CPSSMUN CRISIS NIGHT



KNIVES OUT

Diveena Sureshkumar & Sia Dani

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Content Disclaimer	
Equity Concerns	
Directors Letter	····· ²
Background Information	
Timeline of the Night of April 20, 2025	
Topic 1: Who Dunnit?	9
Topic Two: Harlan's Publishing Firm's Legacy	1
Character List	13
Citations	2

CONTENT DISCLAIMER

This committee is based on the popular IP Knives Out, and all characters, events and situations are entirely fictionalized for the purpose of the committee. While this committee explores sensitive topics such as greed, deception and justice within this setting, it does so with no intention of reflecting real people or circumstances.

The heightened differences between certain characters do not promote the usage of stereotypes or real-world prejudices. Delegates can embody their characters while foregoing their problematic traits.

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DIRECTORS LETTER

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the twisted, and utterly chaotic world of Knives Out: Who Did It! We are beyond thrilled to have you join us for what promises to be a whirlwind of scandal, sharp wit and high-stakes murder mystery. In this committee, you won't just play a part, you will shape the very outcome of a deadly puzzle that has yet to be solved.

The date is April 21, 2025. Easter festivities have turned stone cold, the champagne is still open, but the man of the house, Harlan Thrombey is gone. A locked room. A missing key. A family full of motives. And right at the heart of it all. You.

As delegates, you will take on the role of family members, opportunistic friends, employees and bright minds. Secrets will be exposed, alliances will change by the minute and your ability to strategize and make friends will be your greatest weapon. It is not just about finding the killer, it is about surviving the fallout, protecting your secrets and maybe walking away with a brighter future.

This committee is your stage. Whether you are prepared to outwit or betray, there is a place for you in this tangled web.

So sharpen your minds, polish your poker faces and step into our world where every word is a clue and your every move is being watched.

The game is on and the house is burning. Let's see who makes it out!

Diveena Sureshkumar and Sia Dani

Directors of Knives Out

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The date is currently April 21, 2025. It is Easter Monday, and famous mystery novelist Harlan Thrombey has been found dead in his study at his Massachusetts estate after a night full of Easter Sunday festivities. His family, already on the edge from the previous night's explosive arguments, is now thrown into chaos. Grief? Maybe. Shock? Probably. Opportunism? Definitely. To make matters worse, private detective Benoit Blanc is mysteriously hired to look into the case, suspecting foul play. Benoit Blanc is a world-renowned detective responsible for solving many cold cases, leaving no stone unturned. He was brought into this investigation with nothing but a note at his door with no return address. "Harlan Thrombey was murdered." With Benoit Blanc present, those close to Harlan are at risk of exposing their secrets to the entire community. Family members are frantic, pointing fingers as soon as the news has been revealed, desperate to shift blame, protect their interests and secure their share of Harlan's fortune before it slips through their fingers.

Harlan was not just a writer. He was a man who calculated his every move. If the family does not uncover the identity of the killer, they run the risk of losing their fortune forever. Although Harlan comes across as well-intentioned he does not think clearly about the consequences of his actions on his family. He did not dwell on the consequences of lending money to his materialistic children. However, his existence was very important to his family as he has been silently covering many of their expenses and providing them with resources to live their luxurious lives. The family is a wealthy yet deeply dysfunctional group of people where each family member harbours their own unique personal goals and secretive motives tied to inheriting Harlan's will.

So what happened that night? Harlan was making his rounds talking to everyone at the party. People noticed that his usual charming wit had a sly edge to it. Conversations turned heated, especially with his family. Linda stormed off after a whispered argument with Harlan and Ransom left abruptly with his smirk wiped clean off his face. One by one, family members left the house with a common theme: anger and resentment. By midnight, the estate had fallen silent,

Central Peel Model United Nation | Knives Out

and only Harlan remained, in his dimly lit study where a single lamp glowed behind a desk. That was the last time anyone saw him alive... By morning, he was dead. The door locked from the inside. The key to his safe, is GONE. Despite the clashing personalities in one room on the Easter Sunday dinner, only one of them left the estate with a dark secret that night. The cause of death was determined to be smoke inhalation due to a fire that occurred that night, but fires don't start themselves. The study doors were locked and his inheritance documents had vanished. Someone set those flames. Someone wanted to burn the truth.

