Kokichi deduces that he's in a virtual world:
I'm inside a game where people are killing each other.
If they really wanted to kill us, they would have done it a long time ago. Why bother putting us in this kind of game?
Humans often enjoy things that are sensational and dramatic.
Betrayal among people, shown through how they kill each other despite having goals, is an unexpected thrill, a twist you can't predict (like a plot twist, and who doesn't love a good twist if it's naturally built up?).
They also enjoy watching people desperately chase after a hopeless goal. Like trying to escape, failing, then watching a Motive Video and continuing to search for a way out of the Killing Game. Then, they either expect a miracle to happen… or for despair to take over and everyone starts killing each other again, circling back to the first point.
The Motive Video and Flashback Light are the "hope" they look forward to, the hope of learning the truth about the outside world (Flashback Light is a device that makes you regain your memories, meaning the truth before you came here).
The viewers also enjoy seeing a villain go up against a group of heroes, especially if it's a balanced match. Kokichi created that "balance" by building up his own intelligence in Chapters 2 and 4, while also contributing to the development of Shuichi as an all-knowing detective and Kaito as the inspirational leader (just like in superhero films).
The game is decorated to look very flashy, and the Monokubs constantly perform comedic skits even during life-or-death trials, almost like they're entertaining someone (lmao, why would there be comedy in a life-and-death trial?).
Every time the group starts to find their spirit and cooperate to escape the game, something always gets in the way:

- Rantaro's death, despite Kaede leading everyone,
- Motive Videos are tossed at them right after they start working together,
- Angie is turning the group into a cult-like dictatorship right after.

=> This Killing Game exists to entertain someone.
(It could be a virtual reality show, or something like Squid Game.)
The game is popular enough that the mastermind wants to keep it going and doesn't want anyone to actually win.
So Kokichi's job is to make himself seem more entertaining than the game, without outright trying to destroy the game."
=>Abduction, Induction, EU, Mass/ Direct/ Emotional Manipulation, Acting Skills, Concealment
First, Kokichi hints to Shuichi by asking, "Why is Maki hiding her lab? Her job is just taking care of kids, could she be hiding something?" He also suggests, "The look in Maki's eyes is like she wants to kill someone."
Then, the event where everyone exchanges Motive Videos (basically, videos meant to provoke people into killing) takes place, and the videos have been randomly shuffled (according to Monokuma).
Everyone suggests that they should just ignore them, since no one wants to watch a video that would make them want to kill someone.
However, Ryoma opposes this idea and expresses a desire for everyone to watch the videos together.



And Kokichi also agreed with that idea right away.

This allowed Kokichi to "read" Ryoma. From the beginning, Ryoma had no will to live and was haunted by his murderous past. He even said outright: “Even if I escape from here, I'll just go straight to a different prison.”

But why was Ryoma suddenly so interested in the Motive Video?

Perhaps Ryoma believed the purpose of those videos was to "ignite the desire to escape" , something that could most easily be achieved through murder.

Ryoma believed the Motive Videos might contain things like:

- Brainwashing content
- A purpose or reason to escape from the killing game
- A video portraying someone as despicable and worthy of death
  (which is unlikely, since Ryoma had already admitted to killing in the past, and no one attacked him for it, so he figured Monokuma wouldn’t take such a risk)

A person who has no will or desire to live means they lacks two things:

1. A goal or objective
2. People they care about

(Because if they had a will to live, they’d fear death, often because they don’t want to hurt the ones who love them, right?)

Actually, there’s one more case: they’ve suffered so much that they no longer care about anything.

However, the fact that Ryoma showed interest in the Motive Video suggests that he still wanted to search for even the tiniest glimmer of hope, hope coming from the second point (loved ones), because he no longer had a life goal, so he had to seek out that “faint ray of light” in his life.

(Cold Reading, EP, EU)

Back to that event, Kokichi and Gonta ran off together with the purpose of “discussing how to make everyone watch their own Motive Videos.”
During this time, Kokichi learned a few things about Gonta:

- Gonta loves bugs. Really, really loves bugs.
- Gonta is clumsy and foolish, and he’s aware of it himself.
- Gonta is incredibly strong.
- Gonta always wants to help others in any way he can.
- Gonta initially trusted Kokichi because Kokichi defended him when Gonta was enthusiastically trying to help everyone. Kokichi said: “But Gonta is sooo much more reliable than some bean-counting robot…”

Now, Kokichi was about to trigger Gonta by persuading him with something like this: “Those guys might not actually like bugs.
And people who don’t like bugs, well, they’re likely to kill them. You love bugs, right? You don’t want the bugs to be wiped out by bug-haters here, do you? So why don’t you throw a bug-themed event? Introduce bugs to everyone, let them play with bugs!”
This is Kokichi’s way of testing Gonta, to see whether he’s someone who thinks deeply and strategically or just a fool.
If Gonta turned out to be a thinker, Kokichi was ready to explain the full strategy and benefits behind it.
But Gonta actually went through with it, which confirmed that he really is an idiot.
(Persuasion, EU, Direct - Emotional Manipulation)
As a result, Gonta went and practically dragged almost everyone to his Lab in order to make them “love bugs more.” Only a few people didn’t go, allowing Kokichi to collect the Kubs Pads.
This made Kokichi very pleased.
Kokichi told Gonta, “I gotta run an errand, but I’ll be back,” and when he returned, he said: “Y’know, as much as I’d love to do that… maybe we should call it a day, hm? The bugs look really tired, and a gentleman knows to do things in moderation, y’know?”
(This showed a “gentlemanly” attitude, caring and considerate of others.)
At that point, only Ryoma and four others were not at Gonta’s place: Kaito, Maki, Miu (though Miu stepping out was enough for Kokichi to obtain the Motive Video she was holding), and Kirumi.
This meant Kokichi could now collect the Motive Videos without interruption.
So what were the main goals?
To find out what Maki’s real Motive Video was.
This was necessary because Kokichi needed to understand who Maki truly was in order to be able to use that when the time came. Maki had always refused to cooperate in previous cases, and Kokichi believed part of that was because she was trying to hide her "true nature." Getting Maki’s Motive Video allowed him to uncover her secret, that she was an assassin. This explained why Maki had been hiding it: who would trust someone capable of killing in a killing game?
This allowed Kokichi to emotionally manipulate Maki. First, Kokichi chose the moment right after the class trial, when everyone was still shocked by Kirumi’s death, to mock and provoke Maki. When Maki lunged forward to choke him, believing he was extremely annoying (or even if she

had just gotten angry without attacking, the result would be similar), Kokichi would then reveal Maki's secret to everyone: that she is the Ultimate Assassin.

After that, back in his room, Kokichi privately told Kaito to go talk to Maki kindly, that she was hurting, scared, and afraid of being ridiculed by the others. Meanwhile, Kokichi went around telling the rest of the group: "Well, I've spilled the beans. Whether you believe it or not is up to you, but I'm wondering if we should even be talking to a freaking assassin, y'know?"

As a result, Maki was shunned by the others; no one wanted to hang around someone who "might be a killer." People were half-believing and half-doubting what Kokichi said, partly because Maki's cold and deadly gaze made her look like someone who could kill, but also because Kokichi was known to talk a lot of nonsense. Now, Maki was aware of the situation and grew sad from being isolated.

However, thanks to Kaito's encouragement, telling her that people deserve to live and move on from the past (which Kokichi believed Kaito would deliver well, based on how Shuichi was already falling into despair after the girl he loved, trusted, and believed in betrayed him and committed murder), Maki would eventually reflect on things more deeply and realize: "Right now, everyone is unsure if I'm really an assassin. If I help everyone, they'll come to believe I'm a good person."

That's Maki's anxiety, her desire to be trusted. And from that point, she would slowly open up more to everyone, since they now knew her past, and she would try to prove that she's a reformed assassin. The group working to end the killing game would now have a new useful ally. Eventually, Maki might even develop feelings for Kaito, something Kokichi could exploit later.

Creating the situation for Ryoma's death.

Kokichi had seen Ryoma's Motive Video and knew that Ryoma essentially had no one he loved, and no one loved him either. This was extremely advantageous for Kokichi, especially since Ryoma was already nearly isolated. He negotiated with Ryoma to get him his own Motive Video from Maki, in exchange for Maki receiving hers. Because of this, Ryoma would become even more isolated.

There were two possible outcomes: either Ryoma would commit suicide, or he'd be killed by Maki or Kirumi (though if Maki had been talked out of it, she probably wouldn't kill).

Another important point is that Kokichi was lucky to have gotten Ryoma's Motive. He told Maki, "I'm sure Ryoma has a Motive Video," essentially pressuring her to go find him.

This was combined with his prediction strategy:

Find mentally unstable individuals.

Since each Motive Video had the recipient's name on the back, when Gonta wanted to restart the Insect Meet and Greet event for a second time, everyone panicked and ran off to find their own Motive Videos. When people are in a rush, they don't think; they just act. That allowed Kokichi to observe who was truly shaken or mentally unstable (or who had a really shocking motive) and see if anyone would be triggered into murder.

And finally, to build an image of himself as the Mastermind, for both the audience and the other characters.

