The final report!!!

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Incident Report — CS-LAB-B | Subject: Khanna, Aarav (Deceased)

Date Filed: 22 July 2025
Investigating Officer: Inspector R. Mehra, Division 4 (Cybercrime & Homicide)
Jurisdiction: St. Augustine Technical Institute (SATI), Eastern District

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Details

On the morning of the school's flagship tech fest Hackspire, a scream echoes from the old Computer Science Lab B, sealed since the 2013 lab explosion.

Inside the locked room:
- A student's (Later identified as Aarav Khanna) lifeless body, twisted into an unnatural position, bound to a chair with the network cables torn from the local server nearby.
- The victim's skin on his dorsal portion is flayed open till the dermis, revealing binary code carved into the fat and a little into his flesh leading to 4th degree burns.
- The mouth is stuffed with shredded school transcripts, and the tongue is missing with cuts seemingly done by a tool like pliers with a great amount of force. The missing portion of the tongue was not found in the crime scene.
- The eyelids were removed, eyes staring blankly at a laptop screen that shows:
"Cape me si potes" translating from latin to "Catch me if you can"
- There's no blood pooled — but dried streaks are found trailing to an open Ethernet port.
- A QR code is burned onto the victim's palm. Scanning it leads to a hidden site

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THE VICTIM: Aarav Khanna
- 17, bright but unnoticed.
- Suspended months ago for "unauthorized system probing."
- Had filed a bullying complaint that never reached the authorities.
- Two weeks after claiming he'd found the TRUTH, they found him wired to his chair as described above.

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THE 4 SUSPECTS

1. Dr. Vishal Dey

Title: Head of IT Infrastructure
Connection to Victim: Aarav's former mentor.

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🔍 **Evidence of Suspicion**:
- **Draft email (unsent)** recovered from his desktop:
"He knows. We either silence him or bury everything we've built."
- **He had the access to lab B.** One of the only few left in the school with the restricted access.

- A **shredded USB** was recovered from his trash bin — forensic traces reveal remnants of a code framework associated with student lab networks.

- Surveillance logs indicate **14 remote accesses** to Aarav's student record within 48 hours before the incident.

≡ **Alibi & Uncertainties**:
- Claims **his fingerprint was cloned and card was manipulated with**, citing forensic gel residue found in his office — potentially staged to frame him.
- No direct DNA match found at the scene.

- The draft email was found in **volatile system memory**, not an official folder — possible manipulation?

- Has a reputation for **obsessive control over campus systems** — but would he risk exposure to eliminate a student?

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2. Zoya Fernandez

Title: Final Year CS Student, Hackspire Competition Head.
Connection to Victim: Former best friend, academic rival, ex-collaborator

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🔍 **Evidence of Suspicion**:
- Aarav had previously implied she **reused code** from their abandoned joint project in her current Hackspire entry.
- Her laptop's browser history showed searches like:
"how to erase digital identity permanently"

- Her 3D printer logs show an unsupervised job resembling a **precision blade handle**, printed just hours before the murder.
- Multiple witnesses recall her saying:
"Lab B should've stayed sealed. Nothing good ever came out of that place."

＝ Alibi & Uncertainties:
- Claims she was up all night **preparing Hackspire logistics** with four team members — all confirm, but no timestamped proof.
- Messages deleted from her private drive show multiple **unrecoverable gaps** from the night of the incident.
- Her emotional distance post-incident is noted — guilt, trauma, or something else?

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3. Principal Arjun Jain

Title: Principal, St. Augustine Technical Institute
Connection to Victim: Signed off on Aarav's disciplinary suspension weeks before death

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🔍 Evidence of Suspicion:
- Internal whistleblower claims Jain ordered the **suppression of Aarav's bullying complaint** earlier in the semester.

- Financial audit flagged **four undocumented payments** to "Q-Byte Solutions," a firm linked to **Zoya's father**.

- Was one of **only three staff** with override access to the **Lab B circuit breaker**, which was tampered with the night of the murder.

＝ Alibi & Uncertainties:
- Claims he was **home reviewing Hackspire funding** — unverified, but his access card shows building entry earlier that evening.
- School admin logs show a **suspicious login into a private messaging app** connected to Zoya's device — possibly related to non-academic communications.
- Known to operate in **shadows when protecting the school's image** — but would he enable violence?

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4. Sahil Wadhwa

Title: Hacker Club President, Black Hat Enthusiast
Connection to Victim: Friend, hacker partner, and known provocateur

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🔍 **Evidence of Suspicion**:
- Operated a secret node on the school intranet named **"Deadpool/404"**, full of simulated breach scenarios and encrypted student metadata.
- Video recovered from Aarav's wiped laptop shows Sahil, close to the camera, whispering:
"Sometimes, a bug has to be squashed, even if it screams."
- Was seen **leaving the east wing** an hour before the murder window — **outside curfew protocols**.

⚖ **Alibi & Uncertainties**:
- Claims the video was part of a **roleplay for a cyber-themed ARG** — final script never submitted.
- Insists he and Aarav were friends — says they were "working on something big," but refuses to elaborate.
- **Encrypted file transfer logs** show Aarav sent something to Sahil two days before death — file now **corrupted beyond recovery**.
- Known for **blurring the lines between pranks and psychological warfare** — but would he go this far?

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Interrogation logs:

Dr. Vishal Dey

"He was… digging. Asking the wrong questions to the wrong people. I told him to focus on his coursework. Stay out of things he didn't understand. But he often did not due to his curiosity."

"You think I had something to do with this? Let me be absolutely clear here. That boy was a born genius… a person like me would never want that skill wasted. That's a very different kind of fear."

"I didn't kill him. But I won't pretend I didn't breathe easier when he stopped poking around 2 weeks ago."

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Zoya Fernandez

"He changed. Got distant. Obsessive. I'd see him in the corner of the library scribbling numbers, muttering like a lunatic."

"At first I thought he was stalking me. Then I confronted him. He seemed too confused about the conversation. It seemed as if he was only interested in computers and not anyone else."

"I didn't hate him. I hated what he was becoming — this… martyr-in-the-making. Like the world owed him answers."

"I still maintained my distance from him because he was becoming like one of those psychopaths they show in true crime documentaries."

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Principal Arjun Jain (Internal Memo, never sent)

"I tried to help that boy. He was gifted. But he often indulged in matters that didn't belong to him. But some students don't want help. That stupid little boy thought he could control all the wrong doings by himself."

"He asked too many questions. Not about his grades. About things that didn't concern a teenager."

"If he hadn't gone off on his own, maybe none of this would've happened."

"Also, this goes without saying… but this incident has deeply saddened us and the school promises to increase the surveillance and tighten the security until the perpetrator is secured and behind bars."

(This is yet to be decided)
FORENSICS

Participants play cyber-investigators given:
- Laptop dump (files, deleted logs, cookies)
- Server access logs
- Corrupted surveillance video
- Chat transcripts from school's internal messaging app
- Recovered metadata from QR code and digital "will"

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