



Witness Card for Investigator #4 – Jason, Age 25

My real name is Jason Johnson, and I NEVER go by the nickname “JJ.” I don’t know who told you it is OK to call me that! I’m a graduate student focusing on Middle Eastern Studies, researching my doctoral dissertation on the impact of the falaj irrigation system on village life. I have known John for two years. That summer, I spent two months studying Arabic in the program at his language school. I came back for a month last year as well, and I saw him this year when I stopped by Muscat on my way out to Nizwa, where I am living for the summer and fall semesters. He came to Nizwa himself before I was here, so I haven’t seen him much recently – except when I went through Muscat as I mentioned.

No, we’re not really friends; in fact, we didn’t get along very well. You’ve probably heard that from other people. I don’t really approve of the way he thinks that he is a scholar – even though he just barely finished his master’s degree. I don’t understand why *he* is writing a book about the history of Oman when other people are more qualified. Then, there was the disagreement about his sister. I’m sure that Cara was interested in me, but John discouraged her.

Of course, that doesn’t mean that I wanted to kill him. I’m sorry that it happened, especially for Cara’s sake. Also, I couldn’t have done it since I haven’t left this village for the past two weeks. I’m a serious scholar and have been immersed in my work interviewing the rural people. It’s not easy living here in the countryside. I’m used to living in big cities, like Chicago. I would have preferred a project that would allow me to be based in Salalah or Muscat, but my advisor encouraged me to focus my studies in this direction. And it’s better to be where I’m not running into Cara all the time.

Who could have killed him? I’ve been thinking about that. I read a lot of crime novels and am pretty good at solving mysteries. My theory is that it is for one of three reasons:

1. personal: He flirted with the wrong person and angered her relatives.
2. professional: He uncovered something in his research that angered someone.
3. ideological: Someone might not have approved of him living in or writing about Oman.

I hope that helps. Let me know when you find out that I’m right!