

Grimshade City: A Tabletop Skirmish Game

The flickering gaslight cast long, grotesque shadows on the cobblestone street. Rain, slicked with grime, ran down the gargoyle-infested walls of the old apothecary, pooling in the ruts and potholes that scarred the alleyway. A lone figure, cloaked and hooded, pressed against the cold stone, their breath misting in the chill air.

This was the Gutter, the festering underbelly of Grimshade City, where the six noble houses dared not tread openly. Yet their agents lurked everywhere, their eyes and ears ever watchful for any advantage in the ceaseless struggle for power.

The figure, a young woman named Elara, adjusted the leather straps of her pack, the weight of its contents a familiar burden. Within lay her tools: vials of shimmering potions, bundles of dried herbs, and a gleaming silver syringe loaded with a potent alchemical concoction. Tonight, she was no mere surgeon, no simple healer. Tonight, she was a Serpent's Fang, an agent of House Vashti, and her mission was simple: retrieve the artifact.

A low growl echoed from the depths of the abandoned building across the street, followed by the metallic clang of armor. Her contact, a grizzled veteran of the City Guard known only as "Ironhand", emerged, his face a mask of grim determination.

"The beast is restless," he rasped, his voice barely a whisper. "Grew strong feeding on the residual magic of the artifact. We'll need to move quickly if we want to get out of here alive."

Elara nodded, her heart pounding in her chest. This was no ordinary beast. The whispers spoke of a Chimera, a monstrous fusion of lion, serpent, and drake, warped and twisted by the arcane energies that pulsed through the city's veins.

Taking a deep breath, Elara drew a small, intricately wrought vial from her pack. It glowed faintly in the dim light, the liquid within swirling with an inner luminescence. This was no time for fear. The fate of House Vashti, and perhaps the city itself, hung in the balance.

"Let's finish this," she murmured, her voice a steel trap in the night. The hunt had begun.

Contents

Contents	3
I. Welcome to Grimshade City	8
Introduction	8
Ways to Play Grimshade City:	9
What You Need to Play	10
Game Overview	10
Basic Mechanics	10
II. Core Game Mechanics	12
Actions and Activations	12
Movement	13
General Movement (Mv)	13
Sprint Movement (Sm)	13
Movement Abilities and Actions:	13
Difficult Terrain	14
Climbing	14
Falling	14
Attacking	14
Defending	15
Cover	15
Damage and Wounds	16
Morale (M)	16
Skill Checks	16
Miniature Base Sizes and Facing	16
General Terrain Rules	17
Line of Sight	17
Difficult Terrain	17
Cover	17
Specific Terrain Types	17
Magic Defense (MD)	18
Healing	18
Additional D20 Mechanics	18
III. Heroes of the City	20
Archetypes	20
Leader (Trailblazer)	24
Knight	25

Dead Shot	26
Rogue/Scout	27
Healer	28
Mage	29
Gadeteer (Specialist)	30
Blood Priest (New!)	32
Shadowmancer (New!)	33
Ironclad Brawler (New!)	34
Attributes	35
Hero Advancement	36
Archetype Point System	36
Hero Example	38
Experience and Leveling	39
Equipment and Upgrades	39
Grimshade City: Equipment Upgrades	39
Grimshade City: Weapon Stat Lines with Point Costs	42
IV. Magic in the Shadows	43
Spellcasting Attributes	43
Spell Levels and Casting	43
Mishaps and Backlash	44
Schools of Magic	44
Advanced Spellcasting	45
Magical Items and Artifacts	45
Mage Magic Point Progression	45
Spell List	46
Elemental School Spell List	47
V. The Momentum Engine: Shared Resources and Teamwork	48
Resource Points (RP)	48
Contributing to the Pool	48
Spending RP	49
Team Abilities	51
VI. Monsters of the Gutter	52
Monster Stats	52
Reactive Actions	53
Monster Bestiary	54
Challenge Rating (CR) in Grimshade City	54
Boss Monsters	67

1. The Glimmerheart Behemoth (Beast):	68
2. The Clockwork Colossus (Construct):	69
3. The Spectral Weaver (Undead):	70
4. The Alchemically Augmented Kingpin (Humanoid):	71
5. The Gargoyle's Curse (Aberration):	72
Boss Monster Loot Table	74
VII. Running Grimshade City	76
Multiplayer Rules	76
Reactions and Threat Management	76
Demo Scenario: The Foundry's Heart	78
Grimshade City: A Gazetteer of Shadows and Secrets	80
Grimshade City: Archetype Leaders	83
House Valerius Hero	84
House Vashti Hero	85
House Thorne Hero	86
House Raeth Hero	87
House Eldrin Hero	88
House Cadmus Hero	89
Creating Your Own Adventures	90
PvE Encounters:	90
PvP Encounters (Incorporating Monsters):	90
VIII. Appendices	91
Glossary of Terms	91
Quick Reference Sheets	91
Index	92

The air hung heavy and humid in the forgotten depths of the Grimshade Foundry. Rusted gears hung like morbid Christmas ornaments from crumbling catwalks, and pools of toxic sludge glowed with an eerie luminescence. Each step sent a tremor through the metal grating, echoing through the vast chamber like a death rattle.

"Remember, stay sharp," Kaelen muttered, his gauntlet scraping against the rusted railing. The veteran Knight of House Valerius, his armor scarred from countless battles against the creatures of the Gutter, surveyed the chamber with a grimace. "The air itself feels wrong here."

Beside him, Elara, the Serpent's Fang surgeon, scanned the chamber with a practiced eye. "Residual alchemical energies," she confirmed, adjusting the silver syringe at her hip. "Potent... and unstable. Whatever warped this place wasn't natural."

Their team, a motley but experienced crew assembled by the ever-ambitious House Vashti, moved with practiced caution. There was Rhys, the sardonic Dead Shot, his hand never far from the haft of his rune-carved weapon. Behind him slunk Silas, the Whisper's Shadow, a Rogue whose loyalty was as fleeting as the shadows themselves. Bringing up the rear was Marius, the Arcanist, his staff crackling with restless energy as he murmured arcane counter-chants.

They were here for one reason: an artifact, a heart of pulsating crystal rumored to hold immense power. House Vashti paid handsomely for such trinkets, and their rivals paid even more for the secrets they contained.

A low groan, like the grinding of tectonic plates, echoed through the chamber. Rhys swore under his breath. "About time. I was getting bored."

From the heart of the Foundry, where molten metal once flowed like water, a monstrosity rose. The Clockwork Colossus, a towering behemoth of gears, pipes, and stolen souls, stirred to life. Its single baleful eye, a lens of cracked crystal, fixed on the intruders, and chains whipped through the air with a sound like a death knell.

"By the Serpent's Grace..." Elara whispered, her fingers instinctively reaching for a vial of shimmering liquid. "It's awake."

The Colossus lunged. Kaelen met its charge head-on, his shield groaning under the impact. Sparks showered as metal met metal, and the very foundations of the Foundry seemed to tremble.

"Take its limbs!" Marius roared, unleashing a bolt of crackling energy that shattered a chain link inches from his face. "Aim for the joints!"

Rhys grinned, a predator scenting blood. With a flick of his wrist, a rune-etched axe spun through the air, severing a piston with a shower of sparks. The Colossus roared, a sound of tortured metal and broken machinery, but it was already adapting, its remaining limbs lashing out with terrifying speed.

Silas, a shadow given form, darted between the Colossus's legs, his blades flashing. But even his agility was no match for the sheer unpredictable fury of the machine. He cried out as a grappling hook slammed into his shoulder, dragging him toward the churning gears of the Colossus's chest.

"Silas!" Elara screamed, but her warning came too late. The Rogue, his eyes wide with terror, vanished into the monstrous maw of the machine. A sickening crunch echoed through the chamber, followed by a silence more terrifying than any roar.

Kaelen, his face a mask of grim determination, locked eyes with Elara. They were outmatched, outgunned, and now, outnumbered.

"Run?" he gasped, the effort of holding back the Colossus clearly taking its toll.

Elara, her gaze fixed on the spot where Silas had been devoured, felt a chill run down her spine. This was no longer about the artifact, or the bounty, or even the glory of House Vashti. This was about survival.

But there was something else in her eyes, something cold and calculating. Retreat was not in her nature, not anymore. Not while the beast still breathed.

"No," she said, her voice surprisingly steady. "We end this."

I. Welcome to Grimshade City

Introduction

Welcome to Grimshade City!

This document provides the core rules for playing Grimshade City, a tabletop skirmish game where you control a team of heroes battling monstrous foes in a world of urban fantasy.

Clash of Styles: Grimshade City is a tabletop skirmish game where medieval fantasy collides with urbanpunk. Imagine knights in plate armor wielding glowing swords forged from the hearts of slain monsters, facing off against nimble rogues who dart between rusted iron scaffolding and crumbling gothic towers.

Dynamic Action and Tactics: The game uses an alternating activation system driven by **Action Points (AP)**. Players take turns activating one model at a time, spending AP to perform actions like moving, attacking, or using special abilities. This creates a dynamic and tactical experience where **miniature facing, flanking maneuvers, and clever use of terrain** can turn the tide of battle.

Choose Your Path: Grimshade City offers thrilling gameplay in a variety of modes! Assemble your hero team and face the challenges of the Gutter in cooperative **PVE scenarios** against monstrous foes. Delve deeper into the city's secrets through an engaging **campaign**, where your heroes grow in power and uncover hidden truths. Or, test your tactical skills against other players in thrilling **PVP battles**, pitting hero against hero amidst the chaos of Grimshade.

