

Sample Paper: Narrating an event (Cohee)

Cohee 1

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Escaped Prisoner

One busy Friday evening the police department had me assigned to the Bureau of Patrol at Woodland Grove. There weren't even enough seats to go around for all the prisoners. I was working the desk, and another shoplifter had just come in. With a recent directive requiring him to be handcuffed and with no space left on the bench, I was at a real loss. So I went into a nearby office and came out with a chair. Setting the chair next to the coatrack, I handcuffed the shoplifter to the rack until I could get to him. After all, I thought, he's only a shoplifter and the rack stands nearly six feet high. Where's he going to go?

It hadn't been ten minutes until someone went to get his coat. All the coats and jackets were on the floor and both rack and man were gone. The ultimate embarrassment had befallen me--an escaped prisoner. We searched the neighborhood for the rack-laden shoplifter, and after an hour I would have settled for almost anyone who happened to be handcuffed to any six-foot coatrack. Then the call came. A lady near Central Avenue had seen a man climbing backyard fences carrying what looked like a coatrack. A quick run to her house--but the man and the rack were gone. How could anyone move so fast with such a cross?

I rode around for about another hour or so and then pulled into an empty lot to sit awhile. I looked down Central Avenue and

Title is centered.

The introduction ends with a question that propels the action of the narrative.

Cohee presents events in chronological order.

suddenly there he was. Coatrack and all. The tired shoplifter was cautiously making his way up the street. I was in a dark spot so I decided to sit it out and watch him for a few minutes. I couldn't believe it. He stopped at the Metro bus stop and, with his own jacket covering the handcuffs, pretended to be leaning against the coatrack waiting for the bus.

Specific details highlight the humor of the escaped prisoner's struggles.

Almost immediately a bus showed up, and there he was--a 160-pound, five-foot-four man trying to maneuver a six-foot coatrack onto the bus and trying to be cool about the whole thing. After he had made several unsuccessful attempts at boarding, one of which knocked the driver's hat off, I pulled up next to the bus. The exhausted shoplifter was almost relieved to see me. His burden had been too much, even for the search for freedom.

Cohee ends by putting his experience into perspective: Humor can be shared by the most unlikely characters.

Once back at the station, the shoplifter found himself facing charges of escape, but even that didn't keep him from rolling with laughter as he recounted his trials at crossing all those backyard fences with his special companion. With my own embarrassment gone, I could laugh too.