Minotaur’s Labyrinth



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How to read

This doc is split into two parts. The first part is a detailed retelling of the events of the Minotaur's Labyrinth arc. It focuses on tactics, strategic intent, and explanations on the scheming aspects of the arc from Baku Madarame's perspective. The second part serves as a collection of ideas that support the main retelling. This part includes justifications for certain ideas, deeper explanations for events, author's side notes, or any other kind of auxiliary remarks that do not fit into the main first part but are still relatively important for complete understanding of the feats. Throughout the doc, you will see the (†††) symbol. These are links to the parts that provide additional context to the part where they stand. Simply click on them and the doc will take you to the corresponding additional information section. Test it out by clicking this (†††)

As we will later see, Minotaur's Labyrinth is an arc that is riddled with plot inconsistencies. So, a majority of these additional information sections are attempts to rectify these mistakes.

Minotaur's Labyrinth Retelling

Context

Baku had just won 1.1B yen and discarded his death warrant by beating Yukiide Kaoru in the Paper Labyrinth game. He stands with Marco against Amako Seiichi and Minowa Seiichi (not related), who arrived a few minutes after the game with Yukiide. Baku has yet to achieve his true aim of coming to the MPD, which is to gather the list of elites who used the crime coverup system for his grander schemes. Amako also aims to retrieve the 1.1B yen and kill Baku to maintain the crime coverup system. A Kakerou match between the two and their ally is inevitable. The four players relocate to an underground facility consisting of 36 rooms, arranged in a 6x6 grid. This is where they will have their Kakerou Match.

Pre-game Preparations

Baku receives information about the L-file from Kaji. The L-file is a list of clients that have used the MPD's crime coverup service, exactly what Baku is looking for. He makes sure to include it in the wagers.

Baku notices some pipes that run all across different rooms. The possibility of these pipes being used for communication between Amako and Minowa appears in his mind. So, he plants his cellphone near the pipes to record any auditory-based communication through the pipes (such as Morse code). He also hides the receiver to his prepared listening device alongside the phone as he plans to use it during the game.

Baku and Amako get into a little scuffle before the game starts, and Baku is left bleeding from the nose and mouth. He is escorted by a Kakerou staff member to clean himself up in a bathroom. He takes this opportunity to play victim and get the Kakerou black suit to change shirts with him out of pity, as his shirt has blood on it. What goes unnoticed is the listening device that Baku hid in his shirt before giving it to the staff member. With the receiver he hid, Baku will listen in on what Kakerou is doing during the game. He only has to retrieve it after the match starts.

Explanation of the facility

- The facility consists of 36 rooms, arranged in a 6x6 grid. Each room is has a designation based on coordinates of letters and numbers (see figure 1)
- Each room is connected to its adjacent via doors. So most rooms will have 4 doors connecting with other rooms, while rooms on the edges will have 3 and corner rooms will have 2. However, every room will have 4 doors so as to remain roughly indistinguishable from each other. A door that leads to outside the grid will only lead to a wall.

- Each room houses a camera and each door is controlled remotely at a command centre.
- Judging from faint marks found on the walls of the rooms and the pipes connecting them, one concludes that the rooms also serve as water tanks in response to natural disasters. In an event of an earthquake, the rooms are made to quickly fill with, store, and discharge water.
- No traps of any kind were found. Referee Kadokura Yuudai guarantees this statement.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
A	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6
B	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6
C	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
D	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
E	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
F	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6

Figure 1: Room designations

Rules for the game

- Each of the four players will have to move through a labyrinth created individually and fairly by referee Kadokura, doing so simultaneously. To aid them, every player is equipped with a sizable stack of paper with the labyrinth layout, which they can use to hypothesize and draft their routes on.
- First, the order of player turns is determined and the four players will start in one of the 36 rooms.
- A player spends their turn going through their labyrinth by picking a door in their room. If the door is unlocked, they gain 1 M-point (MP) and proceed to the next room. If they encounter a locked door, their turn ends and the next player's turn commences.
- As a result, players will gain and stockpile MP as they solve their maze.
- While playing, there will be times where players will encounter each other. In such a case, each player will decide on how many MP they want to use from the total they have gathered. The player who uses more MP will enter a 30-second period called M-time. Other players cannot attack or counterattack a player who is in M-time. In other words, an unilateral onslaught from the person in M-time.
- After M-time ends, the loser will rest for one turn. If it was during the turn of the loser, his turn will stop in that room and he will also rest for the next turn.

- In cases where more than two players meet in the same room, all players present will present MP and the game proceeds similar to what was stated above.
- In cases where players spend the same amount of MP, a genuine fistfight is allowed between the players (presumably for 30 seconds as well).
- Aside from all of the cases specified above, physical contact with a player is prohibited throughout the duration of the game.
- The player to first reach the end of their labyrinth is declared the winner.

Baku makes some proposals. He makes it a part of the rules that Amako's party "will not even lay a finger on Kakerou's clothes". Baku claims that this is to ensure the safety of Kakerou, who is his only safety insurance in this situation.

