

KUEN KAI KADEE

Case File No. 3: The Photograph on Rain Lane



CONFIDENTIAL



Regional Cold Case Review Centre
Unsolved Cases Division
Old Canal Road, Talat Kao District

Ref. CCRC 003/2025

1 September 2025

Re: Request for review of the death of Mrs. Mei Heng-Ankul

To: The Independent Investigation Team

Enclosed: Copy of criminal case file No. 317/2025 (Talat Kao Police Station), one folder,
plus three sealed evidence envelopes

On the night of Friday 22 August 2025, during the 80th birthday dinner of Mr. Heng Heng-Ankul, owner of the Chinese herbal pharmacy **Heng-An Osot** on Soi Fon ("Rain Lane"), the lights in the building went out for about ten minutes. When they came back on, **Mrs. Mei**, the family's daughter-in-law and keeper of the shop's accounts, was found dead in the third-floor accounts room. In her hand she was gripping an old family photograph from 1982. One face in it had been scratched away to white.

Talat Kao Police gathered a great deal of evidence, but everyone at the party was hiding something, and the file still cannot say who caused her death. The Centre is therefore sending you the complete file for an independent review.

Read every document. Check the times carefully. Trust no statement until another piece of evidence backs it up. Some evidence was still being tested when the file was copied; the Centre has sealed it in envelopes that you may open once you have answered each stage. Please report your findings on four points:

1. **Who** is responsible for Mrs. Mei's death.
2. **How** that person reached the third-floor accounts room and left again unseen.
3. **Why** that person had to see her that night.
4. **Whose face** was scratched out of the 1982 photograph.

For your action, please.

Respectfully,

Thana Wongfon

(Thana Wongfon)

Police Lieutenant Colonel
Head, Unsolved Cases Division

*URGENT! Finish the
review before month end. — T.*

Unsolved Cases Division
Internal line 317
Received No. 1240 · 1 Sep 2025

CONFIDENTIAL

How it works

You are all **one investigation team**. No roles, no private secrets, nobody is the killer. Play solo or with as many friends as you like. Spread the evidence across the table, read it together and argue it out.

Step	What to do
1. Main file	Read the Centre's letter, the incident report, the profiles, the statements and Exhibits 1-12. Use the timeline worksheet to take notes.
2. Stage 1	Answer the Stage 1 questions on the answer sheet. Write your answers down first , then open Envelope A . Its first page gives the Stage 1 answers with reasons. If you got it wrong, keep playing.
3. Stage 2	Use Exhibits 13-21 and the new statements. Answer Stage 2, then open Envelope B (its first page gives the Stage 2 answers).
4. Final answer	Use Exhibits 22-30 and Statements 13-14. Answer all 5 questions on the case summary sheet, then open the Solution envelope and read it together.

Stuck? Turn to the **hint page** for that stage. Hints come in 3 levels. Level 1 only points the way. Levels 2 and 3 are printed upside down so you don't read them by accident. Use one level at a time.

House rules

- Every answer should rest on **at least 2 pieces of evidence** (quote the exhibit or statement number).
- **Statements can lie**. Photographs, receipts, police records and recordings can be trusted.
- Everything you need is in this file. No outside research, nothing supernatural.
- Don't open an envelope before you've written down that stage's answers.

Cutting and setup (once, about 20 minutes)

1. Print on A4, single-sided. Black and white works, but colour makes the photographs easier to read. The cover is optional.
2. Pages headed "**Cut Sheet**": **cut along the dashed lines** ✕ to get the real props: photographs, receipts, a business card, notes. Pieces marked "back of photo" can be glued to the back of the photo with the same number, or just laid beside it.
3. Police documents, statements, the floor sketch, the livestream transcript and the worksheets are **used as whole pages. No cutting**.
4. Get 3 brown envelopes (or fold paper into envelopes). Cut the labels from the bottom of the case summary sheet, stick them on, and fill them like this:
 - **Envelope A**: every page headed "Envelope A"
 - **Envelope B**: every page headed "Envelope B"
 - **Solution envelope**: every page marked "Solution" (ideally, **someone who isn't playing** prints and seals it)
5. Lay the hint pages face down at the side of the table. Pens, pencils and sticky notes help a lot.

All characters, shops, companies, agencies and places are fictional and not connected to real people or events · The story involves a death and a family conflict, with no violent images · All ages can play; younger children should play with an adult.

Don't feel like cutting? You can play from the full sheets. The dashed lines are only there for that "real case file" feel.

The household at No. 45 Soi Fon

Thai-Chinese families often call each other by family titles instead of names. The file uses both. This list shows every name you will meet.

