

FREE PREVIEW

THE LOST & FOUND

A Narrative Hall Campaign Codex

COZY MYSTERY · SMALL-TOWN SECRETS · GENTLE PARANORMAL
· SYSTEM-AGNOSTIC

A few opening pages of the campaign. The full campaign, with every scene, NPC, map note, and handout, is the complete download on narrativehall.com.

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HOW TO USE THIS CODEX

This is not a rulebook. It contains no statistics, no encounter math, and no system mechanics. It is a **story bible**, a complete, warm, internally consistent town with a season of connected mysteries, a full cast, mapped places, and a session-by-session shape you can run with any tabletop system you already own.

You only need three things in your head before the first session.

1. **The premise.** In the small market town of Hartleigh, a quiet woman named Hazel Penhallow keeps the Lost & Found, a little shop of unclaimed and unwanted things. She can feel the last strong feeling pressed into an object: grief, guilt, joy, fear. Never the facts. Just the feeling. And this season, the things that wash up on her counter all belonged to the same girl, who everyone agrees ran off thirty years ago, and who never did.
2. **The tone.** Warm, wry, lamplit. A town where paying attention and being kind is the only superpower that matters, and the strangest thing in it is *gentle*. The stakes are emotional, not violent. Nobody needs to swing a sword. The hardest thing anyone does here is tell the truth to someone they love.
3. **The fair-play promise.** This is a real mystery, run honestly. The gift never hands the players the answer, it points. The truth is always there to be found by paying attention to people. Every reveal is earned by a clue the players could have caught.

A note on the gentle paranormal. Hartleigh has exactly one uncanny thing in it: Hazel's gift. It is small, unreliable, and warm. There are no monsters, no eldritch horror, no cosmic dread. If your table wants the supernatural even softer, you can play the gift as nothing more than a deeply perceptive woman's intuition, the campaign holds either way. Wherever the gift matters, you'll find a short **Light GM Hook** sidebar on how to stage "a reading" in your own system.

A note on the heat and the warmth. This is a cozy mystery. Keep it kind. The deaths are quiet and mostly old; the violence is offstage; the comfort is the point. Run it the way you'd run a good evening with friends, tea, lamplight, a puzzle, and people you come to love.

CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

Hartleigh is the kind of town that looks like it was drawn for a biscuit tin. A market square with a worn cross at its centre, a millpond fringed with willows, water-meadows that flood silver in spring, narrow lanes that all seem to lead back to the same warm window. Everyone knows everyone. The same families have run the same shops for a century. The town has a story it tells about itself, that it is gentle, that it looks after its own, that nothing bad has ever really happened here, and like most towns, it believes that story because believing it is more comfortable than checking.

On the square, between the tea room and the ironmonger's, there is a shop with a hand-painted sign: **The Lost & Found**. It is run by **Hazel Penhallow**, a woman in her forties who came to Hartleigh a few years ago, fixed up the old premises, and quietly made herself useful. People bring her things. Lost things, broken things, unwanted things, the contents of cleared-out attics and the bottoms of drawers. She mends what she can, finds owners for what she's able, and keeps the rest in a ledger of the unclaimed. The town finds her restful. They do not know that when she holds an object, she feels the last strong feeling pressed into it, and so she knows, more often than anyone should, when a smile is hiding something, and which of the cheerful things people hand her are heavy with grief.

She has kept that gift to herself. In a town that prizes comfort, a woman who can feel the truth of things is a frightening thing to be, and Hazel knows it. So she is careful. She is kind. She does not pry. She has built, for the first time in a life of not-quite-belonging, something that feels like a home.

This season, the home gets tested.

It begins with the objects. One by one, things start coming into the Lost & Found that all carry the same feeling, a young woman's grief and fear and love, decades old and still bright. A hair comb. A dance card. A single shoe. A locket. Hazel feels them and goes cold, because she knows what she is holding: the last strong feelings of someone who died frightened, a long time ago, and was never grieved out loud. And when she starts, gently, to ask, she hits the smoothest wall a town can build, the wall of *oh, her, she ran off to the city, didn't she, years and years ago*.

She didn't. Thirty years ago, on the night of the **Lantern Fair**, a nineteen-year-old named **Posy Marlow** went down to the millpond and never came home. The town agreed, quietly and without ever quite saying so, that she had run off, because that was kinder than the alternatives, and because one or two people needed it to be true. Her things were boxed and

given away and lost. And now, an attic is being cleared, and Posy's things are working their way back into the light, one at a time, into the one pair of hands in Hartleigh that can feel what they have to say.

The players arrive in the middle of this, as Hazel's friends and helpers at the shop, as newcomers drawn into the town's warmth, as the people who can't quite let "she ran off" stand. Whatever brings them, they will spend a season solving small, human mysteries that each town wants kept quiet, and discovering that all of them are threads of one larger, gentler, sadder truth, building toward the next Lantern Fair, when the lanterns go out on the millpond and Posy Marlow finally comes home.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Five ways to bring a party into Hartleigh. Mix them, the warmest tables give each player a different reason to care.

The Shop Hands. The players help Hazel run the Lost & Found, a friend, an apprentice, a lodger upstairs, a neighbour who's always in and out. They are there when the first object comes in, and they watch a careful woman go quietly pale over a child's hair comb. They're inside the mystery from the first afternoon. *Best for parties who want to belong somewhere from minute one.*

The Newcomers. The players are new to Hartleigh, moved for the quiet, inherited a cottage, came to get away from a city and a life. The town folds them in with tea and gossip and gentle nosiness. But newcomers see what locals have learned not to: the things that don't quite add up, the name nobody finishes saying. *Best for parties who like to learn a place by its secrets.*

The Returners. One or more players have a thread back to Hartleigh, grew up here and left, or are connected to Posy's story without knowing it (a child of someone who was there that night; a relative come to clear the very attic that's stirring all this up). The town remembers them, which is both a welcome and a problem. *Best for parties who want the stakes to be personal and the welcome complicated.*

The Quiet Investigators. The players have a small, legitimate reason to ask questions, a local historian writing up the town's records, a solicitor settling an old estate, a journalist doing a soft piece on the Lantern Fair, a genealogist a family hired to find someone. The questions are innocent. The answers are not. *Best for parties who like a paper trail and a polite excuse to knock on doors.*

The Retired Detective and Friends. For a built-in double act: one player is **Bram Ashcombe**, a retired city detective who moved to Hartleigh for peace and is constitutionally incapable of leaving a loose thread alone; the others are the friends he ropes in. He brings procedure; the town brings the things procedure can't reach; Hazel brings the things nobody can explain. *Best for tables who want the classic sleuth-and-companions shape.*

Want the rest?

This is just the opening. **The Lost & Found: Campaign Codex + GM Kit** is ready to run: a complete, system-agnostic kit you can drop into any tabletop game.

Get the full download at

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