They would begin to think: "Kokichi is playing with the whole cast like it's a game, manipulating everyone's actions like a master strategist."

=> Planning, Anticipation, Deduction, Abduction, Concealment, Bluffing, Verbal Deception, Logical/ Emotional/ Mass/ Indirect Manipulation, EU, EF, Fabrication, Misdirection, Creativity, Improvisation, Lateral/ Application thinking

A brief explanation of the Killing Game rules:

Everyone is trapped in a school, and the only way to escape is to kill someone.

- Kill someone and avoid being identified during the Class Trial = win, and the rest of the participants are executed.
- Kill someone and get identified in the Class Trial = lose, and the killer gets executed.
- The Class Trial is a gathering where everyone discusses and debates who the killer is whenever someone dies (with an investigation phase beforehand, of course).

The Mastermind is portrayed as the one behind the entire series.

Kokichi discovered that he and everyone else are just fictional characters for the "viewers."

What Kokichi has:

- A personality seen by others as mischievous, a liar, and a troublemaker.
- He has already won over Gonta.
- Several gadgets were created by Miu (such as Electrohammer, which destroys electronic devices; Electrobomb, which has a wider range than the hammers; and a remote control for the giant Exisal robots).

Rules of the virtual world (which are public knowledge):

- Walls can't be passed through, except for non-living objects.
- Items cannot be broken.
- No dangerous tools exist in the world.
- Everyone has equal physical strength.

First, we must mention how Kokichi predicted Miu's scheme using his EQ.

This was shown by how he sensed Miu's anxiety and mistrust of the others.

It may seem like this guarantees that Miu wouldn't be someone who would kill, but actually, it doesn't. In this killing game, if you're not someone who kills, then either you have strong mental fortitude and a pure, virtuous soul, or you're extremely weak and fearful, just waiting for the right moment to strike. Or… you'll end up being killed by someone else.

The truly "good" people, especially in a killing game like this, are the ones who are capable of killing but choose not to, or at least haven't decided to do so yet. This applies to Miu's situation now, especially since she's a girl with a fragile heart.

But that's not all. The people who are still alive in this game all carry a persistent hope: that they'll escape together, that there must be another way (because if they truly wanted to escape alone, they would've killed someone already, since that's the easiest way out, and that's the common mindset).

So, if Miu has shown fear and mistrust toward the others, then there's a possibility she has developed the desire to kill and escape alone, no longer believing in the group's shared goal. That's why Kokichi needs to stay extremely cautious of Miu.

=>EU, EP, Cautious, Psychological Analysis, Logical Prediction

This gave Kokichi a reason to approach Miu and assist her in setting up the VR program, allowing him to operate more freely and investigate things. In fact, on the night before (the night Miu and Kokichi talked), Kokichi had asked Monokuma if he could borrow the Motive Video,

because there was going to be an “interesting event planned by someone.” Monokuma agreed immediately.
This allowed Kokichi to achieve several things:

- Increase the certainty that everyone would participate in Miu’s plan, which was tied to her scheme.
- Create more evidence to support the idea that he’s the Mastermind (in case this gets exposed).
- Confirm without a doubt that this world has an audience, and they are nothing more than pawns.

=>Deduction, Analysis, Abduction, Induction, Anticipation, Tactics, Bluffing
That Motive Video was actually the truth about the outside world. A brutal, devastating truth. Everyone is dead. The Earth is in ruins. Everything looks like you couldn’t possibly survive in that place.



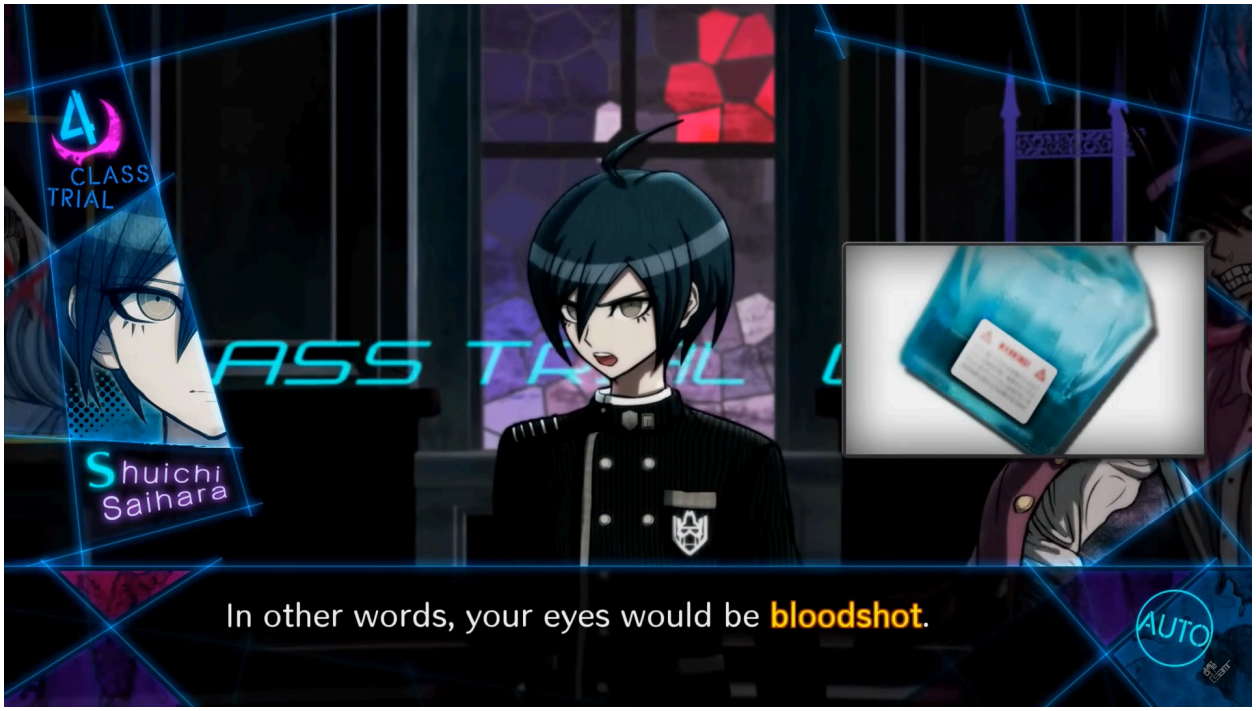
Kokichi understood this clearly, so he used it to manipulate Gonta. At that moment, Gonta was at his weakest mentally. While everyone else was trying to investigate and gather information in the VR world using their intelligence, Gonta couldn’t do anything. That was because, in that world, everyone had equal strength, making Gonta’s physical power useless.
Previously, Gonta had already shown how easily he could be manipulated by Kokichi, so he wouldn’t be suspicious of Kokichi now. But just to be sure, Kokichi let Gonta watch the video first. According to Kokichi, Gonta would experience extreme fear and despair upon seeing the outside world, the feeling of being trapped in a never-ending loop, escaping from a killing game only to end up in a hellish place. On top of that, there would be fear of others learning this secret, fear that they’d fall into despair, fear of affecting everyone’s emotions, mixed with his own sense of inadequacy.
At that point, all it would take is a single line: “Why don’t you kill everyone instead of letting them live in this painful despair, worse than death? I’ll accept dying, too. I’m also in despair after

learning the truth."
That would turn Gonta's emotions into firm resolve and purpose.
Beyond using him in the murder plan, this manipulation also helps build Kokichi's image as "the one who manipulates others into killing," further making him look like the Mastermind.
The Mastermind is the one who controls the game, the one who created it out of boredom (people will start to suspect Kokichi like that: someone who made this killing game, who enjoys watching people murder and betray each other just for his own entertainment, kind of like Squid Game).
He's already shown himself to be manipulative. He wants to create fear. Now, by inciting murder and even using Monokuma's Motive (well… if people don't kill enough, he'll just urge them to), and by saying lines that "sound like Monokuma," staying calm during the class trials while somehow knowing everything with a confident attitude, and never wanting to cooperate with anyone, all of these are strong signs.
It's just that no one has the courage to outright accuse him yet. But suspicion? Everyone is already seriously doubting him.
=> Acting Skills, Fabrication, Emotional/ Direct Manipulation, Persuasion, Self-Profiling
Kokichi noticed something suspicious about the game map. First, the game map loads in the middle of the map. In open-world games like this, the loading point usually appears at the beginning of the map (or at least at the visible boundary of the character's view). But here, it loads in the center, isn't that strange?
And in games that load at the end of the map, they usually have a boundary at that end, meaning the map has an actual "end." So… what if the end of the map doesn't exist? Could it be that this is an infinite map, like in games such as Minecraft?
Not to mention the fact that Miu is the only one who knows about the "infinite map" + the wall that only she can pass through, doesn't that give her a huge advantage? (Like, kill someone and then teleport from one side of the map to the other in 5 seconds, a perfect alibi.)
=> Induction, Abduction
Kokichi decided to leave and separate from the group while everyone was discussing exploring the island.
Why would he do that? Kokichi had already built up an image of himself as someone deceitful, manipulative, essentially a "mastermind."
Keeping a close watch on him might reduce the threat, but it doesn't eliminate it completely. So, perhaps isolating him and secretly having Gonta or someone else keep an eye on him would be a better strategy. If anything happens, they can immediately report it. This would not only prevent his next moves but also provide clues about the true nature of the game. And if he commits murder, it would be easy to frame him right away.
But since Gonta was already nearly manipulated into becoming Kokichi's follower from the start, yeah, this was pretty much the perfect opportunity to counter Miu.
=>Mind Control, EU, Tactics, Information Control
Kokichi felt that Miu seemed very eager to carry out her plan, which was when Miu started coaxing Kaito to explore the roof of the Mansion, while Kokichi investigated the salon area. Additionally, Shuichi and Tsumugi also went to investigate the Mansion, but on the lower floor. Then Miu and Kokichi invited each other upstairs for a private talk, bringing Gonta along as "protection.".