Name in the file	Also called	Who they are
Mei Heng-Ankul	Aunt Mei, Sim Mei, "Asim"	The victim, 58. Daughter-in-law, runs the shop's money and keys.
Heng Heng-Ankul (Mr. Heng)	Akong (Grandpa), Tao-kae (Boss)	80 today. Founder of the pharmacy, owner of the building.
Ming Heng-Ankul	Hia Ming (Big Brother Ming), Uncle Ming	55. Akong's elder son, Mei's husband.
Lee	Je Lee (Big Sister Lee)	51. Akong's daughter, Nick's mother. Found the body.
Pao	Apao, Ah Pao	59. Shop assistant since 1995. Not a relative (civil registry).
Nick	—	24. Lee's son, Akong's grandson. Content creator.
Emorn	Auntie Emorn, Mrs. Emorn	68. Next-door neighbour (No. 47). Former owner of Emorn Film photo studio.
Ama Ngek	Grandma Ngek	Akong's late wife (died 2012). Mother of Ming and Lee.
Nuch	—	A woman who lives in another district. Appears in Envelope A.
Wichai Saithan	Pol. Lt. Wichai, "W."	Investigating officer, Talat Kao Police Station.
Somsak	—	Local electrician and locksmith.

Words you will see

Soi · a side lane. **Soi Fon** means "Rain Lane".

Akong / Ama · Teochew Chinese for grandpa and grandma, used by the whole family.

Tao-kae · "boss", the polite word staff use for a Chinese shop owner.

Hia / Je / A- · "big brother", "big sister", and a friendly prefix before a name (A-Pao, A-Mei).

Ua / Lue · old Teochew-Thai for "I" and "you". Akong speaks this way.

Ya hom · a traditional Thai-Chinese herbal aromatic remedy, sniffed or sipped. "Heng-An Ya Hom" is the family's secret recipe.

Chrysanthemum tea · a mild herbal tea. Akong drinks only his own, from his own flask.

Red envelope · a red paper envelope of birthday money given to elders.

Years · Thailand counts years in the Buddhist Era (2025 CE = 2568 BE). This English file converts every date to the Western calendar, e.g. **1982**.

Times · police records use the 24-hour clock: 21:46 = 9:46 pm.

Baht · Thai currency (written "B" or "baht" in the file).

Shoe size 42 · European sizing (about US men's 9).



Talat Kao Provincial Police Station

Preliminary Incident Report · Case No. 317/2025

Reporting officer Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan · Investigator · Call received Fri 22 Aug 2025, 21:55 ·
Arrived on scene 22:35 (lane mouth flooded)

Location	3-storey shophouse, No. 45 Soi Fon (Heng-An Osot pharmacy), third-floor accounts room
Deceased	Mrs. Mei Heng-Ankul, age 58
Found by	Mrs. Lee (the deceased's sister-in-law), approx. 21:51
Weather	Heavy, steady rain since 18:30. No lightning or thunder (confirmed by the Meteorological Department)
Persons in the building	Mr. Heng (80) · Mr. Ming (55) · Mrs. Lee (51) · Mr. Pao (59) · Mr. Nick (24) · Mrs. Emorn (68) · and the deceased. 7 people in total. No one else.
Ways in and out	Front steel grille: locked since 19:00, key held by Mr. Ming · Ground-floor back door: opens onto the back alley, a dead end closed by an iron gate locked from the inside. No signs of forced entry.

Sequence of events agreed by all witnesses

Time	Event
19:00	Dinner begins in the 2nd-floor dining room
20:00	Mrs. Emorn arrives and talks privately with the deceased in a corner for a few minutes
20:30	Mr. Heng announces at the table that he will not sell the building, will not go to a care home, and on Monday will change his will "for the one I have owed all my life"
20:55-21:10	Mr. Ming goes downstairs "to check the flooding at the shopfront". The deceased and Mr. Pao go down at the same time "to check stock in the storeroom". All three are back up around 21:10
21:24	Mr. Heng pours chrysanthemum tea from his personal flask into his dragon-pattern cup and hands it to the deceased
21:25	The deceased carries the tea up to the 3rd floor, saying she is "fetching the red envelope for Akong"
21:35	Mr. Pao goes downstairs, saying he is "getting the cake from the shop fridge"
21:38	Mr. Nick starts a livestream of the party (see Exhibit 9)
21:39	Mr. Ming goes downstairs again, saying he is "checking the water at the front"
21:41	Power fails in the whole building
21:51	Mrs. Lee carries a candle up to fetch the deceased and finds her dead
21:52	Power returns
21:55	Mr. Nick calls the police

The building (see sketch, Exhibit 1)

- **Ground floor:** pharmacy shopfront, with the shop fridge beside the front counter · middle hallway · storeroom at the back, with a back door onto the back alley
- **2nd floor:** dining room (window overlooks the front lane) · kitchen (directly under the accounts room) · Mr. Heng's bedroom
- **3rd floor:** the deceased's accounts room (with an iron safe) · old box room
- **Indoor stairs:** ground to 2nd floor is concrete and silent · 2nd to 3rd floor is old timber and creaks on every step
- **Outdoor iron spiral staircase:** in the back alley. It connects **only** the ground-floor back door and the 3rd-floor back door.





Talat Kao Provincial Police Station

Record of Persons Involved

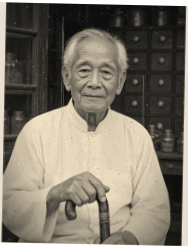
From the civil registry and neighbourhood enquiries · photos from ID cards / family albums

**Mrs. Mei Heng-Ankul · DECEASED**

Age 58 · daughter-in-law, wife of Mr. Ming · shop manager

Married into the Heng-Ankul family in 1995. For almost thirty years she controlled the books, the cash, every key and every employee. The whole lane knew her as strict, thrifty and never one to back down.