Core Mechanics:

1. **Turn Structure:** Players roll for initiative, then take turns activating one hero at a time, creating a dynamic back-and-forth flow.
2. **Action Points (AP):** Each hero has a pool of Action Points to spend on various actions, such as moving, attacking, casting spells, or using special abilities.
3. **Movement & Positioning:** Carefully measure your movements and utilize the terrain to your advantage. Use cover to protect yourself from attacks, flank enemies for bonus damage, and navigate the treacherous environment with special movement abilities.
4. **Combat:** Engage in thrilling combat using a D20 dice pool system. Roll to hit, defend against attacks, and inflict damage based on your hero's stats, weapons, and abilities.
5. **Magic:** Wield the power of magic! Mages cast spells using **Magic Points (MP)** and their **Wit (WT)** attribute, unleashing devastating attacks, protecting their allies, or manipulating the battlefield with their arcane might. But beware of mishaps and backlash! Spellcasting is a risky endeavor.
6. **Morale:** The horrors of Grimshade City can test even the bravest heroes. Morale tests determine your heroes' resilience in the face of fear and danger.
7. **The Momentum Engine:** Work together! Grimshade City features a shared resource pool called the **Momentum Engine**, allowing players to contribute **Resource Points (RP)** and spend them on powerful team abilities or enhanced actions, encouraging teamwork and strategic resource management.
8. **Equipment & Upgrades:** Customize your heroes with a variety of weapons, armor, gadgets, and magical items. Defeat enemies, complete objectives, and earn loot to enhance your heroes' strengths and overcome their weaknesses.
9. **Miniature Scale:** 32mm scale miniatures, emphasizing dynamic poses and detailed equipment.

Grimshade City is a fast-paced, tactical skirmish game that combines the excitement of fantasy combat with the gritty atmosphere of urbanpunk. With its dynamic gameplay, rich setting, and endless customization options, Grimshade City offers a thrilling tabletop gaming experience for all types of players!

Ways to Play Grimshade City:

Grimshade City is a versatile game that can be enjoyed in a variety of ways, allowing you to tailor the experience to your preferences and play style.

- **Monster Hunts (PvE):** Assemble a team of heroes and face off against challenging boss monsters, delving into the depths of Grimshade City to uncover ancient artifacts and uncover its secrets. The game provides rules for randomly generating monsters and creating exciting encounters.
- **Campaign Play:** Embark on a thrilling campaign, where your heroes grow in power and experience as they navigate the city's dangers, complete missions for powerful factions, and face the consequences of their choices. Develop your heroes' skills, acquire powerful equipment, and unravel a gripping narrative that unfolds over multiple sessions.
- **Skirmish Battles (PvP):** Challenge your friends to tactical skirmish battles, pitting your heroes against each other in a contest of skill and strategy. Utilize cunning tactics, exploit your opponents' weaknesses, and claim victory in the shadowy streets of Grimshade City. You can even incorporate monsters into your PvP battles, adding another layer of challenge and unpredictability.

No matter how you choose to play, Grimshade City offers a rich and engaging experience filled with action, intrigue, and endless possibilities for adventure!

What You Need to Play

- **This Rulebook:** This document outlines the core rules and mechanics.
- **Dice:** You'll need a set of polyhedral dice, focusing on D20s for most actions.
- **Measuring Tape:** Used for movement, range, and determining distances.
- **Miniatures:** Represent your heroes and the monstrous foes they face (32mm scale recommended).
- **Terrain:** Create a dynamic battlefield with buildings, obstacles, and scatter terrain to represent the urban environment.

Game Overview

In Grimshade City, two players take on the roles of rival factions vying for control of a monster-infested city. Each player controls a small team of heroes (typically 5), each with unique abilities and roles. You'll engage in fast-paced, tactical skirmishes against your opponent's team, monstrous creatures controlled by the game itself (using the provided rules), or even in cooperative scenarios against a common enemy.

Basic Mechanics

1. Turn Structure:

- **Initiative:** At the start of each round, roll a D20 for each hero and any enemies. Highest roll goes first.
- **Activations:** On your turn, activate one of your heroes. Perform two actions with that hero.
- **Alternating Activations:** Players take turns activating a single hero at a time, creating a dynamic back-and-forth flow.

2. Actions:

On your turn, you activate one of your heroes. Each hero can perform two actions per activation. Common actions include:

- **Move:** Spend action points to move your miniature across the battlefield.
- **Attack:** Attempt to hit an enemy within range with a weapon or spell.
- **Special Action:** Use a unique ability specific to your hero's archetype or equipment.
- **Interact:** Manipulate an object, open a door, or perform a contextual action.

3. Movement:

- **Action Point Costs:**
 - **Base Movement (Mv):** A character can spend 1 Action Point to move up to their full Mv value in any direction.
 - **Additional Movement:** Characters can spend their second Action Point to move up to their Mv value again in the same turn.
- **Sprint Movement (Sm):** Secondary movement value used when a character wants to move quickly, but they cannot use this movement to navigate through difficult terrain.

- **Action Point Cost:** Moving a character's full Mv and SM during their turn costs all Action Points.
 - Difficult terrain includes, but is not limited to, rubble, dense vegetation, bodies of water, and areas designated as hazardous by the GM.
 - **Measuring Distance:** Use a measuring tape to determine movement range.
 - **Difficult Terrain:** Obstacles and difficult terrain may cost additional movement to traverse.
4. **Attacking:**
- **Line of Sight:** You can only target enemies that your hero can see. True line of sight is used (if you can't see it, you can't shoot it!).
 - **Weapon Range:** Each weapon has a range, measured in inches.
 - **Rolling to Hit:** To attack, roll a D20 and add your hero's Weapon Skill (WS). If the result meets or exceeds the target's Defense (D), the attack hits.
 - **Rolling for Damage:** If your attack hits, roll for damage based on your weapon.
5. **Defending:**
- **Defense (D):** When attacked, a hero's Defense stat determines how difficult they are to hit.
 - **Cover:** Taking cover behind obstacles provides a bonus to Defense.
6. **Wounds and Health:**
- **Wounds (W):** Each hero has a Wounds stat representing their health. When they take damage, subtract it from their Wounds.
 - **Out of Action:** When a hero's Wounds reach 0, they are incapacitated and removed from play.
7. **Morale (M):**
- **Morale Tests:** Certain events or abilities may require a Morale test. Roll a D20 and add your hero's Morale (M). If the result is 10 or higher, the hero succeeds.
 - **Panic and Fear Effects:** Failing Morale tests can result in negative effects, like being stunned, losing actions, or fleeing in panic.
8. **Miniature Base Sizes:**
- **Heroes:** All heroes in Grimshade City are represented by miniatures on 25mm or 32mm round bases.
 - **Boss Monsters:** Boss monsters, representing larger and more formidable creatures, are represented by miniatures on 50mm round bases.
 - **Model Facing:**
 - **Facing Arcs:** Each miniature has two 180-degree arcs: a Front Arc and a Rear Arc.

- **Determining Facing:** At the start of their activation, players should clearly indicate their miniature's facing. This can be done by pointing the miniature in the desired direction or using a visual marker.
 - **Rear Attacks:** Melee attacks that strike a miniature from its Rear Arc gain a bonus (e.g., +2 WS, +1 Damage).
9. **Terrain Interaction:** The urban environment plays a key role in Grimshade City. Models can climb, vault over obstacles, and even use parts of the environment to their advantage in combat.
10. **Magic**
- **Magic Points:** Mages have a pool of magic points used to cast spells.
 - **Spellcasting:** Casting a spell usually requires an action and expending magic points.
 - **Spell Effects:** Spells can have a wide range of effects:
 - **Offensive:** Deal damage to enemies.
 - **Defensive:** Protect allies or hinder enemies.
 - **Healing:** Restore lost Wounds.
 - **Utility:** Provide tactical advantages (teleportation, illusions, etc.).
11. **Equipment and Upgrades**
- **Starting Equipment:** Each hero begins with basic equipment based on their archetype.
 - **Loot and Rewards:** Defeating enemies and completing objectives can earn your heroes new gear and upgrades.
 - **Customization:** Use loot to customize your heroes, enhancing their strengths or shoring up weaknesses.

Grimshade City is a fast-paced, tactical skirmish game that combines the excitement of fantasy combat with the gritty atmosphere of urbanpunk. With its dynamic gameplay, rich setting, and endless customization options, Grimshade City offers a thrilling tabletop gaming experience.

This concludes the basic rules overview for Grimshade City. Consult the full rulebook for more in-depth explanations, advanced rules, monster creation guidelines, and exciting campaign ideas!

II. Core Game Mechanics

Actions and Activations

Types of Actions:

- **Movement:** Free action to move your miniature.
- **Attack (Melee/Ranged):** Attempt to hit an enemy within range.

- **Cast Spell:** Mages can cast spells, which have various effects.
- **Use Item:** Activate an item's effect.
- **Special Action:** Perform an ability specific to the hero's archetype.

Introducing Action Points:

- **Action Point Allocation:** At the start of their turn, each hero receives a set number of Action Points, typically 2 AP.
- **Spending Action Points:** Heroes spend AP to perform various actions, such as:
 - Move: Spend 1 AP to move up to the hero's full Mv.
 - Sprint: Spend 2 AP to move up to the hero's Mv+Sm in a straight line.
 - Climb: Spend 1 AP to climb a vertical distance (as defined in the movement rules).
 - Attack (Melee or Ranged): Spend 1 AP to make a single attack.
 - Cast Spell: The AP cost to cast a spell varies (see the magic rules).
 - Use Item: The AP cost to use an item varies (see item descriptions).
- **Special Actions:** Unique abilities might have specific AP costs.
- **Action Point Limits:** Heroes cannot "save up" AP or carry them over to their next turn. Any unspent AP are lost at the end of their activation.

Movement

General Movement (Mv)

- **Action Point Costs:**
 - **Base Movement (Mv):** A character can spend 1 Action Point to move up to their full Mv value in any direction.
 - **Additional Movement:** Characters can spend their second Action Point to move up to their Mv value again in the same turn.
- **Facing and Turning:**
 - **Free Turn:** Characters can turn to face any direction for free at the start of their activation.
 - **Turning During Movement:** Characters can turn freely during their movement as long as they do not exceed their total movement allowance.

Example: A Rogue with Mv 5 wants to move around a corner. They could spend 2 Mv to move forward, turn 90 degrees, and then spend their remaining 3 Mv to move in a new direction.

- **Moving through friendly:** A character can move through spaces occupied by friendly characters as long as they do not exceed their total movement allowance.

Sprint Movement (Sm)

- Secondary movement value used when a character wants to move quickly, but they cannot use this movement to navigate through difficult terrain.
 - **Action Point Cost:** Moving a character's full Mv and SM during their turn costs all Action Points.

Example: A Dead Shot with Mv 4 and Sm 4 could move 4" with their first Action Point or use all Action Points to Sprint move an additional 4" in a straight line, totaling 8" of movement.

