

HOST MATERIALS

The Last Toast — Cooperative Murder Mystery

WARNING: HOST ONLY — DO NOT SHOW TO PLAYERS

This document contains the complete solution.

PHASE 4: FINAL RECONSTRUCTION

Duration: 15 Minutes

Host Instructions

1. Distribute the **Summary Cards** (below) to each detective
 2. Give players the **Final Answer Card**
 3. Set 15-minute timer
 4. Players must agree unanimously on all five answers
 5. Collect answers, then read the **Solution** aloud
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SUMMARY CARDS

Cut and distribute one to each detective

DETECTIVE 1: TIMELINE ANALYST — PHASE 4 SUMMARY

KEY FACTS FROM YOUR EVIDENCE:

- Camera SC-1 was deliberately disabled (junction box in service kitchen)
- Blackout period: 00:47 - 01:10
- Rohit was the LAST GUEST to leave (02:10 AM)
- Catering staff departed at 02:30 AM (after Rohit)
- **Delivery manifest shows Bottle ID: BTL-7794**
- **Evidence tag shows Bottle ID: BTL-7711 (MISMATCH!)**
- Bottle delivered December 12; Rohit visited that evening (19:32-21:15)
- **Swap window: December 13, 19:00-20:00**
- Catering staff log shows **Vikash Mehta** as bar assistant

YOUR KEY QUESTION: Who had access to swap the bottle on December 13, and who was still at the estate after 2:10 AM?

DETECTIVE 2: FORENSICS LEAD — PHASE 4 SUMMARY

KEY FACTS FROM YOUR EVIDENCE:

- Death by ligature strangulation (silk cord from behind)
- No defensive wounds — victim was incapacitated
- Diazepam in blood: 850 ng/mL (well above toxic)
- Sedative was in the BOTTLE (Bottle ID: BTL-7711)
- Silk fibers on neck match missing curtain cord (EV-007)
- Curtain cord thrown out study window (fibers in garden)

- Rohit paid ₹2.5 lakh to Mehta Pharmaceuticals (Nov 22) — **UNEXPLAINED RED HERRING**
- Time of death: 2:15-2:30 AM (catering staff still present)

YOUR KEY QUESTION: Who had ACCESS to swap the bottle AND physical presence to strangle the victim after 2:10 AM?

DETECTIVE 3: SOCIAL OBSERVER — PHASE 4 SUMMARY

KEY FACTS FROM YOUR EVIDENCE:

- Deepika and Rohit were in a relationship before she joined company
- Rohit introduced Deepika to Arjun for PA position
- Rohit discovered Deepika-Arjun affair in October 2024
- Deepika is 14 weeks pregnant (Arjun's child)
- Deepika had champagne, NOT whiskey (she was not drugged)
- Kavya attended St. Xavier's College, Mumbai (2012-2015)

YOUR KEY QUESTION: What is Kavya's real relationship to Arjun, and why might she have access to the study during setup?

DETECTIVE 4: OBJECTS & SPACE — PHASE 4 SUMMARY

KEY FACTS FROM YOUR EVIDENCE:

- Two paths to study: visible (through drawing room) and hidden (service kitchen)
- Hidden path NOT covered by cameras; passes junction box
- Missing: Silk curtain cord from study window (EV-007)
- Silk fibers found in garden behind study window
- **Kavya signed staging checklist for Private Study at 19:30**
- Staging checklist gave her access to whiskey cabinet
- Catering staff had access to service kitchen path
- Catering staff departed at 02:30 AM — AFTER Rohit left

YOUR KEY QUESTION: Who had access to the study cabinet during the swap window (19:00-20:00), and who could exit undetected?

DETECTIVE 5: MOTIVE & MONEY — PHASE 4 SUMMARY

KEY FACTS FROM YOUR EVIDENCE:

- Rohit lost ₹23,950 Crore (inheritance + insurance changes)
- **Kavya gains ₹300 Cr + 40% equity — BUT ONLY IF SHE REMAINS ENGAGED**
- If Arjun leaves Kavya for Deepika (pregnant mistress), Kavya gets NOTHING
- Deepika gained inheritance + paternity acknowledgment in new will
- Insurance clause: convicted beneficiaries forfeit their share
- Arjun's last text at 01:52: "I know who you are..." (to burner phone)
- Rohit paid ₹2.5 lakh to Mehta Pharmaceuticals — **NEVER EXPLAINED**
- **Kavya's real motive: Fear of losing everything to Deepika**

YOUR KEY QUESTION: Who stood to LOSE everything if Arjun lived to leave his fiancée for his pregnant mistress?

