

Topic: Learning the hard way

Abstract: I have gone through a lot of hardships, getting into many problems. An experience, when I got arrested thought me the greatest lesson. It is something I don't want to experience again or something I would wish upon someone else either. I learned to read into situations the hard way.

Keywords: officer, interrogation, advise, apperance

Reading is fundamental

I had gotten a tattoo to remind me of what I had gone through in the past few months, but that proved to be a non-adequate reminder. I was back, back were you might ask, back to that cold freighting little office at the back of the store. Once again I had been caught red handed for the third time. I knew well that this time I was screwed for sure, for the first time I feared for myself. The interrogation was going smoothly; I had previous experience so I knew not to complicate things and I knew what they wanted to know. I confess without actually saying it, and I showed them the tool. It wasn't like the second time where the officer took pity on me and let me go without arrest to be later settled in the courts. From what I read and understood of the officers' words that second time was that I had the look that of an innocent young man who he would not even think about stopping if he was to see me in the streets. He said I didn't have that gangbanger look upon me that would get most officers to have a second look at me. At the moment I realized his bias judgment, I knew I would be home that night. This officer seemed nice going about the interrogation about the second case. He seemed to conclude I was merely a teenager that had a bad lapse of judgment and had obviously learnt his lesson. He was right and

gave my friend and I advise that made a difference in our lives. We restarted school and started to focus on our future.

So what happened you might be wondering, well I actually have no idea. Everything was perfect up to this point, I was on track. As I sat in that back office I asked myself this and still had no answer. Maybe I am a kleptomaniac, or perhaps I was bored and looking for entertainment, or simply horrible decision making. Either way I was in this and determined to overcome. The interrogation proceeded and

as I had anticipated I was being sent back to jail. As I waited for the arresting officer to arrive the atmosphere in the little office got calm. It was a bit too relaxed in my opinion; it reminded me of the first time I was in the holding office. Yet I felt more respect from these security people that knew I had a history than what I got from the first security people. The first time my friend and I were stopped at the front door by two obviously over weight guys screaming at us to get inside. Much like in those television shows were the officers screams at the criminal to get on the floor when they bust down the door to the hideout. Then proceed to take us to a very cold room which was kept cold because they seemed to overheat easily from their weight condition. Even throughout questioning they kept making crude jokes and rude remarks to each other, all the meanwhile mean mugging us and giving disdainful looks. Only one of them kept a professional level and to my surprise it wasn't the store manager. There was one thing both the first security people and the third did and that was celebrated. Why celebrate, well every time a person is caught the person who caught them receives a gift card or some kind of price. But the third time I was caught it was an even bigger one because I was the first one caught in the whole region so they got an even bigger price for me and boy I felt special for that. At the moment I saw it the same as how the military gives metals for killing the enemy, but it just clicked that they were just

doing their job. The job to protect the public from the enemy where ever it might be, but in this case to protect the profit of the corporation. After their celebratory congratulations they seemed to go back to work slightly ignoring me. They monitored the cameras and started to have small talk with each other.

“Where should I point this camera?” Asked the girl

“Point it at those watches on display, put three on them.” The guy said as he pointed at the watch display.

She did as told and randomly panned in and out the cameras at people walking and shopping. And every time someone would get close to the watches she would watch carefully. Out of nowhere the guy receives a message through the radio.

“Where they at? Switch to camera seven.” He commanded to the girl

“The guys in the black?” he questioned his coworker as the girl followed them with the camera.

“They don’t seem to be doing much just walking plus they have an older adult, looks like a dad.”

While the guy and his coworker converse I’m just think to myself,

“Are they really following a group of guys based on their appearance? How bias can you get really now and just because there is an adult it don’t mean that they won’t do anything.”