Lately she had been pushing to sell the building to a property developer and to find a care home for her father-in-law. It put her at odds with almost everyone in the house.

**Mr. Heng Heng-Ankul ("Akong")**

Age 80 (on the day) · founder of the shop, owner of the building

Opened Heng-An Osot in 1967. His wife, "Ama Ngek", died in 2012. They had two children together: Mr. Ming and Mrs. Lee.

Had knee surgery in 2017 and walks with a cane. Sleeps in a 2nd-floor bedroom. Kind but stubborn; does not want to sell. At the party he announced he would change his will.

A poor sleeper for years: his doctor prescribes one sleeping pill a night. He drinks only chrysanthemum tea from his own flask, from the one dragon-pattern cup he has used for forty years, and lets no one else touch it.

**Mr. Ming Heng-Ankul ("Hia Ming")**

Age 55 · Mr. Heng's elder son · husband of the deceased

Lives in the building with his wife. Mainly drives the delivery van and looks after regular customers. Left all money and property matters to his wife.

Neighbours call him kind and eager to please. Lately he has looked stressed and is often on the phone.

**Mrs. Lee ("Je Lee")**

Age 51 · Mr. Heng's younger daughter · mother of Mr. Nick · found the body

Married and moved to her husband's home at 25. Sells cosmetics online. Often quarrelled with the deceased over "**Heng-An Ya Hom**", Ama Ngek's herbal remedy recipe, which the deceased kept locked away from everyone.

CERTIFIED COPY

Michai

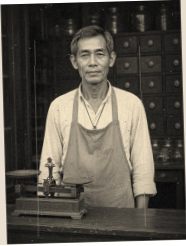
Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan



Talat Kao Provincial Police Station

Record of Persons Involved

From the civil registry and neighbourhood enquiries · photos from ID cards / family albums



Mr. Pao ("Apao")

Age 59 · shop assistant since 1995

From another district, no family, rents a small room behind the market. Knows all one hundred and twelve herb drawers by heart. Makes up Mr. Heng's medicines and delivers them to him every morning.

Quiet and polite. Calls Mr. Heng "Tao-kae". Regular customers say he is the most honest man on the lane.



Mr. Nick

Age 24 · Mr. Heng's grandson, Mrs. Lee's son · content creator

Runs a channel called "Old Things, New Stories" with about forty thousand followers. Wants to turn the ground-floor shop into a herbal café. On the night, he livestreamed the party from 21:38.



Mrs. Emorn

Age 68 · next-door neighbour (No. 47) · former owner of Emorn Film studio

Ran the photo studio on this lane for forty years and closed it in 2015. Has photographed the Heng-Ankul family since they were young. Still carries a film camera everywhere.

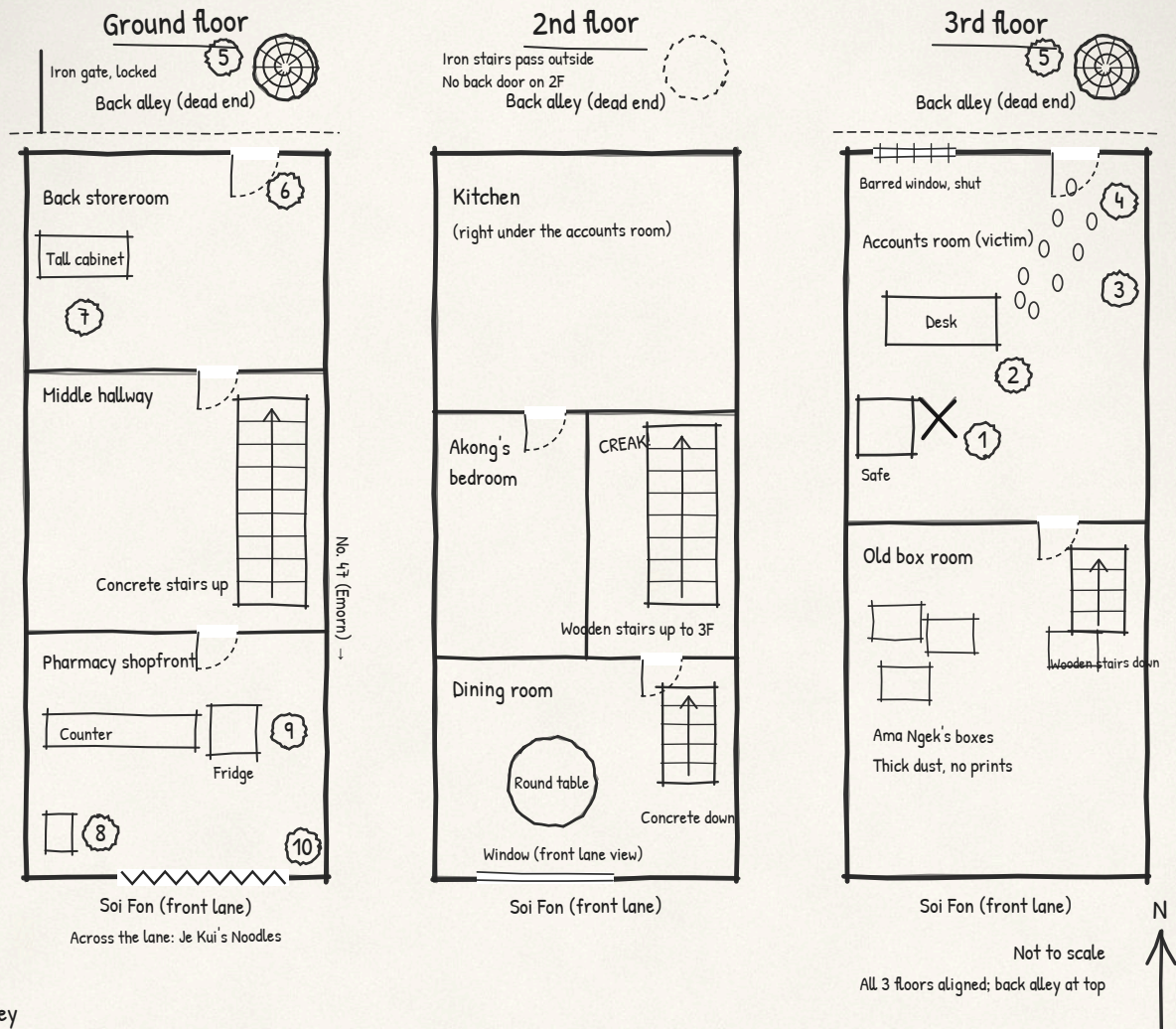
Family tree (per civil registry)