Movement Abilities and Actions:

- **Dash:** A common action that lets a character spend 1 Action Point to gain a burst of speed, allowing them to move an additional 3" (depending on the archetype) and not trigger reactions. This can be used to cross open ground quickly or reposition tactically.
- **Leap:** A more specialized movement action that lets characters jump over small gaps or low obstacles using their Mv.

Difficult Terrain

- Difficult Terrain: Obstacles and hazardous terrain might cost extra movement to traverse, affecting both MV and S.
- Terrain Types: To create more varied challenges:
 - Rubble/Water: Slows movement by half, characters can spend an extra Action Point to move through it at normal speed.
 - Elevated Walkways: Provide cover and advantageous positions but have limited entry/exit points, requiring climbing or special actions to access.
- Terrain Effects:
 - Steam Vents: Obscure line of sight and provides temporary cover.
 - Machinery: Might activate or malfunction, creating hazards or advantages depending on the situation.

Climbing

Climbing Actions:

1. **Climbing:** A character can attempt to climb a vertical surface, such as a wall, building, or obstacle, by spending 2 Action Points.
2. **Vertical Distance:** For each Action Point spent on climbing, a character can move a vertical distance equal to their Movement (Mv) value.
 - Standard Climb (No Check): If a character spends enough Action Points to meet or exceed the climbing distance, they climb successfully without a roll.

3. **Dropping:** Characters can drop from a height up to their Mv value without taking damage. Dropping from a greater height follows the falling rules (1 damage per 3" fallen).

Additional Rules:

- Climbing Gear: Characters with appropriate gear (e.g., grappling hooks, ropes) might receive bonuses to climbing or be able to climb higher.
- Special Abilities: Some characters might have abilities that enhance their climbing speed or allow them to climb without making checks.

Falling

- o Taking Damage: A character that falls from a height suffers 1 point of damage for every 3" fallen, rounded up.

Example: Climbing and Falling: A Rogue attempts to climb a 12" wall. Their Mv is 4". They spend 2 Action Points to climb 8" vertically. They then spend another Action Point to climb the remaining 4". If they had fallen from 9" up, they would have taken 3 points of damage ($9" / 3" \text{ per damage} = 3 \text{ damage}$).

Attacking

1. Determine Range: Ensure the target is within the attacking weapon's range.
2. Line of Sight: Verify the attacker has a clear line of sight to the target.
3. Modifiers: Apply any relevant modifiers to the attacker's Weapon Skill (WS) due to cover, flanking, special abilities, etc.
4. Attack Roll: The attacker rolls a D20.
 - Success: If the roll is less than or equal to their modified WS, the attack hits!
 - Failure: If the roll is higher than their modified WS, the attack misses.

Defending

1. Successful Hit: An attack must hit before damage is rolled.
2. Defense Roll: The defender rolls a D20.
3. Determine Damage:
 - Success: If the D20 roll is higher than the attacking weapon's damage value, the defender negates all damage.
 - Partial Success: If the D20 roll is equal to or less than the weapon's damage value, the attack inflicts damage. However, the defender reduces the damage taken by their Armor value.
4. Apply Damage: Subtract the remaining damage (after armor) from the defender's Wounds.

Example 1:

1. Attack: Kaelen (WS 12) attacks a creature with a sword (Damage 10). He has a clear shot, so no modifiers apply. Kaelen needs to roll 12 or lower to hit. He rolls a 7 - success!
2. Defense: The creature has an Armor value of 3. It needs to roll higher than 10 to avoid all damage. It rolls a 14 - success! The creature avoids all damage from Kaelen's strike.

Example 2:

1. **Attack:** Rhys (WS 13, after a flanking bonus) fires his crossbow (Damage 8) at a foe. He needs to roll 13 or lower. He rolls a 10 - success!
2. **Defense:** The target has an Armor value of 2. It needs to roll higher than 8 to avoid all damage. It rolls a 6. The attack hits, but the target gets to reduce the damage by its armor.
3. **Damage Calculation:** 8 (Damage) - 2 (Armor) = 6 Damage inflicted.

Cover

- **Types of Cover:**
 - **Partial Cover:** Obstacles that provide some concealment but not complete protection. A miniature with partial cover gains +1 D against ranged attacks.
 - **Full Cover:** Obstacles that completely obscure the miniature from a direct line of fire. A miniature with full cover cannot be targeted by ranged attacks.
- **Determining Cover:** Use common sense and clear sight lines. If half or more of the miniature is obscured by the obstacle from the attacker's perspective, it has cover.
- **Cover and Movement:** A miniature can move between points of cover during their movement, gaining the cover bonus if they end their movement behind cover.

Damage and Wounds

- **Wounds (W):** Each hero has a Wounds stat representing their health. When they take damage, subtract it from their Wounds.
- **Out of Action:** When a hero's Wounds reach 0, they are incapacitated and removed from play.

Morale (M)

- **Morale Tests:** Certain events or abilities may require a Morale test. Roll a D20 and add your hero's Morale (M). If the result is 10 or higher, the hero succeeds.
- **Panic and Fear Effects:** Failing Morale tests can result in negative effects, like being stunned, losing actions, or fleeing in panic.

Skill Checks

Making the Skill Checks:

2. **Roll and Modify:** The player rolls a D20 and adds any relevant modifiers from their character sheet.
3. **Compare to Target Wit:**
 - **Success:** If the total result of the roll equals or exceeds the Target Wit (TN), the character succeeds.
 - **Failure:** If the total is lower than the Target Wit, the character fails.

Miniature Base Sizes and Facing

Heroes: All heroes in Grimshade City are represented by miniatures on 25mm or 32mm round bases.

Boss Monsters: Boss monsters, representing larger and more formidable creatures, are represented by miniatures on 50mm round bases.

These rules add tactical depth to combat in Grimshade City, emphasizing positioning, maneuver, and exploiting enemy weaknesses.

II. Facing:

- **Facing Arcs:** Divide the area around a miniature into two 180-degree arcs: front and rear.
- **Determining Facing:** Players should clearly indicate their miniature's facing at the start of their turn.
- **Rear Attacks:** Melee attacks that strike a miniature from the rear arc gain +2 WS.

III. Flanking:

- **Flanking Condition:** A miniature is considered Flanked if:
 - There is at least one enemy miniature within base-to-base contact
 - There is at least one enemy miniature within 2".
- **Flanking Bonus:** When a miniature is Flanked, all attacks against it (melee and ranged) gain +1 WS and +1 Damage.
- **Flanking and Movement:** A miniature that moves out of a flanking position during its turn loses the flanking bonus.

Example of Play:

- Kaelen the Knight is behind a low wall (Partial Cover). He is safe from the Dead Shot's ranged attacks but could still be targeted by the Mage's spells.
- The Rogue, using its agility, maneuvers behind the Glimmerheart Behemoth, putting it in the beast's rear arc. The Rogue's next melee attack will have a significant bonus.
- Two members of the team coordinate their attacks, one engaging the Behemoth from the front while the other darts to its side. They successfully achieve a Flank, gaining a bonus to their attacks against the now-vulnerable creature.

General Terrain Rules

Line of Sight

- **Line of Sight (LOS):** Use true line of sight. If a miniature cannot physically see its target, it cannot attack it. Obstacles and terrain feature block LOS.

Difficult Terrain

- **Difficult Terrain:** Obstacles and difficult terrain cost extra movement to traverse.

1. **Example: Difficult Terrain:** Moving through rubble costs 2 Movement Points (Mv) per inch, while Sprinting is not allowed.

- **Impassable Terrain:** Some terrain features are completely impassable, such as deep chasms or solid walls.

Cover

- **Cover:** Obstacles provide cover, granting bonuses to Defense against ranged attacks (see the Cover System rules).

Specific Terrain Types

- **Elevated Walkways and Platforms:** Provide advantageous positions for ranged attacks and flanking maneuvers. Characters might need to climb to access them (see Climbing Rules).
- **Machinery:** Large gears, pistons, and pipes can offer cover but also pose hazards. The GM might rule that characters taking cover near machinery suffer penalties to their actions due to noise, vibrations, or the risk of malfunction.
- **Toxic Pools:** Areas of hazardous sludge or chemical spills inflict damage to characters who end their turn within them (e.g., 1 point of poison damage).
- **Collapsing Structures:** Crumbling buildings or unstable scaffolding might collapse during combat, dealing damage to characters caught beneath them. The GM can use a random event or trigger a collapse based on specific actions (e.g., a powerful attack that shakes the structure).
- **Magical Anomalies:** Areas infused with chaotic or unstable magic might have unpredictable effects, such as teleporting characters, granting temporary buffs or debuffs, or summoning minor creatures.

Magic Defense (MD)

1. Magic Defense (MD) Stat:

- Non-Magic Units: Assign a base Magic Defense (MD) score to non-magic units, representing their natural resilience to magical effects. This score can vary based on the unit's type and abilities.
 - Example: A heavily armored Knight might have MD 8, while a nimble Rogue might have MD 6.
 - Basic Human: For reference, a typical human (with no special abilities or training) would have an MD of 10.

2. Resolving Magic Effects:

- Spellcasting Roll: The mage makes a spellcasting roll as usual to determine if the spell is successfully cast.
- MD Check (If Applicable): If the spell requires an MD check, the target of the spell rolls a D20.
- Target Number: The target number for the MD check is the spell's Power (POW) value.
- **Outcome:**

- Success (Higher Roll): If the D20 roll is higher than the spell's POW, the target completely resists the spell's effects.
- Partial Success (Lower Roll): If the D20 roll is equal to or less than the spell's POW, the spell takes effect. However, the target reduces the spell's impact (damage, duration, or other effect) by their MD value.
- o **Example 1:**
 - Spellcasting: A Mage casts "Ember Bolt" (POW 6) at a Knight (MD 8). The mage successfully casts the spell.
 - MD Check: The Knight rolls a D20 for their MD check, needing to roll higher than 6 to resist. They roll a 12 - success! The Knight shrugs off the Ember Bolt, completely resisting its fiery energy.
- o **Example 2:**
 - Spellcasting: A Mage casts "Weaken" (POW 8, reduces target's WS by 2 for 1 round) on a Rogue (MD 6). The mage successfully casts the spell.
 - MD Check: The Rogue rolls a D20, needing to roll higher than 8. They roll a 5 - partial success. The spell takes effect, but the Rogue's MD reduces the penalty. Instead of -2 WS, the Rogue suffers -1 WS for one round ($8 - 6 = 2$, but the minimum penalty is always 1).