Amako thinks that it's a stupid proposal as not only is it impossible to overwhelm Kakerou physically, especially in Amako's position, becoming antagonistic towards Kakerou when much of their operation relies on them is counterproductive. Baku knew this, but he made the proposal regardless to plant inside Amako's mind the idea of "why did Baku make that nonsensical proposal".

Based on the wording, the only explanation is that Baku had switched his shirt with one of Kakerou's staff. Thus, to protect himself from physical altercations, Baku would make this proposal with the impression that the shirt he is wearing, which originally belonged to a Kakerou employee, would prevent Amako and Minowa from touching him. Of course, Baku had a different intention when switching his clothes with the Kakerou employee, as he wanted to plant the transmitter on him. So, this proposal is meant to misdirect Amako into coming to the wrong conclusion if he noticed the shirt switch.

Baku's second proposal is for all players to forfeit communication devices of any kind that they are currently carrying, which accomplishes a few goals

- It prevents convenient communication and coordination between Amako and Minowa.
- It prevents Amako from calling for backup in the middle of the game.
- Baku carries an extra cellphone on him, which will get confiscated as well. This conceals the existence of the other cellphone and receiver that he has hidden in room F3. Amako wouldn't expect Baku to use his cellphone and listening device mid-game since all communication devices were confiscated in the beginning. However, the use of communication devices are technically allowed during the game, as it was never stated otherwise. The only rule against communication devices like this is that they must be confiscated before the game starts, which does not apply to devices that are not on their person at the specified time, such as the one Baku has hidden in one of the rooms.

Hints for the labyrinth created by Kadokura

- There is one cross
- all rooms will be passed on the shortest route possible

Right before the game starts, Nanpou, who works under Amako, sets a deadly trap in the labyrinth without Kakerou noticing. He communicates its existence to Amako but does not tell him where exactly it is as a kind of test for Amako. Because of Amako's risk-averse nature, the existence of this trap will affect the strategy he chooses to implement during the game. As a part of this strategy, Amako instructs Minowa to always be listening on the pipes unless it is Minowa's turn to move. This allows the two to communicate through the pipes via Morse code (something Baku anticipated).

Game Start

Sequence of players: Marco goes first, Minowa second, Baku third, Amako fourth

Marco and Minowa take their first turn and progress an arbitrary amount along their labyrinth.

Baku and Amako start in the same room, A6. Baku's turn. He takes off his blindfolds while Amako still has his own. Baku pretends to be Minowa using his voice mimicry. Amako pretends to be duped by this. Baku knocks on the walls pretending to try to find which room he's in. Amako hears this and reflexively says "Mi..." before stopping himself and continuing with "Minowa...". He also tells Baku who is disguising as Minowa that this room is most likely not a corner room and recommends two doors for him to go through.

Baku sees through Amako's act and successfully picks the right door from the two Amako recommended. He correctly spotted Amako's lie about this room not being a corner room, which means that they are indeed standing in a corner room with only two possible doors that wouldn't lead to a wall. Then, he correctly inferred that the two doors Amako recommended were these doors that wouldn't lead to a wall. Since each player has individual mazes, it is likely that Baku and Amako will have to go through different doors in this first room. They are standing in a corner room, so there are only two usable doors. If Amako tells Baku to go through one of them, then, regardless of if Baku succeeds or fails, that would give Amako enough information to choose his own door correctly. Baku realizes this and picks correctly from the two remaining doors.

He notices three strange details. First, Amako instantly saw through his voice mimicry and even pretended to be deceived, which is almost impossible. Second, Amako instantly knew which room they were in even with blindfolds on. The only way he could've identified the room is by listening to Baku's knocking, which means that he can identify any room based on the sounds

they produce. Third, the "Mi..." that Amako produced when he heard Baku's knocking was not "Minowa" but most likely meant to be "Midori" or "Mizurio", which are Japanese for green and light blue respectively. From these three minor clues, Baku hypothesizes that Amako has an incredible sense of hearing and most likely has chromesthesia -- he is able to see sound as colors. Amako will then use this skill to keep track of everyone's movements by assigning a unique color to each unique sound of every door opening.

Baku receives 1 MP. More rules are clarified:

- A player may return to a room that they have already visited. However
- If you meet a player during your turn, you cannot proceed with your route and return to their room to battle for M-time.

Baku keeps moving from A6 to B6, B5, and C5 until he meets his first locked door trying to get into D5 from C5, thus ending his turn.

