

Lindsay Wincherauk

life on the slush pile productions

LITERALLY



WITHOUT

AND...



lindsay wincherauk

Literally without And...

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Without And...

This is the story of a city boy named And. It is also a story about a country girl named Literally.

As happenstance would have it, they would meet on a fateful day.

And, was the saddest boy in the world – Literally was the saddest girl in the world. Why? Because as they travelled through life, they grew increasingly tired of their names being over + misused.

They both lived in a time without video games; there was no numbing the mind with unlimited streaming services or smartphones.

All And + Literally had to entertain themselves were their fertile imaginations.

Shortly after he turned twelve, doctors diagnosed And with a terminal illness, requiring him to attend a clinic daily for three hours of gruelling treatments – literally only about 15 minutes – the rest of the time was sitting in wait.

On the fateful day when they met, with And's parents eying a parking spot directly in front of the clinic (a choice spot) – as And's father, That, began backing into the spot, Literally's father, This, sped forward, stealing the sparking space from That.

A heated exchange ensued between This + That.

And sat on the curb. Literally coped a spot beside him. They looked into each other's eyes.

Hi, I'm And.

Hello, I'm Literally.

Pleased to meet you, And. What are you doing here?

And hesitated before uttering, I'm dying?

Tears sprung from Literally's eyes.

How about you?

My Grandma's sick. We come every day for two, three, sometimes four hours.

Great, I'm usually here for three hours as well. Will you be my friend?

They formed a phantasmagorical bond from that moment on. And in his looming death. Literally hoping her Grandma would hold on long enough for her bond with And to turn into love.

Every day, And, took Literally by the hand. They roamed the halls of the clinic together, often giggling with glee.

One day, they found a forbidden room.

You go in.

No, you go, Literally.

Back and forth, they bantered. Finally, And suggested, they both put their hand on the

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door handle – on the count of three, they pulled the door handle together.

What they found inside was glorious. Bright lights shone down on them. They tripped into their imaginations. In front of them, a portal opened. And gripped Literally's hand tightly.

Together they drifted into other realms, different times – with fantasies coming to life.

Together they escaped And's illness.

Together they escaped Literally's Grandma's sickness.

Together they travelled to the moon, the canals of Venice – throughout all time.

The only downside was that each time they returned, it became glaringly apparent that time was being subtracted from And's life. And was growing weaker.

With tears pouring from Literally's eyes, she desperately tried to talk And out of travelling into their fantasies.

I can't live without you And.

I want every second I can have with you.

I need every second.

Literally, no, we must travel; it's the only time I feel alive.

By this time, they were now 15 years old. And had become frail; his time was running out.

Literally, why are you crying?

Grandma died today.

And embraced Literally as it was the last time, never wanting to let her go.

Literally, we must go – I want to take you to Paris.

Together, they pulled the door handle open – on the count of three.

Lights flashed. And ZOOM. They were on the banks of the Seine, holding hands, eating a croissant, with minstrels serenading them. And had fallen in love with Literally. Literally had literally fallen in love with And.

It was time to go home.

Not before And looked deeply into Literally's shimmering brown eyes and uttered, *I love you*. Literally wept tears of joy, uttering, *I love you*, back at And.

They kissed.

When their lips parted, they whisked back to the clinic where And took his final breath of life.

From that day forward, the world would have to learn to live without And...

Before we go, a magical thing happened; every piece of literature from the past + present changed, except for And's name, was erased from the pages, nowhere to be found ever again. Unless of course you were speaking about And.

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