

## Case Brief: *State of Georgia v. Jamal Dubois*

### I. Case Overview

*State of Georgia v. Jamal Dubois* centered on an armed robbery that occurred in Metro Atlanta in 2023. Jamal Dubois, a 22-year-old local resident with a minor prior record, was accused, tried, and convicted of the crime. The case later gained notoriety due to evidence discovered after the verdict that cast significant doubt on the conviction.

### II. Factual Background

On a Tuesday night in 2023, a convenience store in a transitional Atlanta neighborhood was robbed. The lone clerk on duty was bound with duct tape, and the perpetrator absconded with the cash register. Surveillance footage from a blurry, distant outdoor camera depicted a figure matching the general build of Jamal Dubois.

Two days after the robbery, Jamal Dubois was arrested. He asserted that he was at his girlfriend's apartment across town for the entirety of the evening of the robbery. As an indigent defendant, Dubois was subsequently assigned Ms. Evelyn Reed, a public defender with eight years of experience. A grand jury later indicted Dubois on charges related to the robbery.

### III. Trial Proceedings

The trial spanned three days. The prosecution, led by Mr. David Chen, began by painting a picture of Jamal Dubois as a repeat offender, referencing his minor prior shoplifting charge from age 18. The prosecution's case primarily relied on the blurry surveillance footage and the testimony of the convenience store clerk. A generic dark hoodie, found discarded a block from the store and matching the one seen in the video, was also presented as evidence. Notably, no fingerprints matching Dubois were found at the scene, nor was DNA evidence linked to the hoodie.

#### Witnesses and Evidence Presentation:

- **Prosecution's Case (State of Georgia):**
  - **The Store Clerk (Ms. Brenda Lee):** Ms. Lee testified about the terrifying experience of being robbed.
    - *Prosecutor Chen:* "Ms. Lee, can you describe the individual who robbed your store?"
    - *Ms. Lee:* "He was a male, about Jamal's height and build. He wore a dark hoodie pulled up. I only saw his face for a second or two, but... it was him. It looked like him."
  - **The Investigating Officer (Detective Marcus Jones):** Detective Jones introduced the blurry surveillance footage and the generic dark hoodie.
    - *Prosecutor Chen:* "Detective, based on your investigation and this footage, did you identify a suspect?"
    - *Det. Jones:* "Yes, sir. Based on the build and the clothing visible in the footage, along with other intelligence, we identified Jamal Dubois as our suspect."
- **Defense's Case (Jamal Dubois):**

- **Cross-examination of Ms. Lee (by Ms. Reed):** Ms. Reed vigorously questioned the clerk about the reliability of her identification.
  - *Defense Reed:* "Ms. Lee, you testified you were bound with duct tape. You were terrified, correct?"
  - *Ms. Lee:* "Yes, ma'am, I was."
  - *Defense Reed:* "And you stated you only saw the perpetrator's face for 'a second or two' under dim lighting, is that right?"
  - *Ms. Lee:* "Yes."
  - *Defense Reed:* "So, under extreme duress, with limited visibility and time, are you absolutely certain of this identification?"
  - *Ms. Lee:* (Hesitates) "I... I think so. It looked like him."
- **Cross-examination of Det. Jones (by Ms. Reed):** Ms. Reed questioned the investigating officer regarding the poor quality of the surveillance footage.
  - *Defense Reed:* "Detective, this surveillance footage is quite blurry and distant. Could you definitively identify a specific individual's facial features from this video?"
  - *Det. Jones:* "It shows the general build and clothing, which matched Mr. Dubois."
  - *Defense Reed:* "But no unique identifying marks, like a scar or a specific pattern on the clothing, are visible, correct?"
  - *Det. Jones:* "That's correct."
- **Alibi Witness (Chloe Johnson):** Jamal's girlfriend, Chloe, testified to his whereabouts. Chloe testified under oath that Dubois was with her at her apartment during the time of the robbery, consistent with Dubois's own statement.
  - *Defense Reed:* "Chloe, where was Jamal on the evening of October 17th?"
  - *Chloe:* "He was with me, at my apartment, the whole night. We watched movies."
  - *Prosecutor Chen (on cross-examination):* "Chloe, you're Mr. Dubois's girlfriend, correct? You'd do anything to protect him, wouldn't you?"
  - *Chloe:* "I'm telling the truth."
  - *Prosecutor Chen:* "And there's no one else who can confirm this, no neighbors who saw him there?"
  - *Chloe:* "No, we didn't have company."

During trial preparations, Ms. Reed, managing a heavy caseload (over 120 active felony cases), did not interview Chloe's neighbors to corroborate the alibi, nor did she pursue a tangential lead regarding a similar robbery in a nearby county a week prior. She also chose not to file a motion to suppress the blurry surveillance footage or request an expert witness to testify on the unreliability of such footage or eyewitness identification. The prosecution, led by Mr. David Chen, leveraged Dubois's prior minor shoplifting charge and the prevailing public concern over local crime rates. Chen also argued the character of Dubois by citing restraining orders placed on him by 3 former girlfriends and his lack of paying child support for 2 children.

A jury was selected through standard voir dire procedures. After a three-day trial, the jury deliberated for less than four hours.

#### IV. Verdict and Sentencing

The jury found Jamal Dubois **Guilty** of armed robbery. He was subsequently **sentenced to 15 years in prison**.

## **V. Post-Verdict Revelation**

Approximately six months after Dubois's conviction, an investigative journalism team, working independently, discovered new evidence. They located a separate, higher-resolution surveillance camera on a neighboring building's rooftop that had also captured the convenience store's entrance, but this footage had been overlooked during the initial police investigation.

When this newly discovered footage was enhanced and stabilized, it clearly depicted the perpetrator entering and leaving the store. This individual was definitively **not Jamal Dubois**, showing a distinct gait and a visible neck tattoo that Dubois does not possess. This evidence confirmed that the person captured in the original blurry footage was a different individual entirely.