Kokichi went upstairs with Miu, and just as Miu was about to send Kokichi to Jesus, Kokichi had Gonta strangle Miu from behind using a roll of toilet paper (in this world, nothing can be destroyed).
At this point, Kokichi had become fairly certain about several parts of his reasoning, as follows:
First, based on Kokichi's initial observation, Kaito had disappeared. Kaito was the one Miu had directly instructed to go up to the Mansion (while Shuichi and Tsumugi volunteered, Miu specifically named Kaito), which made Kaito more "under Miu's control." So it was highly likely that Miu would frame Kaito for the murder.
At this time, Kaito had likely finished investigating the rooftop of the Mansion and was on his way down to assist Shuichi and Tsumugi (Logical Prediction). Kokichi believed that if he let Miu's body fall through the wall, the noise would be loud enough (since the body would weigh several kilograms, and yes, the VR world still simulated sound proportionally, in case anyone doubts it) that Kaito (if he hadn't vanished), Shuichi, and Tsumugi would seek each other out to figure out where the sound came from, thus establishing an alibi for all three of them.
Sure, making everyone equally strong neutralized Gonta, but it also had one downside: Miu couldn't attack either, because Kokichi could easily block her using equal strength. So why would Miu want to face Kokichi directly? Miu must've had some kind of hack (well, it's her world…) that would prevent Kokichi from defending himself.
Then why didn't Miu just create a more "broken" hack? Like making Kokichi die instantly or something? Kokichi believed that doing so would be too risky; if Kokichi suddenly died like in Death Note, or was suddenly stabbed out of nowhere, it would feel unnatural and raise high suspicion against Miu, the one who built the machine. Also, maybe Miu wasn't clever enough to think of that, but that's not important right now. Miu needed a plan that minimized the risk of being exposed, or else it wasn't worth doing.
Next, Kokichi tried to build rapport with Shuichi to create a small sense of trust from the start. Kokichi persuaded him by saying something like, "Kaito already logged out, he even logged out early, that's super suspicious because how do we know if Miu was killed inside or outside the VR? Come on, just work with me a little and let's find some evidence." This could plant a bit of trust, like, "Maybe Kokichi isn't as bad as I thought."1
This would help Kokichi later on when he wanted Shuichi to understand certain things in the End The Killing Game (ETKG). Like, Kokichi predicted that during the ETKG, it would be revealed that he wasn't the mastermind, and at that point, Shuichi might recall that Kokichi had actually tried to help him a few times. As a result, Shuichi would be even more certain that "Kokichi is trying to help me and everyone else end this killing game."
(Persuasion, Direct/ Logical Manipulation)
Kokichi went up to Monotaro and asked, "Is there any other way to get past the two blocked areas by the river besides the bridge?" 2
This made Shuichi suspicious, wondering, "Could it be that Miu was moved? Is there another way to get across?"(Logical Manipulation)
So, how did Kokichi test Shuichi?
First, let's look at Kokichi's deduction about using Kaito to frame him:

- Kaito was logged out (kicked) the earliest.
- There was a phone that could log someone out immediately with just one call.
- Miu was the only one who knew about that phone.

- The symptoms of Miu's death were different from the symptoms caused by the poison (with the poison, the eyes would turn bloodshot).



Miu needed a way to justify her act of murder, and framing someone was the best method.

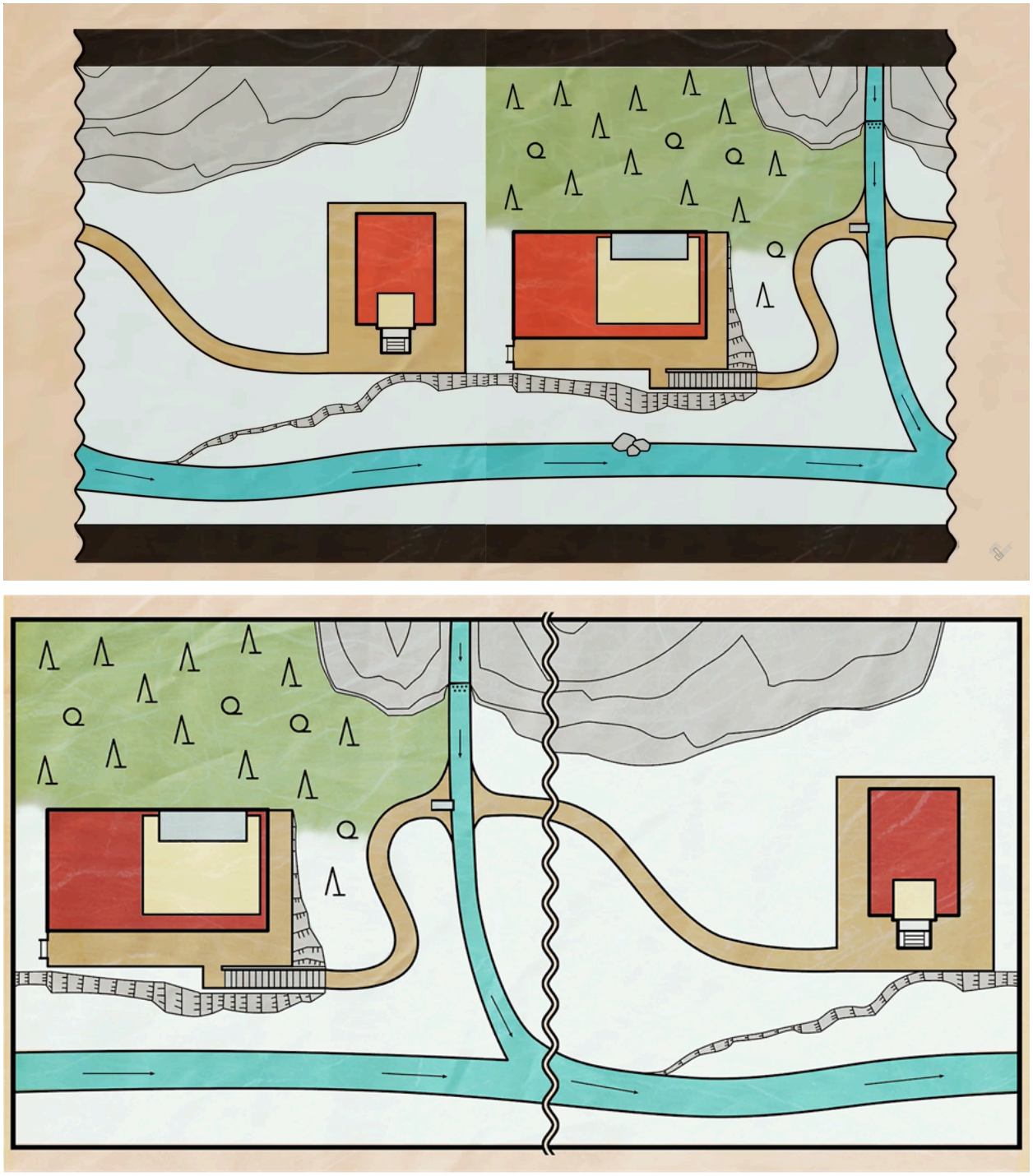
- Miu was the last one to enter the game.
- The poison bottle was found on Kokichi's seat.

To achieve his plan, Kokichi looked for a way to frame Kaito, forcing Shuichi to uncover the details about the poison bottle and to determine why Kaito was logged out, what the poison was meant for, and why that log-out occurred. From there, Shuichi could figure out Miu's intentions and how Kaito's log-out tied into her murder plot.

Next comes Kokichi's manipulation move to feed information to us: when Shuichi hears a noise at the Mansion while the body was at the Chapel, despite the bridge being broken. Kokichi understood that Monotaro had a motherly love for Miu, so Kokichi insulted Miu harshly (s), calling her a "liar and manipulator." This provoked Monotaro into getting angry and yelling, unintentionally confirming that Miu had been lying (x). At the same time, Monophanie had to step in and clarify that this was actually important evidence. (h)

=> This made it easier for Kokichi to help Shuichi deduce the "infinite map" theory and better understand the world Miu had created.

