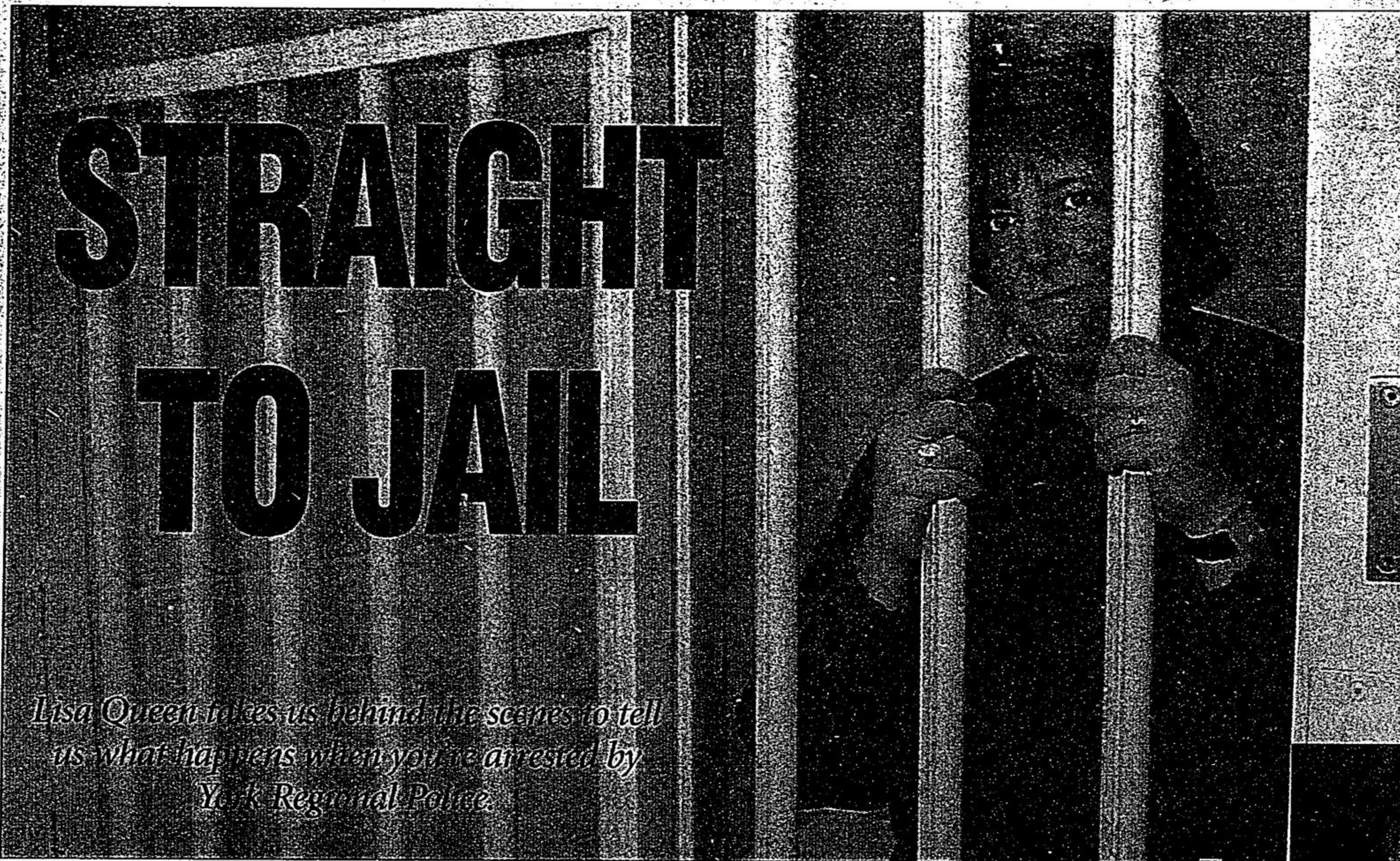


Economist &amp; Sun • Stouffville Tribune

## ETCETERA

STRAIGHT  
TO JAIL

*Lisa Queen takes us behind the scenes to tell us what happens when you're arrested by York Regional Police.*



STAFF PHOTOS/ROB ALARY

**B**usted. Out with some friends, I knew I shouldn't drink. I knew I had to drive home.

But sitting in the bar with the girls, shooting the breeze about spouses, kids and work, I guzzle back a few.