- **Mr. Heng** (80) + **Ama Ngek** (died 2012)
 - **Mr. Ming** (55) + **Mrs. Mei** (58, deceased) · married 1995 · no children
 - **Mrs. Lee** (51) · married, lives elsewhere
 - **Mr. Nick** (24)
- **Mr. Pao** (59) · employee, not a relative
- **Mrs. Emorn** (68) · next-door neighbour, not a relative

CERTIFIED COPY
Michai
Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan



Talat Kao Provincial Police Station

Sketch Map of the SceneScene 3-storey shophouse, No. 45 Soi Fon (Heng-An Osot), Drawn by Pol. Lt. Wichai SaithanDate and time drawn Fri 22 Aug 2025, 22:50 Scale not to scale

Key

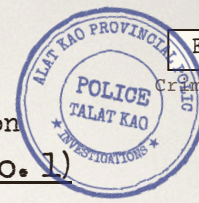
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Body found beside the safe (X) | 6 Ground-floor back door (storeroom) |
| 2 Victim's wristwatch, by desk leg | 7 Fuse box now (hidden by tall cabinet) |
| 3 Wet prints: back door → desk → back door | 8 Old fuse box by front (empty shell) |
| 4 3F back door locked, not forced | 9 Shopfront fridge (the cake) |
| 5 Outdoor iron spiral stairs: G ↔ 3F only | 10 Front steel grille, locked from 19:00 |

Notes to the sketch (checked in person by the officer)

- Timber stairs, 2nd to 3rd floor: tested. However lightly you step, every stair creaks. In the dark you cannot skip steps.
- The iron spiral staircase is outside the building. It runs from the ground-floor back door up to the 3rd-floor back door only. There is no landing or door on the 2nd floor.
- The ground-floor and 3rd-floor back doors have deadbolts that need the key to lock or unlock, from inside and from outside.
- The back alley is a dead end. Its iron gate is locked from inside and shows no sign of forcing. No outsider can get in.
- To reach the iron stairs from the 2nd-floor dining room you must go down the concrete stairs to the ground floor, along the middle hallway, and out through the back door in the storeroom.

(Signed) Wichai Saithan Pol. Lt., drawn by

(Wichai Saithan) Investigator, Talat Kao Police



Talat Kao Provincial Police Station
Scene Examination Record (No. 1)

3rd-floor accounts room · recorded by Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan · Fri 22 Aug 2025, 22:40

Position of body	Lying on her side beside the iron safe in the corner. Chair tipped over towards the back door.
Injuries	Left side of the head struck the corner of the safe. No other injuries found. Awaiting post-mortem.
Victim's wristwatch	Came off the wrist; on the floor by the desk leg, glass cracked. Hands stopped at 21:46 (see Exhibit 4).
In right hand	One old black-and-white photograph, gripped tight, hard to remove (Exhibit 3).
On the desk	1 candle (out) · tin box holding 4 struck matches, but no burnt paper or ash · empty brown paper envelope marked "Negatives 22/8/82", no film inside · red envelope marked "Akong 80" · abacus · shop ledger · papers about the building sale and the staff (Exhibits 5-8) · dragon-pattern teacup with a little tea left in the bottom (bagged for testing before photo 4 was taken)
Victim's keys	Dropped under the desk. The ring holds the back-door key, the safe key and the desk-drawer key.
Safe	Closed and locked. Opened with the victim's key. Inside: the shop's cash book and the Heng-An Ya Hom recipe book .
Desk drawer	1 drawer locked, not yet opened (sent for examination later).
3rd-floor back door	Shut and locked with a key . No sign of forcing.
Wooden floor	Wet footprints, rubber sandal tread , leading from the back door to the desk and looping back to the back door · sent for size measurement
Timber stairs (2F to 3F)	Dry . No water marks or wet prints.
Observations	Accounts-room window shut tight and barred · 3rd-floor box room: nobody hiding, thick dust, no footprints.