From this, Baku reasons out his starting room and path configuration to two possibilities. First, Baku remembers that the room they were in before starting the game, F3, had all of the doorknobs on the left of all doors in that room. Furthermore, the room he started in, A6, had all of its doorknobs on the left as well. Therefore, the doorknob in every room will face the same direction. When standing in front of a door with the doorknob on the left side, facing the door on the other side would put the doorknob on the right. Thus, the placement of the doorknob room by room alternates in a checkerboard pattern as shown in figure 2. This together with the fact that Baku started in a corner room narrows down the possibilities to A6 or F1. Then, from the path he has taken so far, there can only be two possibilities. Baku will only be able to know which path he's on after reaching F3, but we as the readers know that he started in A6.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
A	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left
B	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right
C	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left
D	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right
E	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left
F	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right

Figure 2: placements of the doorknobs in each room

For his second turn, Baku moves to C6, D6, and D5, where he gets blocked trying to move to D4, ending his turn with 6 MP. For his third turn, Baku tries to move to E5 as he thinks that it's the only possible answer, but his assumption was wrong and he ends his turn with 6 MP.

At the same time, Amako starts to use his strategy. He stays in his starting room. One reason is to use his chromesthesia to assign different colors to the different players' movements, making it possible for him to keep track of everyone else's routes. The other reason is because he can't risk stepping on the trap set by Nanpou. He would need either Baku or Marco to trigger the trap before he can venture further. In the meantime, he will use the information from the other players' routes to solve the algorithm behind the labyrinth and complete it in one turn when someone eventually triggers the trap.

Baku continues. He moves through C5, C4, D4, D5, E5, E6, F6, and F5, where he tries to go to F4 and is blocked. (†††)

Kadokura meets with Nanpou and suspects that he has done something that would affect the game. Then, he spots vestiges of C3 being flooded with water. After checking the blueprints of the rooms, Kadokura deduces that these vestiges came from a trap set by Nanpou for the players in the Labyrinth, and he sets out to stop Nanpou.

In the meantime, Baku takes his next turn and moves to E5 again, where he meets Minowa. They will have a M-time showdown. Minowa goes into excruciating detail on how he will torture Baku when he wins the M-time, but Baku correctly discerns that this is a bluff meant to scare him into using all of his MP. Minowa would then only use 1 MP to save the rest of his MP in case he meets Baku again. Baku counters this stratagem by only using 2 MP, the minimum to beat Minowa's 1, while acting like he used all of it. With this, Baku successfully fends off Minowa while preserving his MP and tricking Minowa into thinking that he used it all (†††). Minowa goes down to 14 MP and rests a turn. Baku continues his turn with 13 MP (See figure 3)

Amako explored 4 rooms and then retreated back to his starting room. This is because he knew Marco was coming towards him in A6. So he maneuvered to C4, letting Marco pass him and returned to A6 when he was sure that Marco was gone.

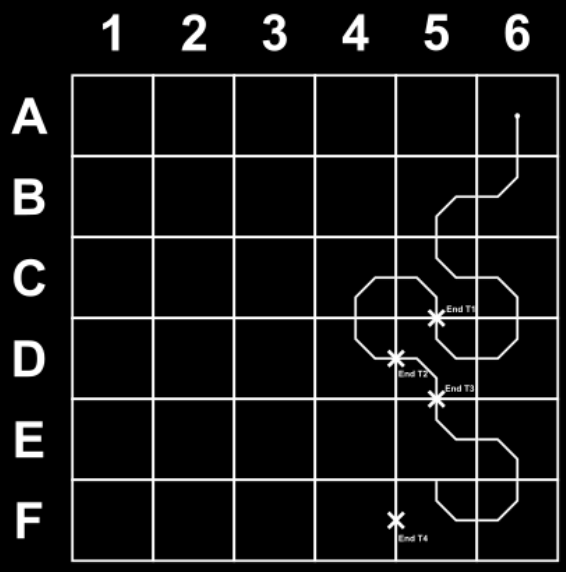


Figure 3: Baku's path up until this point

Marco vs Minowa

On Minowa's turn, he meets Marco in E6 after going through F5 and F6, making his MP increase from 14 to 17. From Marco's route, he has amassed 21 MP. Marco gets tricked into using 10 MP while Minowa uses 11 MP to secure the M-time. Marco sustains noticeable injuries in the following scuffle. Marco has 11 MP left whereas Minowa's dwindles down to 6.

After the M-time, Minowa continues with his turn and moves through E5, D5, D6, C6, C5, increasing his MP to 11. However, in C5, Minowa once again meets Marco, who had gone back along his route to chase after Minowa. Both players use their remaining 11 MP to have a fight on equal footing for 30 seconds. Marco scored a decisive victory in those 30 seconds.

The following may go against implications derivable from the source material, but it is the most likely course of action to remain consistent with events in the future. Marco continues with his turn, maneuvering back to E6 and gaining 1 MP from continuing into F6. However, due to mental fog from his injuries, Marco backtracks along his route and ends up resting in D4. (†††)

Upon entering F3

Baku enters F3 during his turn, making his current MP 16. He retrieves his hidden phone and listening device receiver.

He recognizes the room is F3 from before the game started and has deduced precisely which path he is on and projects the final stretch of his maze. The layout of every maze is based on a game called Black. Using the rules of that game and the hints given by Kadokura, Baku deduces that his ending square will either be A1 or A5, and his path forward from F3 will be one of three choices. The path stays the same until he reaches D2 before the possibilities branch out. If he is able to turn right in D2, then there is only one possible path left. If the path veers left however, he will have to choose between two possibilities. One of these possibilities sees him turning left when entering C3 with the goal situated at A5. The other option sees him turning right with the end being at A1. See figure 4.

