I realized I royally screwed up. It was Monday night, the night reserved for facing the tube and watching "The Donald" on "The Apprentice." I debated whether or not to go to the game before reluctantly accepting I asked Jeff, a colleague, to go with me.

So, this Monday night was fated to be Trump-less. Jeff and I had arrived at the arena fifteen minutes before the game started.

I'm sitting in Row 6, within spitting distance of the Home Team's bench. G.M. Place is packed and roaring with a near-playoff intensity, with the fans hoping our fanatically worshipped local heroes crank out a 110% effort. Strangely, I'm pissed –

I'd much rather be sitting on my sofa, sipping cola, watching Trump's hair bounce from

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side to side. Instead, I'm pretending to be interested while also scribbling these notes I'll type up later for you to read. Please bear with me. If I seem distracted, it's because every-now-and-then now and then — I may take a peek at the action on the ice.

SHOOT!

With LA in town, I just flashed back to a jaunt I made down the Interstate 5 to Portland, Oregon, in 1992. So why did L.A. stir up memories of a trip to Portland, you might ask?

I'm not entirely sure.

I just checked a map, and Los Angeles is on Interstate 5. Could it be that simple?

After all, both Portland and Vancouver are on Interstate 5 as well.

In any case, I was playing pool and imbibing on a pre-Trump Monday before Trump had made his way to the small screen; when I suggested to four friends, we blast down to Portland after the bar.

"Yes!" They said in unison.

My friends bailed on me, undeterred; I set off alone.

After four hours of roaring down the I5 blacktop, sleep was calling. I pulled off the Interstate into the parking lot of a Holiday Inn for much-needed downtime. At 8 AM, the light from the VACANCY sign pulsed and pierced through the windshield, waking me.

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What was I thinking?

Bed, reclining car seat; bed; reclining car seat.

The car seat won.

"C'MON REF, OPEN YOUR EYES!" Jeff shouted.

Besides the VACANCY sign waking me, the only other obstacle I faced during the trip to Portland was a brief visit with a State Trooper to discuss horsepower when I was pulled over for speeding on the outskirts of Portland.

Hey, Ed, the period ended. Jeff and I have to fill out loan applications for beer.

Welcome to Portland!

A big city with an enticing small city vibe!

Come along with me on a Portland walking tour. I visited the Trailblazer Store, followed by Powell's Bookstore, one of the West's oldest and largest book emporiums. They carry my first book:

SEED'S SKETCHY RELATIONSHIP THEORIES

A GUIDE TO THE PERILS OF DATING

(HOW NOT TO BECOME A BAR REGULAR)

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I gazed out the windows at the back of the store to find a delightful vision luring me away from perusing the aisles: Henry Weinhard's Brewery. A BEER TOUR was next on the docket.

After quaffing several ales, I was magically transported from the brewery to a stool at Jakes Famous Crawfish Restaurant: a Portland institution. I injected myself into the conversation of the occupants of neighbouring bar stools, showering them with small talk. A crew of Portlanders took a shine to me. I remember them as *Guy, Girl, Girl* and somewhat *Skanky Girl*.

We flirted our way to another bar. I played darts with *Guy*. The trio of *girls* chatted with each other off to the side.

Guy bought the first round for the two of us.

Round two was my shout. "I'll *have two draughts, please!*"

"*That'll be 50 cents,*" said the bartender.

I returned to the table with twenty-four beers.

At pint fest's end, I discovered "pickled" was quickly leading to slurring.

We departed the company making plans to hook up later.

It was time to find a place to stay, and it was also time to find sustenance.

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I began to *CHASE NEON*, and a flickering *HOTEL* sign drew me in.

Checked in, showered, and shaved; it was time to eat!

I stopped at a nightclub. I queried the crowd for dining suggestions; two dudes sat near the club's entrance, chilling, draped in bling, wearing tracksuits, counting heaps of cash.

It must be the bar managers, I thought.

I left without asking for their dining suggestions.

Great Jeff! Our beer applications: STAMPED APPROVED, who needs food?

Out on the street, I walked in circles for twenty minutes. When I finished circling, I looked up to find the two managers standing next to me.

They asked me if I was a cop? Dropping the question on me in an echoing loop five times.