The worst part is that Harlan knew his death was coming. He knew that someone fostered resentment towards him and knew that things would inevitably escalate.

Note: Below is the scene of the crime and a timeline of the events leading up to Harlan's death.

Note: This committee is based on the popular movie Knives Out, however, the committee storyline does not follow the plot of the movie. You do not have to watch the movie to understand the committee although it might help you understand the depth of your character.



Clues: hidden security cameras on the bookshelf, the blue hoodie next to the body, the cracked windows (possibly how the murderer escaped and got in), the open safe, the *absence* of a key, etc. Delegates are encouraged to incorporate these clues into their theories of the killer.

Note: Delegates are also encouraged to work with Benoit Blanc, who can be accessed through crisis.

TIMELINE OF THE NIGHT OF APRIL 20, 2025



TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

TOPIC #1: WHO DUNNIT?

Upon the discovery of Harlan's death, the family begins to uncover handwritten notes by Harlan scattered throughout the house, which he left there after suspecting his end was near. The detectives begin to take a look at the evidence, dissecting the scene to paint a clear picture of the night. During this time, some family members step back and let the others do the work. Whereas some take a proactive stance and work towards answering the big question: Who killed Harlan Thrombey? This question must be answered by the family before Benoit Blanc uncovers the story, but the killer remains very well hidden in the crowd. Also worth noting is that each person is harbouring a secret that only they know.

Panic spreads amongst the dinner table as family members begin to take on investigations of their own and in groups. There are clear divisions between Harlan's children and their allies. As the evidence continues to pile up, including a timeline of events and a DNA test with the results of various fingerprints identified, they become increasingly desperate, and Benoit Blanc becomes closer and closer to solving the crime. However, this evidence is still in processing. Through the cryptic notes, Harlan says if they do not determine the killer before his last note the family can lose the inheritance. They must solve the crime and bring justice to the individual before their fortune is lost forever, and in order to do that, they must work together. However, as panic and terror spread throughout the family, working together is the last idea on their minds.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- 1. How will you uncover the killer, and what resources will you use? Is it better to team up or work on your own?
- 2. What secrets are people hiding, and what are the dangers if they are exposed to everyone?
- 3. What was everyone doing that night and which individuals could be at fault?

TOPIC #2: HARLAN'S PUBLISHING FIRM'S LEGACY

Harlan Thrombey built his publishing empire with thought, wit and an unshakeable vision. His firm was more than a business, it was a powerhouse of literature, shaping the world with timeless classics and modern masterpieces. With his passing, the fate of his publishing house hangs in pieces. Someone must take over in order to ensure that books are still being published under the Harlan Thrombey name. Everyone is eager to have some part in the famous firm, they rush to get the word out, pushing people to nominate them. Harlan's family, his employees, and EVERYONE he ever knew each have a stake in this game, each one hungry for a piece of what Harlan built up. His children, tired of having minor roles in the industry, are hungry for the powerful position of the president's chair. They believe it is their birthright, yet none of them truly understand the weight of running such a vast empire. To them, the publishing firm is more than just a company, it's power, it's influence, it's money. People who once worked for Harlan at his estate were close enough to Harlan to know the ins and outs of the publishing company. Each person in the room is a worthy candidate, and it is up to everyone to determine the one individual fit to lead the empire and continue Harlan's legacy.

The battle for control has begun, lawsuits will be filed, elections must run, and old alliances are now broken. The question remains: Who will seize the throne?

