A Rushing Red River Flowing From My Hand

It was a crisp, chilly, fall evening at Gates Park, and I was bored with not much to do. My dad was playing a coach’s soccer game. I was watching the game, and then my brother and I wandered off to the exercise park, where a few other boys my age were playing. When I got there, I saw the sparkling metal equipment. It looked as though it had just been polished for my entertainment. It drew me in, and I hopped onto one of the pieces of equipment. I looked down and saw a sign that stated, “Not intended for play. Please keep children away from moving parts.” I read the sign, but decided to play on it anyway. To my left are some kids using a machine that swings your legs while you hold your hands on a bar to stabilize yourself. That’s when I hear one of the other boys say, “Hey look at this!”

I look over and saw one of the boys lift up one of the swinging leg bars… 90°... 150°… 180°… 220°…

“What the heck!”

“Is this bar supposed to go this far?”

“Uhhh, I don’t think so.” I say.

I walk over to see the broken equipment. I step on the other leg and wrap my hand around the bar to balance myself. At that moment I hear *swoosh!* The world stops. I look down. I see a little white thing sticking out of my finger. Oh my gosh. That a bone. The next thing I know there is blood gushing, and overflowing from my hand. Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh. My mind races. I hear the kids yelling for their parents. I look down and see that my middle finger is split right down the middle with the skinny white bone sticking right out. I freeze on the spot. “Agh. Agh. AAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!” I grab my split finger with my other hand, but there is still a thick flow of blood spilling out from my finger, like a rushing river in the middle of spring. I see my brother racing down the hill, to tell my dad what just happened.

“Your going to be okay!” says a stressed but reassuring voice.

“I-I-I-Ijustdontknowwhathappend!!” I start sobbing, and some other parents rush over to see what the commotion is about.

“Here.” A lady gives me some Kleenex, and a napkin from Subway. I try to remove my clutching hand from my finger, and when I do the blood starts flowing again. This time the river of blood rushes even faster. I take the napkin and quickly wrap my mangled finger, and before I can blink, the napkin is a dark crimson color. I immediately clutch my finger once again, and see my blood stained hand. I hear the other kids around us.

“Eww!” “It’s so bloody,” says one.

“It’s my fault. I lifted up the bar,” says another.

“No it’s not. The machine was broken. It’s none of our faults,” says a third.

Then I hear a small scared voice.

“Be quiet! Can’t you see he’s traumatized!”

I hear them but I can’t say anything. I want to tell them that it was just an accident and that they don’t have to feel bad.

It seemed as though time had slowed way down. *I feel like I’ve been here a thousand years.* I finally knew what it felt like to be a snail. My legs felt heavy and I just wanted to wake up from this nightmare. I faintly could hear the voice of my dad, and I look up and see him taking off his jersey and wrapping it around my bloody hand. I try to say thank you to everyone who helped me, but the words got muffled in my mouth and I say, “thn ku.”

My dad leads me to our truck, and I climb in, and he buckles my seatbelt. While driving, my dad sings me a song, and I calm down a little.

“Dad? Will I be okay?”

“Of course buddy.”

“Okay,” I say with an almost silent voice.

I sit quietly while my dad is still singing the song about how much my family loves me, and I pray to God, “God, please let me recover from this injury.”

Once we arrive in the hospital, we wait in the emergency room for what feels like forever. Finally the nurse comes and says, “Joel?” I stand up and walk down the cold, bare hallway, and arrive in the hospital room. I sit down and close my bloodshot eyes, and feel the salty tears run down my face.

I open them again and see the familiar faces of my mom, dad, brother and sister. They are crowding around me with concerned looks on their faces.

“How do you feel?” says my mom.

“Alright.” I mumble.

“I was really worried and I didn’t know what happened, and I thought that you chopped you finger right off, and…” my brother stops his sentence short.

I see his glassy eyes, and I suspect that he had cried for a while.

“Trevor?” I’m gonna be okay.” I say with a strong voice to show him that I’m not worried, and he doesn’t have to be either. Although I was scared too, I knew I’d be okay.

I lay in the hospital bed with my finger in a cast, and I thought: *This experience has taught be to be careful and safe, so from now on, I am going to try to be safe in everything I do.* And for a long time I *was* safe in all that I did, until a month ago I got a concussion, but that’s another story for another time.