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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/237/2021_2022__E5_85_AC_E5_85_B1_E7_AE_A1_E7_c72_237191.htm Unit 21 A young man finds that strolling along the streets without an obvious purpose can lead to trouble with the law. One misunderstanding leads to another until eventually he must appear in court for trial..... A Brush with the Law I have only once been in trouble with the law. The whole process of being arrested and taken to court was a rather unpleasant experience at the time, but it makes a good story now. What makes it rather disturbing was the arbitrary circumstances both of my arrest and my subsequent fate in court. It happened in February about twelve years ago. I had left school a couple of months before that and was not due to go to university until the following October. I was still living at home at the time. One morning I was in Richmond, a suburb of London near where I lived. I was looking for a temporary job so that I could save up some money to go travelling. As it was a fine day and I was in no hurry, I was taking my time, looking in shop windows, strolling in the park, and sometimes just stopping and looking around me. It must have been this obvious aimlessness that led to my downfall. It was about half past eleven when it happened. I was just walking out of the local library, having unsuccessfully sought employment there, when I saw a man walking across the road with the obvious intention of talking to me. I thought he was going to ask me the time. Instead, he said he was a police officer and he was arresting me. At first I thought it was some kind of joke. But then

another policeman appeared, this time in uniform, and I was left in no doubt. But what for? I asked. "Wandering with intent to commit an arrestable offence, he said. What offence? I asked. Theft, he said. Theft of what? I asked. Milk bottles, he said, and with a perfectly straight face too! Oh, I said. It turned out there had been a lot of petty thefts in the area, particularly that of stealing milk bottles from doorsteps. Then I made my big mistake. At the time I was nineteen, had long untidy hair, and regarded myself as part of the sixties youth counterculture. As a result, I wanted to appear cool and unconcerned with the incident, so I said, How long have you been following me? in the most casual and conversational tone I could manage. I thus appeared to them to be quite familiar with this sort of situation, and it confirmed them in their belief that I was a thoroughly disreputable character. A few minutes later a police car arrived. Get in the back," they said. Put your hands on the back of the front seat and don't move them. They got in on either side of me. I wasn't funny any more. At the police station they questioned me for several hours. I continued to try to look worldly and au fait with the situation. When they asked me what I had been doing, I told them I'd been looking for a job. Aha, I could see them thinking, unemployed. Eventually, I was officially charged and told to report to Richmond Magistrates Court the following Monday. Then they let me go. I wanted to conduct my own defence in court, but as soon as my father found out what had happened, he hired a very good solicitor. We went along that Monday armed with all kinds of witnesses, including my English teacher from school as a character witness. But he was never

called on to give evidence. My trial didn't get that far. The magistrate dismissed the case after fifteen minutes. I was free. The poor police had never stood a chance. The solicitor even succeeded in getting costs awarded against the police. And so I do not have a criminal record. But what was most shocking at the time was the things my release from the charge so clearly depended on. I had the right accent, respectable middle-class parents in court, reliable witnesses, and I could obviously afford a very good solicitor. Given the obscure nature of the charge, I feel sure that if I had come from a different background, and had really been unemployed, there is every chance that I would have been found guilty. While asking for costs to be awarded, my solicitor's case quite obviously revolved around the fact that I had a brilliant academic record. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com