

REEKED IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A Boy's Puberty Story



RICHARD CARLSON

Reeked in Junior High School: A Boy's Puberty Story

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About the story: Liam, a pubescent, twelve-year-old seventh-grader, made an innocent mistake before going to school. How did Liam get out of his predicament? A fictitious short story taking place in the southwestern desert of Tucson, Arizona, USA, in the fall of 1983.

About the author: Richard Carlson is an author of children's and coming-of-age books. He is a highly sensitive person, or HSP. You can learn more about him at

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Liam, a twelve-year-old seventh-grader, finished taking a shower before school. He was taking his time but didn't want to be late. Completely naked, he admired his naked body in the mirror as he checked for more pubic hair.

He had noticed, a week ago, that he had some thin dark hairs just barely growing in. *When will I have a full bush of hair?* He hoped it would happen soon.

Liam looked at his armpits for any hair. *Not yet.* But he could hope.

Then, Liam carefully shaved the slight fuzz on his pubescent face.

He was new to shaving and had only done it one other time, last weekend when he was at his dad's house. His parents were divorced. His dad had shown him how to shave. Liam rubbed his sore face; it hurt, especially because he had rushed shaving.

What should I put on my face?

We don't have any aftershave.

He remembered that his mom always used alcohol, such as

whiskey, to put on cuts, abrasions, and scrapes.

Liam didn't know that it was not good to use alcohol, like whiskey, on cuts.

Donning a towel around his waist, he hurried barefoot to the pantry, found the whiskey, and headed back to the bathroom while his mom put on her makeup and got ready for work in her room.

Locking the bathroom door behind him, he doused his cheeks and above his lip with the whiskey,

even though it was stinging his face.

Liam was careful not to get any in his mouth or eyes.

Then, he got dressed.

“Have a nice day at work,” Liam called to his mom as he walked by her room.

“Have a good day at school,” she replied.

He pulled on his backpack as he hurried to the bus stop.

The girls at school will like me shaven. Liam hoped he would grow more facial and pubic hair very soon.

There was a beautiful girl who was also in seventh grade, Dusty, and he really liked her. Liam wanted to show off to her that he had shaved.

His best friend, Pete, was at the bus stop with the other kids.

“You reek, Liam. What were you drinking?” Pete exclaimed, hoping his best friend wouldn’t get in trouble at school.

“Oh, no! I put whiskey on my face after shaving. I forgot that I’d smell like alcohol,” he said as the bus pulled up and the kids got on.

Liam was the last to get on, after Pete. The boys sat near the back of the school bus, hoping the bus driver wouldn’t smell the whiskey.

“When we get to school, I’ll rinse my face in the restroom,” Liam decided, not wanting to get in trouble. The reek of alcohol permeated the air.

At school, he raced to get off the bus, hoping again that the bus driver wouldn't smell the alcohol.

“Whew,” Liam said to Pete as they headed to the closest restroom.

However, near the restroom entrance stood the principal, with a clipboard.

“Let's go to another one,” Liam said, and they hurried away.

The other boys' restroom had several boys using the urinals and stalls. Pete stood there as Liam

desperately rinsed his face twice at a sink.

Pete handed him two fresh paper towels from the dispenser.

“That’s better,” Liam said, patting his face dry.

“Now you smell like pizza,” Pete joked, as the boys headed to their first class, P.E.

Liam was relieved and happy now. He had a great day at school. He talked with Dusty, the girl he liked, during lunch.

“How do I look?” Liam asked her, showing her a profile of his face. “I shaved. Can’t you tell?” he said with a grin.

“Cool. You are really cute,” she said, making his chest tingle with love for her.

“Thank you,” he replied, feeling great inside because she thought he was attractive.

Liam ate lunch with Pete after spotting him at the table they usually ate at. Pizza was on the school menu today.

“I’ve got some more pubes,”
Liam said quietly, so no one else
would hear, “around my willy.”

“Good. I have a bush, like a
garden hedge above my junk,” Pete
said.

Liam couldn’t wait for his pubic
hair to grow in. “Do you have hair on
your armpits?” he asked.

“No,” Pete said raising one arm
and holding open his short sleeve,
showing Liam his armpit.

When he got home that day, Liam, who had learned his lesson, asked his mom to get antiseptic spray for cuts and aftershave. He told her what had happened. She was surprised.

Days later, Liam asked his doctor about using whiskey on cuts, and she told him not to use alcohol.

He never used alcohol on his face or anywhere else again.

Liam continued to shave the fuzz off his face every so often. Eventually, by the time he was in high school, he

was shaving every morning. He was a happy young man.