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The Scar

Emily C. Ryan
St. John Fisher College

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Abstract
In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"See it all went down like this . . . my brother and I were in a motorcycle race on a beautiful sunny day; I remember the asphalt seemed to ripple with heat, the sky never so blue, the wind so exhilarating against our skin and hair - and that's when it all just goes blank. I must have hit the pavement going at least 100 miles per hour; all the doctors said that I was lucky to have lived . . ."

Cover Page Footnote
EMILY RYAN

THE SCAR

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my brother and I were in a motorcycle race on a beautiful sunny day; I remember the asphalt seemed to ripple with heat, the sky never so blue, the wind so exhilarating against our skin and hair — and that’s when it all just goes blank. I must have hit the pavement going at least 100 miles per hour; all the doctors said that I was lucky to have lived . . .

It always happens when I’m just not ready for it. “Wow, where did that scar on your back come from?” A numbing question that sends my mind wondering — All the perilous journeys and harrowing adventures I had fabricated in my mind so many times before. Suddenly I’m on the spot, and I just can’t find the words to make my story live up to the bustle my little scar has caused; a spot on my back that I haven’t had the pleasure of seeing, which seems to lend itself to stories that even the best liar (or perhaps fabricator) cannot forge. I panic for a couple minutes, muttering a few “uhhh’s” and “ohhh’s” here and there all the while staring into the hungry eyes and searching for a story that will appease their ever-growing appetites. “What this little thing?” I modestly but heroically ask, buying myself more time, and building some suspense.

on one of our midnight trips to get emergency Easy Mac at Ghetto Wegmans, a man in a bright orange hoody with shifty eyes walked in; I knew right away that he was up to no good, so I made sure to keep a close eye on him. He made his way slowly around the store, and then finally arrived at the register where he pulled out a rusty knife that must have been 10 inches long. Needless to say I was there in a flash, and this wound here is just a little reminder . . . that and my medal of honor . . .

Too many times have I looked into those wanting eyes, seen in them the ability to create my own superhero, and watched it all slip away, because when it comes right down to it, I just can’t do it. For whatever reason, whether it be my inability to work under pressure, or my impossible desire to weave myself into the perfect hero, I cannot find the stories I so long to tell about this damned little scar. It always happens the same way. After several minutes I sigh, a new look of disappointment overcoming the once valiant look I donned just seconds before, and tell my mislead spectators the true story, in its pathetic and anti-climatic entirety. Once I am finished, they often sigh, a long dissapointed sigh, grunt a depleted “oh,” and simply walk away.

it was the championship soccer game senior year and I can’t remember a more exciting time. The score was all tied up and there were only 30 seconds to go, we had possession of the ball and with the shrill cry of the whistle, the ball was off and headed my way. One bicycle kick, the winning goal, and some surgery later, we are the champions, and I have this scar . . .

For a while after this fairly damaging ordeal, I find myself reproaching the scar. After all, what is the point in having such a scar if you cannot tell some amazing story about how it became a part of you? But just as surely as I am asked, “How’d you get that scar?” my daydreaming continues. Maybe, just maybe, I will get the story right.