Tran Tien Document

Disclaimer: pink = direct context from the story

Context: Cam Giai Ninh (a former chemistry student) was the crush of Trần Tiến (a chemistry PhD). After Cam Giai Ninh's husband was killed by corrupt officials due to a land dispute, she became overwhelmed with grief and rage. She created a TNT bomb and carried out a suicide bombing to take them down with her. After the corrupt officials were killed, their families sought revenge by attacking and abusing Cam Giai Ninh's family.

Knowing that he was terminally ill, Trần Tiến decided to return to his home country to complete the revenge and protect Cam Giai Ninh's family. Upon returning, he immediately met with Từ Tăng — a prosecutor who used to study at the same university as both Trần Tiến and Cam Giai Ninh, and also a close friend of Trần Tiến. Trần Tiến revealed his intention to commit murder to Từ Tăng. Upon hearing this, Từ Tăng was shocked and tried to persuade Trần Tiến to give up on the idea. When he realized he couldn't change Trần Tiến's mind, Từ Tăng became furious and severed their friendship.

The first case begins with Tran Tien kidnapping Jiang Xiaobing – the son of a corrupt official (Cam Gia Ninh) whom Tran Tien had already killed. After the successful kidnapping, Tran Tien tracked and waited for Wang Lecam (Jiang Xiaobing's mother) to be near a police station before calling to demand ransom.

Wang Lecam reported it to the police, but surprisingly, officer Lin Jie didn't believe the kidnapping was real. His reasons:

> "Think about it, does any real kidnapping go like this? That brat Jiang Xiaobing is a thug, good at fighting – who's stupid enough to kidnap someone like that? Demanding 3 million yuan right away? Insane. No real kidnappers start with such a ridiculous number. If someone wanted money, they'd go for richer families, big business owners, or target a girl – way easier. And the voice on the phone? Sounds like a clueless teen. I'd bet that brat staged the whole thing with his gang to scam his mom. And what kind of real kidnapper has a *middleman* who says the hostage isn't beside him, so the mother can't hear his voice? Clearly trying to avoid exposure."

Since the police didn't believe him, Tran Tien **cut off Jiang Xiaobing's ear**, boiled it, placed it in a cardboard box, and told them where to pick it up. (Tactic)

Now convinced, the police entered negotiations. Tran Tien always claimed to be a "middleman on behalf of *us*," to create the illusion he had accomplices. He also **only called for exactly 2 minutes** before hanging up and changing the SIM card, because he knew police could trace the location if the call lasted 5 minutes or more. (Knowledge)

During the negotiation, the police stalled, saying they couldn't gather the money so quickly and asked for 3 more days. Tran Tien agreed – but he also knew they'd use the time to locate him. (Anticipation, Negotiate)

When Vuong Cac Dong began tracing clues through security footage on An Lac Street (where Giang Tieu Binh was kidnapped), he saw Tran Tien (in disguise) giving the camera the middle finger. This made Vuong Cac Dong more certain that Tran Tien had accomplices, because he appeared to leave An Lac Street alone without the hostage. He also perceived the gesture as Tran Tien arrogantly mocking the police. But in reality, Tran Tien had already disguised himself (with platform shoes, costume, etc.) so that when police later searched for a suspect based on height and weight, he could evade detection.

→ Tactic, Misdirection, Anticipation

Three days later, Tran Tien called again to continue the negotiation. He easily anticipated that the police were still tracking his calls (**Anticipation**) and warned them that tracking was fine — but no police were to be present during the exchange.

Later, Vuong Le Cam requested to hear her son's voice because she feared he had already been killed. (In truth, this request was manipulated by Vuong Cac Dong, who suspected the ear had been cooked to hide the fact the hostage had died.)

Tran Tien agreed and allowed Vuong Le Cam to hear the boy's voice. Once the voice was confirmed, Vuong Cac Dong resumed negotiation. Tran Tien then announced the exchange location: Nam Ho Reservoir.

A police officer disguised as Vuong Le Cam's cousin accompanied her with the money. Tran Tien, aware of the trick, pretended not to notice — for his own later purpose.

At the location, Tran Tien instructed them to find a suitcase containing 30 aluminum foil sheets. He ordered them to wrap the cash in foil and place it back into the suitcase, warning not to use counterfeit money.

Vuong Le Cam, worried for her son's safety, insisted on using real money. Vuong Cac Dong, confident in the GPS tracker hidden in the money and afraid the kidnappers might kill the hostage if they found fake cash, agreed.

Once packed, Tran Tien ordered the suitcase to be thrown into the lake. Vuong Cac Dong was slightly surprised but complied, reassured by waterproof GPS inside.

However, after a while with no one appearing to retrieve the suitcase, Vuong Cac Dong became confused — the plan wasn't going as expected. Then Tran Tien called to cancel the negotiation, claiming that police were present.

Forced to retrieve the suitcase, they opened it — only to find all the stacks of money had turned into slippery, unrecognizable blobs.

After suffering an embarrassing failure, Vuong Cac Dong, enraged, decided that he would use **counterfeit money** instead of real cash for the exchange the next day. Although Tran Tien stated that the exchange location would remain unchanged, Vuong Cac Dong didn't believe it. Nevertheless, he ordered a **secret ambush** around the Nam Ho Reservoir.

> "Also, these farther locations need to be guarded too — in case the kidnapper repeats the tactic of having us throw the suitcase into the water. As long as we cover all areas, we'll be able to monitor the entire reservoir surface. Even if the kidnappers dive in to retrieve the ransom, they won't escape our surveillance.
> Tomorrow, have Vuong Le Cam continue carrying a GPS tracker. Even if the kidnappers unexpectedly change the exchange location, we'll be able to respond in time.
> Captain Lam, immediately deploy the team and request sniper backup. They'll take position tonight under the cover of darkness — not by road, but through the mountain paths around the lake. Watch carefully for anyone on the mountain. If anyone's seen during the night, just arrest first and ask questions later."

On the day of the exchange, Tran Tien ordered that Vuong Le Cam come alone with the money. He guided her to a **small rock** under which a suitcase was buried. She dug it out, opened it, and was instructed to reach into a **small hidden pouch** at the bottom for a letter with the next instruction.

As she reached inside, something **snapped** and injured her hand. Vuong Le Cam immediately became disoriented. The last thing she read was a note: **"Dead yet?"** — then she died.