Simultaneously, Baku decodes the Morse code messages sent between Amako and Minowa. He finds very important information in those messages

- Baku finds the positions and MP of Amako, Minowa, Baku, and Marco, which he uses to calculate the routes of every player. Notably, he calculates the starting position and possible routes of Minowa, the possible routes of Amako, and notes that Marco is at D4 with 1 MP. The fact that Amako was able to gather this much information on the players proves Baku's suspicions about Amako's synesthesia. Knowing the mechanism by which Amako gathers his intel, and using the routes and positions of all players, Baku can set a trap for Amako by making Amako guess his MP wrong.
- There is a distinct lack of worry from Amako even though Baku has progressed very far into his route. This can only mean that Amako still has some hidden strategy that can stop Baku. And based off environmental clues of each room as well as their discussed purpose, Baku predicts that the trap will involve differences in air pressures between adjacent rooms. A trap of this nature would only trigger once on the first player who enters the room. Since it hasn't been triggered, the trap must be in a room that no player has visited, and that room can only be C1, C2, or C3 based on the current explored routes of the players.

In the same moment, Amako coordinates with Minowa and leads him towards B4 (†††). Baku is still listening in on the pipes for any new Morse code while he deciphers the recorded messages. He knows that Minowa on B4 is standing in the way of his path, and the chances of Minowa ignoring the rules of M-time to attack him is considerable (notice in figure xxx how all of Baku's potential paths pass through B4). He can redirect Minowa away by sending his own Morse code, but the chances of Amako listening in and nullifying his attempt are high. So he needs to find a way to stop Amako from listening in on the pipes.