Signed Pol. Lt. *Wichai*, recording officer

Note: she went up at 21:25. Looks like she was getting ready to burn something (4 matches) but never managed it · So where did the film from that envelope go?





Exhibit 3 Photograph in the deceased's right hand

Exhibit 3 Back of
photo (glue to photo 3)

Emorn Film · Soi Fon

*Heng An Oot
Sao-kae's 37th
birthday
22 Aug 1982*

*"This one is not
one of this family."*

(Last line in a different
hand and a different ink,
written later)

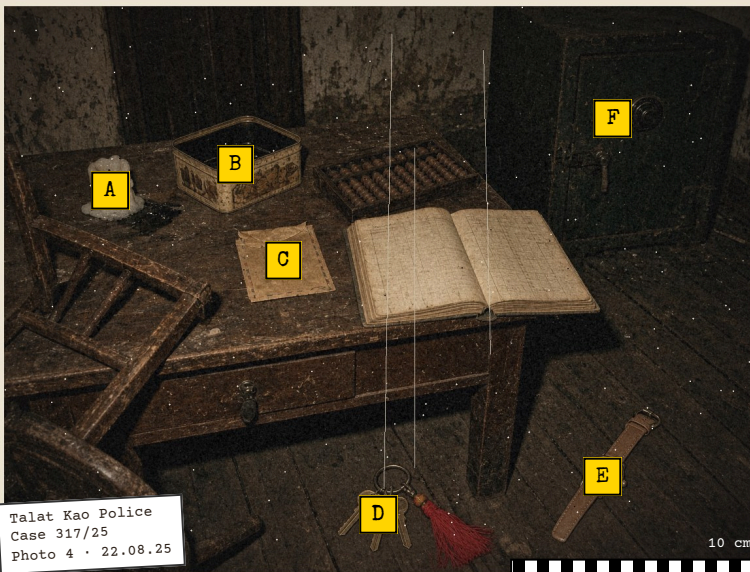


Exhibit 4 Police photo · desk in the 3rd-floor accounts room ·
22:45

Exhibit 4 Photo key

- A** Candle (out)
- B** Tin box: 4 struck matches, no paper ash
- C** Envelope "Negatives 22/8/82", empty
- D** Victim's keys (includes back-door key)
- E** Victim's watch, glass cracked, stopped at 21:46
- F** Iron safe; the corner her head struck

Exhibit 5 DRAFT · Agreement to Sell Land and Building

Buyer Rungnakorn Development Co., Ltd.

Seller Mr. Heng Heng-Ankul (registered owner)

Property 3-storey shophouse, No. 45 Soi Fon

Price 38,000,000 baht (thirty-eight million baht)

Terms To be signed by 31 Aug 2025 · building handed over empty within 90 days

Seller's signature

..... (blank)

** Must include No. 47 (Emorn) or the company won't pay full price. Use her extension that encroaches on our land as leverage.*

** Akong won't sign → have Ming apply to be his legal guardian?? Ask the lawyer.*

Exhibit 7 Heng-An Osot
FINAL WARNING

To: **Mr. Pao** (shop assistant)

On Wednesday 20 Aug 2025 the front-counter cash drawer was **8,000 baht short**. Mr. Pao was responsible for the counter that day. If this happens again, or if he does not resign voluntarily, the shop will take legal action.

Shop manager *Mei*

Mr. Pao refused to sign for receipt.

Exhibit 6 Sukjai Golden Years Home

Senior residence · 24-hr nursing · 5 meals a day · physiotherapy

Admissions: tel. 080-000-0207

Single room 207 · move in 1 Sep

Deposit received 10,000 B · contact: Khun Mei

Exhibit 8 Proposal: "Heng-An Café"

Proposed by Nick (grandson) · co-investor: Khun J

Turn the ground-floor shop into a herbal café, keep the old medicine cabinets as a photo corner, run ya-hom blending workshops ...

NOT APPROVED. Not while I'm alive. — Mei



Exhibit 10 Frame from Mrs. Emorn's film camera
(rush-developed by police)

Exhibit 10 Back of photo (glue to photo 10)

*Taken from the 2nd-floor window of the Heng-An building
during the blackout, about 9:44 pm.
Noodle shop opposite: lights ON.
Street lamp ON. Shop signs ON.
Only the Heng-An building is dark.*

— Emorn

Exhibit 11 Somsak Electrical

Wiring · fuse boxes · locksmith · Receipt book 3, No. 0217 (carbon copy)

Date 14 Mar 2017 · **Customer** Heng-An Osot

Contact / site supervisor Khun Pao

Move main fuse box from the shopfront to the back storeroom wall, hidden behind the tall wooden medicine cabinet (Khun Pao's request, to keep kids away)	6,500
New main breaker, 1 unit	2,800
Replace deadbolts on 2 back doors (ground floor + 3rd floor), both on the same key	1,800
Cut 3 keys : Khun Mei 1 · Akong 1 · Khun Pao 1	300
Total	11,400

Good to know: if this breaker **trips by itself** (overload or leak), the lever stops in the **"MIDDLE"** · if the lever is **all the way down**, someone switched it off.