Healing

- o **Spells:** You've provided a good starting list of healing spells.
- o **Abilities:** Healer-specific ability that provides healing.
- o **Items:** healing potions or medical items in your equipment lists, limited use.
 - **Healing Touch (Ability):** As an Action, the Healer can touch an ally within 3". The ally regains 4 Wounds.
 - **Healing Potion (Item):** As a Bonus Action, a character can consume a Healing Potion to regain 2 Wounds. A character cannot benefit from more than one potion per round.

Additional D20 Mechanics

1. **Opposed Rolls:**
 - o **Example:** A Mage casts "Earthen Grasp" on a Rogue. The Mage's spellcasting roll is 17. The Rogue, known for their agility, makes an Acrobatics check to escape the spell's area, rolling a 19. The Rogue dodges the magical tendrils.
2. **Critical Hits:**
 - o **Trigger:** When an attacker rolls a natural 20 on their attack roll, they score a Critical Hit!
 - **Effects:**
 1. **Double Damage:** The attacker doubles the damage for their weapon.
 1. **Example:** Kaelen scores a critical hit with his greatsword (normally 7 damage). He does 14 instead.
 2. **Ignores Armor:** The attack ignores the defender's armor value.
 3. **Potential for Additional Effects:** The GM may introduce additional effects based on the weapon or the situation, such as:
 1. **Knockback:** The target is pushed back a short distance.
 2. **Disarm:** The target drops their weapon.

3. **Stun:** The target is stunned for one round, losing their next activation.

3. Critical Defenses:

○ **Trigger:** When a defender rolls a natural 1 on their defense roll, they achieve a Critical Defense!

▪ **Effects:**

1. **Complete Negation:** The defender takes no damage from the attack, even if the attack is a Critical Hit.
2. **Counterattack:** The defender may immediately make a free attack against the attacker, using their full actions as if it were their turn.
3. **Potential for Additional Effects:** Similar to critical hits, the GM might allow for additional benefits based on the situation, such as:
 1. **Deflect (Projectile):** The defender deflects a projectile attack back at the attacker, potentially hitting them!
 2. **Riposte:** The defender delivers a swift counter-attack that ignores the attacker's armor.

Integrating D20 Mechanics into Grimshade City:

- **Urban Exploration:** Use skill checks (Athletics to climb, Perception to spot clues, etc.) to make exploration engaging.
- **Social Encounters:** Employ Charisma-based skills and opposed rolls for negotiations, intimidation, or deception.
- **Environmental Hazards:** Introduce random events with D20 rolls, forcing players to react to unexpected challenges.

By using these D20 mechanics, you can create a dynamic and unpredictable experience for your Grimshade City games, where player choices and a little bit of luck determine the fate of the city!

III. Heroes of the City

Archetypes

Each hero in Grimshade City belongs to an archetype, granting them unique abilities and playstyles.

- **Knight:** The heavily armored frontline fighter. High Defense and Wounds, excels in melee combat.
- **Dead Shot:** The ranged specialist, dealing damage from afar. High Weapon Skill, but fragile.
- **Rogue/Scout:** The agile skirmisher, flanking enemies and exploiting weaknesses. High Morale and skills for stealth and trickery.
- **Healer:** The vital support role, keeping their allies alive with healing magic and potions. High Magic Defense and healing abilities.
- **Mage:** The master of elemental magic, unleashing devastating spells. High Magic Defense but physically weak.

- **Specialist:** The adaptable gadgeteer, using inventions and cunning to gain an edge. Average stats but relies on equipment and unique skills.
- **Leader (Trailblazer):** The inspiring commander, rallying their allies and disrupting the enemy. Balanced stats and powerful leadership abilities.

1. Party Composition

- **The Leader:** Every hero party in Grimshade City **must** include a Leader (Trailblazer) archetype.
- **Party Size and Point Limits:**

Campaign Scale	Party Size (Including Leader)	Total Party Points
Skirmish Level	3 Heroes	50 Points
Standard Level	5 Heroes	100 Points
Grand Campaign	7 Heroes	200 Points

- **Archetype Costs and Customization:**
 1. **Choose Archetypes:** Players select their desired archetypes, including one Leader.
 2. **Base Cost:** Each archetype has a base point cost (as established in previous responses). This cost is automatically deducted from the party's total points.
 3. **Remaining Points:** The remaining points are used to customize heroes:
 - **Stat Increases:** Players can spend points to increase their heroes' stats beyond the archetype's base values.
 - **Equipment:** Purchase weapons, armor, gadgets, and other gear.
 - **Spells:** Mages can use points to acquire additional spells.
 - **Special Abilities:** Some archetypes might have optional abilities that can be purchased with points.

Example Party Creation (Standard Level - 100 Points):

1. Archetype Selection:

- Leader (Trailblazer) - 10 points
- Knight - 8 points
- Dead Shot - 7 points
- Rogue - 8 points
- Healer - 6 points

2. **Points Spent:** $10 + 8 + 7 + 8 + 6 = 39$ points
3. **Remaining Points:** 100 (Total) - 39 (Spent) = **61 points**
4. **Customization:** Players now have 61 points to distribute among their heroes to improve stats, purchase equipment, acquire spells (for the Mage), or gain additional special abilities.

Here's an example 100-point party for Grimshade City, showcasing a balanced composition with starting gear:

Party Name: The Gutter Hawks

Total Points: 100

Heroes:

1. Captain Zara (Leader - Trailblazer)

- Base Cost: 10 points
- Stats: (Uses default Trailblazer stats, no modifications)
- Equipment:
 - Ceremonial Sword (Sword - 0 points): A symbol of her authority, more for show than combat.
 - Reinforced Leather Armor (Armor Patch - 4 points): Provides +1 D
- Remaining Points: $10 + 4 = 14$ points (saved for future upgrades)

2. Kaelen "Ironheart" Thorne (Knight)

- Base Cost: 8 points
- Stats: (Uses default Knight stats, no modifications)
- Equipment:
 - Grimshade Greatsword (Greatsword - 3 points): +2 Damage
 - Thorne Family Plate (Reinforced Plating - 4 points): +1 D
- Remaining Points: $8 + 3 + 4 = 15$ points (saved for future upgrades)

3. Rhys "Whisper" Blackwood (Dead Shot)

- Base Cost: 7 points
- Stats: (Uses default Dead Shot stats, no modifications)
- Equipment:
 - Blackwood Repeater Crossbow (Repeater Crossbow - 6 points): Can make two attacks, each at -1 WS.
- Remaining Points: $7 + 6 = 13$ points (saved for future upgrades)

4. Silas "Shadowhand" Kress (Rogue/Scout)

- Base Cost: 8 points
- Stats: (Uses default Rogue/Scout stats, no modifications)

- Equipment:
 - Shadow Dagger (Dagger - 1 point): +1 WS when attacking from the rear arc.
 - Grappling Hook & Line (Gadget - 3 points): Can move to elevated positions without spending extra movement.
- Remaining Points: $8 + 1 + 3 = 13$ points (saved for future upgrades)

5. Sister Elara (Healer)

- Base Cost: 6 points
- Stats: (Uses default Healer stats, no modifications)
- Equipment:
 - Healing Staff (Staff - 1 point): Can be used with both WS and WT.
 - Healing Salve x 2 (Healing Salve - 2 points x 2 = 4 points): Each salve heals 2 Wounds.
- Remaining Points: $6 + 1 + 4 = 11$ points (saved for future upgrades)

Total Points Spent: $14 + 15 + 13 + 13 + 11 + 45$ (Archetype Costs) = **100 Points**

Remaining Points for the Party: $100 - 100 = 0$ Points

Why this Party Works:

- **Balanced Roles:** The party has a solid mix of damage, defense, support, and tactical flexibility.
- **Leader Focus:** Captain Zara, the Leader, can boost the team's actions and provide tactical guidance.
- **Synergy:** The Knight can protect the more vulnerable Dead Shot and Healer, while the Rogue can set up flanking opportunities for the Dead Shot and Knight. The Healer keeps everyone alive.
- **Room for Growth:** The party has 0 points remaining to spend on upgrades, allowing for customization and character progression during the campaign.

Playing the Gutter Hawks:

This party excels at coordinated assaults and strategic positioning. The Leader can use abilities to grant extra actions or enhance movement, allowing the Knight and Rogue to quickly engage enemies. The Dead Shot provides accurate ranged support, while the Healer keeps the team healthy.

Remember: This is just an example! Encourage your players to be creative and build parties that reflect their own playstyles and preferences. The point-based system allows for a wide variety of possibilities in Grimshade City!

Leader (Trailblazer)

Leader (Trailblazer): Inspiring figures who rally their allies and disrupt their enemies. They possess powerful leadership abilities that can turn the tide of battle.

A figure of inspiration and authority, the Leader (Trailblazer) commands attention with their presence alone. They possess an unwavering confidence and a natural charisma that rallies others to their cause, their words carrying the weight of experience and the promise of victory. Whether wielding a blade, a staff, or the sheer force of their will, they lead from the front, their courage and determination a beacon for their allies to follow, even in the darkest of times.

Actions (Cost Action Points):

- o Rallying Cry (2 AP): The Leader bolsters the spirits of those around them. Choose one:
 - o Boost Morale: All allies within 6" of the Leader gain +2 Morale until the end of the round.
 - o Shake Off Fear: Remove one fear or morale-reducing effect from each ally within 6" of the Leader.
- o Tactical Reposition (1 AP): The Leader's commands allow for a quick adjustment. Choose one ally within 6". That ally may immediately perform a Move action as if it were their turn, but their movement for that turn is reduced by half.
- o Challenge (1 AP): The Leader focuses the enemy's attention. Choose one enemy within the Leader's line of sight and make a Morale check opposed by the target's Morale or Wit (whichever is higher). If successful:
 - o The target must attack the Leader with their next attack action, if able.
 - o The target suffers -1 D until the start of the Leader's next turn.
- o Passive Abilities (Always Active):
 - o Aura of Confidence: Allies within 6" of the Leader have +1 Morale.
 - o Tactical Acumen: Once per round, when an ally within 6" of the Leader fails a skill check or saving throw, the Leader may spend 1 RP to allow the ally to reroll the check.

