Mark Hoffman/Saw V Doc

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This is a short doc that will quickly analyze the cat and mouse game between Hoffman and Strahm throughout the movie.

I have been a big hater of the series when it comes to SCD scaling, especially towards its main antagonist, John Kramer who I still rate very low.

But I'm far away from being a genuine hater, as I generally enjoy the series a lot and give credit where it's deserved.

This is one example of this, as Kramer's successor Mark Hoffman is in my eyes a very solid smart character, who surpasses his predecessor in pretty much every area and needs a lot more recognition.

Disclaimer: Please keep in mind that I'm not a native English speaker.

WARNING: MAJOR SPOILERS FOR SAW V AND SAW IN GENERAL

Context:

The movie starts at the end of the two movies before, at the crime scene of the games during Saw III and Saw IV. Many people died here, with the exception of Mark Hoffman and Peter Strahm. Hoffman is a detective, but secretly an ally of Jigsaw, who now after Kramer's death will continue the Jigsaw killings, while Strahm is an FBI Special Agent, who came up with the theory of Kramer having a second ally before.

Hoffman's goal throughout the movie is framing Strahm for his own killings, giving a scapegoat for the new Jigsaw murders, while being seen as innocent.

Strahm's goal is to uncover the identity of the new Jigsaw, with him suspecting Hoffman.

At the start Strahm is locked up in a room with Kramer's corpse and no way out, until he spots a hidden door. Behind that he finds a corridor and a recording of Kramer that tells him he has to choose between staying in the room and following the corridor, but gives him also the advice of choosing the former.

However, Strahm refuses to do what Kramer wants him to do and does the opposite, by following the corridor, where he is taken down by Hoffman and put into a trap.

Here, Hoffman already gains very crucial information about Strahm's personality. He refuses to take advice from Jigsaw and does the opposite of what he tells him (Emotional Perception, Emotional Understanding, Psychological Insight, Profiling).

Strahm survives his trap, meaning he and Hoffman are the only survivors.

Meanwhile, Hoffman saves Jeff's daughter, presenting himself as the hero. He is later promoted and seen as a police hero, not only within the police, but also publicly as the one who caught Jigsaw (Large-Scale Deception, Concealment, White Knighting, Propaganda).

Strahm however suspects Hoffman of being Jigsaw's ally, which is a problem for the latter.

Hoffman's plan to get rid of Strahm is making him chase after him and leading him into a trap, while spreading suspicion of Strahm being actually the Jigsaw ally and fabricating evidence that leads to him being framed for it. For this, he gets Strahm's old phone that is used as evidence in the Jigsaw case.

Hoffman visits Strahm at the hospital, where Agent Perez supposedly died.

We find out in the next movie that this was actually not the case and she survived, meaning this is now most likely an attempt of Strahm to see through Hoffman, not knowing he is actually playing directly into the other's hand.

Strahm tells Hoffman that Perez said *“Detective Hoffman”* before she died, indicating that she knew something about him.

Through this, Strahm tries to find out if Hoffman is in fact the Jigsaw ally by observing his reaction, as it would mean he is under suspicion, which would be a very stressful situation for Jigsaw.

Hoffman responds pretty defensively and Strahm makes his suspicion even more obvious, only for Hoffman to get more defensive.

This raises Strahm's suspicion, but that's also what Hoffman is looking for (Direct Manipulation, Logical Manipulation, Behavioral Manipulation, Direct Control).

Shortly after this, Strahm gets excluded from the Jigsaw case by his superior Dan Erickson and is told to take a break. Meaning, he now has to investigate on his own.

Parallel to this, Hoffman is working on a new Jigsaw game that is about to start, prepared hidden below a house.

To confirm his suspicion, Strahm goes through the files of Hoffman and the Jigsaw case. Based on the information on the Seth Baxter murder, where he also visits the crime scene, he concludes that this was actually Hoffman's work separate from Jigsaw and that he got into contact with Kramer before the next murder, because he was since then part of every investigation on the case.

