

THE HOLLOWMERE THEFT

A stolen relic at a school for magic. Easy · about 45 minutes · 2 or more players. Everyone plays, including the host.

WHAT YOU NEED

- This PDF, printed single-sided on A4 or Letter (black and white works)
- 3 envelopes or folders, tape, pens, scratch paper
- Everyone's phones (no app or account needed)
- Recommended: a laptop on the TV for the story, soundtrack and live events

PREP (10 MINUTES, BEFORE GUESTS ARRIVE)

1. Page 2 has labels **A, B, C**. Cut them out and tape one to each envelope.
2. Every later page shows **Envelope A, B or C** in its top-left corner. File each page in the matching envelope **without reading it**.
3. Seal B and C. Leave A closed on the table.
4. Laptop on the TV: open the case link, tap **Host a new game**, then **Make this the Command Screen (TV)**, then **Enable sound**.
5. Players scan the QR code on the TV, type a name and pick a role. Don't tap Start yet.

SET THE MOOD (OPTIONAL)

Candles or warm lamps, low light. Let the TV soundtrack play (music box and crackling fire). Make four house ribbons (red, blue, green, white) and let each guest pick a house. A plate of "enchanted" sweets for each clue solved.

HOUSE RULES

Don't open an envelope until the app says so. Don't search the internet; everything you need is on paper. Everything in this case is fictional.

CASE APP



[CASENIGHT.PAGES.DEV/HOLLOWMERE/](https://casenight.pages.dev/hollowmere/)

This is a public link: anyone with the game code can join. Every phone and the TV stay in sync. No printer? Skip this pack: every document is also in each phone's Evidence tab.

RUNNING THE GAME

1. Tap **Start the case** on any phone. Lights down: a short story plays on the TV, then the clock starts. Open Envelope A.
2. Each role holds different evidence, so talk. Interrogate suspects in the app (each question costs a minute). Type answers into a phone; the app says when to open the next envelope.
3. **Live events**: the TV will throw pop challenges, team decisions and a blackout at you. Answer fast on a phone. Right answers add time; wrong or slow ones cost time.
4. Stuck 5+ minutes? Take a hint. Hint 3 gives the answer, so nobody stays stuck.
5. After Envelope C, file the final report. Then the true story plays on the TV.

A

ENVELOPE A · OPEN WHEN YOU TAP START

B

ENVELOPE B · DO NOT OPEN UNTIL THE APP SAYS SO

C

ENVELOPE C · DO NOT OPEN UNTIL THE APP SAYS SO

THE GILDED HOURGLASS IS GONE

HOLLOWMERE ACADEMY OF THE ARCANE ARTS · THE NIGHT BEFORE THE LANTERN CUP · 2:10 AM

BY OWL, SEALED IN VIOLET WAX

FROM THE DESK OF HEADMISTRESS ORIEL VANE

To the Prefects' Council,

Forgive the hour. At some point before midnight, the Gilded Hourglass was taken from its pedestal in the Founders' Hall. Hettie found the pedestal empty on her rounds at 1:45.

You know the old law. At dawn on the morning of the Lantern Cup, the Headmistress must turn the Hourglass in front of the whole school. If it is not turned, the Charter of Hollowmere lapses, and the Board of Governors may appoint whoever they please to run this school.

Lady Marisol guards the Hall door. She tells me, deeply embarrassed, that she fell asleep. She has not slept in three hundred years.

I have gathered what I can. Find the Hourglass before dawn, and find who took it.

O. Vane

THE FOUR HOUSES (FROM THE ACADEMY CREST)

HOUSE	ELEMENT	SYMBOL ON THE CREST	COLOUR
Ember	Fire	The flame	Red
Tidewell	Water	The wave	Blue
Thornwood	Earth	The root	Green
Gale	Air	The wind	White

YOUR TASK

Work through the evidence together. The case app asks one question per envelope. Each correct answer unseals the next envelope. At the end, make your accusation: **who**, **how**, and **why**.

In this envelope: A1 Summons · A2 Persons of interest · A3 The Founders' Hall · A4 Caretaker's clock ledger

PERSONS OF INTEREST

HEADMISTRESS ORIEL VANE

HEAD OF HOLLOWMERE · 19 YEARS

Must turn the Hourglass at dawn. Has argued with the Board of Governors all year about the school's budget.