Afterward, Tran Tien made **one final call** to direct Vuong Cac Dong to where the hostage's body was. It turned out:

- Tran Tien had **already killed the hostage on the day of the kidnapping.**
- The voice Vuong Le Cam heard had been **pre-recorded**.
- The **cooked ear** sent earlier was done intentionally to coagulate the blood and prevent forensic tests from confirming whether the hostage was dead or alive.

1. The Letter Trap That Killed Vuong Le Cam

> "This is a clip-style trap handmade by the criminal. It isn't complex, but very clever. Look — if you press directly on the metal sheet, the clamp won't close.
> The criminal placed the letter right next to a spring. When Vuong Le Cam reached into the pouch to retrieve the letter, the action of pulling the letter tugged the spring, causing the clamp to close.
> At that moment, **sharp needles** pierced through holes in the second metal plate, **clamping tightly** onto her hand and piercing her skin.
> These needles were attached to **shortened syringe tubes**, which were mounted to the metal plate using **flexible rubber stoppers**.

When the clamp shut, pressure was applied on the rubber stoppers, **injecting the contents** of the needle tubes into Vuong Le Cam's skin.

The killer had thought of everything:

- He knew the clamp wouldn't exert high force.
- He also knew the rubber created high resistance.
  To solve this, he **applied industrial lubricant** around the rubber, reducing friction.
  Clearly, he had conducted multiple trials to ensure the device would work flawlessly."

▸ Inside the needles was **pure nicotine**, self-extracted by Tran Tien.

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2. The Suitcase That Destroyed the Ransom Money

"We dismantled the suitcase and discovered a **false middle layer** inside the lid.
This layer contained **mesh compartments**, each holding **sodium metal (Na)** — an extremely reactive substance.
To prevent early reaction, the sodium was **coated with pure lime (calcium carbonate)** to block air and moisture.

Why lime?

- Lime doesn't react with sodium.
- Lime absorbs water very efficiently, shielding sodium from reacting prematurely.
- It also prevented air from entering and triggering an early explosion.

Once the suitcase was **thrown into the lake**:

1. Water seeped in.
2. The lime absorbed water → exposed sodium.
3. Sodium reacted with water → **sodium hydroxide + hydrogen gas**.
4. Hydrogen pushed the lime aside, **fully exposing sodium**, accelerating the reaction.
5. Massive heat was released, and the suitcase started **bubbling violently**, which the police noticed.
6. The generated **strong alkali** (NaOH) began dissolving the **aluminum foil** wrapping the money.

7. Exposed money was instantly **corroded** and **partially charred** from the heat.

This is why, when they retrieved the suitcase, all the money had disintegrated into mush."

Overall, Tran Tien had read the police's every move. Throughout the entire process, he forced them into a situation where they had no choice but to follow a single option:

"On the night of the incident, Jiang Xiaobing walked alone into An Le Street. At that time, there was no one else around. It's unclear how the killer administered the nicotine into Jiang Xiaobing's body, but he also turned on a voice recorder to capture Xiaobing's last words: "Ah… ah… what are you doing, don't… ah…"

Immediately, the toxin affected his nervous system. Before Jiang Xiaobing could even realize what was happening, he had already lost consciousness forever. After that, it's likely the killer transported Jiang Xiaobing by car, leaving An Le Street.

The next day, the killer called Wang Lecai, announcing that Jiang Xiaobing had been kidnapped. At that point, Jiang Xiaobing was already dead. His last words could only be used once, so they had to be deployed at a critical moment. That's why the killer pretended to be an intermediary and didn't let Wang Lecai speak to Jiang Xiaobing on the phone.

As a result, that fool Lin Jie suspected the kidnapping was staged and called the kidnapper claiming to be from the criminal investigation team, trying to persuade the kidnapper to surrender.

The killer realized the police had intervened and didn't believe it was a real kidnapping. But since he couldn't make Jiang Xiaobing come back to life and speak, he had no choice but to cut off an ear—already cooked—and send it to the police, making it impossible to determine whether it belonged to a living or dead person.

Although Wang Gedong suspected at that point that Jiang Xiaobing had been harmed, it was only speculation—there was no solid evidence. In a situation where nothing could be confirmed, even the most experienced criminal investigators would first have to ensure the hostage's safety.

Additionally, they had no information whatsoever about the kidnapper or his hideout. They couldn't recklessly assume that the next exchange was a trap and refuse to negotiate. Even if they had known Jiang Xiaobing was dead, without knowing the kidnapper's identity or location, the only way to catch him was to continue with the exchange.

In this incident, Wang Gedong believed he had not made any mistakes. Anyone else would have made the same choice. If they had refused to negotiate, and the kidnapper vanished into thin air, how could they have solved the case? The higher-ups, upon hearing the report, would certainly agree.

Next, the kidnapper showed a deep understanding of police psychology. He gave them three days to solve the case. During those three days, while organizing operations, Wang Gedong

still believed he had made no errors. They reviewed surveillance footage, questioned local residents, and investigated all relevant targets—everything that needed to be done was done. But the killer was too cunning and left no clues from start to finish. After three days of effort, they gained nothing.

When the deadline passed, the kidnapper chose the rocky beach near the Nanhu Reservoir as the exchange location. By then, he had already figured out that Wang Lecai's cousin was a police officer. Yet he didn't say anything and just went along with the plan as laid out by the police.

At that moment, they gave the order to use real money for the exchange—was that a mistake?

Wang Gedong thought about it for a long time and finally shook his head. If it were anyone else, they would also have ordered the use of real money.

First, the killer had played the recorded voice clip, convincing everyone that Jiang Xiaobing was still alive. No one suspected the short clip had been recorded in advance. From the perspective of protecting the hostage's life, they had to use real money.

Second, both Li and Wang Lecai had inspected the suitcase and found nothing suspicious. Plus, Li was armed. After throwing the suitcase into the lake, the distance between him and the suitcase was less than four meters. The suitcase contained 3 million yuan, weighing at least over 35 kilograms. Even if the kidnapper was a skilled swimmer, he couldn't carry a 35-kg case with police just four meters away. Moreover, the suitcase had a GPS tracker inside. If the kidnapper took the money, it would be suicide.

Third, the kidnapper had repeatedly warned against using counterfeit money, and after three fruitless days, Wang Lecai lost faith in the police. She didn't dare use fake money to deceive the kidnapper.

