

Getting Caught

When Bad Things Happen to Good Shoplifters, A Memoir

Mack Evasion

1994

Contents

Before <i>Evasion</i> , There was...	3
Getting Caught	3

Before *Evasion*, There was...

Evasion, the zine, had its first print run of 10 copies in June of 1999. Like all my bad ideas, it was a refined version of an even worse idea — one that came 5 years before, when I was in high school. You could call it ‘*Pre-vasion*,’ but then it was just called ‘*Suburban Justice*.’ It was my first zine. The idea, as I remember it, went like this:

- Handwrite stories of every illegal thing I’d ever done.
- Pad with editorials on pressing matters for suburban punk rock high school kids, such as if *Thrasher* Magazine had totally sold out, and reviews of which bus drivers let you slide with expired transfers pulled from the trash.
- Pepper with how-to pieces, like the most fun ways to get kicked out of the mall.
- Photocopy.
- Pioneer a bold new distribution model where I reach my target market by just leaving copies inside old books on hoboos at the university library and Greyhound station lobbies. I got as far as the Step Three. The unpublished, handwritten first draft of *Suburban Justice* sat in a box for the next 20 years. In 2014, *Suburban Justice* was rumpled unnecessarily from its comfortable resting place in my Mom’s garage, dusted off, and dragged into the light of public scrutiny — against its will, and my better judgment. What follows is an untitled excerpt I am now giving a name: “*Getting Caught: When Bad Things Happen to Good Shoplifters, A Memoir.*”

Getting Caught

Consider any form of capture, arrest, confrontation or police record not as a defeat but as a battle scar. Wear it proud. Getting caught stealing will always be looked at as the end of your career at first, but it shouldn’t be. Stand up and keep fighting!

The first time I got caught stealing that I can recall was in kindergarden, I was living in California. I was in Payless with my mom and I saw some caps for a cap gun on the ground in the store and I wanted them so I took em. A punk was born! I kne it as rong and I hid the caps under my bed and I ould bring my neighborhood friends over to see them and brag.

One day my mom was cleaning my room and she found them and I confessed and it as a big emotional childhood tragedy. I don’t think I was as bold again until the 5th grade and my teacher Mr. Anderson took away my yo-yo for doing tricks to impress girls. I knew he was just jealous cuz I was the mack so when he wasn’t looking I swiped it back from his desk and I got caught. There was a phone call home followed by hard jail time.

Then, in [TEXT OBSCURED] grade I began [TEXT OBSCURED] no gasoline so with the spirit of [TEXT OBSCURED] in me I ran next door to the nieghbors [TEXT OBSCURED] of gas out of their garage [TEXT OBSCURED] I was like a junkie, I need gas! I knew they weren’t home so I opened their garage door and grabbed the jug. I was bad. Just as I was closing the garage door they pulled into the driveway and I was busted with the jug in my hand and longtime family

friends staring me down. I walked up to the car and said “mind if I borrow this, for our lawn mower?” Slick as a slick slippery frog and free on bail.

Then, later that fall I got busted ripping off chemicals from the science room and I got Saturday school. The next month they felt they had reason to search my locker and found jars and jars of chemicals was going to use to throw the communist leadership of [REDACTED] middle school. I got suspended. Then in 9th grade I tried stealing the Poor Man’s James Bond vol. 1 from magazine city and this [REDACTED] dude grabs me and says “take that book out of your jacket and I’ll let you go” So I did and he did.

Then one time on the ferry to [REDACTED] I pried open Ms. Pac Man a little and I taped a bunch of spoons together to scoop the quarters out and this guy grabs me before I could get the loot and he say “Boy, I’m takin you to the captain, yous stealin quarters!” I started to hit him and put up a monster of a fight because he was handlon me like a little kid trying to drag me to the captain. I got away with a little struggle and he chased me and grabbed me and this terry employee came over and asked whats up. This old man said “Dis boys stealin quartas!” The lady makes me empty my pockets and asks me why I did it and I said “Well, it wasn’t for the money” HA!

