Solution

Right then, ladies and gentlemen. It seems to me as if more than one of you had a reason to want Ms Theresa Ventnor-Bernard dead. But the question is, which one of you actually did it?

There are certainly enough motives. Money, love, revenge, all the primary reasons for murder are there, so it's no surprise to me that this weekend ended in tragedy.
The question is, which of you decided the world would be better off without her?

We know how she was killed. The sculpture. What we didn't know was who had the opportunity to cause that heavy object to fall down on top of her. It could only have been someone with access to the study during the day and many of you were heard in there with Theresa.

I admit it was a puzzle, not least because none of the overheard arguments ended in a loud crash. However, I think the clues found by the guests at the chateau have given me the answers to this particular problem.

Firstly, the sculpture wasn't pushed. It was carefully set up to be toppled. The culprit removed the perspex pillar which kept it in balance prior to Ms Ventnor-Bernard's arrival.

This means the person who removed the pillar can only be someone who was in the study alone, unsupervised. Yes, I'm looking at you, Alex. You were the only person to have visited the study alone. Looking for a button you said. Very unlikely!

We know you met Theresa in the study earlier, and you even gave us a motive – she fired you! As your conversation continued, you took note of where she usually sat and had time to plan exactly how you were going to kill her.

You returned later that afternoon, not to hunt for a button but rather to remove the perspex support and lay a length of your invisible thread from the sculpture to the patio doors. This is where you were stood this afternoon, waiting for your moment.

As soon as Theresa sat down, you gave the thread a sharp pull and, as you knew would happen, the sculpture fell on top of her, leaving you free to continue to design for the high street fashion chain that has become your bread and butter income.

And so the killer is Alex De Luca. I do hope you suit prison uniform. That's the only thing you'll be wearing from now on!

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