After Shuichi deduced the concept of the "infinite map" and the reason it works (thanks to Kokichi's hints: (scan), the clues and facts included (the bigger building is the Mansion, the smaller one is the Chapel):

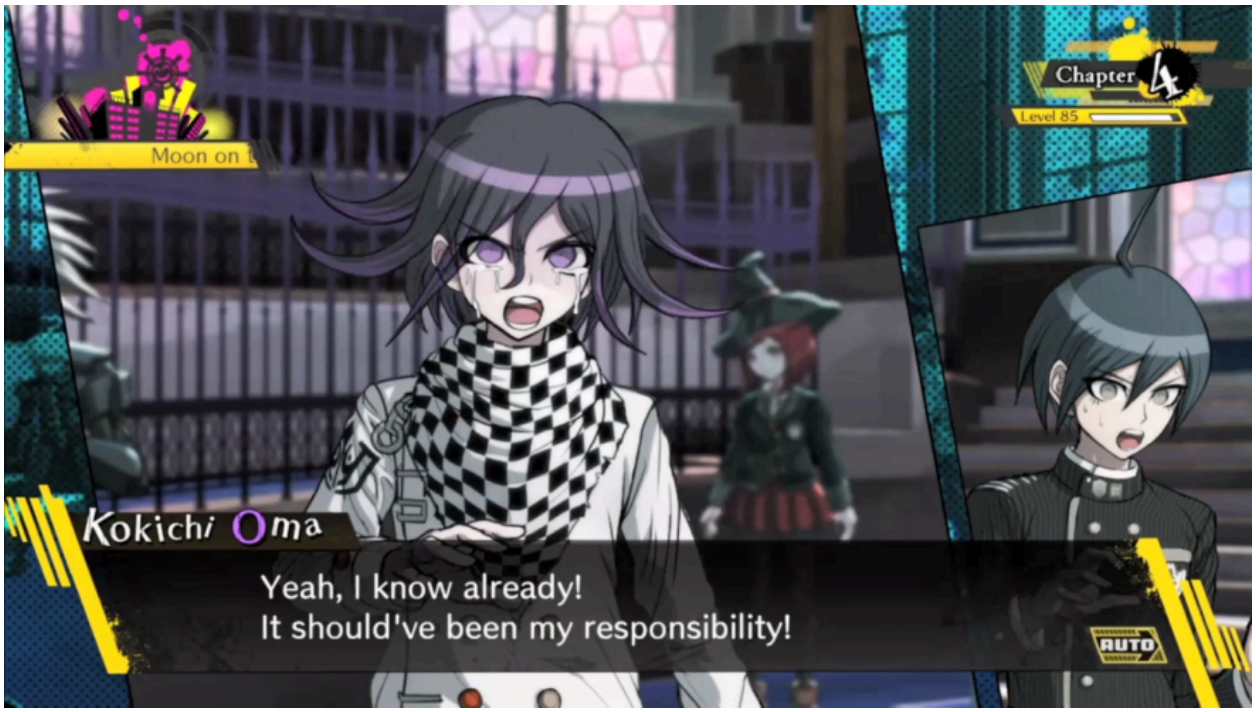


Only objects can pass through the barrier.
The barrier was originally at the edge.
The map is infinite (because otherwise, the sign that Miu dropped from the straight vertical line from the Mansion wouldn't have landed on the rock at the Mansion side).
Miu's body was found near the Chapel, but all three people in the Chapel area were inside the Chapel (none were on the roof to throw the body down), while Kokichi, Miu, Gonta, and Kaito all went up to the Mansion roof (+ the Mansion roof was slippery due to ice, which adds plausibility

to the idea that the body could slide from the Mansion to the Chapel).
The ‘thud’ sound that was heard was Miu’s body hitting the ground (Abductive Reasoning, I mean, what else could’ve fallen with that kind of loud thud other than a human body?), and it was heard from both the Chapel and Mansion areas.
=> The culprit threw Miu’s body from the roof.
After that, Kokichi immediately said, "Gonta is the culprit," without hesitation, and added, "To expose a liar, we must attack their psychology." He then pressed Gonta verbally, forcing him to confess, even though Gonta kept saying, "I didn’t do anything, I don’t remember anything," and behaved like someone who’d lost their mind.
Even though everyone shouted that Kokichi was the real culprit and that Gonta was lying, Kokichi pushed ahead, becoming the embodiment of a mastermind, cold, cruel, and truly insane.
But Kokichi noticed that Shuichi didn’t try to stop him; instead, Shuichi quietly reflected. This made Kokichi realize that Shuichi was maturing, truly seeing the truth, instead of letting emotions cloud his judgment.
But in the end, the case had to be resolved, and Kokichi used the method of elimination:

- Maki, Himiko, and K1-B0 were eliminated as suspects because they were in the Chapel and didn’t know the trick.
- Kaito was eliminated because Miu forced him to log out early.
- Kokichi was eliminated because Miu had activated a hack that froze him whenever he touched her (which the others later discovered).
- Shuichi and Tsumugi found each other to confirm the sound and gave each other alibis.
  So only Gonta was left

How could Gonta have climbed down? Easy, he used the roll of toilet paper to tie up and swing down like Tarzan
Finally, we must talk about Kokichi’s symbolic scene.



...then comes the rest.



You know what I mean.
And one more side detail (but still quite important): Kokichi noticed that Kaito was determined to attack him no matter what. Even after Kokichi threw out an explanation, Kaito still wanted to go after him by voting for him. This gave Kokichi confidence that Kaito wasn't the real mastermind, because a true mastermind would've chosen someone else (since the mastermind already knows the real culprit, they would vote for the actual killer to avoid ending the game prematurely) instead of stubbornly clinging to such a risky move (sure, it's a small risk, but it's still a risk, right?). From this, Kokichi believed that Kaito definitely wasn't the true mastermind and was therefore a good person to cooperate with in Chapter 5.
So, in the end, what did this case give Kokichi?

- A chance to test Shuichi.
- A way to cement his image as a heartless, cruel, manipulative mastermind who hides his emotions flawlessly.
- A chance to build Shuichi up as an "all-knowing" detective by feeding him hints and constantly encouraging him with lines like "Shuichi will solve it because he's Shuichi."
- A moment to entertain the audience, as things start to become clearer, Kokichi reveals his madness, his true nature, his perfect intelligence, and creates a sense of despair, like: "Is there anyone who can stop him??" But without making him feel overpowered like Sukuna in Jujutsu Kaisen, since Shuichi (along with Kaito and us, the audience) still feels like someone who could possibly stand against the mastermind through hope and deductive skill.
- And finally, he stopped Miu's plan.

=> Planning, Deduction, Abduction, Anticipation, Logical Prediction, Direct/ Emotional/ Mass Manipulation, Tactics, EU, EF, Concealment, Bluffing, Information Control, Acting Skills, Trap Evasion, VSI, VCI, FRI

[Execution]

First, let's take a look at what Kokichi has:

- He knows about Kaito's illness.
- He's aware of the negative attitude everyone has and their hatred of the Killing Game.
- He's managed to make himself resemble a true Mastermind.
- He's shaped Shuichi into the image of an "unfailing detective."
- Kaito has now become Kokichi's ally (their negotiation was off-screen, but we can understand part of it through the final chapter).

To begin with, Kokichi makes the real Mastermind feel insecure by hiding and avoiding detection.

Kokichi basically goes into hiding, and no one knows where he is. However, the others aren't too worried.

The reason is simple: if everyone suspects Kokichi of being the culprit, then they'll just stay on guard and watch the areas. Plus, he can't stay hidden forever; hiding means he's on the defensive and hurting himself.

But the Mastermind thinks differently. She forces everyone to go looking for Kokichi. Even when Shuichi tries to stop it, she insists, because the Mastermind fears that the program will break, losing the "plot twist" if Kokichi vanishes. Right then, people will start assuming Kokichi is the culprit. As the Mastermind, she can't risk letting him disappear.

Kokichi shatters the Mastermind's plan.

Next, Kokichi turns Kaito into an ally, allowing him to form his plan.

First, Kaito advises everyone to stop looking for Kokichi and instead prepare to rebel against Monokuma.

Of course, Monokuma is nearly immortal, so defeating him seems impossible. But to Kokichi, this action perfectly matches Kaito's character, someone who always believes in freedom, even if it seems impossible.

Kokichi also predicts that since Kaito already "brainwashed" Maki in the last plan, she now trusts him, maybe even has feelings for him. So Maki will agree with Kaito about fighting Monokuma.

Then, Kaito goes into Maki's lab, shows interest in the crossbow, and provokes her into using it out of anger. This will serve the future plan.

They grab weapons and head to the gym at Kaito's request, but Monokuma isn't there, because Kokichi has kidnapped him from the control room.

First, Kokichi wanted to test Monokuma's resurrection system: does he revive after death, no matter what?

Second, isolating him from the controls makes Kokichi's impossible murder trick easier to pull off.

And conveniently, if Monokuma revives even when not dead, then Kokichi can track his respawn location. If not, and he respawns near the control panel, even better, lock it down.

Kaito, Kokichi, and the others all meet in the gym.