Knight

Frontline Warriors (Knight): Heavily armored melee combatants with high defense and powerful attacks. They are the anvil upon which enemy assaults break.

A towering bastion of steel and resolve, the Knight stands firm against the encroaching darkness. Years of relentless training have honed their movements into an intricate dance of offense and defense, their every step measured, every strike precise. Scars, worn like badges of honor, crisscross their armor, a testament to countless battles fought and won. But it is the look in their eyes that truly marks them—a steely glint of determination, an unwavering commitment to protecting the innocent, even in the face of overwhelming odds.

Dead Shot

Archer/Marksman (Dead Shot): Ranged specialists who excel at picking off enemies from afar. They can also lay down suppressing fire with specialized ammunition like enchanted grenades or alchemically powered repeater crossbows.

With nerves of steel and an eagle's eye, the Dead Shot is a master of ranged combat. They move with a fluid grace, always seeking the optimal vantage point, their weapon an extension of their will. Whether wielding a finely crafted crossbow, a pair of ancient pistols, or a rifle imbued with arcane energy, they are a force to be reckoned with from afar. Their gaze, sharp and calculating, misses nothing, their fingers dancing across triggers with deadly precision.

Rogue/Scout

Skirmishers (Rogue/Scout): Agile and stealthy fighters who specialize in flanking maneuvers and disrupting enemy formations. They can utilize grappling hooks and acrobatics to navigate the urban terrain.

A whisper in the shadows, a flicker of movement in the corner of your eye—the Rogue is a master of stealth and subterfuge. They navigate the urban jungle with a dancer's agility, their steps silent, their presence concealed beneath layers of darkness and misdirection. A wicked glint in their eye betrays a cunning mind, always calculating angles, exploiting weaknesses, and turning the tide of battle with a well-placed blade or a carefully aimed dart.

Healer

Support Unit (Healer): Vital for keeping their allies in the fight, they can heal wounds and cure status ailments. They might employ traditional healing magic alongside alchemical concoctions and potent herbs.

A beacon of hope in the depths of despair, the Healer brings solace and restoration to the wounded. Their hands, calloused but gentle, work tirelessly to mend broken bodies and soothe shattered spirits. Whether drawing upon ancient healing magic, potent elixirs, or a combination of both, their presence on the battlefield inspires courage in their allies and fear in their enemies. For they know that death is but a temporary setback in the face of unwavering compassion and the will to persevere.

Mage

Support Unit (Mage): Wielders of powerful elemental magic, they can unleash devastating attacks or bolster their allies with defensive spells. Their spells can be channeled through enchanted staves or intricate rune-covered gauntlets.

The air crackles with arcane energy as the Mage channels forces unseen. Their eyes, alight with otherworldly knowledge, reflect the raw power that flows through them. Intricate tattoos, glowing runes, or arcane artifacts adorn their bodies, focusing their will and shaping the very fabric of reality. They are masters of the elements, conjurers of illusions, and weavers of potent enchantments—their every spell a testament to the boundless possibilities of magic.

Gadgeteer (Specialist)

Support Unit (Specialist): Masters of gadgets and gizmos, they can provide a variety of tactical advantages. They might deploy automated turrets, set cunning traps, or enhance their allies with alchemically augmented gear.

A symphony of gears, gadgets, and ingenious contraptions surrounds the Specialist, a testament to their boundless creativity and technical prowess. With a keen mind for problem-solving and a knack for turning scrap into something extraordinary, they are a force to be reckoned with both on and off the battlefield. Whether wielding a customized weapon, deploying a network of traps, or enhancing their allies with alchemically augmented gear, the Specialist is always ready to adapt, improvise, and overcome any challenge with their unique blend of ingenuity and grit.

The Specialist begins with a selection of gadgets, representing their inventions and tools. They can acquire more powerful or specialized gadgets through campaign progression, loot, or by crafting them using resources.

Gadget Creation Rules:

- **Wit Check:** The Specialist makes a Wit check (TN set by the GM) to successfully design and build a gadget.

Gadgets:

- **Grappling Hook & Line (Reusable):** The Specialist uses a spring-loaded hook to reach elevated positions or cross gaps without spending extra movement.
- **Deployable Cover (Reusable):** The Specialist deploys a portable energy shield that provides Cover to anyone in base to base for one round.
- **Holographic Decoy (Consumable):** The Specialist activates a device that projects a realistic holographic image of themselves, acting as a distraction or drawing enemy fire.

Specialist Abilities (Using Wit):

Actions:

- **Overclock (1 AP):** The Specialist pushes a gadget beyond its limits, enhancing its effects but risking a malfunction. Choose one gadget the Specialist controls. Make a Wit check (TN 12).
 - **Success:** The gadget's effects are doubled (increased damage, area of effect, duration, etc.).
 - **Failure:** The gadget malfunctions and is unusable for the rest of the encounter.

Passive Ability:

- **Improviser:** When making skill checks to use a gadget or interact with a mechanical or technological device, the Specialist adds their Wit modifier to the roll.

Deployable Turret

- **Type:** Construct (Automated)
- **Size:** Small 25mm base
- **Movement:** Immobile (once deployed, it cannot move)
 - **WS:** 10
 - **D:** 11
 - **MD:** 9
 - **Wounds:** 6
 - **Range:** 12"
 - **Damage:** 8
- **Special Rules:**
 - **Automated:** The turret acts on the Specialist's turn, after the Specialist has completed their actions.
 - **Limited Arc of Fire:** The turret can only attack targets within front arc.
 - **Vulnerable to Melee:** The turret has -2 D against melee attacks.

How to Use the Turret:

1. **Deployment:** As an action, the Specialist can deploy the turret within 3" of their current location.
2. **Activation:** On the Specialist's turn, after the Specialist has completed their actions, the turret may make one attack against a valid target within its range and arc of fire.

Example:

Rhys, the Specialist, deploys his turret near a chokepoint in the Grimshade Foundry. On his turn, the turret fires at a group of approaching Gutter Stalkers, providing covering fire for his allies.

Blood Priest (New!)

Blood Priest (Hybrid Healer/Damage): Zealous warriors who draw power from a dark pact, using blood magic to both heal allies and unleash unholy wrath upon their enemies.

A chilling aura surrounds the Blood Priest, a testament to their pact with forces beyond the mortal veil. They walk a dangerous path, balancing the life-giving power of blood magic with its corrupting influence. Their eyes, often flickering with a crimson light, reflect the duality of their nature—a blend of compassion and ruthlessness, of healing and harm. They are a force to be reckoned with, capable of both mending the flesh and unleashing unholy wrath upon their enemies.

Shadowmancer (New!)

Shadowmancer (Summoner/Controller): Manipulators of shadows, able to command shadowy constructs and unleash waves of darkness to overwhelm their foes.

The world seems to dim around the Shadowmancer, their very presence warping light and drawing shadows closer. They are masters of illusion and manipulation, their forms fluid and ever-shifting. Whispers follow their every move, carried on the ethereal winds of the Ethereal Plane. They command shadowy constructs, bend the fabric of darkness to their will, and strike fear into the hearts of their foes with a mere glance from their enigmatic eyes.

Ironclad Brawler (New!)

Ironclad Brawler (Grappler/Brawler): Masters of hand-to-hand combat, these hardened street fighters rely on a mix of brute strength, grappling techniques, and sheer grit to control the battlefield and pummel their opponents into submission. They often enhance their bodies with cybernetics or alchemical augmentations to push their physical limits.

A whirlwind of muscle and steel, the Ironclad Brawler is a force of nature unleashed upon the battlefield. Their fists, often augmented with metal plates or alchemically hardened, crash against their foes with bone-jarring force. They are masters of grappling, brawling, and close-quarters combat, their movements a blur of raw power and aggression. Scars and callouses tell the story of countless battles fought in the city's underbelly, each mark a testament to their unwavering tenacity and refusal to back down from a challenge.

Hero Archetype Character Backgrounds

Here are optional background elements for each archetype in Grimshade City, designed to help players flesh out their characters and add depth to their stories:

Knight:

Noble Lineage: Which of the six Houses does your Knight hail from? Are they a scion of a prestigious family, or did they rise through the ranks through sheer skill and determination?

Code of Honor: What is your Knight's personal code of conduct? What lines will they never cross, and what sacrifices are they willing to make for their beliefs?

Past Battles: What are some of your Knight's most memorable battles or victories? Do they carry any scars or trophies from these encounters?

Sworn Duty: Who or what has your Knight sworn to protect? Is it a person, a place, an ideal, or a sacred relic?

Dead Shot:

Marksmanship Training: Who taught your Dead Shot their skills with ranged weapons? Were they a military sniper, a hunter in the wilds, or a street urchin who learned to survive by their wits and aim?

Signature Weapon: What is your Dead Shot's weapon of choice? Is it a finely crafted crossbow, a pair of ancient pistols, or a rifle imbued with arcane energy?

Sharpshooter's Eye: What is your Dead Shot's greatest asset? Is it their steady hand, their keen eyesight, their unwavering focus, or their ability to predict the movements of their targets?

Haunted Past: Does your Dead Shot carry any regrets or burdens from their past? Have they made difficult choices that still weigh on their conscience?

Rogue/Scout:

Street Smarts: How did your Rogue learn to navigate the treacherous streets of Grimshade City? Were they an orphan who grew up in the Gutter, a thief who honed their skills in the shadows, or a former member of a street gang?

Hidden Talents: What skills or abilities does your Rogue possess beyond their agility and stealth? Are they a skilled lockpick, a master of disguise, or a gifted acrobat?

Network of Contacts: Who are your Rogue's allies and informants in the city's underbelly? What favors do they owe, and what secrets do they hold?

Shadowy Past: What secrets does your Rogue hide from their past? Are they running from a powerful enemy, a broken heart, or a past they'd rather forget?

Healer:

Healing Tradition: What is the source of your Healer's abilities? Are they a trained physician, a practitioner of ancient healing magic, or a gifted alchemist who blends both disciplines?

Compassionate Heart: What drives your Healer's desire to help others? Have they experienced loss or suffering that motivates them to alleviate the pain of others?

Forbidden Knowledge: Has your Healer delved into any controversial or taboo healing methods? What ethical lines are they willing to cross to save a life?

Secret Burden: Does your Healer carry any guilt or regret over past failures? Have they lost patients they couldn't save, or made choices that compromised their ideals?