FINAL ANSWER CARD

THE FIVE FINAL QUESTIONS

All five detectives must agree before submitting

QUESTION 1: Who strangled the victim?

Answer: _____

QUESTION 2: Who drugged/swapped the whiskey bottle?

Answer: _____

QUESTION 3: Why couldn't the victim fight back?

Answer: _____

QUESTION 4: When was the bottle swapped? (Date and approximate time)

Answer: _____

QUESTION 5: What single piece of evidence proves the killers' identity beyond reasonable doubt?

Answer: _____

THE SOLUTION

Read aloud after collecting answers

THE KILLERS

KAVYA SHARMA (Mastermind) + VIKASH MEHTA (Executor)

CORRECT ANSWERS

Question 1: Who strangled the victim?

ANSWER: VIKASH MEHTA

He strangled Arjun with the silk curtain cord at approximately 2:15-2:25 AM on December 14, 2024. He entered via the service kitchen path after the last guest (Rohit) departed at 2:10 AM. The attack came from behind while Arjun was incapacitated by sedatives.

Question 2: Who drugged/swapped the whiskey bottle?

ANSWER: KAVYA SHARMA + VIKASH MEHTA (together)

- Vikash purchased the duplicate bottle (BTL-7711) on December 11 and added Diazepam
 - Kavya swapped the bottles on December 13 during "event staging" at 7:30 PM
 - She signed the staging checklist, giving her legitimate access to the study cabinet
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Question 3: Why couldn't the victim fight back?

ANSWER: He was incapacitated by Diazepam (sedative) that had been added to the swapped whiskey bottle.

At the blood concentration found (850 ng/mL — well above toxic threshold), Arjun would have experienced severe drowsiness, profound muscle weakness, impaired coordination, and confusion. He was physically incapable of resisting the attack. This explains the critical autopsy finding: no defensive wounds despite violent death by strangulation.

Question 4: When was the bottle swapped?

ANSWER: December 13, 2024, between 19:00 and 20:00 (most likely ~19:30)

The original bottle (BTL-7794) was delivered on December 12. Catering staff arrived at 19:00 on December 13, bringing the drugged bottle (BTL-7711). Kavya signed the staging checklist for the study at 19:30, during which she swapped the bottles. The party began at 20:00.

Question 5: What single piece of evidence proves the killers?

ANSWER: The Bottle ID mismatch (BTL-7794 delivered vs BTL-7711 in evidence)

The delivery manifest shows the original bottle was BTL-7794. The evidence tag shows the bottle found was BTL-7711. This proves the bottle was **swapped**, not tampered with.

Combined with:

- Vikash purchased bottle BTL-7711 on December 11 (CCTV evidence)
- Kavya signed staging checklist at 19:30, accessing the study cabinet (swap opportunity)
- Kavya-Vikash prior relationship (established connection/conspiracy)
- Catering staff (Vikash) departed at 02:30 AM (opportunity for strangulation)

This creates an irrefutable chain of evidence for a premeditated, two-person conspiracy murder.

THE COMPLETE STORY

Read aloud:

"Kavya Sharma's world collapsed in the autumn of 2024. She had secured her future — engaged to a billionaire, ₹300 crore in insurance, 40% of the company. Then she discovered that Arjun was having an affair with his 29-year-old assistant Deepika. Worse, Deepika was pregnant. The new will acknowledged Deepika's child and gave them inheritance rights.

Kavya knew what this meant. Arjun would eventually leave her for the younger woman carrying his child. Her ₹300 crore would vanish. Her status as 'future Mrs. Malhotra' would become 'discarded fiancée.'

She reached out to an old flame — Vikash Mehta, her college boyfriend from 2013-2015. He still carried a torch for her. She manipulated him with promises: 'After this, we'll be together. With Arjun's money.'

When Kavya learned from the housekeeper that Vikram Saxena was sending Arjun a gift bottle, she saw her opportunity. If they could swap the bottle with a drugged duplicate, suspicion would fall on Vikram — the man who had publicly argued with Arjun about the merger.