Kokichi brings a bomb and places two Electrohammers next to him to keep a distance and ensure safety. After all, no one wants to fight a guy who shows no intent to kill, unless they're

crazy (like Shuichi, who later charges forward, and Kokichi tells him, “I wouldn’t move if I were you.”)
Then Kokichi demonstrates the Electrohammers and Electrobombs:

- Electrohammers shut down any electronic device they hit, unless it’s already open. They need to be recharged.
- Electrobombs instantly disable all electronic devices (automatic or manual) within a 300-meter radius, like a real bomb; it’s a one-time-use thing.

Then Kokichi decides to test everyone’s character by saying, “Who wants to survive with me? Just the two of us.”
Kokichi wants to see if anyone is willing to be selfish.
But in the end, no one chooses to go with him.
This contrasts with Miu, who once said, “Someone like me can’t die here.”
These people, however, prove they want to fight the Mastermind.
Of course, Kokichi isn’t fully convinced yet; there might still be a traitor who comes to him privately to talk.
Kokichi believes that everyone will have to cooperate with him because:

- Monokuma and the Exisals are electric robots.
- Electrobombs and Electrohammers can disable them, a huge advantage, especially since no one is certain how Monokuma’s resurrection system works.
- But what if Kokichi is lying? Don’t forget that all four of them are armed, so if they wanted to eliminate Kokichi, they easily could.

There’s also another detail: Maki intentionally pickpocketed an Electrobomb.
Kokichi deliberately kept the bomb in his pants pocket (since theoretically, just holding one in his hand would be enough), making it easy for Maki to use her speed to steal it for her own advantage.
Next, when Shuichi asked about the code, Kokichi used sophistry, saying: “Meh, probably just something the Mastermind wrote to divide us like always. I mean, think logically, who would be dumb enough to pretend to be the Mastermind... unless you actually are the Mastermind?”
This not only helped the plan continue flowing as Kokichi intended, but also planted a seed of belief in Shuichi’s mind: “Only the real Mastermind could’ve written that.”, which greatly benefited the plan and boosted his Strategy Adaptability.
When they arrived, Kokichi invited them to open the door that would 'lead to freedom' after everyone had overcome the obstacles using Electrohammers. But Monokuma wasn’t that simple. He had rigged the door to lead outside the world. What lay beyond was a dark, terrifying place, uninhabitable and completely devastated:



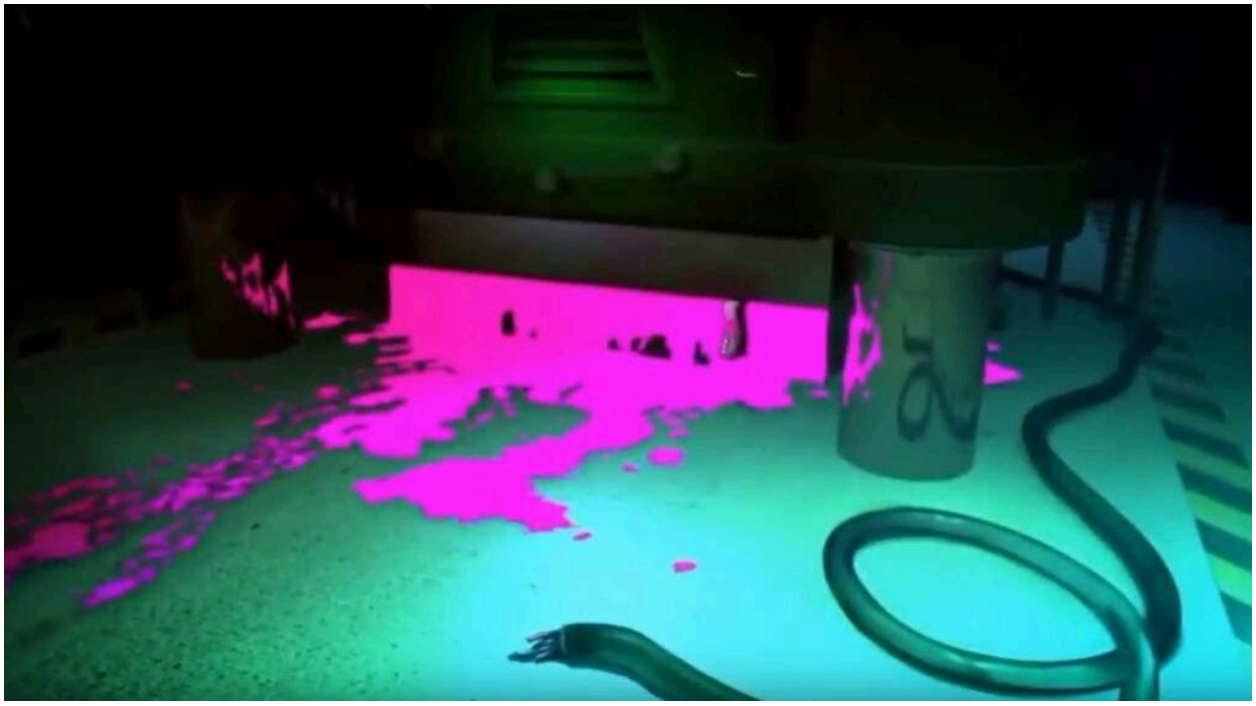
And so Kokichi (who had already known this for a long time) made up a story about himself:
Once upon a time, a bunch of meteors were on their way to crash into Earth. The United Nations and world leaders decided to preserve humanity by sending the most elite people into space, to create a new generation of 'original talented' humans who could save the planet. They called this the Gofer Project, and the plan was to send 16 Ultimate students into space before Earth was destroyed.
But the students didn't want that. They wanted their parents and friends to come too. They would rather die with their families than live without them. As a result, they chose to erase their memories and become normal students again. And of course, the project leaders couldn't force them.
However, a certain cult believed that Earth deserved its fate, that humanity should accept destruction. When they learned about the Gofer Project and the 16 Ultimate students, they decided to hunt them down and destroy them. This event was called the Ultimate Hunt. Under such pressure, the world governments decided to send the students off for real, because if they stayed, they'd only be hunted. The students eventually agreed after being unable to bear the constant pursuit by a cult growing ever more powerful worldwide. So, they left, faking their deaths to escape, even as their loved ones were in danger (some had already died) and they themselves were being hunted.
But… there was a traitor. That traitor was none other than the cult's leader, Kokichi Ouma.
After telling the story, Kokichi brought out the Exisal (which Miu had invented), implying clearly that he was the Mastermind.
Kokichi anticipated that the others would still try to fight, so he made sure the Electrohammers would run out of battery right after breaking through the obstacles. Then, Kokichi kidnapped Kaito (as part of their cooperation) after Kaito punched him (deliberately), and threatened Shuichi into handing over the controller, showing off Kokichi's overwhelming superiority and

control. At the same time, Kokichi mentioned: 'Also, the killing game might start up again if I let him run around.'
He even openly revealed where he was holding Kaito, giving Maki (who had strong feelings for Kaito) a chance to come after him. Kokichi knew full well that Maki was someone who spoke on behalf of everyone (a “projector,” seeing others as reflections of herself), someone who was careful with her words, aware that she had betrayed them once and needed to keep her mouth shut, that was before she was “mentally awakened.” So, to someone like Kokichi, Maki still had to be handled with caution. Meanwhile, the real Mastermind had to subtly steer public perception (because if they just said, 'Kokichi isn’t the Mastermind, he’s pretending,' who would believe that, especially when Kokichi had already told Shuichi, 'No one would pretend to be the Mastermind... unless they really were.').
So Kokichi predicted that he’d end up playing a “fake villain” role (not the real Mastermind), and that eventually Maki would be the one to eliminate him (since that was the Mastermind’s plan, Kokichi was too dangerous to be left alive). But Maki would first need to capture him and force him to spill the truth about himself, and that moment would be his opportunity. That’s exactly where Kokichi’s adaptability within his strategy shines.
Next, Kokichi predicted that everyone would go check on whether Kaito was still alive rather than rebel immediately, because:

- Kokichi had a full set of giant robots, and the electrical weapons were still charging. Not to mention, as the supposed Mastermind, he might have hidden weapons as well. It would be too risky to try anything aggressive at that point.
- Kokichi had carefully built up the image of a cold, heartless mastermind (as seen in Chapter 4, where he showed zero emotion toward Gonta’s death, and in other moments, for example, in Chapter 2, when everyone else wanted to die in Kirumi’s place after learning she was a prime minister and that her life was “worth more,” Kokichi didn’t care at all).
  Because of that, it made sense that the others needed to check on Kaito regularly (especially when Kaito himself said “Kokichi isn’t here,” something Kokichi would have full control over, particularly since the two were working together).
- Furthermore, Kaito was still a key source of emotional support for the group.
  Kokichi was smart, which meant Kaito could be seen as someone trying to scout Kokichi and make a move at the right time.