All these factors combined led to their final decision: to use real money to exchange with the kidnapper.

Regarding this, Wang Gedong still believed he did nothing wrong.

Even a seasoned criminal investigator had never encountered such a case—such tactics were unprecedented.

Despite meticulous planning and preparation, within just a few minutes, the police realized they had been deceived. The entire ransom was gone. The kidnapper justified it by saying he had warned Wang Lecai not to bring the police.

Up to that point, even after analyzing the kidnapper's behavior and clues, the police **still had no idea** that the **real goal was not money**—but to **kill Wang Lecai**.

Even after being tricked, did the police have any other choice? If they wanted to catch the killer, they still had to go through with the exchange.

The next day, snipers and officers were already in ambush around the rocky shore, fully in control of the situation. That's why they were confident enough to let Wang Lecai go alone to deliver the ransom.

This time, they wised up and used counterfeit money.

But at the last moment, the killer changed tactics again. He didn't show up—but within just three minutes, Wang Lecai was dead.

A brilliant con—flawless in every detail.

The result: **The entire Jiang family was wiped out**, half their wealth was gone, and no one knew who the killer was, how many were involved, or where they were.

Looking back at the entire operation, Wang Gedong knew: although they noticed several suspicious points, every action they took had no alternative. They had no choice but to follow the killer's elaborate trap step by step, falling deeper into it.

Even with such tight security, the kidnapper still managed to kill Wang Lecai."

=> Anticipation, Fabrication, Misdirection, Creativity, Disguise Intention, Tactic, Knowledge Application, Application/Linear Thinking, VSI, Setting Trap, Planning

While Wang Gedong was investigating the previous case, Trần Tiến proceeded with preparations for the second case:

Trần Tiến walked slowly step by step, making a round around the Tân Giang residential area.

This is a fairly large residential area with over a thousand households; to the south are several multi-story buildings, in the middle is a villa area, and to the north are smaller high-rise buildings with elevators. There are gates on all four sides—east, west, south, and north. Although each gate has a security guard post, after observing, he found that apart from checking whether motor vehicles entering had permits, the security guards did not ask or pay attention to people coming and going, bicycles, or electric bikes.

This was very good!

Lý Cương's house was located in this Tân Giang residential area. This area was built over ten years ago, and while its architectural style was somewhat outdated now, ten years ago it was the most high-end residential area in the county.

Trần Tiến only knew that Lý Cương's house was in the villa area of this residential district, but he was not clear exactly which house, as he had never entered this residential area before.

He stood outside the residential area, carefully observing everything once again. Each entrance gate was equipped with surveillance cameras. It was not yet time for him to reveal himself. After thinking for a while, he walked to a parking lot a few turns away from the residential area and got into his Mercedes.

The car entered the eastern gate of the residential area, and the security guard stopped it. Seeing it was a Mercedes, the guard showed a very respectful attitude: "May I ask, are you a resident here?"

Trần Tiến shook his head: "No, I'm here to visit a friend, just for a short while and then I'll

leave.”
The guard didn’t ask further because parking was easy during the day and the vehicle management for outsiders was rather lax. Even if the guard had asked who the friend was, Trần Tiến could have said any name. The residential area had thousands of people, with many renters, so the guards couldn’t remember the names of all homeowners.
The Mercedes easily entered the residential area. Trần Tiến drove straight to the villa area, and after parking, he looked carefully all around. Near the parking spot were several surveillance cameras, which were obviously for preventing car theft. On the internal roads of the residential area, there were only a few cameras, so if he wanted to go around to avoid those cameras, it would not require much effort.

Trần Tiến was very satisfied. He clasped his hands behind his back and leisurely walked around the villa area, quietly observing the surroundings.
There were not many villas, a total of just over ten houses. The large gates were all made in a uniform style, all iron fences. He looked into the yards of each house quickly and soon noticed that on an outermost villa to the west, there was an Audi with the license plate that indeed belonged to Lý Cương.

On the day of the second crime, Trần Tiến decided to let his "accomplice" carry out the act (remember this detail). When Lý Khởi Minh (the victim) returned to his apartment, he was immediately sprayed in the face with streams of hydrogen cyanide vapor. He instinctively inhaled a mouthful and died. Right after Lý Cương died, Trần Tiến pretended to ring the doorbell to call out his mother, carried her out, and then used a similar method to kill her. Here, Trần Tiến hung both bottles on the iron gate of Lý Cương’s house, at about head height. Thus, one bottle faced outward from the iron gate, and the other faced inward. When Lý Khởi Minh stood outside the gate, the perpetrator hid at a distance and operated a remote control device to press the switch of the outside bottle. When Diêu Tố Nguyệt stood inside the gate,

This is how Trần Tiến modified the poison sprayer:
Hydrogen cyanide is highly corrosive, but this type of PE plastic bottle can contain it. The perpetrator made two bottles, both filled with hydrogen cyanide, tied together. The bottle caps were modified, with batteries, a motor, and a remote control device attached outside the bottles. This motor and remote control device were probably taken from a toy car or remote-controlled airplane. The perpetrator hung both bottles on the iron gate of Lý Cương’s house at about head height.

Especially in this act, Trần Tiến left the residential area at 7:18 AM and then returned to commit the crime. On his way out, Trần Tiến even deliberately let the camera record him instead of avoiding it as usual (an important detail).

=> Field Navigation, Setting Trap, Info Gathering, Anticipation, Concealment, Knowledge Application, Planning, Fabrication, Bluffing?, Linear Thinking

While the police continued investigating, Trần Tiến began preparations for the third case, which would be the most difficult.
"Trần Tiến once again made a round around the heavily guarded senior official residential

area.

From the outside, it was really hard to find an opportunity to sneak in. The guards at the gate strictly controlled people and vehicles entering and exiting. The entire area was surrounded by high walls, and even famous athletes couldn't climb over, let alone someone with poor physical condition like him.

To get inside, one could only enter through the main gate. But the guards at the main gate were very vigilant, with almost no chance to exploit. What to do?

Should he deal with Trương Hồng Ba first, then Phạm Trường Căn?

Trần Tiến hesitated for a long time but finally gave up that thought. He decided to stick to the plan.

But how to scout?