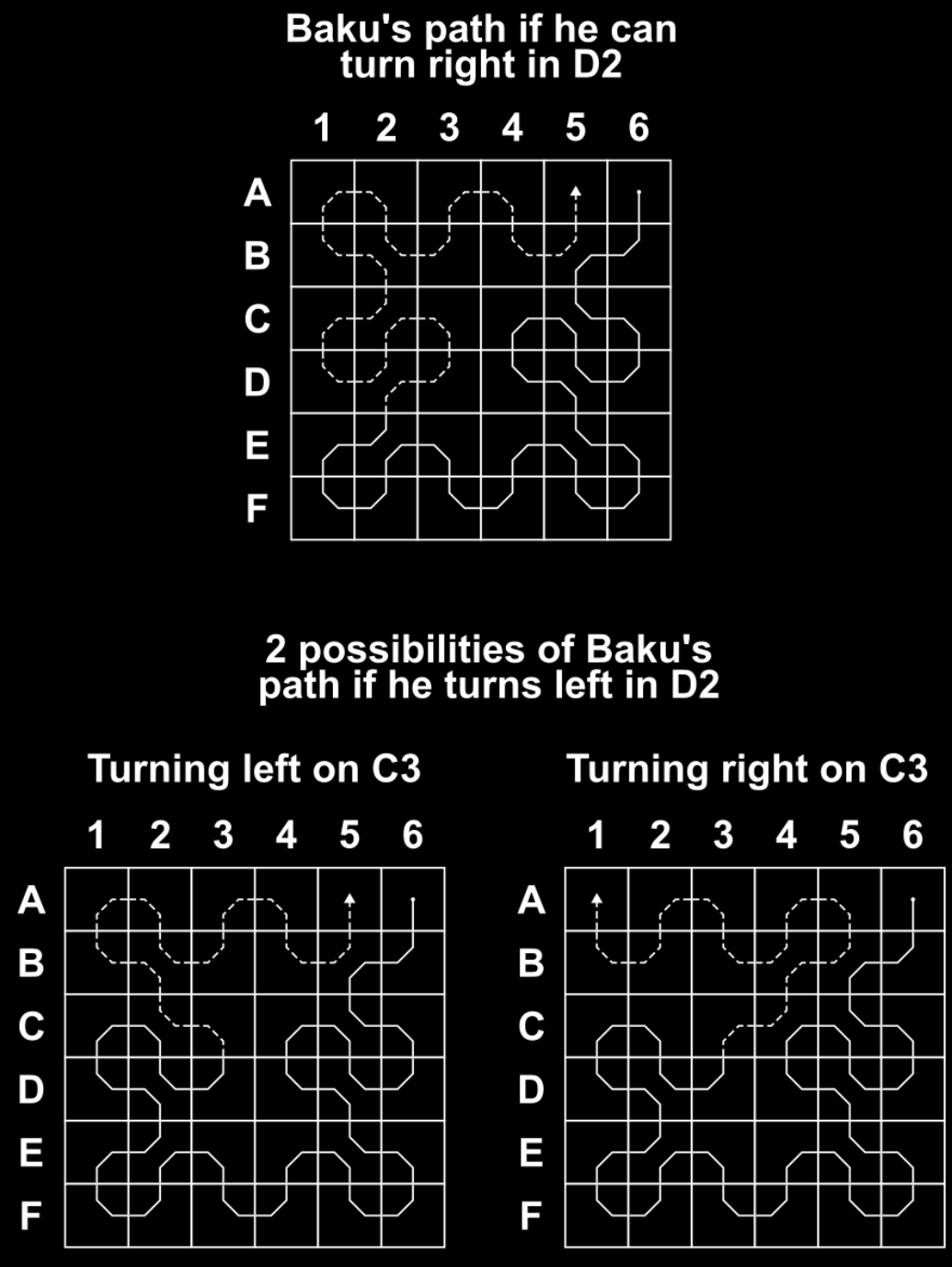


Figure 4: Baku's potential paths going forward from F3

Baku uses all these scattered bits of information to synthesize a coherent strategy.

The strategy starts by triggering the dead room trap on purpose. This would signal to Amako that both Baku and the dead room trap have been dealt with. And since Marco is resting in D4

with only 1 MP, all three things that could've potentially hindered Amako's path can no longer stop him from reaching the end of his route. Then, after Baku ends his turn, Amako will unhesitatingly move through the labyrinth and remove his ears from the pipes. Finally, since Amako is occupied with moving through the labyrinth, Baku gets the chance to send Morse code to Minowa without Amako interfering, telling him to move from B4 to C4, which he is able to do since he has already figured out the rest of Minowa's path. With this, Baku removes the final obstacle in his own path.

Since there was a trap that isn't in the rules and Kadokura guaranteed the non-existence of unexpected traps, his personality dictates that he would immediately rush in to save the weak victim who fell for the trap. Baku knows this is how things would unfold and will purposefully trigger the trap to lure Kadokura into the labyrinth. Baku will then convince Kadokura to open some doors for him while he opens other doors simultaneously to hide his MP. Amako can only monitor player movements by the sound they make when opening a door, with every door having a unique sound (and thus a unique color). If multiple doors are opened or closed simultaneously, the combined sounds would confuse Amako enough to where he can't discern whether the sound is Baku progressing through his labyrinth or the frantic movements of Kakerou staff in response to the trap springing. Therefore, Baku finds a perfect opportunity to hide his progression and his MP, and he would only need to do this masking to gain 2 MP for the strategy to work.

Baku will end his turn in D3 and wait for Amako to progress. The reason for stopping at D3 is because Amako will have to go through D3 and D4, and D4 is where Marco is resting in with 1 MP. Judging from Amako's route, the maximum MP he can gain going into D3 is 30. From the Morse communication between Amako and Minowa, Baku knows that Amako knows about Marco's existence in D4 with 1 MP. If Amako were to use all of his 30 MP in D3 against Baku, he would proceed from D3 with 0 MP. Entering D4 would give Amako 1 MP, the same amount as Marco. Then, both Amako and Marco would present 1 MP for a fair fight during their M-time, and Marco would turn Amako inside out. So, in his mind, Amako cannot use 30 MP against Baku in D3.

Amako also knows about Minowa only using 1 MP in his encounter with Baku. Then, assuming Baku used the minimum amount of 2 MP to win against Minowa, the maximum amount of MP Baku can amass coming into D3 from Amako's perspective is 28. Which means Amako can use 29 MP to win against Baku's 28 and preserve enough MP to win against Marco in D4 as well.

Amako does not know about the 2 additional masked MP Baku would gain from using Kadokura to open doors for him. Amako will use 29 MP thinking he has won, but Baku will use 30 MP and stop Amako in his tracks. And since Amako proceeding with his turn gives Baku the chance to redirect Minowa away from Baku's path, he can go directly to the end of his labyrinth.

Dead room trap

In Baku's next turn, he proceeds from F3 and goes through E3, E2, F2, F1, E1, D2, making his current MP 23. He successfully guessed turning left in D2 and moved through D1 and C1. However, upon entering C1, he is met with a calamity.

The dead room trap is a calamity set by Nanpou directed at the players of the game. As stated before, the rooms in this labyrinth are used as cisterns. The rooms are connected in such a way that when a flooded room is drained, the air of an adjacent room is also drained. So, without knowing the rules of the game beforehand, Nanpou flooded and drained C3, draining all the air from an adjacent room (figure 5). This "dead room" must be one that no player has entered and is adjacent to C3. Judging from all of the player's paths, the dead room must be C2.

