

## The murder of Richard Johnston

The sun was poking through the clouds, harshly needling the warm pavement where detective Jane stood. She looked down upon the dead body of Richard Johnston, a successful and well-known businessman. She looks up and sees the condo he inhabits behind the strong glare of the sun.

The scene was still, unmoving, frozen in the hot sun at most. The scene was taped off to prevent unwanted visitors from disturbing the site. Jane meticulously inquired the few people strolling through the park where the body lay, yet none claim to have seen the act itself. Jane steps out of the scene and begins the crime scene log, ensuring nothing suspicious happens around the murder as the forensic photographer steps in to document the scene.

Once the photographer stepped out, Jane disgustedly reentered the crime scene. She stands above the body looking down, searching for any interesting pieces of evidence near the body. She and a fellow investigator walk in circles around each other and the body, with increasing distance between them as they scan the ground for anything that could be of aid. This method of searching allows them to finely comb over the entire scene even if the scene is small. Each strand of hair and fiber were documented and marked on the scene. The photographer then photographed their locations with a small scale from three positions, with three distances for each position before they were packaged in neat little paper envelopes. She attempted to dust for fingerprints on the floor, but was unsuccessful and could not find anything noteworthy.

Livor mortis had settled, creating a vivid pattern of purple discoloration on Richard's back. It indicated that he had been left lying in that position for several hours. Rigor mortis had set in, making it clear that the time of death was at least 12 hours ago. The body's temperature was only slightly above ambient, suggesting that the warm evening temperature had further slowed down the body's cooling process, and that it had settled there for approximately 14 hours.

The next day Jane enters the lab. She examines the small paper bags laid out on the table in front of her. First, she takes the bag labeled "fiber". She carefully cut the bottom of the bag to ensure not to break the seal. She pulls out the card that the fiber is carefully taped to. This fiber was removed from the scene with sterile forceps and placed and taped carefully onto the card to ensure no accidental movement or tampering could occur. She places the card under the microscope and begins counting to establish the thread count. Then she notes down the orange color of the fiber as well as its frizzy nature, also noticing its clean burn, suggesting that it is a natural fiber. She then observes the fiber diameter and sends off the fiber to the infrared spectroscopy lab. The other fibers from the scene were far too common to be able to be used in an investigation, even though all fiber evidence is class evidence. They included black spandex, and a commonly woven white wool.

Next, she pulls out the bag labeled "hair". Similar to the fiber, it was collected with forceps and placed onto a white card. She also places this card under the microscope to determine other characteristics of it: its red color, thin diameter, and strong ovularity. Jane looked up and down the hair, especially examining the tips to look for any traces of follicle, but unluckily, none were found, this means that this hair evidence is class evidence. She looked at the last two remaining bags labeled "blood" and "splatter" and sent it off to get bloodwork done. It had been collected by using small moist cotton buds to collect the blood on the ground. They are then dried and packaged in an airtight ziplock then a paper bag. The last bag she opened and examined the photographs of the splatters, and surprisingly the angle of impact was low and not far reaching, implying a non forceful fall or splatter.

Two main suspects emerged during Jane's initial investigation. The first was Victoria, Richard's estranged wife. Their bitter divorce battle had recently turned uglier, and Victoria had been seeking a significant portion of Richard's fortune. Their heated arguments and her strong motive for financial gain made her an obvious suspect.

The second suspect was Michael, Richard's business partner. Their company had been facing financial troubles, and rumors swirled that Richard had discovered discrepancies in the financial records. A forensic examination revealed that Richard had been shot at close range, and Jane knew that Michael had easy access to the business accounts and a possible motive for eliminating Richard.

As the investigation unfolded, Jane discovered a hidden safe in Richard's penthouse, containing documents pointing to embezzlement within the company. The evidence suggested that Victoria had been diverting funds into offshore accounts, leaving Richard in the dark.

Just as Jane was about to confront Victoria, a breakthrough occurred. The forensic analysis revealed that a single hair found at the crime scene matched the characteristics of Michael's. Sarah brought Michael in for questioning, and under pressure, he confessed to being involved in the embezzlement scheme. However the fact that the fiber matched those of Victoria's dress remains.

Further analysis of the hair and fiber evidence revealed a third individual's presence at the crime scene. Jane realized there was another player involved, manipulating the situation from behind the scenes. Jane uncovered a hidden connection between Victoria and Michael. They had been secretly conspiring against Richard, with each suspect believing the other would take the blame. Their plot was to eliminate Richard, obtain his fortune, and disappear together.

Tracing the money from the records found in the safe and combining it with the forensic evidence from the crime scene, Jane begins building the case against Victoria and Michael. Using phone records and email history, they finally put enough evidence together to incriminate Victoria and Michael. In the end, justice prevailed, and Victoria and Michael were charged with Richard's murder and the financial crimes they had committed.

The End.