He looked around; this area was on the outskirts of the county, with no tall buildings nearby to get a bird's-eye view of the residential area. Then he looked at a mountain not far away. This was the nearest mountain, high enough to clearly see the whole residential area from the top, but the distance was too far and would require binoculars. Ordinary binoculars could not see clearly at a range of one or two kilometers.

After many days of observation, Trần Tiến finally mastered the security routines of the Đế Cảnh Uyển residential area, where Phạm Trường Căn lived.

This high-ranking official residential area had 24/7 security, even at night. Although the guards stayed in the guard room, the gate lights were bright, there was a barrier at the gate, and very few people entered or exited. Trying to sneak in at night was very risky; if caught, all efforts would be wasted.

But after all, this was not Zhongnanhai, just a county-level official area. No matter how strict the security, there would always be loopholes.

That morning, Trần Tiến discovered such a loophole.

Every day from 5 to 8 AM, some people delivered milk and newspapers into the residential area, and guards did not question them. All newspaper deliverers wore mail uniforms and had a green newspaper bag on the back of their electric bikes. Milk deliverers had milk crates on the back of their bikes.

Only one thing to consider: these deliverers came and went every day. If one day a new face came to deliver milk, would it attract attention?

Using military binoculars, Trần Tiến understood the entire situation inside Đế Cảnh Uyển.

Probably to protect the privacy of the leaders, there were no surveillance cameras inside the residential area, only one camera at the gate.

Tracking Phạm Trường Căn's Toyota also helped Trần Tiến identify the exact location of Phạm's house in the residential area. He drew all information to scale and understood the surroundings well.

Also, that day he got a very useful clue: Phạm Trường Căn's house had milk delivery. Around 6 AM, through the telescope, he saw a milk deliverer stop in front of Phạm's house. The milk crate had the logo of Quang Minh milk company, but he could not tell the exact product.

This was not a big obstacle. He quickly imagined Phạm Trường Căn and his wife dying from poisoning by milk. He smiled slightly. Doing this was not difficult; after multiple reconnaissance, he knew that despite the strict security at Đế Cảnh Uyển, guards allowed milk and mail delivery directly into the area without registration. He was not sure if guards knew the faces of these deliverers or only looked at their delivery equipment on the bikes. This needed to be tested personally once.

Now, what poison to use?

Nicotine was definitely not feasible anymore; nicotine in milk would taste bitter and only a fool would drink it.

What about cyanide? Most cyanides have a smell, usually almond scent, but some types are odorless and effective. He thought again, this was not suitable either.

His goal was to kill both Phạm Trường Căn and his wife, but there were some difficulties.

First, he didn't know who drank the milk, the husband, the wife, or both. He could check the milk crates inside the residential area.

Second, even if both drank milk, they might not drink it at the same time. Cyanide acts very quickly; if the dose was enough to kill, it would take effect in minutes. If one person drank first and died, the other would notice and not continue drinking. If the husband drank first, no problem, but if the wife died and he survived, it would be hard to kill him later.

Hmm, the best solution was to use a poison dose that could be lethal but not act immediately. The answer came to his mind: arsenic trioxide, also called asadin.

That was simple and much easier than extracting nicotine or producing cyanide. Just refine arsenic pentoxide (As2O5) from orpiment, then heat it into arsenic trioxide (As2O3), and finally purify it. Orpiment was not a controlled substance, so it was easy to obtain."

=> Field Navigation, Analysis, Risk Assessment, Prediction, Information Gathering, Analytical/Associative/Divergent/Convergent Thinking

During the time Trần Tiến was gathering information for the third crime, he met again with Từ Tăng. Từ Tăng had many times thought about reporting Trần Tiến, but partly out of loyalty and mostly out of fear that if he didn't report early, it would cause serious consequences, or worse, he might be accused of being an accomplice to Trần Tiến. So in the end, he dared not report. Từ Tăng came to see Trần Tiến to persuade him to finish the crime and then return to America, but of course, Trần Tiến didn't listen. On the contrary, Trần Tiến persuaded Từ Tăng to tell the police that: "You should remember the story about Cam Giai Ninh during college. When we were in college, there was a person named Ngô Cương in our class who pursued her for three years, his behavior was very obsessive, and even after graduation, he still stalked her. You must have heard me mention this before. Besides, Cam Giai Ninh's true lover in college was Lưu Chí Dũng, who was the class president of my class."

Từ Tăng objected, reasoning that Trần Tiến wanted to confuse the police's investigation and shift the blame onto classmates. However, Trần Tiến knew clearly that although these two clues would temporarily mislead the police investigation direction, they would not take long to clarify. He mainly said this so that Từ Tăng could gain the trust of the police because: After telling these two clues, the most important thing was that Từ Tăng must find a way to reveal to Vương Các Đông the information that after graduation and moving to Kim county, he had a time when he pursued Cam Giai Ninh and succeeded, but shortly after, he realized she did not support his career much, so he proposed to break up.

Although half-doubting, in the end, Từ Tăng decided to follow Trần Tiến's words.

In the next meeting, Từ Tăng wondered why Trần Tiến was eating porridge. Trần Tiến answered it was because he had just had a tooth implanted (an important detail). Từ Tăng again tried to persuade Trần Tiến to return to the country, but after Trần Tiến showed his medical records, Từ Tăng understood that Trần Tiến was about to die and had no intention of harming him. Trần Tiến's brain tumor was also a kind of insurance because the police would not dare to interrogate him harshly for fear that he might die unexpectedly.

Understanding this, Từ Tăng grasped his friend's true intentions and decided not to bother him anymore. Trần Tiến also informed his friend that he would send him a package and advised Từ Tăng not to open it. Inside the package was a pack of cigars. The upper layer of the cigar pack was ordinary tobacco, but underneath was a cigar filled with TNT explosives (knowledge). Trần Tiến sent this to Từ Tăng so that later, if the police suspected Từ Tăng, this package would serve as an alibi evidence for him.

=> Preparation Process for the Final Plan

After resolving the issue with Từ Tăng, Trần Tiến also completed his reconnaissance steps at the residential area of Phạm Trường Căn. Through multiple checks, Trần Tiến confirmed that the milk delivery worker would not be stopped by the security guards. He began his plan by disguising himself and renting a room in a nearby hotel using a fake ID (important detail). The next morning, following his plan, Trần Tiến impersonated the milk delivery worker, swapped the real milk crate with one containing poison, and fatally poisoned Phạm Trường Căn and his wife.