Mage:

Arcane Lineage: Where did your Mage learn their mastery of magic? Were they a student at a prestigious academy, a self-taught prodigy, or a descendant of a long line of sorcerers?

School of Magic: What is your Mage's preferred school of magic? What are their signature spells, and what unique abilities do they possess?

Magical Artifact: Does your Mage wield a powerful magical item or artifact? What is its history, and what risks or temptations come with its use?

Arcane Obsession: What drives your Mage's pursuit of magical knowledge? Is it a thirst for power, a desire to understand the mysteries of the universe, or a quest to find a lost spell or artifact?

Specialist:

Inventive Genius: What sparked your Specialist's passion for gadgets and gizmos? Were they a tinkerer from a young age, a student of engineering, or a self-taught inventor who learned by trial and error?

Workshop Secrets: Where does your Specialist conduct their experiments and build their inventions? Is it a hidden laboratory, a cluttered workshop, or a mobile caravan filled with tools and spare parts?

Signature Gadget: What is your Specialist's most prized invention? What unique abilities does it possess, and what risks or drawbacks come with its use?

Technological Obsession: What drives your Specialist's relentless pursuit of innovation? Is it a desire to improve the world, a fascination with pushing the boundaries of technology, or a quest to create the ultimate invention?

Leader (Trailblazer):

Leadership Style: How does your Leader inspire and motivate others? Are they a charismatic orator, a strategic mastermind, a courageous warrior who leads by example, or a cunning tactician who manipulates events from the shadows?

Past Triumphs: What are some of your Leader's greatest achievements or victories? How have these experiences shaped their leadership style and outlook?

Hidden Weakness: What is your Leader's greatest fear or vulnerability? Is it a past trauma, a secret they're hiding, or a doubt that gnaws at their confidence?

Grand Vision: What is your Leader's ultimate goal? What do they hope to achieve for their House, their allies, or the city of Grimshade as a whole?

Attributes

Mv/S (Movement/Sprint): Represents the character's base movement allowance for tactical maneuvering.

WS (Weapon Skill): Represents accuracy in melee and ranged combat. Used to hit in attacks.

D (Defense): Represents ability to avoid physical attacks. Used to defend against attacks.

MD (Magic Defense): Represents resistance to magical effects. Used to resist spells and magical effects.

W (Wounds): Represents how much damage a character can take before being incapacitated.

M (Morale): Represents courage and resilience. Used for morale tests and special abilities.

Wit (WT): Represents a character's mental sharpness, focus, and ability to grasp complex concepts, both mundane and arcane. Used for:

- o **Mage Focus:** A mage's Wit score directly determines their Focus value, impacting their spellcasting success and the effects of certain spells.
- o **Skill Checks:** Wit is used as the primary or modifying stat for skills that require intellect, perception, or mental fortitude.

Archetypes (Base Human = 10):

Archetype	Mv/Sm	WS	D	MD	W	M	W T	Notes
Knight	4/0	10	14	7	14	1 0	8	The immovable object. Very high Defense and Wounds, but slow and less perceptive.
Dead Shot	4/4	14	7	6	7	9	9	The glass cannon. Extremely high Weapon Skill, but incredibly fragile. Fast and agile.
Rogue/Scout	5/4	12	9	8	8	1 3	10	The agile skirmisher. Very high Movement, Morale, and decent WS, allowing for hit-and-run tactics.
Healer	3/3	7	8	13	9	1 2	12	The dedicated supporter. Low combat stats, but the highest MD and WT for potent healing and support magic.
Mage	3/2	6	6	15	6	8	14	The arcane artillery. Incredibly fragile, but with the highest MD and WT for devastating spells. Very slow.
Specialist	4/3	9	9	9	9	11	11	The jack-of-all-trades. Average stats across the board, relies on equipment and abilities for versatility.

Archetype	Mv/Sm	WS	D	MD	W	M	W T	Notes
Leader (Trailblazer)	4/3	11	10	10	11	1 4	9	The inspiring tactician. Well-rounded stats with exceptional Morale to boost allies and perform leadership actions.
Blood Priest	4/2	11	10	11	10	1 2	10	Frontline healing and damage potential make them slightly more expensive.
Shadowmancer	3/3	8	8	14	7	9	13	High MD and summoning are offset by fragility, hence the lower cost.
Ironclad Brawler	4/2	13	11	7	11	1 3	8	

Considerations:

Balance: These stats are designed to create distinct strengths and weaknesses for each archetype while keeping them relatively balanced against each other.

Progression: As characters gain experience, they can improve their stats, reflecting their growing skills and abilities.

Specialization: Equipment, skills, and magical items can further enhance these base stats, allowing for greater customization and specialization within each archetype.

Hero Advancement

Archetype Point System

Grimshade City: Archetype Point System

This system uses a point-buy system where 10 points represents a typical human with no strengths or weaknesses in Grimshade City.

Base Archetype Costs:

Archetype	Base Cost	Starting Points
Knight	8	8
Dead Shot	7	7
Rogue/Scout	8	8

Archetype	Base Cost	Starting Points
Healer	6	6
Mage	7	7
Specialist	7	7
Leader (Trailblazer)	10	10
Blood Priest	9	9
Shadowmancer	8	8
Ironclad Brawler	9	9

Stat Costs (Relative to Human Norm):

Stat Change	Point Cost
+1 WS	+2 points
+1 D	+3 points
+1 MD	+2 points
+1 W	+4 points
+1 M	+3 points
-1 WS	-1 point
-1 D	-2 points
-1 MD	-1 point
-1 W	-3 points

Stat Change	Point Cost
-1 M	-2 points

Explanation:

- **Base Costs:** Archetypes with inherent advantages (like the Knight's durability) have a higher base cost, while those with trade-offs (like the Mage's fragility) have a lower cost.
- **Stat Changes:** Increasing stats above the human norm (represented by the starting stats for each archetype) costs points, while decreasing stats below the norm can refund points (though usually not below a minimum).
- **Starting Points:** The starting points reflect the archetype's base cost, allowing players to immediately begin customizing their characters.

Example:

- A player wants to create a particularly cunning Rogue/Scout. They could choose to spend 2 points to increase their Morale (M) by 1, giving them an edge in social situations and when resisting fear effects.
- Or, a player might decide to create a Mage with slightly enhanced durability. They could spend 3 points to increase their Wounds (W) by 1, making them a bit less susceptible to taking an early hit.

Campaign Progression and Balance:

- **XP and Advancement:** As in the previous system, heroes can earn XP to increase their point totals, reflecting character growth.
- **Point Limits:** Set point limits for character creation and advancement to ensure balance.
- **Stat Caps:** Consider implementing stat caps to prevent excessive specialization.

This point-buy system offers a good balance of simplicity and customization, allowing players to create unique and flavorful heroes while maintaining a sense of fairness and challenge within the world of Grimshade City.

Hero Example

Kaelen Farstriker - Knight of House Valerius

Archetype: Knight

Quote: "Stand firm! For honor, for Grimshade, for House Valerius!"

Background: A seasoned warrior from a long line of protectors, Kaelen is a stalwart defender of Grimshade City. Scarred from countless battles against the creatures of the Gutter, he is a beacon of strength and resolve in the face of overwhelming odds. He wields his ancestral blade, Oathkeeper, with unwavering precision and unwavering loyalty to his House.

Stats:

- **WS:** 12 (+2 from base)
- **D:** 13 (+1 from base)
- **MD:** 8
- **Wounds:** 13 (+1 from base)

- **Morale:** 11

Point Cost: 10 (base) + 2 (WS) + 3 (D) + 4 (W) = **19 Points**

Special Abilities:

- **Guardian's Strike:** Once per round, when an ally within 3" of Kaelen is attacked, he may spend 1 RP to make a melee attack against the attacker. This attack does not count as an Action.
- **Unbreakable Will:** Kaelen gains +2 to all Morale checks. Additionally, he may spend 1 RP to automatically pass a Morale check.

Starting Equipment:

- **Oathkeeper (Greatsword):** Deals 7 damage.
- **Valerius Plate Armor:** +1 D (already factored into stats)

Tactical Overview:

Kaelen is a powerful frontline fighter who excels at protecting his allies and weathering enemy assaults. His high Defense and Wounds make him difficult to take down, while his Guardian's Strike ability allows him to punish enemies who dare threaten his comrades. His Unbreakable Will makes him resistant to fear and morale-breaking effects, making him a steadfast anchor for his team in the direst situations.

Roleplaying Notes:

Kaelen is a stoic and honorable knight, dedicated to upholding justice and protecting the innocent. He is a man of few words but unwavering conviction, always willing to put himself in harm's way for the greater good. He holds a deep disdain for those who prey on the weak and corrupt the city he has sworn to protect.

Experience and Leveling

Equipment and Upgrades

Equipment and Upgrades: Each hero can be customized with unique equipment and upgrades, reflecting their background and playstyle. This allows players to create truly unique characters and tailor them to their preferred tactics.

Grimshade City: Equipment Upgrades

Here's a list of optional equipment upgrades, their stat boosts, and point costs to add customization to your Grimshade City heroes.

Point System:

For campaign play, you can introduce a point-buy system where heroes earn points to purchase upgrades, reflecting their growing experience and resources. For example, you might start heroes with 10 points to spend at the beginning of a campaign.

