

JESSICA JAUCH'S STORY

90 days in jail without a judge or a lawyer²⁰

Relying on a secret informant, a grand jury in Choctaw County, Mississippi, indicted Jessica Jauch on felony drug charges and issued a warrant for her arrest. No one notified Ms. Jauch about the charges.

One day, the police stopped Ms. Jauch for a traffic violation and discovered the outstanding warrant. The police arrested Ms. Jauch and took her to jail.

Insisting that she knew nothing about the charges, Ms. Jauch begged jail officials to let her go to court or post bail. But before she could post bail, she needed to appear before a judge who could set bail.

At that time, Mississippi law said that Ms. Jauch's initial appearance could wait until "the next term of court." But the Choctaw County court only met four times per year, and the timing of Ms. Jauch's arrest meant that the next term of court was three months away.

After 90 days in jail, Ms. Jauch finally had her first court appearance. The judge explained the charges, set bail, and appointed an attorney. Six days later, Ms. Jauch posted bail and went home.

In short order, Ms. Jauch's attorney reviewed the surveillance video. But it only showed Ms. Jauch borrowing \$40 from her "friend" who was acting as a police informant. The attorney contacted the prosecutor, who dismissed all charges.

Ms. Jauch had been innocent all along.



90 days