PROFESSOR SILAS CRANE

MASTER OF ALCHEMY · HEAD OF THORNWOOD

Brilliant, impatient, and never seen without his silver-buckled boots. Applied for Headmaster when Vane was chosen. Lives in the Alchemy Tower.

WREN ASHBY

SIXTH YEAR · EMBER HOUSE CAPTAIN

Ember is in second place for the Lantern Cup. Wren has said, loudly and often, that Ember "deserves it more than anyone".

HETTIE PLUME

CARETAKER · 31 YEARS

Carries keys to every door in the castle. Keeps the clocks wound. Grumbles that the Headmistress never thanks her.

SIR BARTHOLOMEW NETTLE

CASTLE GHOST · DIED 1702

Drifts through walls and loves gossip. Like every Hollowmere ghost, he cannot lift anything heavier than a feather.

LADY MARISOL

PORTRAIT GUARD OF THE FOUNDERS' HALL

Opens the Hall door only for staff who give the nightly password. Proud, sharp-eyed, and (until last night) sleepless.

SCENE REPORT: THE FOUNDERS' HALL

WRITTEN BY THE HEADMISTRESS

2:00 AM

The pedestal is empty. Nothing else in the Hall was touched. The windows are sealed and the only door is the one Lady Marisol guards.

As every student learns in their first week: **the moment the Hourglass leaves its pedestal, every clock in the Founders' Hall stops.** All three have stopped. I have not touched them.

CLOCK 1	GRANDFATHER	CLOCK 2	MANTEL	CLOCK 3	WATER CLOCK
"OLD TOM"		"LITTLE BELL"		"THE DRIP"	
12:05		11:50		11:40	

STATEMENT · LADY MARISOL, PORTRAIT GUARD

GIVEN AT 1:55 AM

"Nobody gave me the password last night. Nobody. I remember Hettie's rounds at half past ten, and after that the corridor was quiet. Then there was a bitter, herbal smell drifting under my frame, like the Alchemy classrooms, and the next thing I knew Hettie was shouting. I have never been so ashamed."

HETTIE PLUME'S CLOCK LEDGER

"CLOCKS WHAT WON'T BEHAVE"			CHECKED EVERY SUNDAY
CLOCK	WHERE	HOW IT RUNS	NOTES
Great Bell	Bell Tower	Exact	The only honest clock in the castle
Old Tom	Founders' Hall	10 minutes fast	Founder set it fast "so no one is ever late". Leave it.
Little Bell	Founders' Hall	5 minutes slow	Spring is tired. Ordered a new one.
The Drip	Founders' Hall	15 minutes slow	Water clocks always lag. Top up on Sundays.
Library clock	Library	2 minutes fast	Librarian likes it that way
Kitchen clock	Great Kitchen	Exact	Cook would have my head otherwise