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- 1. How does everyone's secret affect their chance of leading the firm? Will there be some people without anything at all?
- 2. Is it better to divide the publication equally, or should those who contribute more get a bigger share?
- 3. How will you determine who leads the publication—strength, intelligence, or something else? And what happens if leadership is challenged?

CHARACTER LIST

POLICE REPORT FORM

Name of Suspect

| Marta Cabrera | Employee | Grandchild | Son/Daughter | Other

Description

She was the nurse of Harlan Thrombey until his unfortunate death. As his caregiver she was responsible for his medications, assisting him with daily tasks, and providing support emotionally and mentally. Martha is from South America, and her parents are undocumented. The country in which she comes from is kept discrete as various individuals refer to her as being from Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay, or Brazil. Her loyalty was with Harlan and she remained hardworking, caring, and compassionate throughout her entire time working for the Thrombey. She knew Harlan's wealth could secure her mother's safety, but she never wanted it to happen this way.

Allies	Enemies
Fran - Shared trust and looked out for each other.	Ransom Drysdale - Never liked her working for his grandfather
Meg Thrombey - Advocated for Marta and believed in her kindness.	Walt Thrombey - Believed Marta manipulated Harlan for money.
Harlan Thrombey - He trusted her completely	Linda Drysdale - Thought Marta was undeserving of
	Harlan's trust.

- Her family is desperate need for money how far is she willing to go?
- · She wants to protect herself and her family from the Thrombeys' family drama
- . Knew the ins and outs very well

POLICE REPORT FORM

INVESTEGATOR Benoît Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Ransom Drysdale	☐ Employee ■ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ☐ Other

Description

Is the son of Linda and Richard Drysdale along with being the grandson to Harland Thrombey. He is in his early thirties, yet has never held a real job or achieved anything on his own. His grandfather's wealth pays for his luxurious lifestyle. Character wise Ransom is arrogant, manipulative, short tempered, and entitled which comes from his belief that he is superior to his family and others. Shows no interest in taking part in family matters or discussions, it is indifferent to him. Cut off from his grandfather's fortune, Ransom saw only one way to reclaim what he believed was rightfully his.

Allies	Enemies
Jacob Thrombey - Saw Ransom as a rebellious role model and always looked up to him	Harlan Thrombey - Betrayed him by cutting him off in the inheritance.
Joni Thrombey - Bonded over their resentment towards Harlan and the way he chose to spend his money	Meg Thrombey - Grew to despise his manipulative nature and always knew he was up to something.
Richard Drysdale - Shared arrogance and a mutual hate for the rest of the family	Martha Cabrera - caught onto his cunning personality immediately and knew he had to be up to no good

- He is determined to reclaim his inheritance at any cost
- · feeling entitled to Harlan's wealth
- Will take down anyone who gets in his way

POLICE REPORT FOR	M
NVESTEGATOR Benoit Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Meg Thrombey	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ☐ Other
Desci	ription
about poetry and studies at a liberal arts school. Acts sympathei always prioritizes herself over doing the right thing. Her family h actions she takes. With her tuition on the line, Meg wondered if Allies	as always had influence over her and plays a big part in the
Marta Cabrera - Genuinely liked and trusted her.	Joni Thrombey - Her mother, who pressured her into deception and lies
Fran - Saw her as an honest person amid the family chaos. Paul Bellefeuille - Shared an interest in literature and deep conversations.	Ransom Drysdale - Represented the worst of their family. Linda Drysdale - Looked down on Meg's lack of financial independence.
	тасрениенсе.

• Torn between family loyalty and personal ethics

She seems like she wants to do the right thing but fears the consequences
 Going against her mother and relatives - is that something she will do?

13

POLICE REPORT FORM Benoit Blanc INVESTEGATOR DATE: Name of Suspect Relation to deceased Employee Grandchild Joni Thrombey Son/Daughter 0ther Description Harlon's daughter in law who married Neil Thrombey (Harlan's deceased son who passed away 15 years ago). Despite her husband's death she remains close to the Thrombey family. Relying on immense financial support from Harlan, she runs a brand called Flam - a lifestyle brand for wellness - that sells skincare and healthcare products. Portrays herself as warm, kind, friendly and welcoming but there deeper parts to her personality. Cares a lot about keeping up her image as an independent business owner. The money had been flowing for years until Harlan cut her off, leaving her scrambling to maintain her lavish lifestyle.

