

Drunk Beating Someone at His Own Game

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“Beating Someone at His Own Game” is a first-person narrative in which an ordinary commuter is mistakenly arrested with a group of intoxicated people and then confronts police officers who try to protect themselves by inventing a second accusation. The original story places me at the center of the conflict and builds toward an ironic resolution: after the court accepts the false bicycle charge, my request for the return of the nonexistent bicycle exposes the officers’ dishonesty and forces them to replace what they claimed I had been riding. The story depends on changing emotions, physical detail, and a protagonist who resists corruption through calm reasoning rather than violence. I have preserved that plot while developing the setting, dialogue, tension, and moral consequences more fully.

A Routine Built Around Work and Study

My weekdays were arranged so tightly that I rarely had time to question them. I woke before sunrise, prepared a quick breakfast, dressed for work, and checked the clock repeatedly as though lateness were a moral failure. After an eight-hour shift, I usually returned home long enough to change clothes and collect my university books. Evening classes ended after dark, and by the time I reached home again, the city had become quiet. The routine was exhausting, but it represented progress. Work paid my expenses, while education promised that the strain would lead somewhere. On most days, my car connected each part of the schedule and gave me the illusion that I controlled my time.

The Morning of February 27, 2018

February 27 began badly. When I turned the key, the engine produced a weak grinding sound and then fell silent. I tried again, hoping persistence could repair machinery, but the dashboard lights dimmed and the car refused to move. I could not miss work, so I locked the vehicle and hurried toward the train station. The delay followed me throughout the day. I arrived anxious, worked without a proper break, and left with barely enough time to reach class. Because the university was not far from the station, I decided to walk rather than wait for another connection. The air was cold, and the streets were busy with commuters, students, and people moving between bars and restaurants. (Writer’s Digest) (Writer’s Digest, 2018)

The Group on the Street

After class, I began walking home with my books under one arm. Several people ahead of me were shouting, laughing, and stumbling across the pavement. The smell of alcohol reached me before I

came near them. One man tried to walk in a straight line but moved from side to side as though the sidewalk were rolling beneath him. Another leaned against a lamp post, lost his balance, and laughed when his friend pulled him upright. Their movements appeared disconnected from their intentions. They seemed to command their legs to move forward while their bodies followed a different set of instructions.

I kept my distance and crossed toward the edge of the sidewalk. I had no interest in becoming part of their argument or attracting attention. At that moment, two police officers turned the corner. Their vehicle stopped sharply, and the officers stepped out with the confidence of people who believed they had already understood the scene.

The Sweep

“Everyone against the wall,” one officer shouted.

The intoxicated group reacted slowly. One person raised his hands; another protested; a third appeared not to understand. I continued walking because the command did not seem directed at me. The second officer moved into my path.

“That includes you.”

“I’m not with them,” I said. “I’m coming from the university.”

He took my arm and turned me toward the wall. I tried to show him my books and student identification, but he told me to stop arguing. Within minutes, all of us were searched and placed in the police vehicle. The others smelled strongly of alcohol. One fell asleep almost immediately. I sat upright, shocked by how quickly an ordinary walk had become an arrest.

Detectives John and Joseph

At the station, the two officers introduced themselves as Detectives John and Joseph. They processed the group for public intoxication and disorderly conduct. When they reached me, John asked how much I had consumed.

“Nothing,” I said.

Joseph leaned closer, apparently expecting to smell alcohol. His expression changed when he did not.

“You were in the middle of a disturbance,” he said.

“I was walking behind them. You saw my university books. Test me.”

They exchanged a glance. That brief look told me they understood their mistake. I expected an apology and release. Instead, their tone became harder. Admitting the error would mean acknowledging that they had ignored what I said and arrested me without checking. Pride transformed a correctable mistake into deliberate injustice.

The Invented Bicycle

John left the desk and returned with a form. “You were operating a bicycle recklessly,” he said.

I stared at him. “I was walking.”

“You were weaving through pedestrians and creating a hazard.”

“Where is the bicycle?”

Joseph said it had been secured as evidence. I knew then that they were not confused. They were constructing a charge because the original allegation could not survive even a simple examination. The invention was almost absurd, but the uniforms, locked doors, and official paperwork made it dangerous. A false statement written by an officer could appear more credible than the truth spoken by a student alone.

A Night in the Cell

I spent the night with the people arrested on the street. As they became sober, some remembered fragments of the evening while others remained confused. One man complained loudly about the fine he expected. Another apologized to everyone for shouting. I felt anger toward the officers, but I also felt fear. I had no witness and no recording. My car problem explained why I was walking, but it did not prove that I had not used a bicycle earlier. The more I thought about the situation, the more I understood how authority can make an unbelievable story seem ordinary.

I considered shouting, refusing cooperation, or accusing the officers publicly. None of those actions would create evidence. I needed a plan based on the weakness of their story. If a bicycle offense had occurred, there should be a bicycle. They had turned an object that did not exist into the center of their accusation. That object would become the center of my response.