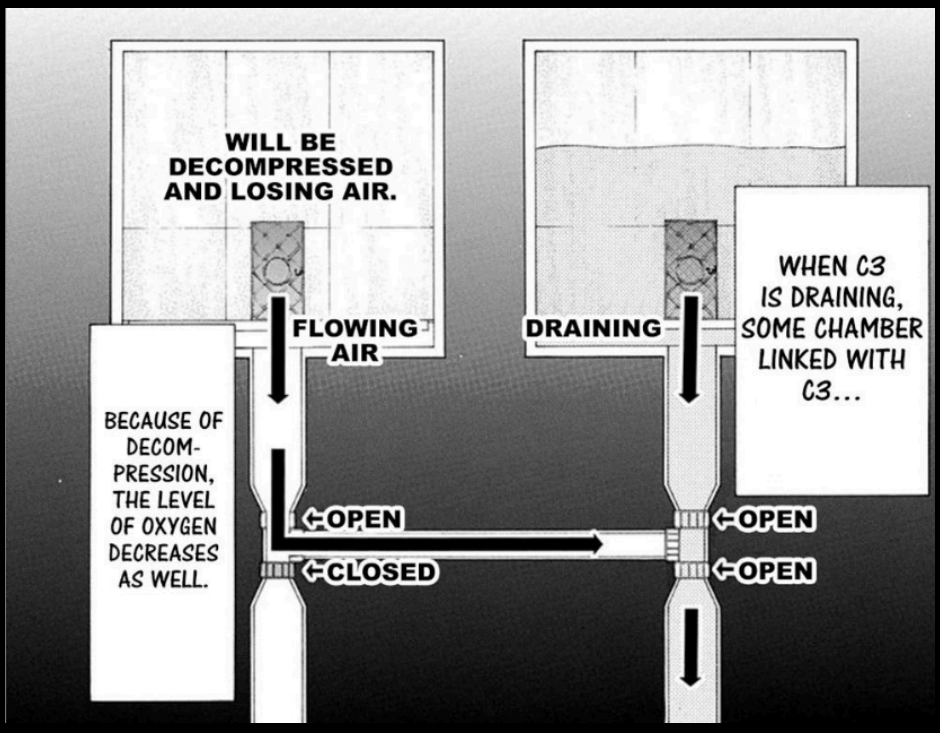


Figure 5: schematics of how each room is connected. Notice how one room draining would drain the air of an adjacent room

As a player enters C2, the air from the room they came from will rush into C2 and propel the player into the room with it. The air will equilibrate, and the oxygen level and air pressure within the two rooms will drop to about half the normal amounts at 12-13% and 0.5 atm respectively, a toxic environment for normal humans. In order to raise these figures back to a normal state, the player would have to open two doors. This would allow a little over three rooms' worth of air to fill in four rooms instead of one room filling two.

Since Baku was the first to enter C2, he was meant to succumb to the dead room trap. However, as stated before, he was able to anticipate that there was still a hidden obstacle on his path, that the location of the obstacle was C1-C3, and even the nature of the trap involving differences in air pressures of adjacent rooms. This was more than enough for him to evade the trap by setting an insurance. Baku used his stack of labyrinth printouts as an improvised doorstop to prevent the door connecting C1 and D1 from closing properly. Then, instead of one room's worth of air filling two, the air in both D1 and C1 will fill three rooms. Baku only needs to open one door to elevate air levels to regular values instead of the two doors he would've had to open had he not set the doorstop (see figure 6).

As predicted, Kadokura rushes into the labyrinth, thinking that he will save Baku. Instead, Baku gets him to open two doors. The first was the door between D3 and E3, the sound of which he used to mask his opening to C3. The second door is between C2 and C3 and, which he masked by opening the door between D3 and C3 again. Now, he has gained 2 more MP without Amako knowing, making his total 30 MP and his perceived total 28 MP to Amako.