Trần Tiến's detailed calculations were as follows:

1. **First**, the key to the real milk crate was kept inside the house. If the perpetrator wanted to poison the real milk, the opening on the crate was too narrow—only enough to see what kind of milk was inside. It would be extremely difficult to insert a tool to inject poison into the bottles.

2. **Second**, even if a flexible tool could be used to inject poison into the sealed milk bottles, the puncture hole left on the bottle cap might alert Phạm Trường Căn—who was, after all, a police officer.

3. **Third**, the perpetrator could not simply break the lock to access the real crate, as damaging the lock would easily make the owner suspicious. Therefore, the killer opted to replace the entire crate instead.

4. **Fourth**, the perpetrator had to wait until the real milk delivery worker left before acting. If the fake crate had been placed too early, the real delivery worker would have noticed the key didn't work and would naturally report it to the homeowner.

5. **Fifth**, the killer used super glue to fix the crate to the wall instead of screws like the real crate. This was because removing a glued crate would be silent, whereas hammering screws would produce noise that could awaken residents in the housing complex.

6. **Sixth**, in terms of timing, the perpetrator had clearly been watching from nearby. The moment the real milkman left, he immediately took action. If he had waited too long, the Phạm family might have already brought the milk inside and drunk it—rendering all efforts futile.

=> Risk Assessment, Setting Trap, Method

This latest crime caused a shockwave due to the series of murders, drawing intense public attention. As a result, Captain Vương Các Đông's team received more resources to support the investigation. This time, Trần Tiến had finally left behind a clue.

The **milk canister** Trần Tiến used did **not belong to any dairy company**. This strongly indicated that the canister had been **custom-made**, as the intricately designed **metal container** was too sophisticated for a killer to craft on his own.

At the same time, the investigation team went to a **mountain near Phạm Trường Căn's house**, suspecting it may have been a **lookout point** used by the murderer. From their inquiry, they obtained a **description of Trần Tiến's appearance**:

> "A fat man, dark-skinned, round face, short, around 1.65 meters tall."

The investigation into the milk canister also yielded excellent results — they **traced the shop** where Trần Tiến had it made.

From the **discrepancy in height**, Captain Vương finally **saw through the height illusion** Trần Tiến had orchestrated from the start. The team then shifted their focus to **suspects approximately 1.65 meters tall**.

Additionally, they found **an image of Trần Tiến inside a Mercedes**, which — naturally — was **another detail he deliberately allowed to be exposed**, all for some **larger purpose**.

With that, **Trần Tiến was officially identified and became the target of an intense manhunt**.

Realizing the police had tracked him down **exactly as he had predicted**, Trần Tiến **disguised himself** once more, using a **fake national ID** to pose as a **court officer**. He used this identity to gain access to **Trương Hồng Ba**, then **assassinated him**.

After the assassination, Trần Tiến **voluntarily turned himself in** and was brought in for interrogation. He **immediately spoke about his brain tumor**, prompting the authorities to **avoid aggressive interrogation** to prevent him from dying before trial. When asked about accomplices, he flatly denied having any and explained his methods:

> “Director Vương, do you recall the terrain around An Lạc Street?”
>
> “Don’t waste words. One side is the river, the other side is buildings. No other way in or out.”
>
> “What about behind the housing complex?”
>
> Vương Các Đông turned to Lâm Kiệt. “What’s behind the buildings?”
>
> Lâm Kiệt recalled, “Seems like… a public green area?”

Trần Tiến confirmed: “Exactly. It used to be a small park, half of it was later demolished. Now it’s a dumping ground, no one usually goes there. That’s where I dumped Giang Tiểu Bình’s body.”

Vương Các Đông was stunned. He had believed the body had been transported elsewhere. Trần Tiến had **disposed of it behind the building via a stairwell**—a move he had not anticipated.

“Why dump the body that way?” Vương asked.

“Killing someone is hard,” said Trần Tiến. “You have to think through every detail. I first had to avoid security cameras. Before the crime, I conducted surveillance. I tailed Giang Tiểu Bình for many days, mapping out his routes home from school. I considered multiple plans. An Lạc Street was one of his usual paths. I had to understand the terrain in order to plan the final phase. If he had taken another route that night, I would’ve adjusted accordingly—and avoided cameras.”

Lâm Kiệt asked, “Then why did you keep referring to yourself as ‘we’ on the phone?”

Trần Tiến gave him a look of disdain.

“He was already dead. I only had one recording of him speaking. To avoid suspicion, I posed as a middleman and used ‘we’ so you’d think he wasn’t with me. Otherwise, if I never let you speak to the hostage, wouldn't that be suspicious?”

Vương challenged: “Then why appear on camera and flip us off? Was that to taunt the police?”

“Partly. I figured you’d never catch me. But I also had a bigger goal: I wore a mask, so you couldn’t see my face. I knew you’d rely on height and body shape. That’s why I wore hidden height-increasing shoes. Did that throw off your investigation?”

Indeed it did. Vương sighed. The misleading height made them focus on suspects around 165 cm tall—costing them valuable time.

Switching topics, he asked about the **cyanide gas attack** on Lý Cương’s family.

“Did you build the hydrogen cyanide device?”

“Of course. The principle is simple. I studied chemistry and have some crafting skills. The remote was from a toy car—no circuit knowledge needed.”

“But we saw you leave the complex before Lý Khởi Minh returned. Who triggered it remotely?”

“Still me.”

> “You mean you triggered it from outside?”
>
> “No, I hid behind a tree nearby.”
>
> “But you left the complex…”
>
> “And came back. The security doesn’t check pedestrians or e-bikes. I left, went home to take my medicine—my illness flared up—and came back on an electric bike.”

Vương: “Why return?”

> “My illness. I take medicine every 3–4 hours. That night I ran out. Had to go back and get it.”
>
> “Why walk the first time, but bike the second?”
>
> “To save time. I knew Lý Khởi Minh only returned on weekends. I couldn’t miss the opportunity.”
>
> “Why stand in front of the camera again after the second crime?”
>
> “To make sure you knew it was me. Also, I was worried the An Lạc camera didn’t show my height clearly due to poor lighting. The residential area camera was brighter—so I gave you another shot.”

Regarding the third case, he **posed as a milk delivery worker**.

> “But that man looked slimmer than you.”
>
> “That was me. Maybe I wore tighter clothes. It snowed that day.”