On December 11th, Vikash purchased an identical Macallan 25 (Bottle ID: BTL-7711) from Mumbai Wine & Spirits, paying cash to avoid a paper trail. He added pharmaceutical-grade Diazepam — enough to

incapacitate a man.

On December 12th, the original bottle (BTL-7794) arrived at the estate. That evening, Rohit visited 'to collect documents.' He was alone in the study for nearly two hours — but the original bottle was still there. Rohit never touched it. His pharmaceutical purchase from November remains unexplained — perhaps he had his own plans, but he never acted on them.

On December 13th, Vikash arrived with the catering crew at 7:00 PM, carrying the drugged bottle in his bag. At 7:30 PM, Kavya signed the staging checklist for the private study — giving her legitimate access to the whiskey cabinet. She swapped the bottles. Vikash later disposed of the original bottle.

At the party, Kavya played the perfect fiancée. She encouraged Arjun to open 'Vikram's special gift' for a toast. Around 1:30 AM, Arjun met Deepika in the study. He poured himself whiskey from the drugged bottle. He became increasingly drowsy.

Rohit visited the study at 1:50 AM to 'say goodbye.' He found his father slurring and confused. He left at 2:05 AM and departed the estate at 2:10 AM — the last guest to leave.

At 2:15 AM, Vikash entered the study via the service kitchen path — a route not covered by cameras. Arjun was slumped in his chair, barely conscious. Vikash took the silk cord from the curtains and strangled him. There was no struggle — the sedative had done its work.

Vikash discarded the cord in the garden through the study window. He exited with the catering cleanup crew at 2:30 AM.

The irony: The evidence points overwhelmingly at Rohit. His December 12 visit, his pharmaceutical purchase, his financial motive, his fingerprints on the champagne glass — it all fits. Most groups will build their entire theory around him. But it's wrong.

The bottle ID mismatch is the key. BTL-7794 was delivered. BTL-7711 was found. The bottle was swapped, not tampered with. And only Kavya and Vikash had both the means and the opportunity to execute the swap.

Kavya killed her fiancé to secure an inheritance she was about to lose. Vikash killed for the woman he never stopped loving."

RED HERRINGS EXPLAINED

Red Herring	What It Seemed	The Truth
Rohit's Dec 12 visit	He drugged the bottle	Original bottle (BTL-7794) still there; he didn't touch it
Rohit's pharma purchase (₹2.5L)	He acquired the sedative	UNEXPLAINED — permanent red herring; possibly his own aborted plan
Rohit's fingerprints on champagne glass	Evidence tampering	He picked it up innocently during the party
Priya's longer stay	She strangled him	She was searching the bedroom for divorce documents
Kavya's sleeping pill alibi	She was asleep	She took the pill AFTER Vikash completed the murder

Camera malfunction	Killer disabled it to hide murder	Anil disabled it to access embezzlement documents from safe
Vikram's gift bottle	He poisoned/drugged it before sending	Genuine peace offering; Kavya swapped it with drugged duplicate
Deepika in the study	She drugged Arjun during their meeting	She had champagne, not whiskey; left before strangulation
The burner phone	Dangerous figure stalking Arjun	Belonged to Arjun; he was investigating the whistleblower

SCORING

Question	Correct Answer	Points
1. Who strangled	Vikash Mehta	20
2. Who drugged/swapped bottle	Kavya + Vikash (both)	15
3. Why no fight	Sedative/Diazepam incapacitation	20
4. When swapped	December 13, evening (19:00-20:00)	20
5. Key evidence	Bottle ID mismatch (BTL-7794 vs BTL-7711)	25
TOTAL		100

Partial Credit

- Q1: 10 points if they say "catering staff" or "someone who was present after 2:10"
- Q1 & Q2: If they identify BOTH people are involved (even if names wrong), +5 points (shows understanding of conspiracy)
- Q2: 10 points if they say "Kavya" alone (she did the swap; Vikash helped prepare)
- Q3: 10 points if they mention "sedative" or "drugged" or "couldn't resist"
- Q4: 10 points if they say "December 13" or "before the party" or "during setup"
- Q5: 15 points if they mention the bottle ID difference or "bottle was swapped"
- Q5: 10 points if they mention Kavya's staging checklist or Vikash's CCTV

Ratings

Score	Rating
90-100	MASTER DETECTIVES — "You solved a conspiracy murder. The misdirection didn't fool you."
70-89	SKILLED INVESTIGATORS — "You pieced together the swap. Close to the full picture."
50-69	COMPETENT SLEUTHS — "You identified the killers but missed some details."
30-49	AMATEUR DETECTIVES — "The Rohit misdirection caught you."
0-29	WRONG TRAIL — "Justice was not served today."

