



Book Review: Lunchmeat & Life Lessons, by Mary B. Lucas

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Although Mary B. Lucas worked her way up the corporate ladder with a 25-year career in a billion-dollar staffing corporation and is currently president and principal founder of a major consulting firm, she counts her B.D. as her most important accomplishment. That stands for Butcher's Daughter, for those unfamiliar with current degree programs, and Lucas says she earned it "by listening to my father's stories about how he achieved success in making deep connections with the people around him." In her new novel, *Lunchmeat & Life Lessons: Sharing a Butcher's Wisdom*, Lucas sets out to share the knowledge her father imparted on her with as large an audience as possible.

Traversing 25 years of the author's life, the book is organized into twelve quick chapters, preceded by an informative foreword, and followed by a touching epilogue. Each chapter includes a bite of wisdom summarized into a few quotes, which are all helpfully listed in the back of the book for quick reference. These tidbits include such gems as "The first hunk of meat you sell is yourself", "If you don't like someone then they don't like you", and "It's not the pursuit of happiness, but the happiness of pursuit that inspires." Each chapter covers a section of the author's life in which she found herself struggling with a specific issue. Ranging from starting a new job to dealing with difficult clients to addressing negative feelings, Lucas finds herself having a lunchtime discussion with her father in order to resolve the situation. John Bichelmeyer, the quiet, thoughtful butcher, never fails to impress with his motivational suggestions.

In the brief 101 pages, *Lunchmeat & Life Lessons* - a title taken from one of Lucas's nieces commenting on how she helped solve her problems: by going to her grandfather for the titular helpful treats - Lucas manages to impart her father's unique sensibility: a strong business mind crossed with superbly sympathetic people skills. Throughout the book, the reader can feel both Lucas's love and respect for her father, as well as her upbeat outlook on life and desire to help share his message with the world.

In a moving cross between *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *Tuesdays With Morrie*, Lucas blends a memoir and tribute to her father with effective business management skills and self-help motivation. "I'm hoping that business owners and managers will read my book and realize that its wisdom can transform the working relationships they have with their staffs." This may seem like a tall order for a book full of simple philosophy from a humble butcher, but with Lucas's reverent writing style, and her father's ample wisdom, *Lunchmeat & Life Lessons* has the ability to do just that.