The Courtroom

The following day, we were taken to court. The intoxicated defendants appeared first. Their cases moved quickly. The judge imposed fines of fifty dollars with alternative periods of imprisonment. When my name was called, John and Joseph described a reckless cyclist who had endangered pedestrians and refused instructions. I denied the allegation and explained that I had been walking

home from class after my car broke down. The judge asked whether I had a witness. I did not.

The officers had matching stories. I had only my word. The court found me responsible and imposed a fine of one hundred dollars, with six months of imprisonment if I failed to pay. The decision felt heavier than the amount. Paying would be easier than remaining in custody, but it would also leave the officers' lie intact.

The Request

When the magistrate finished, I stood.

"I will pay the fine," I said.

The officers relaxed. They believed the case had ended.

"I also want my bicycle returned."

The courtroom became quiet.

The judge looked at the officers. "Was the bicycle seized?"

John said it had been taken to the station. Joseph looked toward him, surprised.

"Then it should be returned to the defendant after payment," the judge said.

I thanked the court and asked that the order identify the bicycle by make, color, and condition. The officers could not provide those details. John said the property record might not have been completed. I asked for the seizure receipt. There was none. The lie that had seemed secure when spoken generally began to collapse under specific questions.

Turning Their Own Story Against Them

The judge ordered the officers to locate the bicycle and report back. They left the courtroom angry. I remained calm because every attempt to add detail would create another contradiction. If they claimed the bicycle had been lost, the department would be responsible for property it said it had seized. If they admitted that no bicycle existed, they would expose the false charge. Their effort to save their reputation had placed them in a position where the official story required them to produce physical evidence.

Several hours later, the officers returned without a bicycle. Their supervisor had joined them. After a private discussion with the magistrate, the court set aside the matter for review. The officers were directed to compensate me for the property they had represented as confiscated. A replacement

bicycle valued at approximately \$270 was purchased. The outcome was strange: I had never owned the bicycle connected to the charge, yet their false account created a legal obligation to replace it.

The Irony of the Victory

Receiving a new bicycle did not make the experience harmless. I had lost a night, faced humiliation, and learned that an official record could be built around convenience rather than truth. The resolution was satisfying because the officers were defeated by the facts they invented. I did not fabricate evidence or threaten them. I asked them to follow their own claim to its logical conclusion. In that sense, I beat them at their own game: I used the procedural confidence of their accusation to demand the evidence that procedure required.

Why the Officers' Conduct Was Wrong

The original arrest may have been a hurried mistake during a confused street operation. Mistakes can occur. The ethical failure began when John and Joseph recognized that I was sober and unrelated to the disturbance but refused to correct the arrest. They placed self-protection above justice. Their invented charge abused authority, wasted court time, and damaged trust in law enforcement. A professional officer should document uncertainty, release a person when evidence is absent, and report mistakes honestly. Integrity is tested most clearly when admitting error is embarrassing.

What I Learned About Evidence

The experience taught me that a convincing response is not always the loudest response. I could not match the officers' institutional authority, but I could identify the point where their story depended on something verifiable. The nonexistent bicycle was not a minor detail; it was the alleged instrument of the offense. Asking for it converted a conflict of testimony into a question of evidence. Rational thinking did not eliminate fear, but it prevented anger from directing my choices.

The Role of Character Development

At the beginning of the narrative, I relied on routine and assumed that institutions would behave predictably. The arrest disrupted that confidence. Fear first made me feel powerless, then anger tempted me toward confrontation. By the courtroom scene, I had learned to control those emotions and use observation. John and Joseph also change, though in the opposite direction. They begin as officers performing a public-safety operation, then become increasingly trapped by pride and dishonesty. Their attempt to maintain control reduces their freedom of action until they must account for the fictional property. (Now Novel) (Now Novel, 2016)

A More Responsible Ending

In real life, a replacement bicycle would not fully address a false arrest or fabricated charge. A responsible system would review the officers' reports, preserve evidence, notify supervisors, correct records, investigate misconduct, and provide an accessible complaint process. The narrative's comic justice gives emotional closure, but institutional accountability is necessary to prevent repetition. Other people may not notice the contradiction or possess the confidence to challenge it. Justice should not depend on a victim being clever enough to expose a lie.

Conclusion

February 27, 2018 began with a broken car and ended with a lesson about power, evidence, and emotional control. I was mistakenly arrested with intoxicated strangers, and the officers who recognized the mistake invented a reckless-bicycle charge rather than admit it. In court, I lacked a witness and was initially found responsible. My request for the return of the alleged bicycle exposed the weakness of the accusation and forced the officers to confront the consequences of their own story. The experience showed that corruption often grows from a small refusal to accept responsibility. It also showed that careful questions can be more powerful than rage. I did not defeat the officers by becoming dishonest like them; I defeated their dishonesty by insisting that their official claim produce the evidence it required.

Bibliography

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