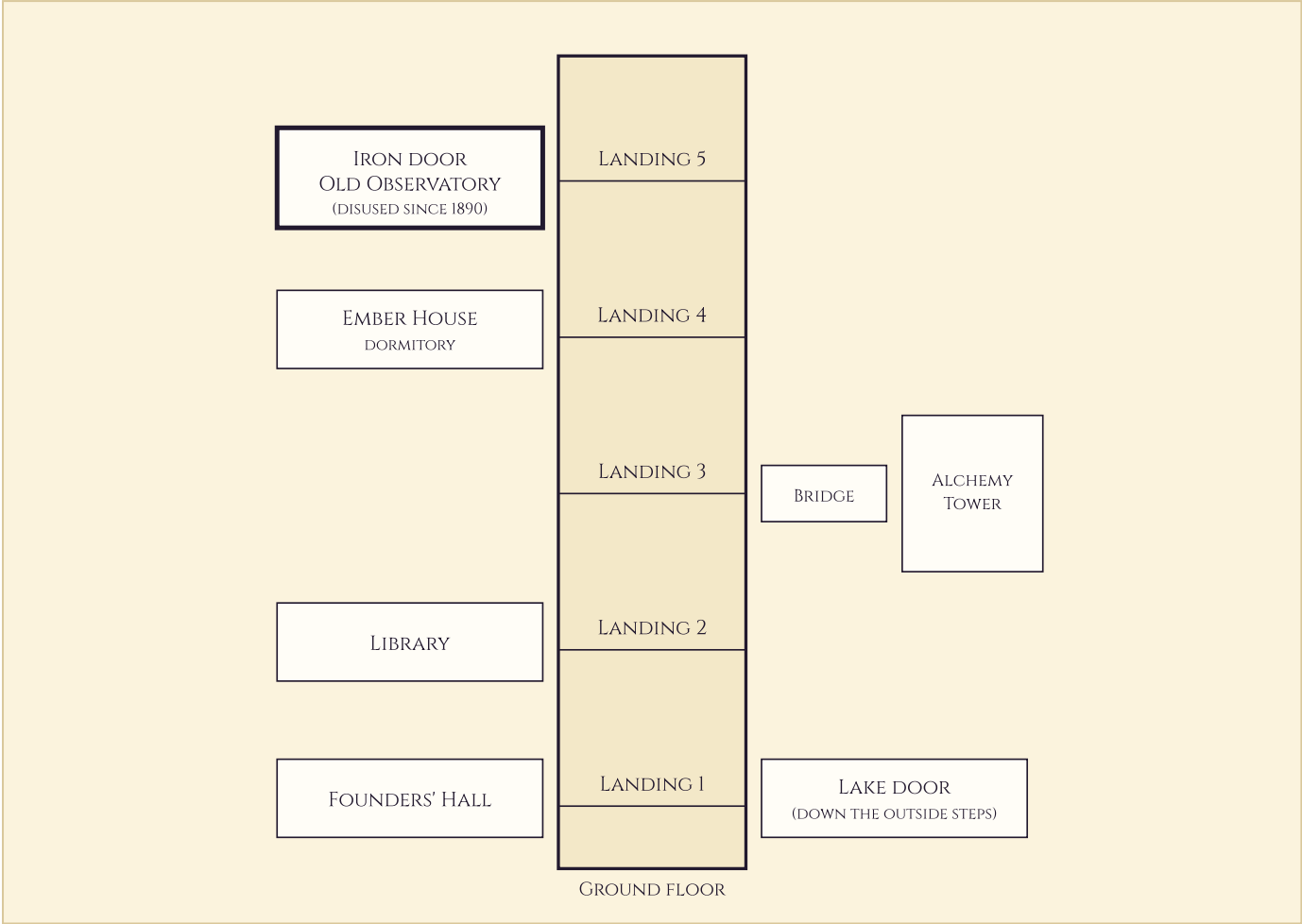
Hettie: "I've wound those clocks for thirty-one years. They're wrong, but they're wrong the same way every day."

WHAT THE WHISPERING STAIR REMEMBERS

The great stair keeps a whisper of every step taken on it. The Headmistress asked it to repeat last night. A prefect wrote it down.

TRANSCRIPT OF THE STAIR'S WHISPERS			LAST NIGHT
TIME	LANDING	WHAT THE STAIR HEARD	
10:30	Landing 1	Hettie's boots and her ring of keys, then her humming as she went down to the kitchens.	
10:58	Landing 2	Soft slippers, pages rustling, going into the library.	
11:31	Landing 1	Light, quick steps going down past the landing toward the lake door. A lantern squeaking. Giggling.	
11:48	Landing 3	Heavy steps coming off the bridge. A small metal <i>clink</i> with every step. A cork popping.	
11:49	Landing 2	Heavy steps going down. <i>Clink, clink.</i>	
11:50	Landing 1	Heavy steps stop near the Founders' Hall door. A small glass vial set down on stone, then a faint hiss.	
11:56	Landing 1	Heavy steps, breathing hard, starting up. <i>Clink, clink.</i>	
11:57	Landing 2	The same heavy, clinking steps going up.	
11:58	Landing 3	The same steps go up past the bridge without crossing it.	
11:59	Landing 4	The same steps, slower now, still going up. A sleepy voice behind a door says "Who's there?"	
12:01	Landing 5	An iron door groans open. Then it groans shut.	
12:09	Landing 5	The iron door groans again.	
12:10	Landing 4	Clinking steps going down, quickly now.	
12:12	Landing 3	Clinking steps cross the bridge toward the far tower.	
12:20	Landing 1	Light, quick steps coming back up from the lake door. A lantern squeaking. Someone shushing.	