Received by Somsak

Exhibit 12 Dispensing Book · Controlled Medicines Cabinet · Heng-An Osot (page 88 · sign every time you take stock)

Date	Time	Item	Qty	For / reason	Signed
1 Aug	09:30	Sleeping pills (prescription, Talat Kao Hospital)	30 tabs	Akong · 1 tab nightly at bedtime · kept in bedside drawer	<i>Pao</i>
21 Aug	09:10	Knee pain tablets	1 strip	Akong (regular) delivered to 2F room	<i>Pao</i>
22 Aug	09:05	Knee pain tablets	1 strip	Akong (regular) delivered to 2F room	<i>Pao</i>
22 Aug	14:20	Sleeping pills	10 tabs	can't sleep	<i>Lee</i>
22 Aug	16:00	Heng-An Ya Hom	2 bottles	Akong's birthday	<i>Mei</i>

Note (Mei's handwriting): Akong's medicine must ALWAYS be delivered to his 2F room. Doctor's orders since '23: no more than one flight of stairs. Akong can't get up to 3F any more · Lee took sleeping pills AGAIN?? Didn't ask anyone.



Talat Kao Provincial Police Station

Transcript of Livestream "Akong's 80th Birthday" · Mr. Nick's account

Transcribed from the file on his phone · times from the clip's clock · camera stayed on the 2nd-floor dining table throughout · *italics* = viewer comments

Time	Audio
21:38:02	Nick: "Hi everyone! Tonight is my Akong's eightieth birthday! Akong, Mum, Uncle Ming, Auntie Emorn, everyone's here. Aunt Mei went upstairs for the red envelope and Apao went down for the cake. We're waiting to blow out the candles!"
21:38:40	<i>Comment: Akong is sooo cute</i>
21:39:10	Akong: "Nick, another live? Take that camera away from me."
21:39:30	Uncle Ming: "I'll pop down and check the water at the front. This rain is unbelievable." <i>[chair scraping]</i>
21:40:30	Lee: "Where's the cake? Apao's been gone ages."
21:41:10	[POWER CUT. Screen goes black. Only the rain is audible.]
21:41:12	Lee: "Whoa! Lights are out!"
21:41:20	Nick: "Hang on, phone torch first. Akong's right here. I've got his hand."
21:41:40	Emorn: "Is the whole lane out? I'll go and look from the window."
21:42:05	Lee: "I'll find candles in the kitchen."
21:42:30	[Ming shouting up from the ground floor] "The fuse box at the front is gone! There's just an empty cover! Does anyone know where it was moved to?!"
21:42:40	Akong (shouting down): "Ask Apao! Apao knows everything about this building!" <i>[no reply]</i>
21:43:05	Emorn: "Strange. The noodle shop across the lane still has its lights on. Street lamp too. It's only us."
21:44:05	[One camera flash] Emorn: "Let me get a picture of that."
21:44:30	<i>Comment: power cut for real?? creepy</i>
21:45:00	Akong: "My legs are cold. In rain like this my legs give up."
21:46:30	[A single dull THUD from the ceiling]
21:46:35	Nick: "What was that? Lightning?"
21:46:40	Nick: "Mum, found the candles yet?"
21:46:42	[Lee's voice from the kitchen] "Not yet! This drawer's all chopsticks!"
21:47:10	Emorn: "There hasn't been a single clap of thunder tonight. That wasn't lightning."
21:48:00	Akong: "Has Mei come down? Don't come down the stairs in the dark."
21:48:30	Nick: "Guys, my battery's on twenty percent. Send Akong some hearts!"
21:49:30	[Lee, from the kitchen] "Got them. Candles!"
21:49:50	Nick: "Mum, can you go up and get Aunt Mei? Then we can do the cake."
21:50:05	[Timber stairs: CREAK, CREAK, continuous. Someone climbing to the 3rd floor.]
21:51:00	[A scream from upstairs]
21:51:20	[Someone running up from the ground floor, through the room, then the timber stairs rattle up to the 3rd floor] Nick: "Uncle Ming! What's happening?"
21:52:20	[LIGHTS ON] [Apao shouting from the ground floor] "Power's back!"
21:53:00	Nick: "Sorry everyone, I have to end the live." [STREAM ENDS]

Investigator's note: listened 3 times. From 21:41:10 to 21:50:05 there is no sound of the timber stairs at all · the thud came from the ceiling on the kitchen side.





Statement 1 · Mr. Heng (Akong)

22 Aug 25 · 22:50 · 2F bedroom

I, Mr. Heng Heng-Ankul, age 80, state the following to Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan, investigator:

Q. Where were you when the power went out?

A. Sitting at the dinner table. I never got up. My grandson Nick held my hand the whole time.

Q. Can you get up to the 3rd floor?

A. Not for two years. Knee operation in '17, and now the doctor says no more than one flight of stairs. The iron stairs at the back? Forget it.