Allies	Enemies
Ransom Drysdale - A fellow opportunist who saw money as the ultimate goal	Harlan Thrombey - Cut her off financially.
Jacob Thrombey - Saw potential in shaping him into a business partner.	Meg Thrombey - Refused to be a pawn in Joni's schemes. Marta Cabrera - Harlan trusted her the most and Joni did not like that as Martha wasn't even family

- Desperate to maintain her lavish lifestyle
- She is willing to manipulate, deceive, and forge alliances to regain financial security.

POLICE REPORT FORM

INVESTEGATOR Benoît Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Walt Thrombey	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ■ Son/Daughter ☐ Other

Description

Is Harlan's youngest son and husband of Donna Thromberly. He was entrusted to run his father's publishing company: Blood Like Wine Publishing. Harlan was a novelist and this company manages and is the backbone of his book empire. Walt is hardworking with dreams and aspirations to grow the business by turning books into movies and TV shows. However, Harlan is not onboard with the idea and despite Walt's high position his father still remains the one in control. He feels overshadowed and is dependent on what has been handed to him to sustain himself. Decades of running the publishing house meant nothing to Harlan, but Walt wasn't about to let his life's work slip away.

Allies	Enemies
Donna Thrombey - His most loyal supporter, his wife is always behind him	Harlan Thrombey - Denied him control of the business despite working his hardest to run it
Paul Bellefeuille - Trusted colleague in publishing and they worked together on numerous occasions	Detective Lieutenant Elliot - behind the scenes on the publishing company there were some grey areas in the books and the detective had doubts
Richard Drysdale - Bonded over resentment toward Harlan's decision to not including them in the will	

- Having always lived in his father's shadow
- He resents being shut out of the publishing empire
- Seeks to prove his worth by taking back control.

NVESTEGATOR Benoît Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Lieutenant Elliot	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ■ Other
Desc	ription
and looks closely as to what's in front of him. Most importantly, who were suspected of being the killer. Has Known Walt for a loextremness of Blanc by being direct and conventional. He wanted wasn't ready to blame?	ng time. Has a dry sense of humour and balances out the
Allies	Enemies
Benoit Blanc - Balanced his eccentricity with a practical approach.	Ransom Drysdale - Had a history of legal trouble. Walt Thrombey - had suspicions that there was
Trooper Wagner - His right-hand officer in the case.	something sketchy going on in the publishing company

NVESTEGATOR Benoit Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Trooper Wagner	☐ Employee ■ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ☐ Other
0	Description Description
loubted his abilities to become a detective, Irooper has dive everything it takes to get the designation of detective? Are	ed head first by gaining entry into the police force. Will he do bit beneaty and morals going to come before his family wha's socrets
	Enemies
are soon to air out in the open?	
are soon to air out in the open? Allies	Enemies
Allies Benoit Blanc - Idolized him as a detective.	Enemies Ransom Drysdale - Mocked him constantly.
Allies Benoit Blanc - Idolized him as a detective. Detective Lieutenant Elliot - Trusted mentor. Meg Thrombey - Shared casual conversations about	Enemies Ransom Drysdale - Mocked him constantly.

