



# **The Titelist** **by Formerly Philly**

This is the story of Ricky Rude. Or maybe it's the story of Benyomen Fishenshitz. Either way, it all starts with Ricky.

You see, Ricky was this six-year old I knew way back in Kindergarten. Ricky was one of those kids who had a nickname for everyone. He was the kind of bully who just wasn't physical enough to be your basic schoolyard tough, so he chose to be a browbeater instead. He was that kid in the class who gave everyone nicknames. Every class has at least one Ricky.

You see, Ricky was a Titleist by blood. That's not just to say that he dispensed titles upon his fellow classmates, what I mean is he was a Titleist, descended on his great-grandmother's side from the family name known as Titlelist, and I'm not talking about the golf ball.

Now, if you don't believe me about these names, if you think I'm just having fun with you, I'm not. Believe me, these are real names.

There really is a Ricky Rude, just like there really is a Ben Dover on Aycock Road in Lexington, Georgia, and a Hugh Jass in Andover, Minnesota. Just like there's a Lance Boyle in Parsippany, New Jersey, a Jeff Johnsonrod in Pensacola, Florida, and a Jack Knoff in Rush City, Minnesota.

Just like there's a Dick Hertz on Wick Lane in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, and a Harry Balls in Miami, Florida. Look 'em up if you don't believe me. You can't make this shit up.

And yes, if you're wondering, there really is a Seymour Butz. He lives in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania. And like I said, there really is a Ricky Rude. Richard

Rude lives on State Route 26 in Glen Aubrey, New York.

Then there was Ricky Rude's mother, Shelby Rude, who was once married to Ricky's father, Will B. Rude. Shelby was only a Rude by marriage. By birth she was a Yokelish. But she took to being a Rude quite naturally, and many said she was even better at being a Rude than was her husband. Most people thought, upon meeting Will B. Rude, that he was actually more like a Boorish than a Rude. A Boorish, like the Allentown Boorishes. The Boorishes of Allentown, Pennsylvania, not related in any way with Cheryl L. Boorish of Dallas, Pennsylvania.

The Boorishes, like millions of others, had their name changed when they passed through that small island in the middle of NY Harbor in the year 1912. They had their name changed by a man named Albe Rude. Albe Rude, as luck would have it, was Ricky Rude's great-grandfather.

The Rudes never had their name changed. They had always been Rudes. No Rude ever passed through any line or was subjected to the ridicule of immigration. Ever. Ricky's great-grandfather came long before the word immigrant even became part of the American vernacular. When the first Rude stepped off a boat into the New World, he was called a Colonist. In America, the word Colonist is considered a compliment, while Immigrant is an insult.

So you see, Albe Rude was actually his real name, just as *his* father's real name was Alzo Rude, and *his* grandfather's name was Iam Rude, and *his* great-grandfather's name was Lesbe Rude. None of these, of course, should be confused or associated with a Mr. Al Rude, who today can be found at the Rosey Baby Crawfish Cajun House in Lauderhill, Florida.

So being a Rude by birth, you can guess how Albe must have treated these dirty little immigrants on that small rock in the middle of the Hudson River, also known to some as *The Island of Tears*.

But just being a Rude in itself wasn't enough to do what Albe Rude did with gusto, as they used to say, on that little island between the years 1892 and 1924. No, it took a little something extra to be the kind of man he was. And that little something extra had been provided by his mother, Anita Rude.

Albe's mother, just like Ricky's, was not a Rude by birth, but by marriage. By birth she was a Laugher, and not akin in any way to Blissjoyce Laugher of Caracas Drive in Mesquite, Texas. Anita Rude had never even been to Texas. So

there.

At the time Anita Rude was born, Texas was nothing more than sand dunes and tumbleweed. Hell, it wasn't even a state yet. Back then, Texans, or Texicans as they were known, had just snuck up on and captured the entire Mexican army while it was taking a siesta. A siesta is a nap. Mexicans are people who are known all over the world for taking siestas.

So the combining of these two bloodlines, the Rudes and the Laughers, is what made life so entertaining for Albe Rude on that little rock just south of Manhattan, a three-acre plot of land that before it was purchased by the Dutch in 1630 had actually been called Gull Island by the natives.

Albe Rude worked on that little island for over thirty years. He loved his job. He did his job with so much gusto in fact that it's said he alone renamed nearly one million immigrants. How else do you think so many people came to have names like Dikshit, Pusey, Fagot, and Shagnasty? Like Ashitosh Dikshit of Firewood Drive in Cupertino, California, and Al G. Fagot Jr. of Mull Avenue in Akron, Ohio. It was all Albe Rude's doing. It was his legacy. And not just because he was a Rude, but because he was also a Laugher.