I’ve been caught liberating food and battonnes from Albertsons a hundered times and I still go there and I’m just part of the family at Albertsons. I’ve never been busted for straight up shoplifting but they confront me about eating food in the aisles and opening packages of lightors and battenes and taking too many free samples and I was asked not to photo copy dollar bills there anymore or they would arrest me for counterfitting. Me and Andrew got nailed stealing Air Jordan clothes at the Bon Marde. I had nothing on me but I was an accomplice and we had stolen stuff each of the 3 days prior to our arrest and sold the stuff at school so we had quite a business going for a couple of days. It was a massive cop scene and we got calls home to come pick us up by the cops not long after we excercised our right to silence by not giving our names but they brought out the handcuffs so we relented. That was my first taste of a cop car on that day.

During the fall of 10th grade I devised this cool scam where I would pick someones mailbox, order tons of shit to it like Colombia House CD’s and Bill me Magazine subscriptions and those worthless star trek/ Elvis plates from Parade magazine. Then I would go there after school and get the loot, cool scam! I know more of the bills would have to be paid by the owner of the mailbox cuz of all those consumer protection laws and stuff so I didn’t feel to bad about it. After about 6 months of [TEXT OBSCURED] magazines and CD’s then I could ever want I was busted in the act when I was checking it after school one day when this car pulls up and a woman says “You’re the son of a bitch using my bailbox! “And I fucking ran like the Flash and hid under some bushes for like an hour I guess I wasn’t really busted, but I quit going to that mailbox after that, Scary!

One time I was at my moms house and she lives next to this rad Toys R Us so I was in there shopping and I came across this cool Nintendo controller with slo-mo and turbo and everything. Yo! It was totally small and usually they kept the cool shit like this in a case but this one was just kind of sitting there in the doll aisle like it had been dropped by someone hauling it to the stockroom. I knew if I didn’t have this I was never going to beat Metroid or Blaster Master so I took it out of the package and kind of held and let my long sleeves on my Beastie Boys shirt fall over my hand so no one could see it. I darted for the door and as soon as I got outside two fuckers pounced on me like cats and politely asked me to empty my pockets. Of course what they were looking for was in my right hand and they couldn’t see it so I told them my pockets

were empty and they said “Mind if we check?” and I said “No”, so they patted me down and let me go, but hey! I got the controller and beat the system! That’s the point and I beat Metroid and Blaster Master so crime does pay.

I got cut off at the door at Goodwill one day for stealing a coke from Goodwill’s *café de Paris*, the Goodwill restaurant and I had to pay. Most recently they slammed me at Tower Records for the receipt scam I had so much confidence in. Some scams and shoplifting spots can become like a drug where you just can’t stop. At the beginning of summer ’94 it got to the point where I would go to at least one and sometimes all three Tower records locations in my area to scam cash every day. Why Tower? I had just been doing it so long and it was so easy I just had to go with what I know and I knew Tower well I could get 15, 20, 40 bucks at a time with the right receipts and I was hooked. The cash was so good why stop? So I’m in Tower one morning returning a House of Pain cd for 16 bucks and I didn’t really need the money so I was being greedy. I had become way too smug with the scam to exercise the right precautions and the proper tact necessary to pull it so my form was all wrong. I got the CD and approached the counter and explained that I would like my money back.

I knew my time was up when the phone behind the counter rang and the cashier picked it up and he said “Uh-huh, Yeah, Uh-huh, ok, Really? Uh-huh, OK, bye.” And he said to me “It will be just a minute, I need to wait for the supervisor to OK it.” Uh-Oh. This has never happened before so I knew they spotted me and I was busted. These two guys walk up and one was a jackadocious-type character and the other was punk-looking with a shaved head and a ring through his nose. Buddy! I got a big speech on how they knew about every move I make, every time I have scammed there and he even knew every item I have returned *and* the exact total of money I had gotten away with -\$76 and something cents. Whoa, buddy! He said they had a big file on me or something with all the receipts I used, that every employee was given my description, skateboard and all, and they have been trying to nat me for some time. By that time my ego was huge and I felt like kind of privileged and honored to have attracted so much attention and become such an infamous celebrity around these parts. *Receipt Bandit Strikes Again! Receipt Bandit Arrested — Crime Spree Cut Short! The End of An Empire!* Well the funny thing was they didn’t know the half of it because I had scammed way more than 76 dollars, please Don’t insult me. The jock also told me not to try in the Tower in [REDACTED] anymore because they know about me there too. I was instructed never to return or I would leave in handcuffs so I guess I need a new place to call *Scam Central!*

Getting caught only makes me stronger and I let each experience be a growing experience and not a setback.

Through theft I have learned to set my soul free whatever that means, Scam hard!

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