Now, that idiotic choice has come back to haunt me.

The long arm of the law has caught up with me.

*Well, not really. Before the rumours start, let's make it clear this isn't a real arrest.*

*There are no real charges. My sheet is clean.*

*This is a trumped-up scenario to see what happens when somebody does run afoul of the law.*

Glancing into my rearview mirror during the drive home, I spot through bloodshot eyes the flashing red light of a police car.

Pulling over to the side of the road, my heart is thumping and my mind is racing as I try to concoct some story that'll get me off the

hook. Const. Stephan Pleskina isn't buying a word of it.

He can tell by the way I fumble for my licence and slur my words that I'm intoxicated.

A breath sample at the side of the road confirms his suspicions.

He reads me my rights.

I'm told to empty my pockets and asked if I'm carrying any weapons.

Handcuffed, patted down (in case I lied about the weapons) and slipped into the back seat of the cruiser, I'm driven to 1<sup>st</sup> District headquarters in Newmarket.

Pleskina parks the car and I'm led to the back door of the station. From this point on, video cameras will watch almost every move I make while inside the building.

Once inside the door, Pleskina directs me to an elevator that will take us upstairs.

But this is no ordinary elevator. I'm forced to stand in a small metal and glass cage for the ride up.

Outside the elevator is a bench, where I sit with others who have been arrested until I get paraded before the staff sergeant in charge of the station.

My jewelry, shoelaces and paper money are taken from me, although I can keep the change.

Glancing up, I see a yellow strip running around the walls at eye level, which officers can push to summon help in an emergency.

Pleskina tells the staff sergeant about the offence I'm alleged to have committed. Because I'm subdued, Pleskina doesn't have to warn him that I pose a danger to myself or anyone else.

At this point, I'm asked if I want an on-call legal aid lawyer to take my case. If I take this route, I'll get a 1-800 number.

Often, people want to contact their own solicitors.

"You'd be surprised how many people have their lawyer's phone number, their lawyer's cell phone number, the whole nine yards, on

them when they're arrested," Pleskina says.

I'm led to the telephone room. The phone itself is brought in and taken out for every call.

This room, where I make my constitutionally guaranteed call for legal representation, is the only place during my journey through the police station where video cameras aren't mounted on the ceiling.

After my arresting officer explains the charges I face to my lawyer, I'm free to converse with my solicitor without interference.

And without handcuffs, which are removed for the conversation but slapped back on again before I leave the telephone room.

The staff sergeant then asks Pleskina if I've been properly searched.

I am led away to a private room, where a female officer searches me more properly to double check I'm not carrying any weapons. A more invasive and humiliating strip search isn't carried out unless offi-



**CONST. STEPHAN PLESKINA:** York Region officer took Lisa Queen through the arrest process.

cers have good reason to believe someone is carrying a weapon or contraband. "It just doesn't happen unless it's justified," Pleskina insists.

Because I have been brought in on an impaired driving charge, I attempt to walk along a white line painted on the floor.