While leaving the FBI facility, he is seen by Erickson, who asks him what he is doing there, despite being on break. He responds by saying he was just getting some stuff. Erickson sees through this being a lie and finds it suspicious, but doesn't think too much about it.

Strahm then continues by visiting multiple Jigsaw crime scenes, in order to reconstruct the actions of Hoffman and Kramer.

While that, Hoffman calls Erickson, telling him that he actually wanted to contact Strahm, but that he wasn't there and that Strahm also previously had the theory of there being a second Jigsaw ally, even adding to that, that said ally has access to the police files. This was new to Erickson.

This series of events gives Erickson the image that Strahm is doing something suspicious nobody should know and had left out crucial information about the Jigsaw case in front of him (Distortion, Logical Manipulation, Half-Truths, Misdirection).

This is further reinforced by Jill Tuck, who is later revealed to work with Hoffman, visiting Erickson and telling him that someone constantly stalks her, suspecting Strahm.

Strahm himself however is now at the crime scene, where the movie started thinking about what Hoffman did, concluding that he wanted all of them to die, while presenting himself as the hero.

This angers Strahm and he gets more emotional, as well as determined to take Hoffman down (Indirect, Emotional and Behavioral Manipulation).

Hoffman's final step before all his preparations are done is calling Erickson from Strahm's phone, but immediately hanging up. This gives Erickson, whose suspicion towards Strahm has now been growing larger, the opportunity to locate him via the call from the phone he got.

Hoffman drives back to the house above the Jigsaw game, where he places the phone on his main desk, where all the Jigsaw shit is, together with a file about Erickson.

Strahm follows him and Erickson manages to locate the phone there, which is why he goes there as well.

Strahm searches for Hoffman in the facility, until he finds a glass coffin and another recording.

In this recording, Hoffman tells Strahm that he has to go inside the coffin in order to survive. However, Strahm still refuses to do what Jigsaw wants him to do and instead hides to wait for Hoffman.

When Hoffman arrives, Strahm approaches him from behind and throws him into the coffin.

But this was predicted by Hoffman, as he already knew Strahm refused to do what he is told to do in the Jigsaw recordings. Turns out, Strahm is now trapped and about to die, while Hoffman is safe in the coffin (Setting Traps, Emotional Understanding, Seeing Through People, Planning, Individual Manipulation).

During this, Erickson finds Hoffman's desk, where he can observe the entire game and sees all the traps, as well as the victims, together with Strahm's phone and his file.

This perfectly adds to the theory that there is another Jigsaw ally with access to police files and Strahm not wanting to tell him that.

Strahm is now dead, his corpse destroyed and he is seen as the new Jigsaw.

Hoffman not only managed to get rid of a threat for his plans, but also to preserve his innocent image.

The plan was insanely complex, with him slowly and inconspicuously raising the suspicion towards Strahm and leading Erickson to fabricated evidence, while getting rid of Strahm through his trap, with all of the latter's actions being under his control this whole time. All of the events were planned and orchestrated by him (Short-Term Planning, Planning Preparation, Planning Aim, Planning Complexity, Difficulties to Counter, Strategic Deception, Misdirection, Concealment, Scapegoating, Indirect Control, Behavioral Manipulation, Gaslighting, Setting Traps and Acting).

It's even more impressive considering Strahm showed a lot of impressive reasoning feats throughout the movie and the one before, making deceiving and manipulating him this hard even more difficult.

Overall, this was an insane feat in the following categories:

Overall EQ

Overall AQ

Planning

Manipulation

Deception

Insight

Info Control

Before analyzing this feat in detail, I already had Hoffman as the smartest Saw character, but still at only mid diffing Kramer.

Now I not only have him far higher above Kramer, but also as a very solid smart character in general. He is by far the smartest character of his series and this is easily the best feat you will find there, although that's not a high bar.

And that was my first intelligence analysis.

What do you think and do you want me to make more?

Please also leave me feedback on aspects, where I can improve if I really happen to write more docs in the future.