Thanks to this, Kaito was in the perfect position to request the crossbow, arguably the best weapon for someone of his physical condition.
(Remember, the guns were all fake, but if there happened to be a real one with a silencer? Then definitely use it. And even if not, there were still plenty of usable weapons like throwing knives or swords. But if there’s a good crossbow available, you’d obviously use it.)
Also, since Kaito had already learned to use the crossbow after observing Maki, it would be easy for him to obtain it (just by asking someone else), and he could then use it effectively in a later strategy.
Summary: After the group returned to the place where Kaito was being held (once the Electrohammers were fully charged), they managed to get in and were met with a horrifying

sight. A crushed body was found, and a sleeve was sticking out.



That sleeve belonged to Kaito.
And since this was now a murder case, by the rules of the game, the group began investigating. Here's what they found:

- A crossbow is inside the room.
- Three crossbow bolts compatible with the weapon, with blood on the tips.
- A vial of medicine was stained with blood, making the label unreadable.
- A blood trail led from where Kaito had been talking to the others to the hydraulic press.
- The safety system had been deactivated (normally, the machine would stop automatically upon detecting a living creature).
- An Exisal was stationed past the gate near the hangar, which should have triggered the alarm and security barriers, but somehow didn't.
- Himiko was found bringing a black bag to the window where people usually talked to Kaito.
- The remaining Exisals (the ones not near the hangar) were set to monitor Monokuma, who had still not been released.
- Two holes (suspected arrow wounds due to the blood) were found on the arm and back of Kokichi's jacket, which someone had "attempted" to flush down the toilet.
- The mysterious disappearance of either Kokichi or Kaito means that one of them is dead, and the other is missing.

Let's examine Kokichi's tactics and line of reasoning:
First, consider Kaito's coat. He normally wears it in a quirky way, only on his right arm, leaving his left arm bare.



Yet the sleeve that was sticking out was the right sleeve, and if he'd truly been wearing that sleeve, his arm (and surrounding flesh) should have been there too. But the sleeve was completely empty. That clue would lead everyone to suspect foul play, and specifically a trick by Kokichi himself.

Another thing pointing to Kokichi's involvement was that someone tried to flush those clothes down the toilet. If Kokichi were the killer and wanted to mislead everyone, he could have simply crammed Kaito's coat into the hydraulic press along with him, obliterating it completely and leaving no arrow-punctured fabric behind. No one would then suspect Kokichi as a victim. Instead, by leaving an arrow-holed sleeve floating in the loo, the culprit forces everyone to question what really happened and directs their suspicion at Kokichi (a classic misdirection tactic).
On top of that, Kokichi added another layer of defense: he used an Exisal robot fitted with Miu's voice-modulation system. That let him steer the investigation more easily, leaving no direct evidence while heightening Monokuma's and the others' fear and caution. After all, if Exisal can lock Monokuma down, Monokuma clearly fears it, and sthe ame goes for the rest of the group when faced with a giant, weaponized robot.
Next, the "failure" of the plan was something Kokichi had also calculated in advance, ensuring everything stayed on the intended path. This is shown through the video being cut halfway. Basically, the footage showed Kaito wearing a coat, about to be crushed. But midway through, it suddenly cuts and jumps to the moment just before the body is crushed. The video was clearly cut off, yet the camera system only has two functions: record and stop. So isn't that strange? So what's the only thing that can interfere with the camera?
That's right, an Electrobomb.
But why use an Electrobomb at all? Because:

- They needed to disable the safety system.
- They needed to conceal the killer's identity (I mean, why would they leave the camera running while the crushing was happening?).

So, the video itself is the clue. But then, why didn't they just destroy the camera and erase the evidence? Why let it show something so suspicious?
Because… they wanted people to see that there might have been a moment where Kokichi and Kaito switched roles (even if that's not what actually happened).
Think about it, what kind of killer would deliberately provide such a critical piece of evidence that basically points right back at them, and then cut the video mid-scene? Clearly, something's off here.
Now, let's take a look at Kaito's motive: he wanted everyone to escape the Killing Game, and he had a strong sense of justice. So obviously, he didn't do all this for his own sake (proof? Revisit the Miu case). Kokichi saw right through him and used that. That left everyone with only one belief:
Kaito killed Kokichi to save us, and agreed to go along with Kokichi's plan, for our sake.
Some might ask, "What if Kaito gave in because he wanted the antidote for his illness?"
Well, the truth is, Kaito wasn't that afraid of the disease. He wanted the cure and to survive only so he could protect us, uphold justice, and save everyone. So there's no reason he would sacrifice us all just to get the antidote.
The next tactic was that Kaito intentionally left a trail of blood. So what purpose did this serve?

- It redirected the investigation and limited the search area.
- Along with the arrow wound on the sleeve, Kaito was suggesting that someone had been injured in a fierce "battle", with the arrow wound serving as evidence, and that it all ended with Kaito carrying Kokichi into the press and committing the murder.

- This further made people suspect that either Kaito or Kokichi had deliberately left clues to give others hints.

Next, why did Kokichi choose to use a crossbow?
Simply because it's a long-range weapon, one that could help people shoot someone through the hangar window.
Kokichi had also thoroughly researched the fact that Maki had poison as well as antidotes capable of killing him, so using the crossbow would support the plan significantly.
And here's what Kokichi predicted:
First, Kokichi asked Kaito to have Himiko bring him the crossbow. Himiko was the most reasonable choice because she wasn't strong or tall enough, lacked the skills to use a crossbow (since using a crossbow does require a certain level of ability, this is also why Kaito learned to use one), and emotionally, she was vulnerable. Most of the friends she truly trusted had either died (like Tenko) or betrayed her trust (like Angie, who created a cult around herself and Atua that became oppressive and prevented escape attempts to avoid risk). Meanwhile, others didn't really trust Himiko due to her supposed "uselessness.".
Next, Kaito and Kokichi staged a scene where it looked like they were about to shoot each other. But in reality, Kaito only prepared one arrow, and this made the reason he gave Himiko for bringing the crossbow more plausible (that he wanted to scare Kokichi and stop the killing game, while still hoping Kokichi would come to his senses and end the game peacefully). This fit Kaito's personality, his strength, his desire to overcome the killing game together, and his trust in his friends. Even though Kaito still had doubts about Kokichi in Trial 5, deep down, he wanted everyone to escape this damn game together. (And come on, Kaito is the kind of person who, even after being shown all the proof, still says, "I still believe in Gonta." That tells you how stubborn and idealistic he is).
Then came Maki, attacking Kokichi with a slow-acting poison (this had already been explained earlier).
To manipulate Maki's emotions, Kokichi had Kaito leap in to take the hit (like an "Ace" move), right after Kokichi taunted Maki and made her feel like he was completely worthless after interrogation.
Kokichi had already planned for the possibility that if Kaito failed, he could still use the arrow he already had or even dodge a new one (he's small, fast, and agile enough to avoid critical hits). In the worst case, he could pretend to be hit and then stab Kaito himself, which would make sense given the maniacal, evil mastermind persona Kokichi had built for himself.
In short, wounding Kaito (especially in such a dramatic way like jumping in to block an attack) would add to the suspicion that he and Kokichi had been working together, which could be helpful later. Of course, there was already evidence for this, but more confirmation wouldn't hurt.
Then came the prediction that Maki would definitely go get the antidote (which was the whole point of having Kaito take the blow at that moment; otherwise, he'd die). She had to go immediately. After that, Kokichi would bring Kaito into the Hangar, where Kaito had already been "imprisoned" previously. Once inside, they would trigger the alarm and activate the barrier to prevent Maki from coming back in (since Exisals are super slow and too big to return quickly, it made sense to keep them home). They would have more than enough time to get back into the Hangar.

The only way to peek inside was through a small window, just big enough to stick your head in. Predicting that Maki would throw the antidote through that window, Kokichi ordered Kaito not to catch it; he would catch it himself. And Kokichi successfully caught it and drank it (or at least, that's what Maki believed).
This behavior matches Kokichi's mastermind persona, evil and ruthless, not letting Kaito have a chance at survival, especially in the eyes of Maki, who loved Kaito deeply.
This would emotionally destroy Maki: after hurting the person she loved, the one who helped her grow stronger and connect with others, she would be left in deep regret, fearing execution, and being ostracized by everyone. Kokichi crafted this emotional breakdown to lead Maki into confessing everything to Shuichi.
Why is that?
Maki is not good at completely hiding her emotions. Her actions are easily suspicious.
For example, when she first entered the game, she refused to let anyone into her room, almost aggressively objecting.
Or when Kaito first "talked sense" into her, she clung to him closely, trusted him wholeheartedly, and barely left his side.
Although this is inductive reasoning, it's a natural human reaction; it shows how difficult it is to hide fear and love (or other strong emotions).
Fear and the desire to hide something are among the hardest emotions to conceal.
What she revealed shows that she isn't like that emotionless freak; she does have feelings of her own.
And that intense fear from having killed someone, from betraying her friends, from keeping the killing game going, combined with the guilt of betraying their trust when they had given her a second chance to live, all of this made it only a matter of time before Maki would give herself away.
(Like in the case, Maki keeps urging, "Execute Kokichi already!", with the belief that everyone, driven by hatred and fear of the mastermind, would trust her and vote Kokichi as the culprit, ending the trial. Then, live or die, it didn't matter anymore, because in her mind: "At the very least, I'll punish myself by living in the hellish outside world, completely alone. If I really did kill Kaito, then living with this guilt would be worse than death anyway.").
Now let's get to the murder case.
First, Kokichi escapes the class trial in advance, leaving behind a pile of clues as we've just discussed.
Maki and (very likely) Himiko will try to corner Kokichi and end the trial quickly (with Himiko being haunted by Kokichi's cruelty as the mastermind and her desire to end this tragedy as soon as possible, she would push hard to convict Kokichi).
Then, while everyone begins confirming Kokichi as the culprit, Shuichi turns the tables.
He argues that Kokichi was hit by a few crossbow bolts, proving that it's not impossible for Kokichi to actually be the victim (especially with all the blood evidence). That's what makes Shuichi suspicious.
Then, the Exisal appears, with its voice modulation software (able to switch between Kaito and Kokichi's voices). It presents uncut video evidence of Kaito being crushed by the press (which Monokuma has already stated can't be edited, the rules say you must believe the footage, no questions).

