

The Taser Incident

By Jesse James Inigo

(The circumstances related to this incident are referenced in *Bound by the Badge: On the Job*)

The Taser Incident
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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents either are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Several years earlier, when Brooks and I had a little over a year on the job, we encountered a drunkard by the name of Frank Larson. Now, Frank Larson wasn't your typical drunkard. No. He was an angry one who had absolutely no respect for people, let alone authority.

He was one of those loud-mouthed drunks who started bar fights, groped waitresses, and tea-bagged any friend who was unfortunate enough to drink themselves into a coma before he did. In other words, Frank Larson was a douche.

Brooks found Frank sleeping on a park bench while he patrolled Crane Park in the middle of the night. It was the largest park in the city.

"528, I'll be out at Crane Park with a S-13," Brooks told the dispatcher over the radio, letting her know he was out with a suspicious person.

"529, 10-51, 10-94," I said, letting Brooks and the dispatcher know I was on my way to back him up.

Brooks thought Frank was homeless at first; he looked a mess. His stained denim jeans were soiled at the crotch and ripped at the knees, his shoulder-length hair was grizzled and matted, and his overgrown beard was unkempt. The scabs across his knuckles foreshadowed his temperament, week-old dirt was embedded within his fingernails, and he reeked of alcohol.

"528, checkin' 10-4?" the dispatcher asked after forty seconds passed.

"I'm 10-4. Just waiting on 529 before I make contact," he said.

"529, I'm on scene. Where are you?" I said over the radio.

"See my light?" He waved his flashlight side to side.

"Gotcha." Its beam stood out against the tangled palms, towering oaks, and shrubbery that darkened the backdrop against the clear night sky.

I walked up to Brooks and patted him on the back, "Anything good?"

Brooks shined his light onto Frank who was stretched out across a metal park bench. He was sleeping on his right side with his arms across his chest. His left leg twisted over the other in some type of yoga stretch and the laces to his left boot scraped at the ground with each inhale and exhale.

"Can he snore any louder?" I asked.

It was loud enough to silence the chatter of wildlife around us, but not so loud to drown the other buzzes, clicks, and croaks from afar.

"Bro, that's how I found him." He snickered. "It scared the crap outta me."

The smell of alcohol permeated around us. At no more than five feet to his front, it was potent.

"You see his leather vest?"

My lips twisted. "Hmmm ... yeah. What motorcycle gang is that?"

"Don't know bro, but check out his tattoos."

I moved in closer with my flashlight in hand, certain not to inhale through my nose.

"Is that a teardrop?"

"Yeah."

"And a spider web on his elbow?"

"Yep. That's why I waited for you first."

I shook my head and said, "Damn. This oughta be good."

Frank had a short, stocky build and big, burly hands. His large work boots were broken in and worn out at the heels from years of use and his vest had that aged leather look to it. He was in his mid-fifty's, at least three inches shorter than I was, too. And those tattoos meant Frank

Larson had done some serious prison time. That explained why he acted the way he did towards us.

“Okay, you ready?”

Brooks nodded.

I inched up to Frank and tapped his foot with my own. “Sir. Wake up.” He didn’t answer. With the same foot, I tapped it much harder and for much longer. “Sir. Wake up.” But Frank just laid there snoring away – violently. I looked at Brooks and shrugged my shoulders.

“I got this,” he said as he pulled out a pair of blue medical gloves from his pouch. They made that distinctive rubber stretching sound as he slapped them on.

“Hey, wake up.” Brooks shook Frank’s shoulder a few times with no response. He then reached over and tugged on his arm. It flopped up and down without any resistance.

“Sir. Wake up. C’mon, wake up.” But still, nothing happened.

Brooks took a step back and considered his options while I kicked at Frank’s foot again. A thought crossed his mind. Reaching down to his utility belt, he pulled out his baton and slapped it in his left hand with the other.

“Sternum rub?” He smirked.

“Good idea. Yeah.” Sternum rubs had a tendency of waking people up rather quickly.

Brooks struggled to push Frank back and expose his chest. “I’ll need your help on this one, bro,” he said after his first attempt failed. “This guy is solid.”

“Hold on, let me put my gloves on.” I pulled them out of my pouch and slapped them on just as Brooks had done.

“Try to lay him flat on his back,” he said.

I leaned in and pushed Frank’s left shoulder back with both hands. It exposed a good portion of his chest. “This should be good. Go ahead.”

Brooks took the rounded end of his baton and rubbed it back and forth against Frank’s sternum. It was the kind of sternum rub that made a dull scraping sound as he rubbed it against his chest. It was the kind of sternum rub that sounded like something broke inside.

“Mmm,” he moaned as he swatted at the baton with a limp wrist.

