

The Missing Grail

GB MYSTERY / CASE FILE

An irreplaceable shirt. A private preview. A perfect substitute.

At Threadbare Archive, a vintage clothing store, owner Nina Vale is preparing to show a private buyer the store's star consignment: a 1989 Glass Meridian tour T-shirt, valued at \$18,000. At 6:30 PM, she checks the display and finds a substitute. Four outgoing parcels have already been collected. The courier has stopped them at its depot. Find the original before tonight's release run.

How to play

For 2-4 adult players. Read the records, compare evidence and write a supported verdict. You can also investigate alone. No specialist knowledge, internet search, cutting or extra purchases are needed.

Print this nine-page player packet single-sided in grayscale, or read it on a screen. Bring pens and scrap paper. All players may examine every exhibit. Take as much time as you need.

Keep the Hints and SPOILERS-answers files separate. Begin without hints. When stuck, read the gentle hint for that question before consulting the stronger hint. Open answers only after recording your verdict.

All people, businesses, bands, schools, products and events in this story are fictional. All facts necessary to solve the case are supplied. Do not assume procedures or facts that the packet does not state.

Your assignment

Exactly one of the six people intentionally substituted and diverted the shirt, working alone. That person personally attached the final destination label to the parcel containing the original. The courier and depot staff acted in good faith. The original is in exactly one of the four intact parcels described here; nothing was added or removed after final weighing. There are no hidden compartments or unlisted garments. All times are PM on the same day.

Person	Interview extract
Nina Vale / owner	"I arranged the \$18,000 viewing. I would never send the shirt away for half that."
Leah Mercer / stock manager	"The outgoing parcels were routine. My label was only for a customer return."
Marco Bell / reseller	"I offered to trade for it. Nina refused. That was the end of it."
Eve Sutton / textile restorer	"I repaired that shirt myself. A period label alone cannot identify it."
Cal Rowan / collector	"I paid for a different shirt. I did ask if the grail was available."
Theo Finch / photographer	"The display photographs were for the store. I handled a spare shirt while testing the lighting."

Official observation records, weights, schedules and authenticated documents are reliable unless a specific claim is marked disputed. Suspect statements can be mistaken or false. A genuine message can record a lie. Opportunity or motive alone is not proof.

Use the five questions on your verdict sheet to organize the investigation. Mark your evidence sources A-F so another player can check your reasoning.

A / The garment archive

The photographs below have been transcribed into visual descriptions so that no color printing is needed. The restorer examined the authentic consignment at intake. These details stayed unchanged today. Store inspection confirms none of the other garments has the same combination.

Record	Observed details
Original intake	A three-step repair inside the lower LEFT hem; a crescent-shaped nick at the RIGHT cuff; two small holes beneath the back collar.
Garment W	Three-step repair lower left; crescent nick LEFT cuff; two collar holes.
Garment X	Straight repair lower left; crescent nick right cuff; two collar holes.
Garment Y	Three-step repair lower left; crescent nick right cuff; two collar holes.
Garment Z	Three-step repair lower RIGHT hem; crescent nick right cuff; no collar holes.

At 5:40 the authentic shirt was still on display. At 6:22 the four garments W, X, Y and Z were each photographed and weighed at the packing bench, then packed one per parcel. The display substitute is a fifth garment and is not in this table.

A vintage tag, faded print or artist name alone is not proof. Use the documented physical details. Glass Meridian is a fictional band; no music knowledge or online research is required.

B / Four sealed parcels

A packing assistant recorded the exact masses below using the same accurate scale. All four parcels use identical packaging. There is one shirt, one tissue wrapper, one inner box and one outer mailer in each. No invoices, hangers, labels or other items add mass beyond the totals listed; labels are included in the outer-mailer mass.

Component	Mass
Garment W	182 g
Garment X	146 g
Garment Y	164 g
Garment Z	170 g
Tissue wrapper	32 g
Inner box	84 g
Outer mailer including label	20 g

Final parcel register: M1 = 318 g; M2 = 300 g; M3 = 306 g; M4 = 282 g. Seals and masses have been verified at the depot. The shirts were not folded into one another or exchanged after weighing.

The parcel numbers describe packages, not the order of photographs. Match all four to check your reasoning.