THE GREAT STAIR AND ITS LANDINGS



The stair is the only way up to Landings 4 and 5. The bridge on Landing 3 is the only way into the Alchemy Tower.

NIGHT LANTERN LEDGER

STUDENTS OUT AFTER CURFEW MUST SIGN OUT A LANTERN

OUT	BACK	STUDENT	WHERE
9:40	10:05	Ines Okafor (Gale)	Owlery, sending a letter home
11:30	12:20	Wren Ashby (Ember)	Lake, with Pip, Tamsin and Rhys of Tidewell, "moon-gazing"

STATEMENT · PIP ARDEN, TIDEWELL, 5TH YEAR

TAKEN BY A PREFECT

"Yes, we snuck out with Wren. We were at the lake the whole time, skipping stones and watching the moon. Wren never left. Please don't tell Professor Crane, he'll take fifty points."

STATEMENT · HETTIE PLUME

TAKEN BY THE HEADMISTRESS

"After my 10:30 round I went straight down to the kitchens. Cook and I were up until one arguing about her damson pie. Ask her. Then I did my 1:45 round and found the pedestal bare. I've got a key to that Hall, but I never use it at night. Lady Marisol would tell everyone."

STATEMENT · SIR BARTHOLOMEW NETTLE

GIVEN WHILE FLOATING UPSIDE DOWN

"I spent the whole evening in the library haunting the Librarian. Marvellous fun. Oh, I couldn't carry an hourglass even if I wanted to, dear. Tried to lift a teacup in 1811. Went straight through it."

INSIDE THE OLD OBSERVATORY

REPORT · PREFECT ON DUTY

WRITTEN AT THE IRON DOOR

Thick dust everywhere, except a fresh path of boot prints from the door to the great brass orrery in the centre of the room. The orrery has a locked compartment under its base with four brass dials, each numbered 0 to 9.

Engraved around the base of the orrery, worn but readable:

*First the wind, then the wave,
then the root, then the flame:
count the moons each star doth keep,
and the brass shall wake from sleep.*

DIAL PLATE

LEFT TO RIGHT

[?] [?] [?] [?]

Dial 1 · Dial 2 · Dial 3 · Dial 4

"THE HOLLOWMERE HEAVENS" (LIBRARY COPY)

Found open on a library table. A prefect says it was shelved last week.

PLATE XII		THE STARS OF THE FOUNDING	
STAR	KNOWN AS	MOONS	COLOUR IN THE NIGHT SKY
Pyra	House star of Ember	3	Deep red
Vesper	The Evening Star	4	Pale gold
Nerith	House star of Tidewell	5	Blue-green
Corvin	The Raven's Eye	1	Silver
Bracken	House star of Thornwood	2	Mossy green
Zephis	House star of Gale	7	White

The founders named one star for each house. Each house's star shares the house's element: fire, water, earth or air.

POTION STORES INVENTORY · ALCHEMY TOWER				KEPT BY PROF. S. CRANE
POTION	KEY INGREDIENTS	LISTED	ON SHELF	LAST SIGNED OUT
Draught of Deep Rest	Wormwood, valerian, moonpoppy	6	5	(none signed)
Brightmind Tonic	Mint, rosemary, starlight	12	12	Oct 2, Nurse Pell
Fire-Ward Salve	Aloe, salamander ash	8	7	Oct 9, Prof. Lune
Label on the Draught of Deep Rest shelf: <i>"Not to be opened near portraits. The fumes alone will put a painting to sleep."</i>				

LETTER FOUND ON PROFESSOR CRANE'S DESK

BOARD OF GOVERNORS SEAL

Dear Silas,

As discussed, the Board remains unhappy with Headmistress Vane. Our hands are tied while the Charter stands. Should it ever lapse, the Board would appoint a new head at once, and you would be our first and only choice.

We trust this stays between us.

Lord Aldous Fenwick, Chair of Governors

LANTERN CUP STANDINGS

POSTED IN THE GREAT HALL

TIDEWELL 455 · EMBER 410 · GALE 388 · THORNWOOD 301