We waited a few seconds for him to wake up, but he didn’t. The smell of alcohol in his breath and the stench of his soiled jeans were less tolerable up close.

Brooks rubbed it again, only harder. I called out for him to wake up as he did.

“Let’s go. Wake up.”

His right eye squinted open. I let go of his shoulder and took a step back.

“Sir. Wake up. It’s the police,” I said.

“Mmm,” he moaned before closing his eye and nestling his body in the bench.

Brooks pulled Frank’s eyelids open while I shined my flashlight into his eyes. His face scrunched as he forced his brows down and tossed his head from side to side

“Eerrghh!” He freed his face and struggled to sit up.

“W-w-what the, what the fuck?” he slurred. The way his mouth twisted with each word made it clear he was highly intoxicated. With his left hand up, he blocked the light and dipped his head. “G-g-get that, get that fuckin’ light ... out my, out my, out my ... fuckin’ face.”

We looked at each other and shook our heads anticipating what was to come.

“It’s the police. Wake up,” Brooks said.

“Fuck you!” The corners of his mouth were moist and pasty with drool.

“C’mon, don’t be like that, sir. What’s your name?”

Frank shooed him off with his hand. It was clear he had no intentions of cooperating. He smacked his lips together from thirst and scratched an itch at the base of his neck in a slow, deliberate motion.

“C’mon. Let’s see some ID,” Brooks followed.

He dropped his hands to his lap and turned his head to Brooks with an unsteady gaze. Struggling to keep his eyelids open, they drooped closed as he swayed back and forth.

“Hey!” Brooks shouted.

Frank jumped in his seat. “Go, go fuck yourself.”

Brooks and I smiled at one another over the amount of luck we were having. Fortunately, his wallet had fallen out of his back pocket when he sat up. Brooks went behind him and kicked it over to the side before retrieving it.

With driver license (DL) in hand, Brooks shined his light back and forth between it and Frank, comparing the two. He looked at me and nodded. I nodded back.

“Frank Larson,” Brooks said.

Frank looked up, confused how he knew his name. Brooks held his DL up to him while Frank tried to steady himself on the bench.

“Gimme back my f-f-fuckin’, my fuckin’ wallet. Fuckin’ pigs,” he said as he reached out for it, grabbing nothing but air.

“Hang tight for a second.” Brooks stepped away to run Frank’s name in the system while I stood behind trying to converse with a guy who primarily spoke with expletives. After the first minute I gave up trying to build rapport with him.

Brooks learned all there was to know about Frank Larson. Not only was his DL suspended for failure to pay child support, but he was also on an inmate release status for a past drug trafficking charge. Records showed he served eighteen years in prison, off and on, over the last thirty. And it also showed he had an active misdemeanor warrant for theft of alcohol.

Now, a good partner would’ve pulled me to the side and warned me about Frank’s criminal history and active warrant before telling him. But Brooks, the genius he was, failed to do so.

Brooks strutted up to Frank with his chin held high and his shoulders back. His look told me he knew something I didn’t.

Before I could get a word out, “Looks like you have a warrant for your arrest,” he said.

Frank perked his ears and held an angry gaze on Brooks. “Okay fuckers. Let’s, l-l-let’s do this,” he said.

I didn’t know what to make of his response but it was enough for Brooks to give me the sign to move in and cuff him. Mind you, this was Brooks’ mess. I was just backing him up.

“Psst, what’s it for?”

“S-30,” he said as we walked up. S-30 was our code for theft.

S-30 of what? Money, candy, a damn gun? I thought.

Frank stood up and nodded. He extended his hands out to his front, palms up. It appeared as though he was going to surrender. But surrendering would’ve been too easy and the story would’ve ended there.

No. Instead he sucked up whatever phlegm he could muster from his nasal cavity and spit out a fairly good-sized chunk near Brooks’ feet. About a third of it dangled off his beard as he swayed back and forth with his middle finger gestured to the imaginary cop in between us.

We reached in and grabbed him before he could try anything else. While I held his left arm, Brooks attempted to twist the other behind his back, but he resisted.

Frank was unusually strong. His short stature and solid frame kept him low and centered to the ground. Overpowering him didn't work.

Although we struggled more than we should've, we still managed to pat him down for weapons along his waistband. He clinched his arms down to his sides and jerked them back and forth trying to break free. It wasn't long before we realized we were getting nowhere.

I clamped onto his arm, careful to keep my head clear from his. I'd been head-butted during a similar struggle five months earlier. It hurt like hell.

Brooks tried to take him down to the ground with a leg sweep, but it didn't work either. We discussed our options within earshot of Frank as he stood in between us. His grunts and expletives made it clear he had no intentions of complying.