Then Kokichi pretends to confess, saying, "I'm the culprit, arrest me."
And most people actually believe him, except… Shuichi.
Why did Kokichi anticipate that Shuichi wouldn't immediately accuse him?
Because of the previous cases, specifically Kaede's and Gonta's.
At first, Shuichi wasn't this resolute. He hesitated a lot. In Kaede's trial, he was practically silent. Kokichi himself had subtly pointed out likely truths in previous trials and understood how these events affected Shuichi's psychology.
Kaede's trial was honestly a lucky break, but the idea of using Gonta to kill later was a calculated setup to make Gonta the blackened one later on.
Thanks to Kaede and Gonta, Shuichi learned that: "Sometimes emotions have to be set aside in favor of the truth, no matter how hard it is to accept."
(Like Conan says: "When you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.")
So why does Shuichi refuse to hastily accuse Kokichi, even though the situation seems hopeless and he's in a "might as well die" scenario?

- Because he inherits Kaede's will, to save as many people as possible.
- Yes, the outside world might be ruined.
- Yes, the mastermind is cruel.
  But… the case simply can't end so easily and suddenly.
  That's not how trials like this operate.
  Someone would have to hide their pain, conceal the truth; that's the essence of a class trial.

If the mastermind truly didn't want to play anymore, and pulled this kind of sloppy stunt…
It just wouldn't make sense.
A bored mastermind wouldn't have allowed another class trial in the first place.
Next is the search for the truth about the crossbow.
While collecting everyone's testimonies, Shuichi will realize that Himiko is trying to lie about bringing the crossbow.
So why did Kokichi already know this?
That's actually pretty obvious. Himiko was asked to bring the crossbow to Kaito, and once everyone learned from Shuichi that:

- It's not certain Kaito is the one who died, and
- It's not certain Kaito was killed by the hydraulic press (since the safety system normally wouldn't allow that, he might've been thrown onto it after he was already dead),

Kokichi launched an indirect emotional attack on Himiko.
It's the kind of situation where: "I gave a weapon (the crossbow) to Kaito, and now suddenly the truth comes out that he died because of that very weapon?", of course, she'd be terrified.
So naturally, Himiko would try to lie a little to avoid suspicion.
But who would've thought she'd get caught by K1-B0 (and even if he didn't catch her, someone else eventually would. After all, everyone was concerned about Kaito and paying close attention to what was going on).
And once Himiko's lie is exposed, everyone finds out that, somehow, there were three crossbow bolts on the floor, even though Himiko only brought one bolt to give to Kaito.

This clearly shows that a third person must've come in and done something, though it's not yet clear what exactly.
And the Electrohammers left behind practically prove Maki had gone there, because she was the only one who refused to bring an Electrohammer, giving the excuse that "she's not used to those kinds of weapons."
In reality, aside from truthfully claiming that she wasn't used to using such a large weapon, Maki also wanted to keep the Electrohammers to maintain an advantage against the Exisal, something that would be very useful if she ever needed to attack Kokichi when he let his guard down. That's why she hid the Electrobomb in front of the unexpected room. The fact that Maki stole those items proves that she was already aware of their potential future use (and honestly, with the fact that "only Maki and Kaito knew how to operate the crossbow," it would soon be proven that she was the culprit anyway).
This leads to Maki being exposed, and once she's exposed, she's forced to confess everything she knows, essentially revealing the entire sequence of events I just described. Kokichi even adds a taunting line: "Well, time to vote… just go with your intuition."
Then, Shuichi suddenly notices something extremely suspicious. Maki had said that after failing to deliver the antidote, she returned once more and tried to destroy the control panel to open the hangar door. BUT, the control panel is located behind both the barrier system and the electric fence. So… how did Maki manage to get in, especially since she hadn't tampered with the system before? (She only disabled the outer barrier, but the inner security alarm was still active.)
So why was the alarm turned off?
Given that Electrohammers are single-use against the Exisal and then run out of power (Kokichi even emphasized this), and that everyone else's hammers were still recharging at the time, the only possible explanation is that an Electrobomb was used.
And since Maki had already used her Electrobomb during her earlier fight, that leaves only Kokichi.
But then, why would Kokichi disable the security system? That's way too risky and doesn't benefit him. Like, what if destroying the control panel accidentally opened the door, he'd be totally exposed. Even though the chances are low (these kinds of machines shouldn't be that fragile), it's still a dumb risk.
There's only one answer: Kokichi used the Electrobomb for a different purpose.
Yet Kokichi, in the meantime, tells everyone, "This is the end. There's nothing more to say. Just vote with your gut."
Because, simply put, no one can clearly determine the culprit, not even Monokuma.
But then, Shuichi restarts the trial, launching it again based on the new clue about the Electrobomb, and begins to deduce further. At the same time, Monokuma admits that Kokichi wasn't actually the real mastermind and reveals everything about the "hints" Kokichi had been giving all along.
Starting the deduction
There's a part in the video where the press machine suddenly stops, then suddenly slams down again. Why is that?
The answer is the "Force Stop" button on the press.
The camera only has three buttons: record, stop, and resume (after stopping). It doesn't have any editing features, so why did it suddenly stop and then continue to crush?

To make the press stop mid-action, you'd have to coordinate the stopping of the camera with the stopping of the press.
But the idea that the Safety System caused the machine to stop sounds… illogical. Think about it: then why would Kokichi throw the Electrobomb? When you throw an Electrobomb, it disables the Safety System completely. However, the press can still function normally, and even more powerfully once it's started. In other words, the safety system and the press system are separate, and the press can still operate mechanically even without electricity, just without safety protection.
So, the only possible explanation is to use the Force Stop button. Not to mention, pressing "Force Stop" allows Kokichi to deliberately control the exact moment the machine stops. He just needed to press Force Stop a few seconds before stopping the video to create that specific effect.
There's also one more detail that supports this theory: the camera's position. It's placed in a way that hides the victim's face after the machine lowers, and it's very close to the press; this is very suspicious. Like, why is the camera set up in such a "perfect" spot? They could've angled it directly at Kaito from a distance, if they really wanted to show Kaito clearly as the victim, and if Maki accidentally killed him, then just show it clearly.
But no. This was planned. The placement of the camera, close to the press and at the "perfect angle", was intentional. Along with the theory of pressing Force Stop, then pressing stop video 1–2 seconds later, this lets Kokichi make the video appear unedited, while manipulating the timing using the buttons. This creates a short time window where everything in the video still looks normal, but allows him to switch things in reality.
→ Kokichi deliberately leads the group to suspect that "maybe the video was edited this way," but he made the mistake on purpose so people would notice.
So, what was that time window used for?
→ To switch places, obviously.
Monokuma had already announced that the corpses of previous victims would be disposed of, meaning there were only two usable bodies at the scene: Kaito and Kokichi.
Kokichi and Kaito, why did they have to switch places?
Because Kokichi gave us way too many clues pointing to that exact thing! Kokichi not only set up the camera angle to hide the victim's face, but also automatically stopped the video, and left behind a bunch of clues that clearly show he cooperated with Kaito. At the very least, there are some suspicious things anyone can notice:

- Kaito asked Maki to make a crossbow for him, even though he should've known that for fighting Monokuma, close combat would be better than using a weapon that requires aiming and multiple steps (anyone who's looked into crossbows knows they're quite clunky).
- While everyone was panicking about Kokichi disappearing, Kaito told them not to worry or rush to find him because it would give Kokichi the upper hand. Sure, that sounds logical… but for someone as impulsive as Kaito, it seems off.
- Then Kaito suddenly decides to start a rebellion against Monokuma, an incredibly irrational move when you know Monokuma can respawn endlessly.