There was no evidence to contradict this; the face wasn’t visible in the footage.

=> Method, Persuasion, Deduction, Fabrication, Concealment, VSI

After searching Trần Tiến's house, Captain Vương Các Đông (VCĐ) discovered that Trần Tiến had burned several personal belongings, such as **two toothbrushes, some tea cups, pillows, blanket covers, bed sheets, face towels, and several pairs of socks**. VCĐ became suspicious of a possible accomplice, thinking that perhaps Trần Tiến had deliberately destroyed these items to **cover up for someone else**.

Trần Tiến then **explained** that he had planned to **destroy his own DNA**, kill someone who looked like him, burn the body, and use that to escape prosecution. VCĐ **temporarily accepted** this logic and shifted focus to ask **why Trần Tiến didn’t go through with the plan and instead turned himself in**. Trần Tiến responded:

> "I have already killed enough people, and I don’t have much time left to live, so I decided to turn myself in."

VCĐ then asked about his **motive**, and Trần Tiến answered that he was **the ex-boyfriend of Cam Giai Ninh**. VCĐ found this hard to believe due to Trần Tiến's **unattractive appearance**. Trần Tiến clarified that he had only dated Cam Giai Ninh briefly during a **period when she was heartbroken after a breakup**, and **emotionally vulnerable**, she had accepted his confession on impulse.

He went on to say:

> "After graduating from university, even though I was in the U.S., I never stopped thinking about her. When I learned she got married, I was happy for her. When I heard she had a child, I was joyful as if I were the father.
> But who could've known she would one day lose her husband and her home?
> When I found out Hà Kiến Sinh had died, I wanted to return to China to visit and comfort her. But before I could even get back, everything had already happened.
> Tell me — how could I not hate? I was so angry I trembled and collapsed. After being taken to the hospital, I was diagnosed with **a brain tumor**, already in the **advanced stage**.
> The doctor said it might be related to my long-term chemical research work — constantly exposed to toxic substances. You can tell just by looking at me — the damage built up day after day until it finally formed a tumor.
> By the time it was found, it was too late. Treatment options were limited. The doctor privately advised me to spend my remaining time however I wished.

Did you know? After learning I only had six months to a year to live, I was completely broken for a whole week, stuck in my house, hopeless.
But then, I came to realize — the greatest hope I ever had was to see the woman I love live happily. Now she was gone.
And my life was counting down anyway. So why not use that time to **finish what she couldn't do herself**?
Luckily, the tumor isn't in the brain's outer cortex, or I wouldn't have been able to think clearly enough to plan these crimes. It only affects the autonomic nerves for now.
I'm on continuous medication. That's how I managed to successfully carry out these murders."

After checking this statement with Trần Tiến's former classmates, they were all quite surprised and **didn't recall any special relationship** between him and Cam Giai Ninh. Some only vaguely remembered that Cam once **gave Trần Tiến a letter**.

At this point, VCĐ chose to **accept Trần Tiến's testimony**.

=> Persuasion, Emotional Engagement, Deduction?, Fabrication

When Trần Tiến's house was searched further, the forensics team discovered that he had also manufactured **potassium cyanide** (knowledge-level chemistry) and **30 grams of TNT**. However, based on **his handwritten purchase logs** and the **remaining ingredients**, it was estimated that he had actually produced **at least 100 grams of TNT**, with the rest unaccounted for.

Captain Vương Các Đông (VCĐ) immediately returned to interrogate Trần Tiến. At first, Trần Tiến **lied**, saying it was the result of a failed experiment. But after more intense questioning, he **admitted** that the missing explosives had been planted **at Từ Tăng's place**.

He explained that he **despised Từ Tăng** for **not valuing Cam Giai Ninh**—for leaving her over money, for not being there to comfort her after Hà Kiến Sinh's death, and for being emotionally absent. Trần Tiến claimed that he had **hidden the TNT in the cigar box**, specifically **in the layer under the cigars**. However, it appeared that **Từ Tăng had thrown the cigars away**, so the bomb was never triggered.

This action **completely cleared Từ Tăng of suspicion** in VCĐ's eyes, **diverting attention away from him**.

As for the **potassium cyanide**, Trần Tiến explained that the poison **acted too quickly**. If **either** of the Phạm Trường Căn couple had consumed the poisoned milk and died instantly, the **other** would have immediately escaped. That's why he later **switched to using arsenic trioxide**, which was slower-acting and more subtle.

=> Misdirection, Prediction, Tactics

The last important information the police found in Trần Tiến's house was psychological counseling notes showing that he had homosexual tendencies (important information). Trần Tiến explained that it was because he loved Cam Giai Ninh so much and had no interest in other girls, so his psychology became a bit strange. In the end, the police could only do a few final verification steps, such as taking out the voice changer device found in his house, asking Trần Tiến to repeat the previous statements, and after comparing with previously recorded voice, confirming that the person on the phone was indeed Trần Tiến.

Besides that, Vương Các Đông also took the surveillance footage from the Lý Cương house case and asked Trần Tiến to identify which electric bike rider was him. Trần Tiến quickly pointed it out. After cross-checking, that electric bike was indeed the criminal's bike found by the police in the residential area, also the bike Trần Tiến used to deliver milk when killing the couple Phạm Trường Căn.

The only point was that the person riding that electric bike always kept his head down, so no surveillance camera captured his facial features. The rider's figure looked very similar to the milk delivery worker on the day of Phạm Trường Căn's murder, but appeared much thinner than Trần Tiến's real figure. However, Trần Tiến insisted it was him, saying it was just due to the clothes he wore at that time.

The police could not find any reason or evidence to deny this claim.

Vương Các Đông even used a lie detector device, took Trần Tiến's testimony again. When he answered, the lie detector mostly showed normal results, with occasional fluctuations. But machines are machines—whether the person tells the truth but feels tense, the machine might indicate false. Conversely, if someone lies calmly and confidently, even believing their own lies, the machine may register them as truthful.

At this point, everything was too clear, just waiting for Trần Tiến's court hearing. During the trial, when the court asked the lawyer representing Trần Tiến if he had any questions about the prosecution's evidence, the lawyer said he fully agreed. Then, Trần Tiến stood up and spoke. He declared something completely opposite to what he had said before: he said he had an accomplice.

Everyone present was shocked, their faces showing surprise. Vương Các Đông was startled—why… why was the accomplice issue still there?

