

# WIRE



## MY FIRST MORPHINE

### *Head Like A Kite's naked despair*

Why is it that most of my "first times" seem to involve nudity? My introduction to morphine upped the ante by mixing in humiliation with full-frontal exposure. But I'm getting ahead of myself. In the spring of 1999, I was the #1 ranked pro-am Northwest road bicycle racer, which led to a cushy mountain-bike racing sponsorship. But all that ended abruptly while racing down a fast descent, when I collided with another racer, breaking my collarbone and plummeting to the dirt trail so hard that my helmet broke in half.

The last thing I heard was my collarbone snapping—a crushing sound more thunderous than any John Bonham "When the Levy Breaks" drum mashup. An ambulance crew arrived immediately, and fearing I might have a broken back, they filled me with morphine and cut off my bike shorts and jersey with scissors to inspect my now naked body.

I'm not sure what hurt more—my shoulder or my pride, as I lay naked in front of the spectators while the crew slowly scooped me up and put me on a stretcher. I'm sprawled out on the race course for all to see and they cut off my clothes! I mean, didn't someone think of at least shading me with a blanket? It was like Paramedics Gone Wild.