

13.

Oh sir, I don't mean to sound snobby or anything, but I don't ever see myself doing business with an American again. You should save this business card for someone else that could benefit from it more. You never know when you'll run out. I had a moment like that once. Let me walk you up to your room so I have time to tell you this story. No? Fine, I can tell it to you quickly out here.

After September 11, the Muslims who lived in the United States were very lost. They did not know whether to endure the threats and name-calling, retaliate, or just go back home, as many people yelled out at them to do. When I got back to New York, a lot of Muslim brothers and sisters came to me for guidance. I didn't think they thought that through well enough though. I was a Muslim by birth, but not especially a Muslim by heart. I liked wine too much. Anyways, New York had a pretty decent Muslim population, and they came to me, the Pakistani Princeton graduate, for guidance. I have to admit, it was pretty flattering, but I did not want to let it get to my head. Like I said, I was not someone I considered to be

particularly religious at that time. So instead of giving them the emotional support and the motivation I think they actually needed, I decided to foolishly offer professional help. However, when I searched in my suit jacket pocket, I only found sticks of gum and loose change. No business cards. I had distributed them out to so many Americans that I did not have enough for my own people in need.

Even after that story, you still want me to take a look at your business card? Okay, well if you so persistently insist, I will. I see your name is Mark Lawson. You now work for Underwood Samson too. I hope that is going well for you. Jim sent you here? You're his son? I would have never imagined that Jim was married; he was always too invested in his work. Well aren't I glad that I only spoke highly about him. I still would've liked for you to have told me this sooner.

Well, I now have your information if I ever choose to contact you in the future. You can scurry up to your nice room now. Send Jim my regards. What else could you be possibly pulling out of your coat now? Is it your cell phone again? I didn't hear it this time.

If you don't pull that trigger, I'll let you in on a little secret about your father and America. Great, you put down the gun and I have your attention. I'm really confused at to what Underwood Samson could have taught me that's so important and supposed to remain so secretive that my life is at stake. Anyways, I won't make you wait for this secret. It's more like advice, actually. You see...