



PUBLIC FILE // CASE 017

THE UNRELIABLE MEMORY TEST

Five pieces of evidence. One version of events. How much can you really trust?

ADRIAN PIERCE

THE FRACTURED MIND FILES

FICTIONAL READER EXPERIENCE. FOR ENTERTAINMENT ONLY. NOT A MEDICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, OR FORENSIC ASSESSMENT.

ACCESS NOTICE

You are about to review five pieces of evidence from a fictional incident at 48 Halden Street. Read them in order. Do not jump to the analysis section. The point is not to prove how observant you are. The point is to notice how quickly certainty forms when incomplete evidence begins to agree with itself.

Keep a confidence score from 0 to 100 as you read. You may find that your confidence rises faster than the evidence deserves. That is the experiment.

All people, places, records, and events in this file are fictional. This is an entertainment experience inspired by the themes of Adrian Pierce's psychological thrillers, not a diagnostic test.

CASE BRIEF // THE HALDEN STREET INCIDENT

At 10:26 PM on a wet Thursday night, a neighbor reports the sound of breaking glass at 48 Halden Street. The homeowner, Mara Venn, tells police she was across town at a cinema and did not return until after 10:40 PM. A study window is broken. The wall safe is open. Nothing appears to be missing.

Within an hour, investigators have a witness, a door-camera image, a voicemail, a scene photograph, and a message thread. The pieces seem to point in one direction. Your task is to decide whether they actually do.

Question to hold in mind: Was Mara Venn inside the house before the window was broken?

EVIDENCE 01

Neighbor Statement // Ellen Roe

Initial call, 10:27 PM: "I heard glass. I looked out and saw someone at Mara's front door. Red coat. I thought it was Mara, but I only saw her from behind."

Formal statement, 11:08 PM: "It was Mara. I recognized her red coat and the way she carries her bag on her left shoulder. She went inside at about ten past ten."

Officer note: Before the formal statement, Ellen was shown a still from the door camera and asked whether the person "looked like Mara."

YOUR READ: How much weight do you give Ellen's identification? ____ / 100

EVIDENCE 02
Door Camera // Frame 221

Displayed timestamp: 22:11:42.

Image: A person in a red raincoat enters through the front door. Face obscured by hood. Black tote on left shoulder.

Maintenance note recovered later: At 23:03 the camera clock was corrected by minus 7 minutes after a power interruption earlier that day. The clock had been running seven minutes fast.

YOUR READ: What time did the person actually enter? _____

EVIDENCE 03

Voicemail // Mara to sister, Nessa

Network receipt: 22:18:32.

Transcript: "Film's finished. I'm walking back to the car now. Call me when you get home."

The message is thirteen seconds long. Background audio includes traffic, footsteps, and a pedestrian crossing signal. The voicemail platform verifies the network receipt time, not the precise moment the recording began.

YOUR READ: Does this prove Mara was at the cinema at 10:18? YES / NO / NOT ENOUGH INFORMATION

EVIDENCE 04

Scene Photograph // Study Window

Photograph taken 22:34.

Most large shards of window glass are visible on the exterior flower bed. Only small fragments are present inside the study.

The window latch is open. The safe door is open. No tool marks are visible on the safe. Police inventory later confirms that cash, jewelry, documents, and a spare key remain inside.

YOUR READ: Was the window necessarily broken from outside? _____

EVIDENCE 05

Message Thread // Mara and Nessa

20:52 - Nessa: "Still have your red raincoat. Sorry. Bringing it tomorrow."

20:53 - Mara: "Keep it tonight. It is pouring."

21:58 - Nessa: "Near yours. I left the spare charger in your hall last week. Can I grab it?"

22:00 - Mara: "Sure. Key code hasn't changed."

Transit record: Nessa's travel card was tapped at Halden Station at 22:02, eleven minutes' walk from the house.

YOUR READ: Has the red coat become stronger evidence or weaker evidence? _____

YOUR VERDICT

1. Was Mara inside 48 Halden Street before 10:26 PM?
2. Who is the person in the red coat?
3. Was the broken window the point of entry?
4. Which piece of evidence influenced you most?
5. Which piece of evidence is genuinely independent of the others?
6. What fact are you most confident about?
7. Confidence that you can reconstruct what happened: ____ / 100.

THE REVEAL // WHAT THE FILE ACTUALLY PROVES

The strongest answer is not a name. It is a limit.

The evidence does not establish that Mara entered the house before the glass broke. The door-camera image shows a red-coated person entering at approximately 10:04:42 PM, once the seven-minute clock error is corrected. Ellen's first account was appropriately cautious. Her later certainty increased only after she saw the camera still. Her second statement therefore is not fully independent confirmation of the image.

The red coat is also not unique to Mara. Nessa explicitly says she has it, and her transit record places her close enough to the house to be the person in the image. The voicemail supports Mara being away from the house at roughly 10:18, but it cannot by itself establish her precise location at the second of recording.

Finally, the distribution of broken glass makes an outside-in break less obvious than it first appears. The safe was opened without force and nothing was missing. The scene may have been staged, but the file does not tell you by whom or why.

THE TRAP: multiple weak clues can feel like one strong conclusion when they repeat the same assumption.

WHAT YOUR MIND MAY HAVE DONE

1. Converted recognition into identification. “That looks like Mara” quietly became “that is Mara.”
2. Treated repeated evidence as independent evidence. Ellen's formal certainty was partly shaped by seeing the door-camera image, so the witness and the image are not two fully separate confirmations.
3. Trusted a timestamp before checking the clock. A precise number looks authoritative even when the device producing it is wrong.
4. Filled missing narrative with motive. An open safe and broken window look like burglary. Nothing in the file proves burglary occurred.
5. Mistook confidence for accuracy. The purpose of the exercise is not to make you distrust memory. It is to separate what the evidence shows from what a coherent story makes you feel.

In Adrian Pierce's thrillers, that gap between evidence and certainty is where the danger begins.

UNLOCK THE FRACTURED MIND FILES

If you enjoyed this case, the private archive goes deeper. Subscribers receive a sequence of fictional evidence files: an impossible voicemail, an altered photograph, a witness interview, three competing memories, a redacted protocol, and an original Adrian Pierce short story.

NEXT FILE: THE VOICEMAIL THAT SHOULDN'T EXIST

Visit the Adrian Pierce reader page and unlock File 001. No quizzes about your personality. No clinical claims. Just evidence, doubt, and stories designed to make you look twice.

Reader page: [INSERT ADRIAN PIERCE LANDING PAGE URL]

THE FRACTURED MIND THRILLERS

The Voicemail Confession · Picture Perfect Alibi · The Witness Protocol

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The Fractured Mind Files

Six case files over nineteen days. Each is a piece of evidence with something wrong in it, and each tells you afterwards exactly what you missed and why you missed it.

File 001 - The Voicemail That Shouldn't Exist

A recording of a call nobody placed. Start here.

File 002 - The Altered Photograph

The photograph is lying. Can you find where?

File 003 - The Witness Interview

A transcript from a witness you would want to believe.

File 004 - Which Memory Is False?

Two accounts of the same evening. Only one happened.

File 005 - The Redacted Protocol

A document that was meant to stay sealed.

File 006 - The Second Statement

What changed between the first telling and the second.

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