"Get your taser, bro," he urged while we tussled and tried to hold him steady.

"Okay." I gestured to the left side of the bench. "Let's push him back that way and then I'll grab it."

Brooks nodded.

"Fuckin' ... bitches," Frank said.

Brooks and I locked eyes while Frank tried to free himself from our grip. I nodded my head and mouthed a silent count of three. On the third nod we pushed Frank off to the side and quickly stepped back.

Frank stumbled backwards a few steps, creating enough distance between us for me to pull my taser out. The red laser dot was pointed at his chest while I gave him verbal commands.

"Stop resisting or you'll get tased."

Slurring his words in a slower, more deliberate, drunk accent, he replied, "Fuck you ... and, and, and s-s-suck my, suck my ass! F-f-fuckin' bitches."

I never had a guy tell me to suck his ass before. I'd been told to kiss someone's ass or to suck someone's dick, but never to suck their ass. His request had me confused while I processed the imagery. He clearly mixed the two up.

Brooks looked at me, uncertain why I was taking so long, "Tase him already," he encouraged.

I ordered him to the ground while I held my taser on target, but he refused.

"N-n-no!" He jabbed his finger at me and leaned his head forward. "You violated, y-y-you violated my civil liberties and, and, and my instalable rights ..." He meant inalienable, "... and now, n-n-now I'm gonna kick, I'm gonna kick your fuckin' asses's's'." With his fists balled-up near his face, he swayed from side to side in some kind of drunken Kung-fu stance.

Frank made little sense when he spoke. And for what it was worth, I actually liked the guy. But when he started walking towards me, stumbling over his feet, I was forced to draw that imaginary line in the sand. I wouldn't let him get any closer. Brooks stood to my left with his hands out to his front, ready to grab him when I did.

I held the red laser dot at his chest while the threats and insults continued. He told me he wanted to have sexual relations with my mother, commented on my penis size, called Brooks and I undercover lovers, and recommended where I should shove my taser.

Frank was too drunk to know what was good for him. It was why I waited as long as I did to tase him. Well, that and the paperwork. Then again there was no point on us getting hurt over him either.

Needless to say, he took one step too many, and I ended up tasing him. My actions were totally justified being he had an active warrant and resisted arrest as much as he did. End of story, right? No.

There was a problem. One of the taser darts ended up piercing his jeans and striking him in his testicles – the left one to be exact. There was no mistake about it. And believe me when I tell you, it looked like it hurt. By no means was it intentional. Between him coming at me and me anticipating the recoil of the taser, it was a recipe for disaster. I felt horrible.

The spread between the top and bottom taser darts was good. He locked-up and fell to the ground almost immediately. But in good conscious, I couldn't let him take the entire five second taser cycle. I turned it off after three.

"Oh ... shit!" Brooks said when he realized the bottom taser dart stuck Frank in the balls.

As soon as I shut the taser off, Frank started bucking. He was pissed. Brooks moved in and tried to get him under control while I hovered over them with my taser still in hand.

"Cut it out or you'll get it again," I shouted, secretly hoping he'd comply. But he didn't.

"Fuck you!" He yelled, writhing in pain. "You fuckin' assholes." It seemed to have sobered him up for the moment.

With a cringe on my face I squeezed the trigger and let him ride the shock for a quick second before I shut it off again. It was long enough to remind him the taser was still working.

"You mother fuckers." He screamed and yelled at the top of his lungs, all the while refusing to put his hands behind his back. The taser darts reacted to his every move. When he jerked back and forth, they stabbed and pulled. Brooks got one handcuff on him but struggled with the other.

"You want it again? Huh? Huh?" I challenged with a threatening, I don't give a damn, look on my face. But deep inside I didn't want to do it again.

"No! Okay, okay, okay," he stammered.

With no more fight left in him, his head slumped to the ground. Brooks took his other hand and cuffed him behind his back without further resistance.

Frank's chin trembled. With turned down lips and a snivel he said, "But yaw didn't have to shoot me in my dick." His snivel turned into a whimper. "Yaw didn't have to shoot me in my dick." And then he cried.

With Frank secured, I called Sarge on the radio, "529 to 193."

"Go ahead, 529," he replied.

"Taser deployed, sir."

Per department policy, Sarge had to respond to the scene. Every use of force required the on-duty sergeant to conduct an investigation and complete a use of force report. He hated doing extra paperwork.

"Ugh. I'm 10-51," he said. Sarge was not pleased.

All he knew was my taser was deployed. I didn't provide him with any other specifics. I wanted it to be a surprise.

When he finally showed up, he walked up to Frank who was leaning against the bench with his legs spread open. Following the trail of wires from my taser to Frank, he lifted his glasses for a closer look. His head jetted forward, causing it to do a double-take when he saw it.

