

A SHORTS STORY

THOMAS LLOYD

This story is part of a compilation I wrote many years ago, when I was fearful that my memory was about to vanish. Back then I figured that by my 18th birthday I would be a run-down invalid, so feverishly I wrote down the 118 most memorable events of my life. It turns out my memory wasn't disappearing, but that my brain was completely unable to think of anything but girls, sex, and trying to get laid. But I did end up with 118 stories, enclosed in a scrapbook entitled *The Confessions of a Justified Sinner*. This story, *Getting Shorts Ripped Off*, has been only slightly edited from its handwritten form.

When I was seven, my brother and I used to always go swimming down in the park, where the playground was. It should be noted that in order to stop kids from stealing my bike, I had removed my seat. Anyhow, I rode my bike down to the park, standing up (which happened to be the fashion of the day), wearing a shirt and some swimming shorts. When I got to the park, my brother saw two girls, and wanted to impress them by being cool.

There was an old cast-iron spin-go-round, and my brother started spinning it to show off his puny muscles. When it was going fast, he would jump on it, and then jump off. It was a dangerous move we rarely did. Now it was my turn to impress the girls. When Bro had it going blindingly fast, so fast you couldn't even see the bars, I jumped straight into the spinning circle of death. Somehow I grabbed a bar!

I held on for dear life, but shit! Shit! Shitty! The centrifugal force was way too much for me. And there I was, hanging on for dear life. I was terrified but my grip started to let go. My hands let loose and I went flying through the air at breakneck speed. I was flung through the air when all of a

sudden I stopped, and was flung back into the steel death-spinner. After hitting it I was then being dragged at approximately 700 miles per hour through the sand. After four or five full circles around it, for some unexplainable reason, I stopped. All I could hear was a crowd laughing at me. Then I realized that my swim suit had caught on a jagged piece of metal when I fell, and had been torn off. I was left naked in the sand.

I grabbed the tattered shorts and threw them on, and I positioned them so they covered my front. I had to hold them in position with one hand, and I went to jump on my bike. When I jumped on, I remembered to my horror that I had no bike seat. So I had to bike home standing up, holding on to the handle bar with one hand, while the other one held my shorts closed. This was positively difficult. I can only imagine what people driving by thought of me on my way home, but the real comedy happened when I got to an intersection. I had to stop, but I could not dismount my bike, or my ass would flash dozens of cars.

At this point I was balling my eyes out. A lifetime later I got home still crying my eyes out, and was greeted by my horrified Mom. Imagine my Mom opening the door to her crying seven-year-old son with his shorts ripped off. When I sputtered out what had happened, she broke out laughing, and soon my brother was through the door. He was about to vomit from laughing all the way back from the park. The two of them rolled around the kitchen for about six hours, and were eventually joined by my father. I ran upstairs and stayed in my room, scarred for life. I think even more scaring was that my mother would never stop telling the story to everyone she met, including every teacher at every parent-teacher interview.