Q. Where is the building's fuse box?

A. I don't know. During the '17 renovation I was in hospital for a month. The others handled it.

Q. Do you have a back-door key?

A. One. I keep it in my bedside drawer... (*opens the drawer*) It's gone! Last saw it on Monday. I thought Mei took it.

Q. You announced you would change your will "for the one I have owed all my life". Who did you mean?

A. An old man's business. Nothing to do with this case.

Q. You and the deceased disagreed about selling the building?

A. Yes. Mei wanted to sell, I didn't. On Sunday I told her if this building was sold I'd cut Ming out of my will. But I did nothing to Mei. I can barely walk.

Q. Why did the deceased go up to the 3rd floor at 21:25?

A. She went up on her own, to fetch the red envelope for me. I didn't send anybody.

Q. What did you hear during the blackout?

A. One "thud" from the ceiling. I thought a box fell over in the box room. Not a sound from the wooden stairs until Lee took the candle up.

Read back; confirmed correct.

Signed *Heng* statement giver

Signed *Wichai* recorder

Statement 2 · Mr. Ming (Hia Ming)

22 Aug 25 · 23:05 · ground-floor shop

I, Mr. Ming Heng-Ankul, age 55, state the following to Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan, investigator:

Q. Between 20:55 and 21:10 you went downstairs. What for?

A. To check the water coming in at the front. Then I heard Mei and Apao arguing quietly in the hallway outside the storeroom. I only caught pieces. Mei said "*Sign the resignation tonight*", "*or tomorrow I report the drawer money to the police*", "*and I'm burning all of this tonight.*" Apao said "*You have no right, Asim.*" Then it went quiet.

Q. At 21:39 you went down again. Why?

A. To check the water again. The rain was very heavy.

Q. Where were you when the power went out?

A. At the front steel grille. Everything went black. I shone my phone at the fuse box by the door, where it had always been: just an empty cover. So I shouted upstairs and waited there.

Q. Why didn't you go and look for the fuse box?

A. I didn't know where it had gone. Nobody told me. Mei handled everything about the building.

Q. Did anyone walk past you?

A. No. The grille was locked and the key was in my pocket. **The fridge was two steps from me, and nobody came to get the cake the whole time.** When I heard Lee scream I ran up to the 3rd floor.

Q. Do you have a back-door key?

A. No. Mei never gave me one. I only have the grille key and my car key.

Q. Your phone kept buzzing tonight. Who was calling?

A. Work. Nothing to do with this.

Recorder's note: the witness appeared anxious and kept his phone face-down throughout.

Read back; confirmed correct.

Signed *Ming* statement giver

Signed *Wichai* recorder





Statement 3 · Mrs. Lee (Je Lee) · found the body

22 Aug 25 · 23:15 · 2F dining room

I, Mrs. Lee, age 51 (who found the body), state the following to Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan, investigator:

Q. Tell me from the moment the power went out.

A. I went into the kitchen and felt around for candles. The kitchen is right under the accounts room. At about 9:46 I heard a "thud" right above my head. Nick shouted had I found the candles yet, and I shouted back not yet. When I found them, Nick told me to go up and get Aunt Mei, so I took a candle up the wooden stairs.

Q. What did you see in the accounts room?

A. Mei lying still beside the safe, the chair knocked over, an old photo in her hand. **There were wet footprints on the wooden floor, from the back door to the desk and round back to the back door.** The back door was shut. The wooden stairs I had just come up were **dry**, no water at all.

Q. When the lights came on, who was with you?

A. Ming ran up behind me. We were both standing in the accounts room when the lights came on. Only then did I hear Apao shout from downstairs that the power was back.

Q. And after that?

A. Around ten o'clock I went down to the shop fridge to get water for Akong's pills. **The cake box was still in the fridge, untouched.** Apao went down for that cake at 9:35. What was he doing down there for seventeen minutes?

Q. Do you have a back-door key?

A. No. I haven't lived in this house for over twenty years. I don't even know where the fuse box is.

Q. What was your problem with the deceased?

A. My own mother's ya hom recipe. Mei kept it from everyone. But if I wanted to kill someone, why wait for a blackout? I could tell her off to her face any day.

Read back; confirmed correct.

Signed Lee statement giver

Signed Wichai recorder

Statement 4 · Mr. Pao (Apao)

22 Aug 25 · 23:25 · ground-floor storeroom

I, Mr. Pao, age 59, state the following to Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan, investigator:

Q. At 21:35 you went downstairs. What did you do?

A. I was going to get the cake, but I stopped in the storeroom first. Rain was starting to seep under the back door. Then the power went. I thought the breaker had tripped because of the water, so I went out to drag sandbags across the back door first. I got soaked. Then I came back in and felt for the breaker in the dark. It took a long time because the box is behind the medicine cabinet. When I found it I pushed it back up.

Q. Ming and Akong shouted asking about the fuse box. Why didn't you answer?

A. I was outside the back door. The rain was very loud. I didn't hear.

Q. At nine o'clock you argued with the deceased. What about?

A. Asim told me to sign a resignation letter. She said I stole eight thousand from the drawer. I didn't steal it, so I didn't sign. That's all.

Q. Do you have a back-door key?

A. Yes, one, on my belt. I use it to open and lock up the back every day.

Q. Did you go up to the 3rd floor tonight?

A. Not once. I was on the ground floor the whole time.

Q. What kind of boss was the deceased?

A. Strict with me for thirty years. But I never hated her.

Read back; confirmed correct.