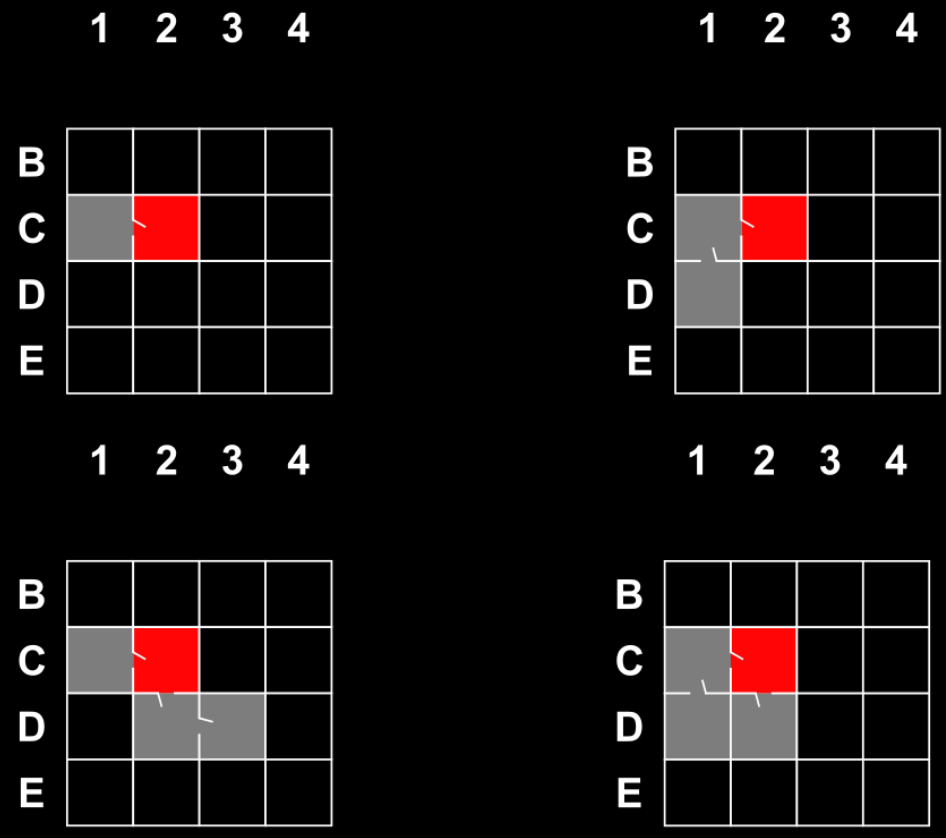


Figure 6: result of the dead room trap with and without the doorstop insurance. The left-hand side shows what would happen if he hadn't set the doorstop. One room of air would've filled two rooms, and Baku would've had to open two doors to re-establish normal levels. The right-hand side shows what actually happened. Because of the doorstop, two rooms filled three, and Baku only needed to open one door to raise air levels to normal amounts.

Amako vs Baku

Up until this point, Amako has been keeping track of every player's movements. The dead room trap must be in a room that no other player has visited. With the routes of all 3 players, Amako easily deduces that the trap must be in C1, C2, or C3. So when Baku enters C2 and it becomes Amako's turn shortly after that, Amako assumes that Baku has succumbed to the trap. Amako unhesitatingly progresses through his route as he thinks there is nothing left standing in his way. He eventually reached D3 with 30 MP and unexpectedly met Baku. The subsequent M-time soon follows.

Baku starts by naturally bringing up that he hasn't met Minowa yet. From Amako's perspective, he knows that Baku is lying as he has met Minowa before, and Amako also believes that Baku doesn't have the means to know that he knows Baku has met Minowa. If Baku wanted to win this M-time, he would've done the opposite and mentioned his meeting with Minowa to make Amako believe that he doesn't need to use too much MP. So, Baku's lie was meant to make Amako believe that Baku still had all of his 30 MP and make him use all of his own 30 MP in turn. But this would see Amako continuing to D4 with 1 MP and going up against Marco with 1 MP, where Marco would put belt to ass.

However, Amako knows that Baku has met Minowa before, so the highest amount of MP Baku can have is 28 MP. Amako can't use 30 MP because of Marco in D4, but if he used 29 MP instead, he can beat Baku's 28 and enter D4 with 2 MP, beating Marco's 1 MP. He settles on this course of action.

Amako briefly questions how Baku could've attained the information he needed to concoct this scheme. He settles on the possibility that Baku could have a man inside Kakerou helping him. With this, another possibility emerges. Amako realizes that the shirt Baku is wearing is not the same shirt he was wearing before the game started. True enough, Baku went to the bathroom to clean up after he started beating from Amako's assault. What if Baku had switched his shirt with a Kakerou employee's. This makes Baku's strange proposal retrospectively make sense. The reason why Baku proposed that Amako's party cannot "lay even a finger on Kakerou's clothes" is because he is technically and literally wearing Kakerou's clothing, which should prevent Amako from touching him. After Amako wins the M-time and starts beating on him, Baku would reveal this trap and argue for Amako's disqualification by technicality. Amako seeks clarification from referee Kadokura, and Kadokura ensures that such a trick will not be enforced in his game. Satisfied by seeing through Baku's final trick, Amako calmly awaits the results he expects.

But he could've never expected that Baku Madarame would be the victor of this M-time.

Baku used his full 30 MP, which included the 28 MP Amako thought he had and the additional masked 2 MP from Kadokura, to stop Amako in his tracks. We know that the strange proposal from Baku was purposeful misdirection if Amako ever questioned the shirt swap. Amako fell perfectly for the false proposal and never conceived of the possibility of a wire tap. Baku used the wiretap to listen in on the Kakerou black suits during the MP presentation to hear how many MP Amako would use, another layer of security. By whispering his MP use, he made Kakerou

staff feel the necessity to double check each player's MP by repeating their number out loud. Then, he asked for Amako to present his MP first, so he could hear it through the wire tap before presenting his own.

Since Baku has already sent Morse code through the pipes to reroute Minowa from B4 to C4, he can progress right through the labyrinth in his turn.

Labyrinth Finale

After Amako's fiasco, Marco retraces his steps and collapses in B5 as his heart stops. Minowa's turn is next. He follows the instructions he heard from the Morse code and moves to C4, out of the way for Baku. Baku moves through the rest of his route, but he stops at B5 to resuscitate Marco, missing his chance to win the game. By the order of players, it becomes Amako's turn again, but his turn is skipped after losing to Baku in their M-time. Marco is in no condition to continue with his turn, Kakerou escorts him out of the labyrinth. On Minowa's turn, he continues to Amako's room and kills him out of irrational rage. He then follows backwards to meet Baku in B5. They have the final MP showdown of the game. Baku easily wins by 1 MP again using his wire tap. Baku takes his turn again and exits the labyrinth. He is crowned the final victor of the game.

