

Interview: Virani, Nikhil

Interviewer: Domingo

Transcribed June 28, 2021

Location: Third Floor, Study

DOMINGO

Mr. Virani, please, make yourself comfortable. Can I interest you in anything to drink before we begin? Tea, coffee? Or something stronger, perhaps?

NIKHIL

Just water, thank you.

DOMINGO

I understand this must have been very difficult for you, coming from such a prominent family. How have you managed with the challenges of such a highly-publicised incident?

NIKHIL

As you know, I'm not unfamiliar with media attention. I find it helpful to pay them as little mind as possible and to focus on my work.

DOMINGO

It's been some time since all of you were gathered in the same place. Have you stayed in touch with any of them during these last five years?

NIKHIL

To an extent. We all drifted apart somewhat after our time at Verdamme, as you might expect, but the circles we run in tend to be small. I've run into many of them in either a social or professional capacity on occasion, but we haven't been in regular contact.

DOMINGO

What was Julian like? Tell me a little bit about him in your own words. What were your days at Verdamme like? Was he well-liked?

NIKHIL

He was extraordinarily charismatic, as I'm sure you've heard. He commanded attention unlike anyone else I've known. He was incredibly intelligent, an excellent conversationalist when he wanted to be, and very difficult when he wanted to be. I believe he aimed to inspire stronger emotions than like, and almost without exception, he succeeded.

DOMINGO

And were the two of you close? How would you describe your friendship?

NIKHIL

You could say that. I'd call it more of a rivalry than a friendship, though the line between the two was always rather blurry with us. I certainly valued the time we spent in each other's company. We... challenged one another. I valued that. I hope he did, too.

DOMINGO

In your original witness statement for the night of Julian's death, you mentioned that the last time you saw him was at [TIME HERE]. What was he doing at the time? Did you notice anything out of the ordinary about him?

NIKHIL

We only spoke briefly. We were both intoxicated. He looked like he'd been in a fight. Honestly, neither was unusual for him. I asked him about it, but he didn't want to talk. I didn't press the issue.

DOMINGO

Did you notice anything suspicious about your friends in the days leading up to his death? Were any of them acting or behaving differently?

NIKHIL

No, not that I recall.

DOMINGO

As you know, the manner of death was originally ruled as a drowning via a drug overdose. The consumption and possession of drugs for personal use is not a criminal offense in Spain. It is certainly not a crime for young people like yourselves to indulge and have fun. Were there any occasions, however, where this drug use may have gone too far? And is there anyone amongst your group who was most frequently involved in these occasions?

NIKHIL

I don't recall. I rarely partake, myself, and typically didn't linger on more indulgent occasions. I trust my friends' judgement.

DOMINGO

Who was typically responsible for acquiring substances used amongst your friends on nights out?

NIKHIL

As I said, I rarely indulge. I didn't involve myself in such matters and don't recall who did.

DOMINGO

Who supplied the drugs Julian was using on the night of his death?

NIKHIL

I don't recall.

DOMINGO

Do you think any of your friends were capable of harming Julian?

NIKHIL

No.

DOMINGO

Amongst your friends and those present on the night of the murder, do you know anyone that might have had a reason to kill Julian?

NIKHIL

Murder? No. It was the end of the year. Whatever quarrels we had with him, we were all ready to put them aside and move on. Frankly, without any new evidence to the contrary, I still see this as a simple tragic accident.

DOMINGO

Mr. Virani, I would now like to ask that if you have anything else you would like to share about Julian, your friends, or the night of Julian's death, that you speak freely and without fear of repercussions. Anything you say here off the record will be protected under the highest level of confidentiality.

NIKHIL

Nothing comes to mind. I hope your investigation is able to bring some closure to the De Cervantes family. If you have any more questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

DOMINGO

Thank you, Mr. Virani. Your cooperation has been noted and I appreciate your honesty here today. That will be all.