No one stopped him; everyone wanted to know what he would say. The judge was also stunned in disbelief.

Trần Tiến continued: "After the special task force arrested me, they also suspected I had an accomplice, but based on my testimony and other evidence, they were fooled and believed I acted alone without accomplices. The truth is, now I can say, I have a partner."

The eyes of the attending leaders turned to Vương Các Đông, whose expression was very awkward and embarrassed.

At this moment, it was as if Trần Tiến spoke for Vương Các Đông: "But you can't blame the task force. I think they were very professional. You can only blame me for protecting my friend too well."

"In the prosecutor's documents, it seems there's a missing section. I have a psychological treatment record stating I have homosexual tendencies. Perhaps the prosecution thought it was irrelevant to the case and did not hand it over, right?"

The attending leaders started whispering among themselves. Many looked at Vương Các Đông, whose expression clearly indicated this was true.

Actually, I don't just have homosexual tendencies—I admit I am truly homosexual. Think about it: how can a homosexual person fall in love with Cam Giai Ninh and commit crimes for her?"

That sentence from Trần Tiến was like a grenade thrown into a lake, suddenly exploding.

The accused's motive for the crime suddenly changed with that statement!

"Maybe when I was young, because of my ugly appearance and low self-esteem, I didn't dare interact with girls. When I discovered my tendencies, at least I was already in college. You can investigate my friends—ask if I had contact with girls during college? No. You can also check my working environment in the US—if I had girlfriends in recent years? No. Why? Because I simply could not accept girls."

"So, when I told the task force that Cam Giai Ninh was my girlfriend for a short time, that was a lie. When I made up that story, I felt disgusted myself, because I really can't imagine being with a girl—it would make me nauseous. If you don't believe me, you can check my anus."

"About the crime process, I was the one who planned everything and prepared, but the final killing actions were half done by me, half by my friend."

The first time killing Giang Tiểu Bình, I did it personally because my friend was sitting in the car and had no chance to act. The prosecution's documents say I followed Giang Tiểu Bình to An Lạc Street, waited for a chance to use a tranquilizer gun to inject nicotine into his neck, then took him to the nearby residential building, threw him out the back window from the stairwell, then drove the car around and took the body away. I also took the task force to the crime scene, and the prosecutor provided photos. But that was completely false.

The truth is after killing Giang Tiểu Bình, I hid his body in a corner nearby, covered it, and my friend drove the car in to take the body away. Think about it: I planned everything carefully, why would I throw the body out the back of the building's stairwell? What if someone was there? Wouldn't that be a big risk for me? The safest way: I wouldn't kill Giang Tiểu Bình on a street with cameras at both ends like An Lạc Street.

Another way: I bought three cars, parked them each day along three routes Giang Tiểu Bình might take home. Since these cars rotated parking daily, it wouldn't attract attention. Then I killed Giang Tiểu Bình and only took his body away on the second or third day. How would the police trace the cars? This is much safer than dumping the body behind the building.

People listening whispered. Indeed, according to police investigation, if I used this method and chose a later time to move the body, it would be very discreet, and police would have no clues. But in the prosecution's documents, I used a riskier, more foolish method.

"When killing Diêu Tố Nguyệt and Lý Khởi Minh, the electric bike rider looked like me, right? The task force suspected it before, but I insisted it was me, maybe because it was dark, riding, clothes... so you believed me."

"When killing the couple Phạm Trường Căn, the person who scouted several times before, you recognized me. But on the last early morning, did that rider's figure look like the previous one? Yes, that person was my friend, not me."

"If you don't believe me, check one thing. If I'm not mistaken, Phạm Trường Căn's couple died on December 22. Those days, I was not home because of a chemical experiment with a toxic leak, so I rented a room at Phổ Giang Hotel, room 806. Near my room, there was a surveillance camera on the corridor, which must have recorded me entering and exiting the room on December 21 and 22. If you cross-check, you'll find I wasn't there committing the crime. So I couldn't be the electric bike rider."

A loud "bang" sounded, Vương Các Đông's heart was shattered by a powerful hit. At the crime time, he did not leave the room, so the rider must be his accomplice!

Trần Tiến deceived himself and the whole investigation team. Now he revealed this to disgrace the task force? Vương Các Đông clenched his teeth, trembling with rage.

Trần Tiến continued: "After the police searched my house, they found a metal box containing personal items like a toothbrush and towel that had been burned, which the prosecutor mentioned and provided photos for. The task force found my hair in that box for DNA testing, fortunately it was mine. My friend's hair was probably all burned or decomposed because I poured dilute sulfuric acid on it. I believe even dead skin cells couldn't be traced by police.

Also, my friend only stayed at my house a few days, so it's impossible to find his hair on the floor."

He smiled: "You might think I'm cold-blooded to find someone who looks like me to kill and fake suicide to avoid responsibility. Even if I wanted to do that, I know it's not easy because you'd find my hair on the floor or on many clothes, even sweat on shoes can be DNA tested. Would I risk creating a fake case like that?"

Everyone in the courtroom carefully analyzed his words and agreed they made sense. If the murderer wanted to commit suicide to avoid punishment, DNA evidence would be carefully checked. Even if the floor was cleaned, hair could never be fully removed.

"But luckily, my friend only stayed a few days, and I cleaned all his stuff. You couldn't investigate him."

Vương Các Đông covered his face with his hands, unwilling to hear more. Every sentence from Trần Tiến was like a hundred slaps. He felt ashamed and furious but had no one to vent on.

"The time I planned to kill Từ Tăng..."

Từ Tăng opened his eyes wide.

"If I really wanted to kill Từ Tăng, why would I put the TNT cigars at the bottom layer? I heard he only smoked one because he didn't like the taste and didn't continue. If the whole box contained TNT cigars, even if he only tried one, he would have died. Why did I put real cigars on top and TNT ones underneath?"

He paused, then smiled mysteriously: "Because I didn't want to kill him."

His smile was terrifying.

He continued: "I still consider Từ Tăng a friend, although we rarely contact. I don't want to kill him but had to, because of my friend's orders."

"This case's motive is very complex. My friend is a man, not homosexual but once loved Cam Giai Ninh without return. She also gave him many difficulties."

Trần Tiến looked sad and moved his eyes around the courtroom, then said: "I also love my friend very much. I sacrificed myself for him."

