

SIX MINUTE MEMOIR

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THEME: LIES MY PARENTS TOLD ME

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My father is a pathological liar. Or is it a compulsive liar? I wasn't sure if there was a difference? So I googled it. One is a liar who can't stop themselves from lying. The other is a liar because they take delight in manipulating people to achieve their ends. So my Father is a pathological liar and a compulsive liar.

My childhood was filled with my Father constantly telling me and my three younger brothers tall tales about his many life adventures.

We would later discover not only were they completely false, but sometimes they were even the plots from movies.

The one thing about liars is that it is never one lie. It's the lie to cover up the lie on top of a dash of yet another variation on the truth. Let's just say I knew all about the term "alternative facts" long before the Trump Presidency.

One particularly memorable moment of my Father just letting the BS tumble out of his mouth happened on a Christmas Eve. The parents of my middle brother's girlfriend decided to trek out from Brantford and surprise him with a visit.

They didn't know they had crashed the big annual family dinner, but my parents made the most of it and had them join us around the table. Then my Father starts launching into an epic tone poem about his days as a former Taxi Driver. I blurt out: "What on Earth are you talking about Dad!?!?! You never drove a taxi in your life." My Mother then gives me a look of death. I clue in and shut the fuck up. My Father then regales everyone with pure stream of consciousness blathering.

Now one of the problems about being a liar and telling fibs all the time is that there are a lot of multiple narratives you need to keep track of or else you will trip yourself up.

My Father's biggest trip up centered around our beloved pet dog Patchy. Patchy moved down South with all of us to Hamilton from our former hometown of Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island, North West Territories. He was a mutt, but he was originally raised in the wild on the land as a member of a dog sled team. He was a rough and violent dog.

That was OK when we lived in the Canadian arctic, but not so OK when you live in the suburbs of Hamilton. Patchy would routinely jump over our backyard fence and attack innocent pedestrians. I remember having to pull him off one of my best friends as he viciously tore apart her coat.

Not too long after that incident our Father told us that he gave Patchy to the Hamilton Police to use as a Police Dog. He then told us that while Patchy was helping the Police that he was shot by a criminal during the course of an investigation. My brothers and I were all in tears. Our Patchy was gone, but at least he died a hero.

Years go by and we are all sitting around the dinner table talking about pets we have loved and lost. Our Father pipes up and mentions that he had to take Patchy to the vet and put him to sleep because he was too violent.

WAIT A MINUTE!!! my brothers and I all blurt out.
YOU TOLD US YOU GAVE HIM TO THE POLICE AND
HE WAS SHOT BY A CRIMINAL. YOU LIED TO US!!!!
ABOUT OUR DOG!!!!

Now you all know that old adage you date what
you know. You would think that living with a liar
my entire life would have me red flagging this
type and staying far far far away. You would
think.

One of my most heartbreaking and tragic
romances was when I was in college. I was a 20
year old virgin. He was the 30 year old Bass
Player of a Punk Rock Band.

It wasn't until months into our courtship that it would be revealed to me that not only was he living with a woman and keeping that information from me, but that I was one of a dozen women he was stringing along at the same time. During the course of our on again/off again, love/hate, comic/tragedy, a melodrama that is far funnier now after 20 plus years of retrospection, my Punk Rocker shared with me that he had once lived in Frobisher Bay and had worked as a part of a research team. I was pretty sure he was full of shit, so I decided to run this by my Father. My Father then started sharing stories with me about my "boyfriend" and the research project he was a part of in Frobisher Bay. Now I knew they were both full of shit.

I then shared the shit show that had come out of both men's mouths with my Mother. One of the rare bonding moments between my Jehovah's Witness mother and her queer, feminist, activist daughter was the realization that both of the men in our lives had inadvertently conspired together to tell the same cock and bull story.

I always find it sad that my Father feels this compelling need to lie all the time. He didn't need to make up stories to make his life more fascinating. His real life was already fascinating enough.

Kid escapes with his parents from Hungary during the 1956 Revolution, moves to Canada, opens a hotel in the arctic with his parents, and then after his parents pass on keeps up their entrepreneurial spirit by launching businesses of his own.

And if you thought that Punk Rocker was the last variation on the theme of my Father I was ever in a relationship with ... oh think again. That's another 6 minute memoir. Or two? Or more?
Next memoir theme night Anne: Shit Heads!