"Are you shittin' me?" He ripped his glasses off and turned towards us. "Y'all shot him in the dick?" His southern accent was unmistakable.

"Not his dick, Sarge," I tried to reassure. "His balls. I got him in the balls."

Sarge's head snapped back with his lips perched as if he'd eaten something sour. He looked at the taser dart, then at me, then again at the taser dart, then again at me. "You sumbitches gonna gimme a goddang heart attack."

With a downward gaze I said, "Sorry, Sarge."

"Yeah. Sorry, Sarge," Brooks followed.

Sarge curled his lips and shook his head while Frank sat there sullen and motionless with his legs open and a frown on his face.

“I have a question?” Sarge scratched the top of his head with one hand and held his glasses down to his side with the other.

“Which one of y’all riffs is gonna pull that dart thing outta his ballsack?”

Brooks and I looked at Sarge as if he had a third nipple on his forehead. It was the unmistakable look of confusion.

“Better yet,” he said, “maybe the two of y’all should do it together. It’ll be a goddang bonding experience.” He was clearly pissed off.

“Sarge, I ain’t touching his balls,” I said.

“Me either, bro ... I mean, Sarge,” Brooks followed.

“Not for nothing, Sarge, I think they’re gonna have to surgically remove the bottom one,” I said.

“Whad’ya mean surgically?” The possibility angered him. It meant he’d have to fill out an additional form and call the lieutenant. “They gonna call in a taser testicle-removal specialist?” He scooped out the pinch of dip he had tucked behind his bottom lip and threw it to the ground.

Brooks and I held our laughs. We didn’t want to piss him off anymore.

“They gonna fly in a doctor with one of them fancy helicopters into our little shit town just to pull out a goddang fishhook from a drunk guy’s scrotum?”

“Huh ...” Frank raised his head and tried to blow the thin strands of hair from his face restricting his view. The phlegm on his beard was all but dry.

“Somebody get me a pair of rusty pliers. I’ll pull it out my dang self,” Sarge said before storming off.

Frank’s eyes opened wide, “W-h-hat he say?”

Sarge was joking about the rusty pliers. But we played along with it anyway.

“Brooks, stop him. I don’t think he took his meds today.” Brooks smirked and followed behind Sarge.

“What?” Frank tucked his knees into his chest and looked over his shoulder with drunk eyes. “Where’s he, w-w-where’s he going?”

“Hey, don’t worry about him. I won’t let him hurt you,” I said.

My response surprised him. “Really?” he said with a tilt to his head.

I nodded and gave him a wink.

“R-r-right on, man.” He took a deep breath and relaxed his shoulders. “Thank you, Officer. And, and, and I promise to, and I promise to behave from this point, f-f-from this point on.”

Sarge mumbled under his breath all the way to his car before jerking the door open and slamming it shut behind him. His tires peeled out of the parking lot, leaving a small cloud of smoke behind.

Frank was taken to the hospital where a doctor surgically removed the taser dart from his testicle. Apparently it was deep. Lab results determined his blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was three times the legal limit (.242). That explained a lot.

My write-up came a week or so later from my Lieutenant. She said I was incompetent in my duties being that I tased him in his balls and all. I didn’t agree with it, but didn’t dare fight it.

Tasers were new back then. Frank’s actions didn’t factor in as much as mine did. They made me recertify with the taser before I could carry it again.

For his efforts, Frank was booked on the warrant and received an additional charge of resisting arrest. For his pain and suffering, the city gave him ten thousand dollars. Last I heard, he was serving prison time for a home invasion charge he picked up a year later.

Of all the crazy cases Brooks got me into, the taser incident was one for the books. Frank Larson was definitely a character. Even after I tased him in the balls, he still found it in his heart to thank me for helping him out at the end.

Author's note

Thanks for reading. Be sure to also read *Bound by the Badge: On the Job* as well. It's a short story/novella available on Amazon. It's a crime fiction story which touches on how the job affects Ofc. Bronson after a shooting. Visit me at www.jessejamesinigo.com

Here's the blurb:

When veteran cop Mitch Bronson finds himself alone, in a fight for his life, he risks being killed in the line of duty. With hope fading and his will to survive tested, he knows there's only one way out – he has to pull the trigger.

But when his actions are scrutinized by the media, allegations of police brutality and excessive force circulate and he soon finds himself in another fight ... a fight for his freedom. He has one chance to convince the grand jury of his innocence, but to do so means reliving that fateful night all over again.

With everything to lose, will his actions be justified? Or will he be indicted and risk spending the rest of his life behind bars?

A suspenseful thriller of survival, self-reflection, and unforeseen consequences, it will win you over and keep you on the edge of your seat.