He used concrete argument for his interpretation

If he didn't have an accomplice, and he's homosexual, how could he possibly seek revenge for Cam Giai Ninh? Keep in mind, all his university classmates said that Trần Tiến hardly ever interacted with girls and had no impression that he had any relationship with Cam Giai Ninh.

If he didn't have an accomplice, then when killing Giang Tiểu Bình, why choose a method of moving the corpse that involved a higher level of risk?

If he didn't have an accomplice, how could he have killed the Lý family and the Phạm family, especially the Phạm family on December 22, while he himself stayed the whole time in a room at the Phổ Giang Hotel, with surveillance cameras as witnesses?

If he didn't have an accomplice, why destroy items containing DNA, like toothbrushes and face towels, when it's impossible to completely clean all hair on the floor?

If he didn't have an accomplice, and really wanted to kill Từ Tăng, why didn't he put TNT in the entire cigar box?

Trần Tiến predicted that after the trial, the police would definitely reinvestigate his accomplice. At that time, they would check the records of the Phổ Giang Hotel. Through the surveillance camera in the corridor on the 8th floor, it is clearly visible that on the night of December 21, Trần Tiến entered the room and did not leave until 9 a.m. on December 22. During that time, he never left room 806. However, if anyone wanted to investigate who Trần Tiến's accomplice was, they certainly would not succeed because Trần Tiến actually had no accomplice. Trần Tiến created a fictitious accomplice mainly to fulfill his wish to protect Cam Giai Ninh's son. But accomplishing this was extremely difficult because no matter how perfect the method was, the motive for the crime would surely be exposed. At that moment, Cam Giai Ninh's son would be brutally avenged by the relatives of those corrupt officials. Therefore, this fictitious accomplice was very important, serving the role of making those powerful figures fear a dangerous, vengeful assassin.

Thus, he had to cause a huge, shocking crime. After being arrested, he provided sufficient reasons to make the police believe that he committed the crimes alone. But at the final moment of the trial, in front of all provincial, city, and district leaders, and in front of the relatives of the Phạm family, during his last defense, he revealed the name of the accomplice who would never be found, and brazenly threatened so that no one would dare disturb the Hà family afterward!

Although during the crime he created signs of another accomplice, those signs were not solid evidence. If the police never found his accomplice, they would ultimately conclude that the crime was committed by him alone.

There was only one way: at the final moment, in front of everyone, present irrefutable evidence proving that there was still an accomplice who had not been caught, shocking everyone present!

This was how Trần Tiến created the "alibi evidence" and the fictitious accomplice:
He had three ID cards. Besides the one used to buy a house and a car, he used a real ID to register renting room 806 and a second fake ID to register renting room 906 on the upper floor.

At night, taking advantage of the dim darkness, he went to room 906 first — the top floor. He hung a flexible ladder at the window and a set of safety belts. That day was a snowy windy day; Trần Tiến had learned about this from the weather forecast a few days before. No one saw anything at the top-floor room during the snowy night. Then he went to room 806, tied himself with the safety belt, climbed up to room 906 by the flexible ladder, hid the ladder and belt, and spent the entire night in room 906. The next morning, when committing the crime,

he left room 906, disguised himself, put on a hat, and left the hotel so that the surveillance camera at the hotel lobby on the first floor couldn't capture his face.

After completing the crime, he returned to room 906 and used the same method to climb down to room 806. Despite the snowy weather, no one saw him. Then he stayed in the room until 9 a.m. before leaving room 806 openly, thereby creating solid evidence of not being at the crime scene.

Of course, he anticipated that if the police had someone extremely intelligent who suspected he acted alone and thought of the possibility of switching from the lower floor to the upper floor to create an alibi, well, even then the police wouldn't gain anything. Because the police would find that on that day the surveillance camera on the 9th floor was probably misaligned due to the cleaning staff's broom and didn't capture images of room 906, making it impossible to determine if Trần Tiến used the method of switching floors to create evidence of being in room 806 and absent from the crime scene.

As for the ID card he used to register room 906, a preliminary investigation showed such a person existed, but after thorough investigation, it turned out not to be true.

But just based on this alone, it's impossible to judge whether Trần Tiến had an accomplice. Are all his statements before death just wild claims?
There is no method, logically, to prove the existence of something except simply finding it.
But how to prove that something does not exist? That's very difficult. Like how you cannot find evidence to prove that God does not exist.

They couldn't find Trần Tiến's accomplice; does that mean they just say he threatened to scare people and had no accomplice at all?

They couldn't find him simply because this accomplice was protected too well by Trần Tiến, leaving very few clues. But Trần Tiến's final words at the trial were full of solid evidence, all indicating he still had an accomplice.

After performing an autopsy, the police found that the sphincter outside Trần Tiến's anus was relaxed, which he had caused himself weeks before. That's why the prison guards told Từ Tăng that Trần Tiến often groaned during defecation, which they thought was caused by his cancer symptoms. In fact, it was not; he had painfully stretched his anus to create further evidence supporting his homosexual tendencies.

If police asked all of Trần Tiến's classmates, they would all testify that during college, he never contacted girls.

Actually, that was because Trần Tiến was very insecure in college and it wasn't related to being homosexual.

He had been in the U.S. for many years and never loved anyone else because he still held deep love for Cam Giai Ninh!

But the police insisted that he was homosexual!

As for the man on the electric bicycle during the killings of the Lý and Phạm families, it was obviously Trần Tiến. The only difference was that he wore thin, tight clothes and hunched over while riding, creating the visual impression that the person was not him.

In reality, the crime process Trần Tiến confessed to the police was true. That's why the lie detector showed he wasn't lying, except about the motive related to Cam Giai Ninh, which were fabricated.

He took the riskier method to handle Giang Tiểu Bình's corpse, each crime was overcomplicated on purpose, obviously to create solid evidence that he had an accomplice. Meanwhile, after being arrested, he provided full evidence and reasonable explanations to make the police abandon the theory that it was a crime with an accomplice. Finally, when saying his last words at the trial, he could still list solid evidence to overturn the previous explanations.

The three layers of motives were embedded in the entire crime plan. Each motive required convincing evidence, and each motive could be overturned by different solid evidence.

=> Misdirection, Fabrication, Bluffing, Disguise Intention, Creativity, Holistic/Non Linear/Convergent/Linear/Associative Thinking, Deduction, Abduction, Anticipation, Contingencies, Risk Assessment