



# Cotswold & Severn Police

MAJOR CRIME INVESTIGATION TEAM

**SEALED**

CONFIDENTIAL SOLUTION

PTI-URN  
22GL/0388/26OPERATION  
GOSHAWKPAGE  
1 of 1RESTRICTION  
OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE**SEALED SOLUTION**

Host answer key - Operation GOSHAWK

**DO NOT OPEN UNTIL VERDICT**

**HOST EYES ONLY.** This is the sealed answer key for Operation GOSHAWK. If you are a player - **STOP READING NOW:** this sheet names the killer and walks through exactly how the case is solved. Reading it spoils the entire mystery for yourself and everyone at the table. Re-seal the envelope and hand it to whoever is running the game.

**1. THE ANSWER - WHO DID IT****Erin Doyle** **GUILTY**

The deceased's best friend and 50/50 co-owner of Quill &amp; Co. Events Ltd

**Charge:** Murder, contrary to common law**Motive:** to stop Liv reporting that Erin had embezzled about £18,000 from their events business**Liv Marsh** **DECEASED**

The victim - unlawfully killed (staged as a drunken fall down the stairs)

**Time of death:** between 02:00 and 03:30 on 14 March 2026**Decisive exhibit:** the Liv-Erin iMessage thread deleted from Liv's phone at 02:51 and recovered (LR/7), plus Erin's fingerprint on Liv's phone (RD/2)

CULPRIT

**Erin Doyle, 30 - Liv's best friend and 50/50 co-owner of Quill & Co. Events Ltd (mobile 07700 900 142)**

METHOD (IN BRIEF)

**a single blow to the back of the head with a cast-iron doorstop, staged as a drunken fall down the stairs**

WEAPON

**a cast-iron doorstop from the hall, recovered at the scene (Exhibit RD/4)**

MOTIVE (IN BRIEF)

**to stop Liv reporting that Erin had embezzled about £18,000 from their events business**

## 2. HOW IT WAS DONE - METHOD & STAGING

1. On Gold Cup day (Fri 13 Mar 2026) Liv Marsh pulled the Quill & Co. accounts and saw the hole. At 23:52 she messaged Erin by iMessage: "I've seen the Quill accounts. Where's the £18k? We talk tomorrow." Erin, who had embezzled about £18,000 from the events business, now faced exposure, the loss of the company and likely prosecution. At 01:10 she posted "crashing night all" in the group WhatsApp to appear settled for the night.
2. At about 02:30, in the early hours of Sat 14 Mar, Erin went back downstairs at 12 Lypiatt Terrace. The row reignited. She struck Liv once on the back of the head with a cast-iron doorstep taken from the hall (Exhibit RD/4), a single heavy impact. Liv had been drinking and zopiclone was present in the house, so Erin arranged the body at the foot of the staircase to read as a drunken fall, then wiped the doorstep down.
3. The staging fails on the pathology. Dr A. Westwood found a single focused impact to the back of the head with none of the varied, spread injuries a genuine tumble down a staircase produces, and signs the body had been moved (Exhibit LR/14). A real fall does not leave one clean blow in one place.
4. The clincher is the phone. Erin took Liv's mobile (Exhibit RD/2) and at 02:51 deleted the Liv-Erin iMessage thread that recorded the £18k confrontation, the one document that tied her to a motive. Her own devices give her away: her Snapchat was active at 02:34 and her WhatsApp "last seen" was 02:49, both long after her claimed 01:10 bedtime. She was back in her room by about 03:10. The body was found by Cara Whitlock at about 09:30 and a 999 call made at 09:34.

## 3. THE PROOF CHAIN

Each link below is provable from a document the players hold. Follow them in order to reach the only safe verdict.

#	WHAT IT PROVES	HOW A PLAYER GETS THERE	DOCUMENT / EXHIBIT
1	<b>Not a fall</b> - Liv was struck, not tumbled.	The post-mortem records a single focused blow to the back of the head, none of the varied, spread injuries a real staircase fall gives, and signs the body was moved. The "drunken fall" staging is broken.	LR/14
2	<b>The weapon</b> - the doorstep is the murder weapon.	The cast-iron doorstep from the hall bears Liv's blood and matches the wound. It had been wiped, but the blood remained.	RD/4
3	<b>Three motives</b> - the chats hand players three suspects.	Nate's drunken jealous row with Liv (23:30); Sam's affair, with Liv telling him by Instagram DM at 23:48 "Cara deserves to know"; and Erin's £18k, the iMessage at 23:52 confronting Erin over the missing money.	LR/6 · LR/8 · LR/7
4	<b>Nate cleared</b> - the jealous ex was elsewhere.	Nate left by Oober at 00:43 to the Queens Hotel; his keycard places him there from 00:58, outside the 02:00-03:30 death window.	LR/11
5	<b>Sam cleared</b> - the affair is not the killing.	Sam shared the room with his partner Cara Whitlock all night; Cara's statement covers the whole death window.	Cara Whitlock MG11
6	<b>Erin's alibi breaks</b> - she was up and active.	Erin posted "crashing night all" in the group WhatsApp at 01:10, but her Snapchat was active at 02:34 (a snap to Liv) and her WhatsApp "last seen" was 02:49, both well inside the death window.	LR/6 · LR/9

