

CONFIDENTIAL CASE FILE

THE MIDNIGHT DIAMOND

Case 001 • A 60–90 minute printable mystery

The gallery was locked. The alarms never sounded.
At 8:47 p.m., the Midnight Diamond vanished.

OPEN ONLY WHEN YOUR INVESTIGATION TEAM IS READY

Created for The Unsolved Envelope. All characters and events are fictional.

Investigator Briefing

Your objective: Identify who stole the Midnight Diamond, explain how the locked display was opened, and identify the evidence that breaks the culprit's alibi.

At the Blackwood Gallery's invitation-only preview, the lights failed for exactly ninety seconds. When emergency power returned at 8:48 p.m., the diamond's locked display was empty. The gallery doors had remained secured and the display alarm never sounded.

Rules: Read pages 2–6 in any order. Do not open the solution page until your team agrees on a suspect, method and decisive clue. Everything needed to solve the case is included.

CASE FACTS

8:35	Diamond verified inside display.
8:42	Curator announces the gallery will close at 9:00.
8:46	Archive-room access recorded.
8:47	Main lights fail; emergency lights delayed.
8:48	Power returns; display is empty.
8:52	All six people are searched. No diamond is found.

Persons of Interest

Mara Voss — Curator

Had the display key and knew the alarm procedures. Says she was in the archive photographing insurance papers from 8:43 until the lights returned.

Owen Pike — Electrician

Serviced the gallery wiring that afternoon. Says he was beside the breaker cabinet when the outage began and restored power as quickly as possible.

Elise Hart — Journalist

Was writing a feature about the diamond. Says she remained in the reception hall, recording voice notes throughout the blackout.

Victor Lane — Collector

Tried to purchase the diamond last year. Says he was on a video call in the courtyard from 8:40 to 8:51.

Noah Bell — Guard

Controlled the entrance and searched everyone. Says he never left the front desk after 8:30.

Sienna Roe — Caterer

Moved between the kitchen and reception hall. Says she was carrying a tray when the lights failed and dropped two glasses.

Evidence A — Security and Display Report

The display uses a mechanical key plus a silent magnetic sensor. Opening it normally sends an alert unless the sensor is placed in service mode. Service mode requires a four-digit code entered at the curator's desk. The code was entered successfully at 8:45 p.m. No failed attempts were recorded.

The display lock shows no scratches or forced entry. The main key was found on Mara's neck chain. The sealed backup-key envelope remained in the safe, but the red wax seal was slightly warmer and glossier than the gallery's older seals.

Desk notepad impression recovered beneath a removed page:

YEAR THE EAST WING OPENED – NOT THE GALLERY
1 9 2 7

Owen confirms the outage came from a loosened timer screw inside the breaker cabinet. It could have been prepared hours earlier to cut power automatically at 8:47.

Evidence B — Devices and Time Stamps

Mara's archive photograph: displayed clock reads 8:44, but file metadata shows the image was created at 8:58 p.m. The camera's clock was verified accurate.

Victor's call: continuous video-call log from 8:40–8:51; courtyard camera shows him there.

Elise's voice notes: recordings at 8:43, 8:47 and 8:49. The 8:47 recording contains two glasses breaking and Sienna apologizing nearby.

Noah's desk camera: shows him at the entrance continuously from 8:31–8:52.

Owen's tool monitor: his voltage meter was connected at 8:46 and recorded restoration at 8:48. It does not prove who loosened the timer screw earlier.

Recovered text draft from an unsent message on the curator's computer:

"After tonight, the board will finally understand what this collection is worth. The insurer only needs proof that every procedure was followed."

Evidence C — Search Results

No diamond was found on any person. Investigators then searched the rooms. A velvet display pad in the archive contained a fresh rectangular indentation. Behind the bottom drawer of the curator’s map cabinet was a narrow maintenance channel leading into the wall.

A flexible exhibition-label tube was recovered inside the channel. The tube was empty, but its inner lining contained microscopic blue velvet fibres matching the diamond’s display pad.

The gallery floor plan shows the maintenance channel ends behind the display wall. Only the curator’s archive map marks that route; the public plan does not.

Wax comparison:

Sample	Colour	Distinctive material
Old gallery seals	Dark crimson	Beeswax + shellac
Backup-key seal	Bright red	Paraffin + cinnamon oil
Mara’s desk candle	Bright red	Paraffin + cinnamon oil

Your Verdict

Before opening the solution, record your team's conclusion.

Who stole the Midnight Diamond?

How was the locked display opened without triggering the alarm?

Which clue proves the culprit's alibi is false?

Where was the diamond hidden?

SOLUTION — OPEN LAST

Mara Voss, the curator, staged the theft.

Mara knew the service code, entered it at 8:45, and used the backup key after replacing its original seal with wax from her desk candle. The matching paraffin-and-cinnamon composition proves the seal was replaced.

She had prepared the timed outage earlier by loosening the breaker timer screw. During the blackout, she opened the disabled display and pushed the diamond through the exhibition-label tube into the maintenance channel leading to her archive map cabinet. That is why nobody carried the diamond during the searches and why blue velvet fibres remained inside the tube.

Her alibi collapses because the photograph she claimed to take during the blackout was actually created at 8:58 p.m. The visible clock was deliberately set back. Her unsent insurance message establishes motive: she intended to create a high-profile loss and force the board and insurer to reassess the collection's value.

Final verdict: Mara had exclusive knowledge, access, a falsified alibi, matching replacement wax and a concealed route from the display to her archive.

CASE STATUS: SOLVED

The next envelope is waiting.