But the Laugher name was all but extinct by the time Ricky came along. The years had worn away and watered the bloodline down so now Ricky was all Rude, no Laugher.

And like I said, Ricky was a Titleist by blood, descended on his great-grandmother's side from the family name known as Titleist, not to be confused with Ernie Titleist of Overland Park, Kansas, no relation.

So anyway, I guess what I'm trying to say is that what all the clerks and inspectors on Ellis Island could not do nearly a hundred years ago, Ricky Rude managed to achieve on my very first day of school. With one simple roll of the tongue he changed my family name from Fishenshitz to Fish. Why? I'm not exactly sure. All I know is that it was Ricky's job to rename everyone, no matter what. He was, after all, just a kindergartner.

And Ricky was not the sort of browbeater to let a nickname languish. Over the course of the year I went from Fish to Fish Sticks to Fish Tank to Fish Food, and finally Fish Face. And Ricky's names stuck. All throughout Elementary School I was known as Fish Face, or at least Fish something. By the time I got to Middle School, my actual name had all but been forgotten.

Our family name had made it past all the inspectors at Ellis Island, the Census Bureau, even the Tax Man, and lasted nearly a hundred years as-is, but it couldn't get by a loud-mouthed six year old named Ricky Rude.

So as you can see, as far back as Kindergarten I'd been thinking of changing my name. It wasn't until college that I actually got around to doing it legally. I changed my last name to Perry. And no, I'm not ashamed I did, though I still haven't told my parents. The right time just hasn't come up, that's all.

Why Perry, you may ask? How did I come about choosing that name? Maybe it's from the glorious Commodore Perry who invaded Japan and sailed around the world. Or maybe I got it from Fred Perry, the last Englishman to win Wimbledon, or Steve Perry the singer, or Joe Perry the guitarist, or Matthew Perry the actor, or even Perry Mason. Sorry, but none of the above. I got it from the brand of shirt I was wearing at the time, Perry Ellis.

And where did I come up with Bentley Weston? Bentley and Weston were these two brothers on a soap opera my mother used to watch, these two rich kids who were always scheming and fighting with each other. They were always at the country club, or at the beach, or by a pool somewhere. They never went to work and they never even once mentioned anything about having a job. So my new name came from two daytime-television characters and a line of overpriced shirts.

So there you have it. My name is Bentley Weston Perry, a fine, upstanding WASP name, and it has served me well. So what's my real name? My birth name? No, I haven't forgotten it. It's Benyomen Freudenthal Fishenshitz. But just try fitting in at Harvard, or on Wall Street, or Tanglewood Elementary for that matter, with a name like Fishenshitz.

And whatever happened to Ricky? Some say Ricky hooked up with the WWE, that he got into naming wrestlers like Tyrus Rex, Frank Stein, and the Atomic Burrito Brothers. Some say that he came up with one nickname too many and wound up getting dropped on his head. Rumor has it he's in a coma now. I guess if Ricky could be any vegetable, he'd want to be an eggplant, or a butternut squash at least.

Others say Ricky went into the porn industry, that he came up with such classic porno titles as *Big Trouble in Little Vagina*, *White Men Can't Hump*, and *Cockfight at the O'Gay Corral*, that he created porn-star names like Ima Cummings, Busta Nutt, and Woody Cox. Rumor has it that he got a little too

close to the action, contracted AIDS, and died a slow, horrible death. While many agree he did indeed die, others say he actually overdosed on heroin, or methamphetamine.

And me, where do I think Ricky is now? I actually have it on good authority that Ricky is alive and well and working on Madison Avenue writing catch phrases and bad metaphors for politicians. Rumor has it he's the one who came up with the whole Wall Street/Main Street thing. Wouldn't surprise me. Last week I heard this politician say, "We need to stop thinking about what's important at the corporate conference table and focus on what's important at the average American's kitchen table." Oh yeah, that one has Ricky written all over it.

The Titleist is the latest in the Flashbytes series from worst-selling author Philip Loyd. Everyone's has their own experience with a bully at one time or another. For Loyd, his was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. And he was a titlist, just like in the story above.

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## About the author



Philip Loyd loves fat chicks and cheap beer, though not necessarily in that order. Loyd has worked for Forbes and McGraw Hill, each time running for his life as if waking up from a nightmare. His dream is to one day move to Hollywood and win a Razzie. Loyd lives in Dumbass, Texas. <http://PhilipLoyd.com>