Signed Pao statement giver

Signed Wichai recorder





Statement 5 · Mr. Nick

22 Aug 25 · 23:35 · 2F dining room

I, Mr. Nick, age 24, state the following to Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan, investigator:

Q. Where were you when the power went out?

A. Next to Akong, holding his hand the whole time. I was live, too. Three hundred-odd viewers can back me up. I didn't get up until I ended the stream. The clip is still on my phone; I've given it all to the police.

Q. When you started streaming, who was at the table?

A. Akong, Mum, Uncle Ming, Auntie Emorn and me. Aunt Mei had gone up to the 3rd floor at 9:25, Apao had gone down for the cake, and then Uncle Ming went down to check the water at 9:39.

Q. The deceased turned down your café project. Were you angry?

A. Yes. But we just disagreed. I wanted the shop to survive in a way people my age would walk into. I didn't want anyone gone.

Q. When Apao came up after the lights came on, what did he say?

A. That water was coming in the back door and he had to go out and put sandbags down. I was a bit dazed then. I didn't think anything of it.

Read back; confirmed correct.

Signed *Nick* statement giver

Signed *Wichai* recorder

Statement 6 · Mrs. Emorn

22 Aug 25 · 23:40 · No. 47

I, Mrs. Emorn, age 68, state the following to Pol. Lt. Wichai Saithan, investigator:

Q. Where were you when the power went out?

A. I went and stood at the 2nd-floor window from the moment it went dark until the lights came back. That window looks onto the front lane. The noodle shop opposite still had its lights on, the street lamp too. Only this one building was dark. So I raised my film camera and took one shot, about 9:44. The flash lit up the whole room.

Q. What did you hear?

A. A thud from upstairs, once. It was raining hard tonight, yes, but there was not one clap of thunder.

Q. At eight o'clock you spoke with the deceased. About what?

A. My house. She wanted me to sell it along with this building. She said the extension at the back of my house encroaches on the shop's land.

Q. The photo in the deceased's hand. Do you recognise it?

A. I do. I took it myself, on Tao-kae's thirty-seventh birthday. I was twenty-five then. But I'm not the one who scratched out the face.

Q. Who was the boy whose face was scratched out?

A. It was so long ago... I couldn't tell you.

Q. The empty envelope on the desk says "Negatives 22/8/82". Do you know anything about it?

A. I don't.

Q. Before the deceased went upstairs, did you notice anything unusual?

A. Nothing unusual. Sweet, really. Tao-kae poured tea from his flask into his own dragon cup and handed it to Mei. He said, "You've worked all day. Drink it all up, then go and fetch Akong's red envelope." He'd kept that cup in his own hands all night; never let anyone touch it. A bit after half past nine he told Apao, "Go and get the cake now."

Recorder's note: the witness held her cloth bag tightly against her chest throughout.

Read back; confirmed correct.

Signed *Emorn* statement giver

Signed *Wichai* recorder



Timeline of the night: who was where? (note the exhibit that proves it)

Time	Victim	Akong	Ming	Lee	Apao	Nick	Emorn
21:25							
21:35							
21:38							
21:39							
21:41							
21:42							
21:43							
21:44							
21:46							
21:47							
21:49							
21:50							
21:51							
21:52							
21:53							

Elimination grid

Suspect	Where at 21:46? (exhibit no.)	Back-door key?	Knew where the fuse box was?	Wet?	Motive / what they're hiding
Akong					
Ming					
Lee					
Apao					
Nick					
Emorn					

Tip: put "?" in any box no evidence confirms yet, and come back to it when you open a new envelope. A statement on its own doesn't count as proof.

Stage 1 · answer from the Main File, then open Envelope A

1. At about what time did the victim die?

Evidence used:

2. By what route did the person responsible reach the accounts room, and leave it?

Evidence used:

3. What did that person need to have on them to use that route?

Evidence used:

Stage 2 · use Envelope A, then open Envelope B

4. Why did the power go out? ☐ by itself (water / fault) ☐ someone cut it on purpose

Evidence used:

5. Who went up to the accounts room during the blackout (one name)? Give 3 pieces of evidence that point to them.

6. What evidence rules out each of the others? (one line each)

Review findings · Case No. 317/2025

1. Who carried it out?

2. Did they act alone? If someone was behind it, who? Give 3 pieces of evidence that point to that person.

3. How: tell it in order, from before the victim went up to the 3rd floor until the lights came back (tea · power · route · key · what was taken · where it was hidden).

4. Why: what was the victim about to do, and why did it have to end before Monday?

5. Whose face was scratched out of the 1982 photograph, and how is that person related to Mr. Heng?

Investigation team Hints used · Time taken min

Score yourselves: 3 points per correct answer · minus 1 for each Level 2 hint and 2 for each Level 3 hint · 14-15 points = legendary detective · 10-13 = sharp inspector · below that = the rain hasn't stopped yet; try the next file.

ENVELOPE A

Open after writing your Stage 1 answers

ENVELOPE B

Open after writing your Stage 2 answers

SOLUTION

Open after all 5 summary answers are written