- And later, Kaito suddenly throws himself at Kokichi even though Kokichi is inside a robot six or seven times his size. Meanwhile, when Kokichi had just some hammers, Kaito was completely calm.
- Why did Kaito ask Himiko to give him exactly one arrow and the crossbow? Kokichi is a massive threat and supposedly the Mastermind, someone who should be killed. Yet Kaito's usual "Talk No Jutsu" approach was too risky by nature.
- Also… how did that one single arrow from Kaito hit Kokichi? And why did Kokichi summon an Exisal for self-defense? With Monokuma, three robots would be enough to guard. Even if Maki managed to destroy one with an Electrohammer, the hammer would be out of battery afterward, and there would still be one left to finish the job.
- Kokichi wrote a full script for the entire trial, listing what everyone would say, and what Kaito should say depending on how things turned out. Kokichi was hit by a poison that causes brain death within 30 minutes and muscle spasms after 15 minutes, so writing a whole trial script while in the hangar would've been physically impossible. (Why 30 minutes? The poison is called Strike-9, likely inspired by Strychnine, which has those exact symptoms.)
- Do you really think someone could write all that in 30 minutes??
  The only logical conclusion is that Kokichi handed the plan to Kaito beforehand.

And don't forget, Kaito's big revelation happened right before the voting. That strengthens the idea that the two of them cooperated.
(And just to clarify: we're not yet deducing the part where Kokichi cooperated with Kaito. That comes later.)
Okay, now we know Kokichi isn't the real Mastermind.
And Kokichi himself must have known that the real Mastermind would try to get rid of him.
Yet Kokichi still chose to be passive, still chose Kaito as the one to kidnap, a move that seems completely meaningless.
And yes, it is meaningless, its only purpose was to lure Maki out and execute the plan.
And Kaito was also the only one who "responded" by fighting the robot solo.
In short, thanks to those things, or at least some of them, Shuichi figured out that Kaito and Kokichi had been cooperating from the start.
So the switching of roles was definitely part of their plan, specifically, to make this trial fail intentionally by guiding the narrative down a false path, rather than letting it wander in uncertainty like it would if Kokichi were the actual culprit.
(Remember: just one seed of injustice in the system is enough; they wanted to keep the others alive to increase the chance of success.)
And then Shuichi concludes:
Kokichi recorded the video of Kaito being crushed in the press machine, and just before the machine completed the crush, Kokichi hit Force Stop, then stopped the video, switched places with Kaito, and then committed suicide.
After that, Kaito hit the button to continue the press, and Kokichi died from being crushed...
Immediately, overcome with guilt, fear, and confusion, Maki asked Shuichi: "Then what about the poison?", "Kokichi clearly drank the antidote bottle!"
Shuichi replied: "Now that Kokichi's 'Mastermind' persona has been stripped away, what are you still worried about? Before, you may have suspected Kokichi drank the entire antidote because

you saw him as an evil Mastermind. But now everything's been cleared up. What if Kaito drank a few sips of the antidote as part of the deal when they switched roles?"
And Maki went silent.
Of course, Maki wouldn't have been able to doubt Kaito as deeply as Shuichi could; Shuichi had been shaped by Kokichi and the Killing Game to become someone who thinks like a detective. Whereas Maki, someone falling in love with Kaito, wouldn't have questioned anything.
And even if Maki or someone else had figured it out, Shuichi was prepared to explain it.
(I'll explain that part in a bit.)
At that moment, Exisal Kaito declared boldly: "If Monokuma gets it right, then he takes everyone's lives, yeah? But if Monokuma gets it wrong, then he'd have no right to take everyone's lives. If Monokuma doesn't know who the culprit is, then this killing game can't function anymore."
That's when Shuichi finally realized the scheme, to create injustice and exploit the loopholes in the game, and he became determined to completely break it, by bringing everyone into endless unity (die together).
So he made a declaration: "The truth is... after we found the crushed body, I... saw Kokichi… Yes. He threatened me, told me that if I didn't do what he said, he'd kill us all. He wanted me to lie about what I saw so that the trial would be more interesting… But I can't do this anymore! I can't keep lying like this! I have to tell the truth… Kokichi isn't dead! He is alive!"
But why did Shuichi choose to lie like that?
Because Kokichi had spent the entire game building Shuichi up to be a true all-knowing detective, case by case.
As the trials went on, Shuichi was crafted into the perfect detective, and with all of Kokichi's manipulations and nudging, it was inevitable that everyone would fully trust Shuichi and be willing to follow any explanation he gave.
Kokichi believed that once Shuichi uncovered Kokichi's real plan, Shuichi would realize that all of Kokichi's lies were for the "greater good", for the bigger picture.
That was the moment Shuichi would realize not all lies are harmful, and that Shuichi himself would have to lie in order to end the Killing Game.
(That would be the worst-case scenario if Shuichi were too upright. But if he wasn't so pure to begin with, then all the better.)
Suddenly, Kaito stepped out of the Exisal, showing himself to everyone, driven by a strong desire to save them, and a fear that Monokuma might not believe Shuichi's lie and execute everyone.
(Well, that's how Kaito explained it anyway, to make it sound less like they were bluffing.)
So what really happened?
Kaito revealed himself and exposed the "Script", confessing to being the culprit.
That became the key factor that allowed Monokuma to conclude Maki wasn't the culprit.
Why?
Because Maki still had a 50/50 chance of being the culprit.
But once Kaito revealed the plot script, Maki was temporarily removed from the suspect list.
The idea of using the antidote bottle as a trade-off to carry out the plan might sound illogical; maybe Kaito only drank part of it.
But in any case, the explanation that Kaito died sounded more reasonable, and at the very least

, it gave Monokuma some hope that the process was “fair.”
Besides… if someone confesses, it’d be kind of weird not to accept it, right?
Now, everyone was forced to vote.
Monokuma would be forced to make a judgment based on instinct, and instinct alone.
And the case would fall into one of five scenarios:

1. Kokichi or Kaito gets voted, and Monokuma gives an explanation to justify why Kokichi/Kaito was the culprit, but that would fall apart if the one voted was already dead.
2. If Maki gets voted… that’s probably the “safest” choice. Monokuma has the full authority to declare her guilty or not.
   To satisfy the viewers, there's a high chance he would make Maki lose in order to keep the game going.
   However, this is a less likely outcome because Shuichi would probably vote for Kokichi instead of Maki if forced to pick randomly, and he'd likely convince everyone to do the same.
3. If people vote as a pair, splitting their votes between two suspects, Monokuma would have no basis to end the game or execute someone at random, because it’s still possible to identify the killer.
   Still, even in that case, Monokuma would be forced to declare a verdict, a dangerous move for him, since he doesn’t actually know anything.
4. If all three suspects are voted on, then Monokuma would definitely have to make a declaration.

In short, many of these outcomes would put Monokuma at a disadvantage, making this trial feel unfair.
Kokichi’s main goal? To create the sense of “unfairness” and expose the loopholes in the game, and more importantly, Monokuma’s weakness: his lack of fairness.
Unfairness here is Monokuma’s biased judgment toward the players.
First, he’s led around like a sheep by Shuichi; whatever Shuichi says, people do.
If Shuichi says “vote Kaito,” they vote Kaito.
If he says “vote Kokichi,” they do it.
Then Kaito walks out of the room, and Monokuma just declares Kaito guilty again.
All of this is based on “cases.” The chance of Maki not being punished is “high,” but it’s not 100%, which only proves Monokuma’s judgment is unjust.
Kokichi also demonstrates a way to manipulate Monokuma in the future, causing the program to pause or stall for a long time, unless Monokuma wants to be seen as “corrupt.”
So, is Monokuma really acting on his own, not being controlled by a Mastermind?
Well, here’s the thing: this is a risk Kokichi fully accepted, especially given the situation he was in.
To reiterate: Kokichi is in this program as a player, and what he needs to do is completely destroy the system, without revealing himself to the Mastermind until it’s too late (because in a Killing Game, being eliminated is always a threat, and murder is "allowed").
That’s why Kokichi gambled on the idea that he could make the game unfair.
Because unfairness is exactly what can destroy the essence of a “test” like this.
Of course, this isn’t even that big a risk.
As for the idea of there being multiple Monokumas, I’ve already mentioned that earlier.

The fact that Monokuma is being modified and controlled using other energy sources and surveillance equipment…
In a virtual world, countering these materials isn't impossible.
Not to mention, they still have to maintain some level of realism in case they want to prevent a "second Kokichi" from showing up later.
Also, rest assured, even with modifications, the final judgment still comes from a human, or at least that's what the audience will believe.
And no matter what, the audience will boycott the show after Kokichi's revelation about its "unfairness."
Perhaps the worst-case scenario would be creating a hyper-sensitive AI system that can detect death flawlessly.
But remember, the hardest thing for humans to regain is trust.
No one will be sure if it'll leak again.
And this is a program, a program with this level of massive investment, that is most likely made for public entertainment (because if they went through all this effort and expense, they wouldn't do it just for fun).
There must be profit involved.
And if people stop watching, where's the profit?
If the profit dies, then it's better to shut it down.
So why let everyone live instead of letting them all die?
Because killing them off isn't necessary at all. It would only increase the risk and lower the chance of success.
For example, what if, hypothetically, they weren't able to shut the program down immediately? That would be a disaster.
Whereas if Shuichi and his friends are still alive, they'd not only carry the motivation inspired by Kaito and Kokichi's efforts, but they also have the skills.
They could expose the true nature of the program on their own, maybe even track down the Mastermind, if one actually exists.
From there, the chances of ending the Killing Game once and for all would only increase.