Each time I volleyed back: "*NO.*"

They pressed me to be truthful.

"*I'm telling the truth,*" I slurred back.

Okay then, we believe you, "*Would you like to buy some drugs?*"

Hey, they're not, bar managers, crossed my mind.

"*No problem. If you change your mind, you know where to find us. And if you are ever in San Diego, look us up?*"

As I relive this story, I can't help but wonder: *what the fuck*, how will I find them? Do they have a billboard in San Diego? If I find them, will they let me sleep on their sofa-bed?

We parted company.

I'm sloshed, in a big, unfamiliar city, which without question, screams: Smart!

From across the street, sultry, soulful voices were calling. I glided toward them. I found two gorgeous African American damsels sitting in what I made out to be either an AMC Gremlin or a hearse.

They asked me to get in.

I got in and sat between them in the front seat.

Strangely, like the bar managers, they asked me five times: if I was a cop.

I replied, "NO," each time.

I showed them my driver's license.

They believed me.

They began to caress my body, brushing over my – they asked me if I'd like to party.

A dim light gleamed, hookers?

I slithered away from the Gremlin. I found a take-out restaurant. When I went to pay, I discovered my pockets were empty, and \$60 was missing.

On that tipsy evening, I learned a valuable lesson: Sitting between hookers in Portland costs \$60.

I ran into *Guy, Girl, Girl*, and somewhat *Skanky Girl* on the street; we *Chased Neon* searching for drinks.

I awoke naked in a bathtub the following day, a cool antique bathtub. I was sporting several pairs of underwear on my head; Skanky wore mine on hers.

After being festooned in lingerie, I managed to escape Portland unscathed with a scintilla of dignity.

"Wow, Jeff, 6 to 3 for our beloved Canucks! Next time, I'll try to watch."

Ed, I really should've been focusing my attention on the ice; screw that, I'd instead be writing this letter to you.

As for the game: I used to love the game. I used to live and die at sporting events. I used to follow my favourite teams. I knew the numbers of every player. Then, one day, athletes started raking in fistfuls of dough. And many of these athletes seem to have forgotten; most of us mere mortals who are just trying to get by don't.

WHAT'S MY POINT?

Before Jeff and I went to the game, I went for a long stroll.

The day was brilliantly sunny. When I left my place, three police cars and two ambulances were in front of my apartment building. An older gentleman lay on the road. My spirit sank as I watched an ambulance attendant pound on the man's chest. The attendant's expression showed defeat.

I walked away, deep in thought. Then, one hour later, I returned. The emergency vehicle's lights were no longer flashing. Off to the side, the emergency responders quietly conversed. A white sheet was covering the man. His hands peeked out from the edge of the sheet.

Ed, at the sight of this man, I was at a loss for words. So, I began to sink into a dark pit. Fortunately, the game allowed me to focus on what was right in front of me.

Lately, I've been in a state of flux, shifting in and out of the past and present. I'm trying to find sanity after a period of terrible uncertainty. I've been trying to avoid thinking about my past. This man's tragic ending began to pull my mind toward darkness. Writing this letter helped me to prevent the descent. But, of course, it also helped me lighten things up, except for the past few paragraphs.

Anyway, it's time to put the **FINAL PERIOD** on this letter.

Gotta' run, the games over, a 7 to 4 - VICTORY for the Home Team.

Regards,

Seed

P.S., Unlike Trump's gorgeous locks, my hair is tragic. I've been shaving it off for about five years. Today I'm sporting two weeks' growth. I don't think I have the patience to let it grow past the awkward stage (ten or eleven months). Ed, do you happen to know of a good barber?

97. When this book was released as "Driving in Reverse - The Life I Almost Missed," this was the first chapter. I was stubborn. I loved scattered + jumping around in the timeline, but I became less determined after more than 100 reader reviews where they suggested the timeline jumping had hurt their brains. Letters to Ed is vital to this book becoming a reality. It was quickly some of my best procrastinating. I hope you enjoy it and understand how non-linear life really is; the only thing we must forget is the past. If we do, forget that is, forgetting would be a monumental travesty. We must carry our lives with us to learn, grow, hug, kiss, and of course, love!

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.