And as I watch them follow the guys all the way to the parking lot I start wondering why I was followed by the cameras if I’m dressed and look like any other person. Well later I learn

through a friend that worked at that store that I was already on their watch list, and for that reason I was being monitored. The time finally came when the officer arrived and I was once again in handcuffs and escorted to the cop car. To my surprise I wasn't scared of jail but of what my parents reactions might be. My parents had arrived when they were called to pick up my sister but I did not get to see them. I was more scared of being kicked out of my house than I was of going to jail. The fear to lose parents unconditional love will always be one of the greatest fears; it may even be greater than the fear of death itself. As some would rather die being loved in a sea of lies than live hated by their creator. I didn't care if they loved me as long as I had a place to stay. The thought of being homeless hunted me the whole drive to the jailhouse

We arrived to the jail entrance door and I was ready to get this over with. I had been waiting for five hours and was finally here and I knew I would be waiting for a while longer but I knew I could at least sleep in the holding cells. The officer stops right before the door and starts shuffling through her papers and proceeds to ask me questions. She hadn't finished her paper work and seemed to want to hurry through it. Throughout the questioning she starts asking if stealing is a problem and I tell her not really, she somehow gets me to say it's something I enjoy and do it to get a high. I'm tiered and sleepy and at the moment and that sounded like a good reason why. Well I honestly thought she was doing it to help me that maybe they could put me in some kind of program or classes, but in reality she was screwing me over. Maybe it was easier to make a report on that than something else but that came to affect me greatly. I should of known they would try to twist my story a bit to their favor just like the first time were the officer confused me into saying that I went in with the intent when the intent wasn't formed until after I was in already. At the moment I didn't know little things like that mattered but the supposed wanting to do is as punishable as doing it.

The officer seemed aggravated like she had worked the whole day and had mentioned something about her reports being late. I could see she was stressing, and I think my constant smiling wasn't helping. She got off the car and opened my door, proceeds to close it again as I'm about to step off, goes back and starts filling out more paperwork. She finishes after five minutes then opens my door and escorts me in to the first room. She gives a sigh of relief as she walks in the door, maybe her shift is over I think to myself as I stand by the wall like I had done once before. She gives her stack of papers to another officer and starts talking about her day. She remarks about how the mall was packed and was an overall a hectic day. With a look of relief that her day is almost done she directs me to the next room.

"Stand and face the wall." She tells me but notices that I'm already doing that. She gives me a confused look and asks me if it was only my second time.

"So have you been to jail before?"

"Yes, I have."

"Here to this one?" I respond yes knowing that she had previously asked this before, I wonder if there trying to see if I lie.

I go through the whole process quickly even my medical history as if I had done this a couple of times prior. She searches my person and puts everything that I had with me in a plastic baggy, even a penny she found in my jacket I didn't know I had. The whole thing goes by pretty relaxed and she seemed to appreciate it as she starts to smile now. I sign off that there keeping my things and then get that infamous phone call. The phones are right outside the first room you go into to the right past the office window. There are three of them attached to the wall with only two of them with stools, why only two stools to three phones I have no clue but that is how they

have it. They point to the phones and say call whomever you have to call. I honestly thought, the first time I was there, that they gave you a quarter and had one call. You're allowed to call as many places you want but obviously not for hours but they do give you all the time you need. And as I sat there waiting for someone to pick up my call I wondered why the officers are so nice this time around. Last time they guy who supervised me was rude and a brute, although very cute. No one answered my call and once again I was put in a solitary holding cell. I first thought it was like that for every inmate but I later learned it's only for those in protective custody. It's a little room and it's cold with it being all cement and a stainless steel toilet. I use the toilet paper they leave there to use as a pillow I curl into a little ball and try to fall asleep.

The holding cell is the worst part of the jail experience. It's cold, hard, and small with nothing to do but sit, sleep or stare out the little window at the door. The florescent light makes it hard to sleep, and the dirty floor and walls makes it hard to want to move. The hardest thing is that you might be there for countless hours and it feels like an eternity. The holding cell is the place that makes you think about all your problems, from the big things about your life to little things. It makes one feel small and I found it to be enriching. To think big outside your own self to notice all those things you would otherwise miss, how every action has a great significance in life. How beneficial your family and culture can be to you at unexpected moments. You have the power to affect every single outcome, just start with a smile and read on.