As a final metacommentary, due to the inconsistencies throughout the arc, a **proposed** timeline of development for the game that seeks to explain these contradictions is presented for readers who are interested (†††).

Minotaur's Labyrinth MP Trap Diagram

Additional Information

Testing Testing

Click this to return to the “How to read” (†††)

Baku Stopping in F4

This isn’t explicitly stated in the manga, but we know that this is the most likely course of events for a few reasons. Take note of Baku’s final route showcased in figure 7. Pay particular attention to the bottom right, where Baku enters E5 two times. First, it must be the case that Baku ends one of his turns after going through E5 the first time but before entering it the second time, which leaves E6, F6, and F5. This is because he will eventually meet Minowa during his second time entering E5 but he does not meet him during his first. Thus, Baku must have ended his turn after going through E5 so that Minowa can move into E5 for their encounter when Baku re-enters E5. Then, judging from the hints about the labyrinth, it is most likely the case that Baku got blocked when he tried to enter F4 from F5. (†††)

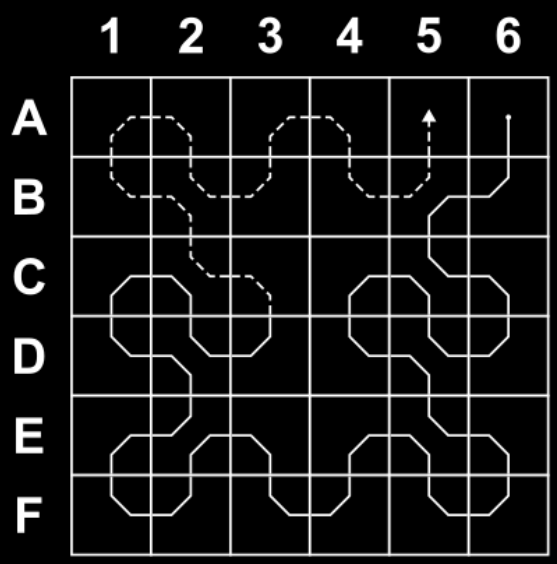


Figure 7: Baku’s final path. Pay attention to how he has to enter, exit, and re-enter E5 in the bottom right.

Baku’s Mind Reading Against Minowa

It is worth noting that Baku does not have the receiver for his listening device that he planted on the Kakerou black suit. He does use it on two occasions to secure M-time victories by 1 point later on. Since he also wins by 1 point in this instance with Minowa, some readers may attribute this win to his listening device. But recall that he hid his receiver in F3, a room he hasn't reached yet. So this win by 1 MP is a genuine mind reading feat. (†††)

Marco’s Movements after fighting Minowa

This is another instance that does not appear in the manga. The manga only mentions that Marco moves to D4 after spending all of his MP in C5 against Minowa. But this would leave Marco with 0 MP in D4 when we know for a fact that Marco must have 1 MP right after fighting Minowa and before Baku enters F3 so that he can hear about it in the recorded messages between Amako and Minowa. Marco having 1 MP will later go on to be the crucial factor that allows for Baku’s 29 MP trap to work on Amako, so this contradicts the fact that Marco should have 0 MP. Therefore, the interpretation where Marco returns to E6 to gain 1 MP and backtracks to D4 serves as a sort of compromise, since it doesn’t happen that way in the manga but it is the only way to resolve the contradiction with Marco’s MP. (†††)

Minowa Moving Towards B4

This is yet another instance of inconsistency within the story. The story leads you to believe that Amako stayed in A6 for the vast majority of the game, with the only exception being the four rooms he explored to allow Marco to pass through his corner. However, in order to get to B4, Minowa would have to go through A6 multiple times and fight for M-time with Amako, making it impossible for Amako to have 30 MP when he eventually meets Baku in D3. This means that Amako must have moved at least to A4, which gets him completely out of the way for Minowa to settle in B4. Once again, this interpretation goes against implications made in the story, but it also helps resolve glaring contradictions while not breaking the logic of the arc. (†††)

Proposed Timeline

At the risk of unintentionally sounding disrespectful, Toshio Sako has gone on interviews and mentioned that Minotaur's Labyrinth was the hardest arc for him to write. And while all the narrative threads tied together very well, one can see what he meant if one scrutinizes the arc under a heavy lens. Minotaur's Labyrinth is plagued with the occasional inconsistency and causational contradiction. Which is why a timeline of events is proposed. The timeline does not break or even change anything of import in the story. All of the key strategic beats remain the same under this interpretation. It is only there to potentially explain causational problems that arise from a literal reading of the manga. The most noticeable changes made by the timeline are marked in red. The explanations for those changes are found in the Additional Information section.

Proposed timeline:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/166x2_1u-JW4EzKs48nvCRmsPl7NntTKH/view?usp=sharing