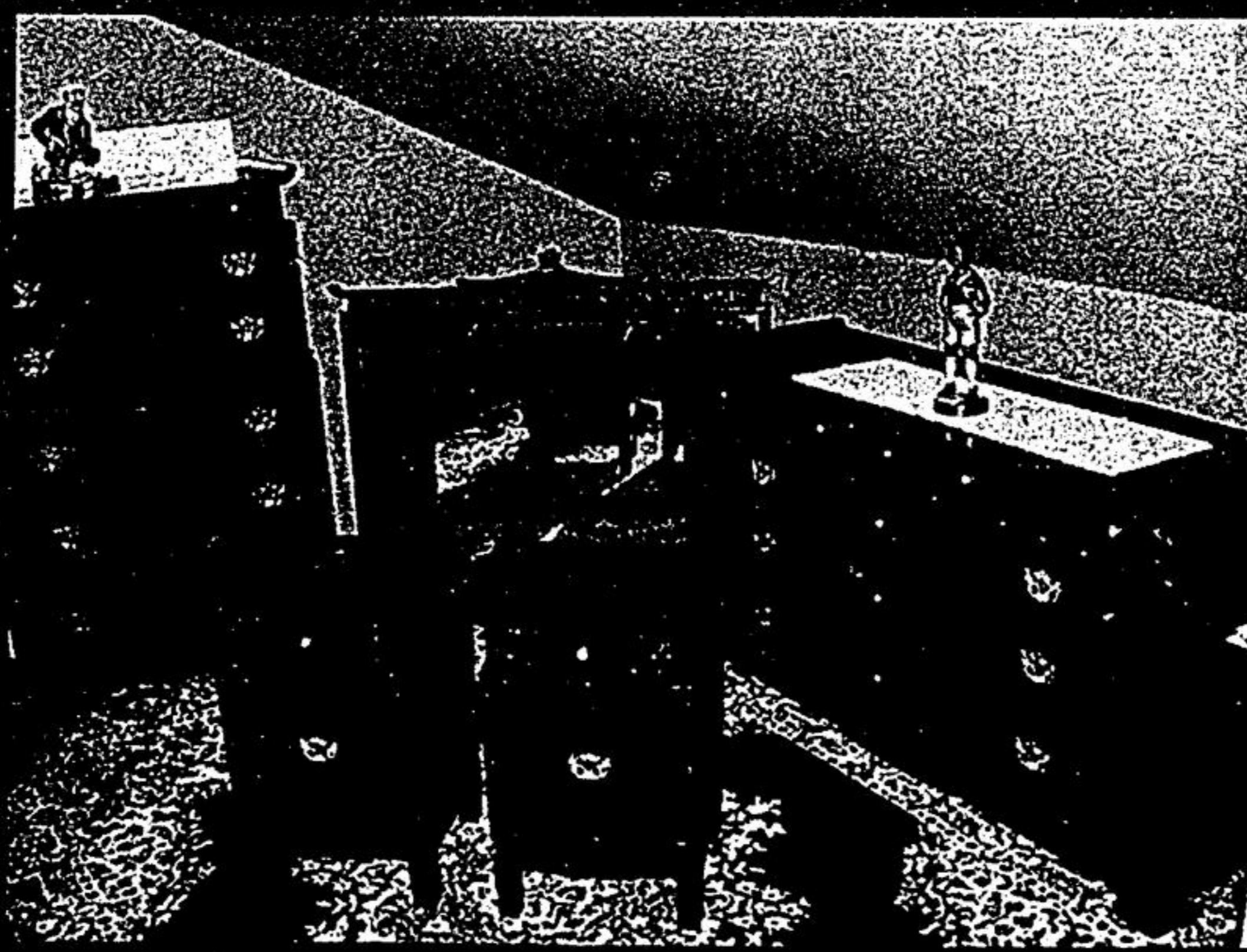
I fail.

I then enter a room across the

See JAIL, page 19.

# SALE

**This Chinese Chippendale Bedroom Suite** includes men's chest, ladies' dresser, mirror, 2 night tables, Queen headboard.  
Was \$8,995.00



Visit our Showroom

*Sheraton*  
**ANTIQUES**  
REFINISHED BEYOND COMPARE

158 MAIN STREET  
(905) 474-9677

Sale Price

**\$7,995**

PLUS DELIVERY AND TAXES