



A Phone Arrives at Your Desk

- Role: Investigative Journalist
- The Status: Serial murder case gone cold. 3 victims. Zero leads.
- The Catalyst: An anonymous package arrives containing the third victim's phone.
- The Objective: Reconstruct the victim's final 72 hours.

Time is the Core Mechanic



Messages: Sorted by Conversations



Calls: Sorted chronologically



Photos: Sorted by Date



Notes: Sorted by Last Modified

Synthesize to rebuild the 72-hour timeline.



Thursday, 2 AM: A new photo in the gallery. Darkness. An open window. Geolocation: an abandoned warehouse on the city's outskirts.



Closed Systems vs. Open Investigations



Inside Job	Dead Signal
System: Closed (Internal Company Network)	System: Open (Points outward to locations and the real world)
Scope: Bounded Evidence (5 Suspects)	Scope: Expanding Reality (Other victims, external threats)
Tension: Moral Ambiguity	Tension: External Danger

Wednesday, 11 PM: The victim texted an unknown number: "I know." The evidence reaches into reality.

Horror Constructed Through Data

Photo
Geolocation

+

Another Victim's
Last Known Position

=

Dread

Encrypted
Note Name

+

All 3 Victims'
Contact Lists

=

The Trusted Killer

Active
47-Minute Call

+

Victim #1's Number
(Deceased 3 Weeks Ago)

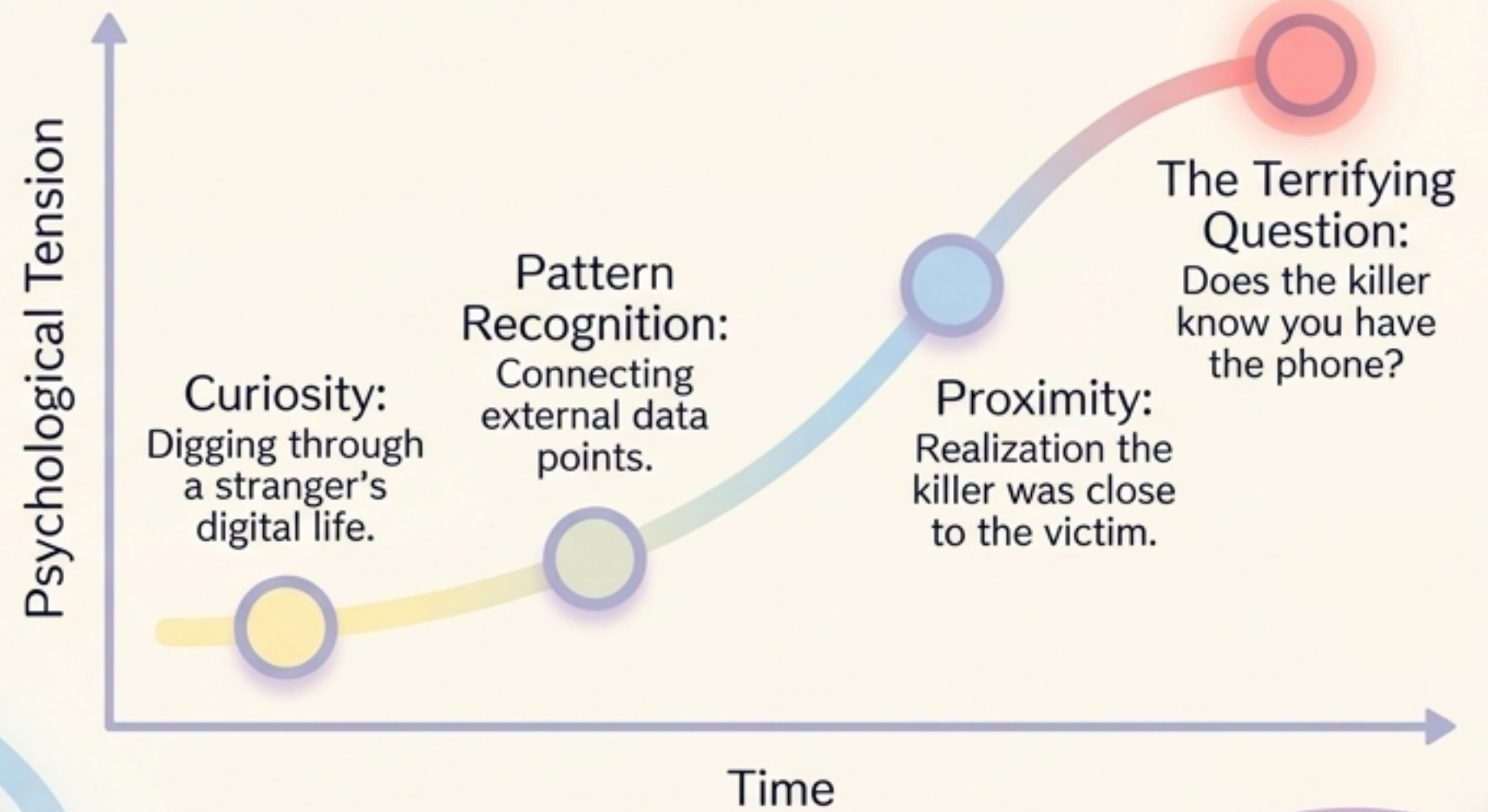
=

**Anatomy of
Data Horror**

**Someone is answering
a dead person's phone.**



The Emotional Pacing of a Dead Signal



The screen glitches. Late in the game, the phone receives new messages. It is the last signal from someone who can no longer speak.