#	WHAT IT PROVES	HOW A PLAYER GETS THERE	DOCUMENT / EXHIBIT
7	<b>The wipe</b> - the motive thread was deleted.	The Liv-Erin iMessage thread (the £18k confrontation) was deleted from Liv's phone at 02:51 and recovered by forensics. Only the killer had reason and access to remove it.	LR/7 · RD/2
8	<b>The clincher</b> - Erin's print is on Liv's phone.	A fingerprint on Liv's phone screen is identified to Erin, consistent with her handling the victim's phone to delete the motive thread at 02:51. Erin offers no innocent reason to have held it.	RD/2

**The clinching links:** steps 7 and 8. The deleted Liv-Erin iMessage thread (LR/7), recovered with Erin's fingerprint on Liv's phone (RD/2), is what convicts, backed by the Snapchat alibi break at 02:34 (LR/9). Note the fair-play nuance: the doorstep is in a shared rental, so contact DNA on it is weak and proves little on its own. The phone, the deleted motive thread plus Erin's print, is the decisive evidence.

#### 4. RED HERRINGS EXPLAINED

RED HERRING	WHY IT LOOKS SUSPICIOUS	HOW IT IS CLEARED
Nate Pryce, the jealous on-off ex	Nate (07700 900 318) had a loud, drunken, jealous public row with Liv at the after-party at about 23:30, the most visible motive in the pack.	He left by Oober at 00:43 to the Queens Hotel and his keycard places him there from 00:58 (LR/11), outside the 02:00-03:30 death window. He cannot have struck the blow.
Sam Okafor and the affair	Sam (07700 900 274) was having an affair with Liv, and at 23:48 she told him by Instagram DM that "Cara deserves to know" (LR/8), a strong silence-her motive.	Sam shared the room with his partner Cara Whitlock all night; Cara's statement (MG11) covers the whole death window, so he had no opportunity.
The "drunken fall" at the foot of the stairs	Liv had been drinking, zopiclone was in the house, and the body lay at the foot of the staircase, exactly the accident the scene was staged to suggest.	The post-mortem (LR/14) shows one focused blow to the back of the head, not the varied, spread injuries of a real tumble, and that the body was moved. It is a killing dressed as an accident.
Weak contact DNA on the doorstep	Players may expect the murder weapon (RD/4) to carry the killer's DNA, and its absence may seem to clear everyone.	The doorstep sits in a shared rental and Erin wiped it, so contact DNA on it is weak and proves little either way. The case does not rest on it; the phone (LR/7 plus Erin's print on RD/2) is what convicts.

**Fair-play check:** every herring above is resolved by a document the players hold - never by a fact that lives only on this sheet. If you add a herring, plant its rebuttal in the evidence pack first.

**5. SCORING & DEBRIEF NOTE**

CORRECT CULPRIT (ERIN DOYLE)	<b>3 points - required to “solve” the case.</b>
CORRECT METHOD & WEAPON	<b>2 points - the single blow with the cast-iron doorstep (RD/4) and the staged drunken fall.</b>
CORRECT MOTIVE	<b>1 point - the embezzled £18k and Liv's 23:52 confrontation.</b>
FULL PROOF CHAIN (ALL 8 LINKS)	<b>2 bonus points - cited the exhibits in order.</b>
CAUGHT A RED HERRING	<b>1 point each - explained why a planted distraction is cleared.</b>

**Host debrief:** after the verdict, read out the proof chain in §3 link by link, then open the floor on the herrings in §4. The intended “solve time” is roughly 90-120 minutes for 1-6 players; if a table stalls, nudge them toward step 6 (compare Erin's 01:10 “crashing” post with her 02:34 Snapchat and 02:49 WhatsApp last-seen) rather than naming anyone.

**SEALED BY**

This answer key was prepared for hosting *Operation GOSHAWK* and sealed prior to play. It is a game artefact only and forms no part of any genuine investigation.

*Game Host*

GAME HOST - HOST / GAME-MASTER

DATE SEALED - 16 MARCH 2026