

## standing in line for confession

I remember  
standing in line for confession  
frantically trying to think of anything bad I might have done  
    in the last week  
    or the last month  
or however long it had been since the last random occasion  
my dad had decided  
    that I was due to confess.

wishing everyone in line ahead of me  
would hurry up and keep it short  
as I tried to think of anything I'd done that was  
    so horrible  
that I should be required to kneel  
    in a dark creepy booth  
and tell  
    some spooky faceless stranger behind a screen  
all about it  
while dad waited out in the car.

for some reason  
the requirement to confess wrongdoing  
    to spooky faceless strangers  
    in dark creepy booths  
didn't apply to my dad.

despite my best efforts to come up with  
an honest list of sins  
well  
I almost never had anything to say  
I mean  
I really tried to be a good kid  
    follow all the rules  
    get along with everybody  
    don't lie  
    and stay outta trouble  
but I knew I wasn't supposed to walk  
into the confessional booth  
and say  
    I hadn't done anything wrong  
the priests had made it very clear  
that we were all loaded up with  
sins from birth  
    even little kids like me  
so I knew I had to come up with something.

the first few lines were easy  
right outta the book  
    *bless me father I have sinned*  
then  
    *it's been*  
        (fill in random period of time in weeks months or years)  
    *since my last confession*  
which would always lead to a bunch of questions from the priest  
like  
    *why has it been so long since your last confession*  
and  
    *how often do you attend mass*  
followed by some stern rebuking  
    when I didn't have the right answers  
    which I never did  
but I knew I wasn't responsible for any of that  
cause I was only a kid  
it wasn't like I could  
    drive myself to church a couple of times a week  
    for mass and confession  
and I knew I wasn't supposed to talk with anyone about  
    what my life was like at home  
so I usually made up some stuff I supposedly did wrong  
    to fill up the rest of the confession time  
    and get myself out of there in one piece  
until the next random confession.

I always figured that making stuff up was  
probably a sin too  
but it sure felt a lot safer  
than going in there with nothing.