C / Destination reconstruction

A damaged booking printout lost the destination column. The original booking clerk's verified notes survived. Each parcel had one different destination: North Arcade, East Exchange, South Rooms or West Market. Parcel numbers M1 through M4 are the only ordering used in these notes.

Clerk note	Verified fact
1	North Arcade was booked on the lowest-numbered parcel.
2	The East Exchange parcel number was exactly one greater than the South Rooms parcel number.
3	West Market was not booked on M2.

These are the ORIGINAL destinations. One final label replaced a customer address with a depot-hold instruction. The parcel retained its original route letter for sorting.

Route key: North Arcade = N; East Exchange = E; South Rooms = S; West Market = W. Do not assume that the letters refer to compass directions within the depot.

Investigator grid: M1 _____ M2 _____ M3 _____ M4 _____

D / Label-control sheet

During this evening's monitored dispatch, each person received one numbered, self-adhesive label from the attendant. The attendant watched each recipient attach their own label to one parcel or place it in the void tray. No labels changed hands, and nobody attached another person's label. This observation is independently verified.

Person	Label issued	Recorded use
Nina	L-61	Void tray
Leah	L-62	Attached
Marco	L-63	Attached
Eve	L-64	Void tray
Cal	L-65	Attached
Theo	L-66	Attached

Depot seal photographs show: M1 bears L-65; M2 bears L-62; M3 bears L-66; M4 bears L-63.
Label-to-parcel attachments are intact and original.

Label L-62 reads: 'HOLD FOR PRIVATE COLLECTION / customer reference LQ-9 / retain original route.'
It is not a customer return. The other three labels name ordinary customers at their original destinations.

The attendant verified attachment, not ownership of the contents. A legitimate-looking label did not authorize shipment of the consigned shirt.

E / The private offer

Investigators obtained an authenticated offer and payment setup from a private buyer. The buyer did not know the shirt was being taken without permission. No payment has yet been released.

Document	Excerpt
Offer to account LQ-9	"\$9,000 on collection tonight, provided this is the Glass Meridian shirt with the left-hem repair and right-cuff nick. Send the sealed parcel to depot hold. I will inspect it before paying."
Account verification	LQ-9 belongs solely to Leah Mercer. Payment would go to her personal account. It is not a store account.
Consignment agreement	Owner of shirt: Wren Estate. Threadbare Archive may display it and negotiate a sale. No employee may remove, pledge or sell it independently.
Store sale terms	A sale approved by the estate would pay the estate \$15,300 and the store \$2,700. No employee receives a personal commission.

Leah's verified message to the buyer: 'Tonight's collection will settle what I owe before tomorrow. Please use the private account, not the shop.' This shows an intended benefit; it does not establish a completed sale.

Marco's rejected trade offer and Cal's interest are real, but neither is evidence that their parcels contain the original.

F / Depot hold instructions

The courier has placed all four parcels on hold, unopened. Its current shelving rules and scan record are below. A parcel stays in the last scanned location until a release scan is recorded. There have been no release scans.

Sorting field	Location rule
Original route N	Bay A
Original route E	Bay B
Original route S	Bay C
Original route W	Bay D
Final mass below 290 g	Shelf 2
Final mass 290-309 g inclusive	Shelf 4
Final mass 310 g or more	Shelf 6

Current scan: all four parcels accepted at Moon Street Depot at 6:41 PM. Use the ORIGINAL destination route plus the verified parcel mass. The private-collection instruction changes release permission, not the shelving rule.

Depot staff will retrieve the identified parcel. Your task is to name the depot, bay, shelf and parcel number, not to visit or intercept anyone.

Write the evidence chain in order: garment identity -> mass -> parcel -> original destination -> label holder -> collection location.

Your verdict

Write a reasoned answer to each question with evidence to support your solution.

1. Which garment is the authentic Glass Meridian shirt? Cite two identifying details.

2. Which parcel contains it? Show your weight calculation.

3. Where was that parcel originally booked to go, and how do you know?

4. Who diverted the shirt, and what connects that person to this parcel?

5. What was the intended financial benefit? Where exactly can the shirt now be recovered?

Before opening the answers: does your explanation fit every verified record, and can you rule out the other suspects?