General Equipment:

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
---------	------	-----------------

Weapons:

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Razor-Sharp Blade	3	+1 WS with melee attacks
Weighted Haft	2	+1 Damage with melee attacks
Balanced Grip	2	+1 WS with ranged attacks
Piercing Ammunition	2	Ignores 1 point of target's Defense
Armor & Defense:		
Reinforced Plating	4	+1 D
Shadowsilk Cloak	3	+1 D against ranged attacks
Serpent's Scale Armor	5	+2 D, -1 Movement (bulky)
Accessories:		
Alchemical Stimulant	2	Gain +1 Action on your next turn (single use)
Healing Salve	2	Heal 2 Wounds (single use)
Smoke Grenade	3	Create a cloud of smoke, providing Cover to those within (single use)
Archetype-Specific Upgrades:		
Knight:		
Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Impenetrable Bulwark	5	+2 D, -2 Movement (becomes very difficult to move)
Shield Bash	3	Melee attack that inflicts Stun (target loses next activation) on a successful hit
Dead Shot:		

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Repeater Crossbow	4	May make two attacks at -1 WS each
Venom-Tipped Axe	3	Attacks inflict Poisoned (target takes 1 damage at the start of their turn)

Rogue/Scout:

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Grappling Hook & Line	3	Can move to elevated positions without spending extra movement
Cloak of Shadows	4	Can become Hidden as a Special Action (cannot be targeted while Hidden)

Healer:

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Healing Infusion	4	One healing spell gains +2 HEAL
Purifying Touch	3	Can remove one negative status effect from an ally as a Special Action

Mage:

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Focus Crystal	4	+1 Focus (permanent)
Arcane Reservoir	3	Gain an additional 3 MP (one-time use)

Specialist:

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Deployable Turret	5	Summons a small turret with basic ranged attacks (can be destroyed)
Alchemical Enhancement	3	Choose one: +1 WS, +1 D, or +1 MD (permanent)

Leader (Trailblazer):

Upgrade	Cost	Stats & Effects
Inspiring Banner	3	Allies within 6" gain +1 Morale
Tactical Brilliance	4	Choose one ally within range; they immediately gain an additional Action.

This list is by no means exhaustive! Encourage players to be creative, come up with their own upgrade ideas, and make their heroes truly unique in the gritty world of Grimshade City!

Grimshade City: Weapon Stat Lines with Point Costs

This list includes point costs for players to purchase weapons during character creation or as they acquire loot and rewards in a campaign.

Weapon Stats:

- **Type:** Melee or Ranged
- **Range:** Maximum range in inches (0" for melee).
- **Damage (D):** Target number the defender must roll *above* on a D20 to negate all damage (armor reduces damage taken if the roll is equal to or lower).
- **Special:** Any unique qualities or effects the weapon possesses.
- **Cost:** Point value for purchasing or upgrading the weapon.

Melee Weapons:

Weapon	Type	Range	D	Special	Cost
Sword	Melee	0"	5	-	0
Greatsword	Melee	0"	7	-	3
Axe	Melee	-	6	-	1
Warhammer	Melee	-	8	-	4
Dagger	Melee	-	4	+1 WS when attacking from the Rear arc.	1
Chainblade	Melee	-	5	Ignores 1 point of Armor on a successful hit.	3
Staff	Melee	-	5	Can be used with both WS and WT (depending on fighting style).	1

Ranged Weapons:

Weapon	Type	Range	D	Special	Cost
Hunting Bow	Ranged	18"	4	-	0
Crossbow	Ranged	18"	5	-	2
Repeater Crossbow	Ranged	18"	4	Can make two attacks with a single action, each at -1 WS.	6
Throwing Knives	Ranged	6"	3	Can be thrown as a melee attack with a range of 3".	2

IV. Magic in the Shadows

Spellcasting Attributes

Magic Points (MP): Each mage has a pool of Magic Points, representing their raw magical energy. Casting spells depletes MP.

Focus: A measure of a mage's control and precision when casting. Higher Focus allows for more potent spells and reduces the chance of mishaps.

Willpower: A mage's mental fortitude and resistance to magical backlash. Used to resist the effects of enemy spells and control powerful magical forces.

Example: Spellcasting: A Mage with a Focus of +2 wants to cast "Stone Skin" (TN 9) on an ally. They roll a D20 and add their Focus and the spell's level (Level 1): $D20 + 2 + 1$. If the total is 9 or higher, the spell succeeds.

Spell Levels and Casting

Spell Levels: Spells are categorized into levels (1-5), representing their power and complexity. Higher-level spells require more MP and Focus to cast.

Casting Actions: Most spells require one action to cast, but some powerful spells may require multiple actions or even a full turn to unleash.

Casting Rolls: To successfully cast a spell, a mage must make a casting roll:

- **Roll:** $D20 + \text{Focus} + \text{Spell Level}$
- **Target Number:** Each spell has a target number (TN) based on its level and effects.
- **Success:** If the roll equals or exceeds the TN, the spell is cast successfully.

Critical Cast: A natural roll of 20 on a casting roll is a critical cast. The spell's effects are maximized, potentially dealing extra damage, affecting a larger area, or lasting longer.

Mishaps and Backlash

- **Casting Failure:** If a casting roll fails to meet the TN, the spell fizzles, and the MP cost is still lost.
- **Magic Mishaps (Typically on a casting roll of 2-5):**
 - **Disoriented (1 Round):** The flow of magic leaves the mage feeling disoriented. They suffer from the "Disoriented" status effect for one round.
 - **Impaired Focus (1 Round):** The mage's concentration is broken. Reduce their Focus by -2 for one round.
 - **Minor Arcane Backlash:** The magic backfires harmlessly, but noticeably. The mage's hands glow brightly for a few moments, their hair stands on end, or they let out an involuntary yelp in a strange language. No mechanical effect but provides flavor.
 - **Attract Glimmerlings (Scenario-Specific):** The magical energy attracts a small swarm of Glimmerlings (refer to your monster stats) to the mage's location. This mishap would be appropriate in areas where Glimmerlings are known to inhabit.
- **Magic Backlash (Typically on a natural roll of 1):**
 - **Arcane Burn:** The mage suffers points of damage as the spell's energy backfires bases on Mage Rank.

Mage Rank	Backlash Damage
○ Initiate	○ 3
○ Apprentice	○ 4
○ Journeyman	○ 5
○ Master	○ 7
○ Archmage	○ 9

- **Overcharged (Stunned):** The mage is overloaded with magical energy. They are Stunned for one round.
- **Weakened Ward (Reduce MD):** The mage's magical defenses are weakened. Reduce their MD by -2 for one round.
- **Uncontrolled Summoning (GM's Discretion):** A surge of wild magic summons a minor creature (determined by the GM) to a random location within 6" of the mage. This could be a harmless critter or something slightly more dangerous!

Schools of Magic

Each mage specializes in one or more schools of magic, granting them access to unique spells and abilities.

1. **Pyromancy (Fire):** Masters of fire and heat, wielding destructive flames to incinerate their foes.
 - Spells: Ember Bolt, Flame Strike

2. **Geomancy (Earth):** Manipulators of earth and stone, creating barriers and hindering enemies with the power of the ground.
 - Spells: Stone Skin, Earthen Grasp, Wall of Thorns
3. **Hydromancy (Water/Ice):** Commanders of water in all its forms, using it to heal, control, and unleash freezing attacks.
 - Spells: Water Whip, Ice Storm

Remember: This is just a starting point. Be creative and come up with unique spells that fit the themes and atmosphere of your Grimshade City games!

Advanced Spellcasting

Ritual Casting: By spending additional time and resources, mages can attempt powerful rituals to achieve extraordinary effects, such as summoning powerful entities or creating lasting magical artifacts.

- A ritual might require a certain number of rounds to complete, specific components, and a successful casting roll each round. Failure during the ritual could result in negative consequences.

Spell Weaving: Skilled mages can combine multiple spells into a single, devastating attack or create complex magical effects.

- To weave spells, a mage must spend additional MP and make a more difficult casting roll. Success combines the effects of the chosen spells, while failure could lead to a magical mishap.

Counterspells: With careful timing, a mage can attempt to counter an enemy's spell, negating its effects or even turning it back on the caster.

Magical Items and Artifacts

- **Enchanted Weapons & Armor:** Items imbued with magical properties that grant bonuses to attacks, defense, or other attributes.
- **Talismans & Charms:** Small, portable objects that provide passive magical benefits or allow the bearer to cast specific spells.
- **Artifacts:** Rare and powerful items imbued with ancient magic, capable of altering the tide of battle or granting their wielders extraordinary abilities.

Mage Magic Point Progression

This system combines the structure of mage ranks with the flexibility of a Wit-based MP pool, providing a clear progression path while allowing for character customization.

Rank-Based MP Modifier:

Each mage rank grants a bonus modifier that is added to the mage's Wit (WT) score to determine their maximum MP.

Mage Rank	MP Modifier	Example (WT 13)	Point cost	Notes
Initiate	+3	16 MP	+0	Starting MP, reflecting basic magical training.

Mage Rank	MP Modifier	Example (WT 13)	Point cost	Notes
Apprentice	+5	18 MP	+5	Increased MP, enabling more spellcasting options.
Journeyman	+7	20 MP	+12	Further MP increase, allowing for more potent spells and longer battles.
Master	+10	23 MP	+20	A significant boost, reflecting mastery over their chosen school of magic.
Archmage	+15	28 MP	+30	Represents the pinnacle of magical power and control.

MP Calculation:

- **Maximum MP = Wit (WT) + Rank Modifier**

Example:

- **Marius the Mage (WT 13):**
 - As an Initiate, Marius has 16 MP (13 + 3).
 - Upon reaching Journeyman rank, his MP increases to 20 (13 + 7).

Additional Considerations:

- **Spell Costs:** Balance spell costs against the combined MP system, ensuring that higher-level spells remain challenging to cast.
- **MP Regeneration:** MP regeneration happens story between encounters.
- **Items and Abilities:** Items or abilities that temporarily boost Wit will also increase a mage's MP for the duration of the effect.
- **Direct Rank-to-Level Correlation:**
 - Initiate: Can only cast Level 1 spells.
 - Apprentice: Can cast Level 1 and 2 spells.
 - Journeyman: Can cast Level 1, 2, and 3 spells.
 - Master: Can cast Level 1, 2, 3, and 4 spells.
 - Archmage: Can cast all levels of spells (1-5).

These advanced magic rules add a layer of depth and strategy to spellcasting in Grimshade City. Mages are no longer just damage dealers but versatile forces on the battlefield, capable of controlling the flow of combat and shaping the very fabric of reality with their arcane might!

-

Spell List

Grimshade City: Spell List with Stats

Here's the expanded spell list with stats for cost, power, and other effects. Note that these are guidelines, and you can adjust them to fit your game's balance and desired level of crunch.

Spell Stat Key:

- **MP:** Magic Points required to cast.
- **TN:** Target Number for the casting roll (D20 + Focus + Spell Level).
- **RNG:** Range of the spell (in inches, unless otherwise noted).
- **POW:** Attack Power (added to damage rolls) or Buff/Debuff Power (added to relevant stat).
- **DUR:** Duration of the spell's effect (in rounds, unless otherwise noted).
- **HEAL:** Healing points restored.
- **Effect:** Special rules or descriptions of the spell's effect.