HOST TIPS

Pacing the Game

- **Phase 1:** Let them discover the basic facts — strangulation, no defensive wounds, sedative in blood. Plant the Bottle ID BTL-7711 in the evidence inventory.
- **Phase 2:** They should start building the Rohit theory (pharma purchase, Dec 12 visit, motive). This is EXPECTED and DESIRED. The delivery manifest with BTL-7794 is there — observant players may notice the mismatch.
- **Phase 3:** The bottle ID mismatch should cause the "wait, what?" moment. Rohit's Dec 12 visit becomes irrelevant because the swap happened AFTER he left.
- **Phase 4:** Light pressure. The timer creates urgency for final consensus.

If Players Are Stuck

Phase 1-2: Don't help. Let them build the Rohit theory.

Phase 3: You can ask leading questions:

- "Compare the bottle IDs from Phase 1 and Phase 2."
- "What does the catering staff log tell you?"
- "What's the connection between Kavya and Vikash Mehta?"
- "Who had access to the study cabinet on December 13?"

Phase 4: Last resort hints:

- "The bottle was SWAPPED, not tampered with."
- "Look at who signed the staging checklist."
- "Who was still at the estate after Rohit left?"

Common Wrong Theories

Players will likely suspect:

1. **Rohit** (pharma purchase, Dec 12 visit, motive) — **THE INTENDED MISDIRECTION** — Let them build this theory; it falls apart when they notice the bottle ID mismatch
2. **Deepika** (was in study, earring found) — Good misdirection; she had champagne
3. **Anil** (camera, service kitchen access) — Plausible but he has embezzlement motive, not murder
4. **Vikram** (sent the bottle) — The frame; alibi is solid
5. **Kavya alone** (jealousy, stayed overnight) — Close but they need to identify Vikash too

The correct answer (Kavya + Vikash) requires players to:

1. Notice the bottle ID mismatch ($BTL-7794 \neq BTL-7711$)
2. Connect Vikash to Kavya through prior relationship
3. Recognize the swap window (Dec 13, 19:00-20:00)
4. Understand that Rohit's evidence is all circumstantial misdirection

Key Insight for Players

The breakthrough should be: "The bottle IDs don't match!"

Once they connect:

- BTL-7794 was delivered → BTL-7711 was found → SWAP occurred
- Swap window: Dec 13, 19:00-20:00
- Kavya signed staging checklist → access to cabinet

- Vikash on catering staff → brought the drugged bottle + stayed late

The answer becomes clear: Kavya swapped the bottle, Vikash strangled the victim.

Atmosphere Suggestions

- Dim lighting
 - Jazz or noir background music (low volume)
 - Whiskey or mocktails (on theme)
 - Indian dinner to match setting
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PRINT CHECKLIST

Item	Copies	For
Case Brief (File 1)	5	All players
Phase 1 Evidence — Detective 1	1	Detective 1
Phase 1 Evidence — Detective 2	1	Detective 2
Phase 1 Evidence — Detective 3	1	Detective 3
Phase 1 Evidence — Detective 4	1	Detective 4
Phase 1 Evidence — Detective 5	1	Detective 5
Phase 2 Evidence — Detective 1	1	Detective 1
Phase 2 Evidence — Detective 2	1	Detective 2
Phase 2 Evidence — Detective 3	1	Detective 3
Phase 2 Evidence — Detective 4	1	Detective 4
Phase 2 Evidence — Detective 5	1	Detective 5
Phase 3 Twist (File 4)	5	All players
Phase 4 Summary Cards	5 (1 each)	Each detective
Final Answer Card	1	Group
Appendix: Persons of Interest (File 6)	5	All players (optional reference)
Solution (this file)	1	Host only

END OF HOST MATERIALS

"THE LAST TOAST"

A Cooperative Murder Mystery for 5 Detectives