POLICE REPORT FORM Benoit Blanc INVESTEGATOR DATE: Relation to deceased Name of Suspect Grandchild Linda Drysdale Employee Son/Daughter Other Description She is the eldest daughter of the deceased. Linda runs a successful real estate company with her husband, Richard in Boston, Massachusetts. Claims to have most authority over the company and has built it herself from the ground up. Being the oldest of her siblings she naturally takes charge and control in situations. Unlike other members of the family Linda does not rely on her father for money however, she is angry at him for not giving her financial control of his empire. She is a responsible, confident, strong and protective person for herself and loved ones. She built her success from the ground up, but her father's secrets could bring it all crashing down. Allies Enemies Richard Drysdale - Despite their issues, they presented a Harlan Thrombey - Never gave her full control of his united front. empire. Walt Thrombey - Supported him in family disputes. Marta Cabrera - Never trusted anyone outside of the family to be involved in interal affairs Meg Thrombey - Saw her as weak link in the family Important Notes · Fiercely independent, she believes she built her own success but is furious that her father's wealth is slipping away from the family.

NVESTEGATOR Benoît Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Richard Drysdale	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ■ Other
Desc	ription
	hose outside the Thrombey family. Having an affair with Toni, he ep a clean public image of himself and his family. If Harlan expo
Allies	Enemies
inda Drysdale - Needed her power and influence.	Marta Cabrera - Never trusted anyone outside of the family to be involved in internal affairs
Ransom Drysdale - Shared his elitist mentality. Enemies:	ran - ever trusted anyone outside of the family to be involved in internal affairs Trooper Wagner - Ransom believed he was going to expose his whole family

NVESTEGATOR Benoit Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Donna Thrombey	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ■ Other
Desc	cription
being overlooked made her wonder if she'd ever get what she do	ly regarding Harlan's wealth and the inheritance. A lifetime of eserved. There may be more to her than what meets the eye.
Allies	Enemies
Walt Thrombey - Supported him through family issues. Trooper Wagner - trusted him to get to the bottom of this case and bring justice to this family	Harlan Thrombey - Denied her husband control of the business despite working his hardest to run it Detective Lieutenant Elliot - behind the scenes on the publishing company there were some grey areas in the books and the detective had doubts

NVESTEGATOR Benoit Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Jacob Thrombey	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ■ Son/Daughter ☐ Other
0.	escription
The youngest in a family of snakes, he was ready to prove he	· ·
Allies	Enemies
Ransom Drysdale - Admired his defiance against authority.	Meg Thrombey - Found him annoying and immature.
	Meg Thrombey - Found him annoying and immature.
authority.	Meg Thrombey - Found him annoying and immature.
authority.	Meg Thrombey - Found him annoying and immature.
authority.	Meg Thrombey - Found him annoying and immature.
authority.	Meg Thrombey - Found him annoying and immature.

NVESTEGATOR Benoil Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Wanetta Thrombey	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ■ Other
Desc	cription
key information, she is a powerful figure. The family thought sh	ne was too old to know what was going on—but they underestimate
ner entirely. Allies	Enemies
her entirely. Allies Marta Cabrera - Liked her genuine kindness.	
Allies	Enemies

INVESTEGATOR Benoit Blanc	DATE:	
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased	
Fran	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ■ Other	
Des	cription	
knowledgeable person. She saw something she shouldn't have,	ut of the manor and knowing the ins and outs of it really makes he and now, someone was willing to kill to keep her silent.	
Allies	Enemies	
Marta Cabrera - Trusted her more than anyone.	Ransom Drysdale - Knew his true nature.	
Meg Thrombey - Respected her sincerity.	Joni Thrombey - Treated house staff as disposable.	

NVESTEGATOR Benoit Blanc	DATE:
Name of Suspect	Relation to deceased
Paul Bellefeuille	☐ Employee ☐ Grandchild ☐ Son/Daughter ■ Other
Desc	ription
nim as another son and gave him a lot of responsibility at work. I	. He was hardworking and a diligent worker. Harlan had always see Harlan and Paul would often take lunch breaks together playing s of Walt since he was handed everything whereas Paul had to wor
Allies	Enemies
Harlan Thrombey - Respected him as a mentor.	Walt Thrombey - Resented Paul's closer relationship with Harlan.
Meg Thrombey - Enjoyed discussions about literature.	Ransom Drysdale - Mocked Paul for trying to "earn" success

CITATIONS

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