Elemental School Spell List

1. Pyromancy (Fire):

Spell	MP	TN	RNG	POW	DUR	Effect
Level 1						
Ember Bolt	2	8	12	4	-	-
Level 2						
Flame Strike	4	10	6	6	-	Deals damage in a 3" radius burst.

2. Geomancy (Earth):

Spell	M P	TN	RN G	POW	DU R	Effect
Level 1						
Stone Skin	3	9	T	-	2	Target gains +2 Defense.
Level 2						

Spell	M P	TN	RN G	POW	DU R	Effect
Earthen Grasp	3	9	12	-	2	Target is Rooted (cannot move).

Level 3

Wall of Thorns	5	11	8	-	3	Creates a 6" long impassable wall; provides Cover to those behind it.
----------------	---	----	---	---	---	---

3. Hydromancy (Water/Ice):

Spell	M P	TN	RN G	POW	DU R	Effect
Level 2						
Water Whip	3	9	8	5	-	Has a chance to Disarm the target (opposed Strength check).

Level 3

Ice Storm	5	11	10	4	2	All targets in the area are Slowed (half Tactical and Sprint movement).
-----------	---	----	----	---	---	---

Lightning Bolt (Placement Options):

General Elemental: Lightning Bolt | 6 | 12 | 24 | 5 | - | - | -

Remember that this is a sample list! Feel free to create your own spells, experiment with different effects, and tailor the magic system to fit the unique world of Grimshade City!

V. The Momentum Engine: Shared Resources and Teamwork

This mechanic introduces a shared resource pool that players contribute to and draw from, emphasizing teamwork and strategic resource management.

Resource Points (RP)

- **Resource Points (RP):** The team shares a pool of Resource Points, representing their combined momentum and tactical advantage.

Contributing to the Pool

- **Start of Round:** At the start of each round, the Leader automatically generates a fixed amount of Resource Points (RP) for the team, reflecting their leadership and tactical awareness.

- Base Generation: The Leader generates 2 RP.
- Modifiers: This amount can be modified by the Leader's Morale (M) score, special abilities, or equipment. For example, a Leader with high Morale might generate an additional 1 RP.
- Also, RP equal to their current number of heroes who are not incapacitated.
- Shared Momentum Contributions:
 - Other Heroes: During their activation, any other hero on the team can choose to contribute RP to the pool by performing a Momentum Action.
 - Momentum Action: A hero sacrifices their entire activation (both Action Points) to generate 3 RP for the team.
 - Tactical Choice: Players must decide if it's more beneficial to take actions with their hero or contribute to the shared pool for a potential team ability later.

Spending RP

Players can spend RP from the pool to fuel powerful actions and abilities.

- **Teamwork:** Encourages communication and coordination, as players must work together to manage their shared resources effectively.
- This table outlines the amount of RP a Leader generates at the start of each round, based on their Morale (M) score.

Morale Score	RP Generated
● 7 or lower	● 1 RP
● 8-10	● 2 RP
● 11-13	● 3 RP
● 14-16	● 4 RP
● 17 or higher	● 5 RP

- **Example:**
 - A Leader with a Morale of 12 will generate 3 RP at the start of each round.
 - A Leader with a Morale of 8 will only generate 2 RP, reflecting their lower ability to inspire their team.
- **Using the Table:**

- **Determine Leader's Morale:** At the start of each round, check the Leader's current Morale score.
- **Find RP Generation:** Refer to the table to determine the amount of RP generated based on the Morale score.
- **Add to Pool:** Add the generated RP to the team's shared Momentum Engine pool.

Example of Play:

- a. Start of Round: The Leader, with a Morale of 12 (+2 modifier), generates 3 RP (2 base + 1 from Morale) and 3 RP for heroes not incapacitated.
 - b. Knight's Turn: The Knight's player decides to take actions to engage an enemy in melee.
 - c. Rogue's Turn: The Rogue's player, seeing an opportunity for a powerful team ability later, chooses to perform a Momentum Action, adding 3 RP to the pool (total: 9 RP).
2. Healer's Turn: The Healer's player decides to use their actions to heal a wounded ally.

Using Resource Points:

- **Enhanced Actions:**
 - **Extra Action:** Spend 2 RP to grant a hero an additional Action during their activation.
 - **Increased Movement:** Spend 1 RP to grant a hero +3" of movement for a single movement action.
 - **Boosted Attack/Spell:** Spend 2 RP to gain +2 WS or +2 POW to a single attack or spell.
- **Team Abilities:** Introduce powerful abilities that can only be activated by spending a significant amount of RP from the pool. These abilities could have game-changing effects, like:
 - **Coordinated Assault (6 RP):** All heroes gain an extra action on their next turn.
 - **Arcane Surge (5 RP):** One Mage immediately regains all their Magic Points.
 - **Defensive Formation (4 RP):** All heroes gain +2 D until the start of the next round.

Tactical Considerations:

- **Risk vs. Reward:** Players must balance spending RP for immediate advantage against saving for potentially game-changing team abilities.
- **Turn Order:** The random nature of contributing to the pool adds an element of uncertainty, as players may not always have the RP they need when they need it.
- **Teamwork:** Encourages communication and coordination, as players must work together to manage their shared resources effectively.

This shared resource mechanic adds a layer of tactical depth and teamwork to Grimshade City. It creates exciting moments of decision-making as players weigh their options and strive for victory in the monster-infested streets!

Team Abilities

Grimshade City: Momentum Engine's Team Abilities

Utilize the Resource Points (RP), tailored to each archetype in:

Knight:

- **Unyielding Defense (4 RP):** The Knight plants their feet firmly, becoming an unmovable bastion. The Knight gains +4 Defense and cannot be moved by enemy attacks or abilities for one round. Additionally, all allies within 3" of the Knight gain +1 Defense.

Dead Shot:

- **Suppressing Barrage (5 RP):** The Dead Shot unleashes a hail of attacks, pinning down the enemy. Choose a single target area within the Dead Shot's range. Every enemy within that area must make a Defense roll (no modifiers). If they fail, they suffer 1 point of damage and are considered Pinned Down until the start of the Dead Shot's next turn. Pinned Down targets have -2 to their WS and D.

Rogue/Scout:

- **Shadow Ambush (3 RP):** The Rogue/Scout vanishes from sight, only to reappear behind enemy lines, striking with deadly precision. The Rogue/Scout can immediately move to any unoccupied space within 12" as long as it is not within an enemy's line of sight. Then, they may make a single melee attack with +2 WS.

Healer:

- **Advanced Healing Touch (2 RP):** As an Action, the Healer can spend 2 RP to touch an ally within 3". The ally regains 4 Wounds.
- **Surge of Life (6 RP):** The Healer channels a wave of revitalizing energy, mending wounds and restoring vitality to their allies. All allies within 6" of the Healer regain 3 Wounds. Additionally, remove all negative status effects (poisoned, stunned, etc.) from one ally within range.

Mage:

- **Elemental Conflux (7 RP):** The Mage weaves together threads of raw elemental power, unleashing a devastating blast of energy. Choose a target point within 12". All characters within 3" of that point (friend or foe) suffer 5 points of damage and must make a MD check. If they fail, they are also knocked back 3" directly away from the point of impact.

Specialist:

- **Overclocked (4 RP):** The Specialist pushes their gadgets beyond their limits, creating a cascade of unpredictable effects. Choose one:
 - **Emergency Shield:** One ally within 6" gains a temporary shield equal to their maximum Wounds, absorbing damage before their health is affected. Lasts until the start of the Specialist's next turn.
 - **Flashbang Barrage:** Throw a device that explodes in a 6" radius. All characters in the area are Blinded (disadvantage on attacks) for one round.
 - **Automated Decoy:** Deploy a holographic decoy that acts as a valid target for enemy attacks for one round.

Leader (Trailblazer):

- **Rallying Cry (5 RP):** The Leader inspires their allies with a surge of courage and determination. All allies within 6" of the Leader immediately gain 2 Action Points and are immune to fear and morale-reducing effects for one round.
- **Inspiring Charge (4 RP):** The Leader rallies their team for a daring offensive. All allies within 6" of the Leader gain +1 Mv and may immediately make a free Move action. Additionally, their next attack this round gains +1 WS.

Blood Priest:

- **Blood Pact (4 RP):** The Blood Priest forms a dark pact, sacrificing their own vitality to empower an ally. Choose one ally within 6". That ally regains Wounds equal to half the Blood Priest's current Wounds, rounded up. The Blood Priest then suffers damage equal to half the amount healed.
- **Unholy Aura (6 RP):** The Blood Priest unleashes a wave of unholy energy, bolstering allies and weakening enemies. All allies within 6" gain +1 WS and are immune to fear effects for one round. All enemies within 6" suffer -1 WS and -1 D for one round.

Shadowmancer:

- **Shadow Step (3 RP):** The Shadowmancer manipulates the fabric of shadows, allowing an ally to reposition themselves strategically. Choose one ally within 6". That ally may immediately move to any unoccupied space within 6" of their current location, even if it is behind cover or in an enemy's line of sight.
- **Summon Shadow (5 RP):** The Shadowmancer calls forth a shadowy construct to aid them in battle. A Shadow (stats similar to a Clockwork Hound) is summoned within 6" of the Shadowmancer. The Shadow acts on the Shadowmancer's initiative count and lasts for 2 rounds.

Ironclad Brawler:

- **Iron Grip (2 RP):** The Brawler makes a grapple attempt. If successful, the target is restrained and suffers a penalty to their D. The grapple can be broken with a successful Strength check or by dealing damage to the Brawler.
- **Haymaker (3 RP):** The Brawler charges forward up to 4" and makes a powerful melee attack that ignores the target's armor.
- **Unbreakable (1 RP):** The Brawler shrugs off a debilitating effect, becoming immune to one status condition (stunned, poisoned, etc.) for one round.

These powerful team abilities encourage strategic resource management and coordinated play, rewarding players who communicate effectively and time their actions carefully to turn the tide of battle in their favor!

VI. Monsters of the Gutter

Monster Stats

Attribute Key (For Boss Monsters):

- **WS (Weapon Skill):** Roll equal to or under to hit.
- **D (Defense):** Roll over to negate damage (armor reduces damage taken if the roll is equal to or lower).
- **MD (Magic Defense):** Roll equal to or under to resist spells and mental effects.

- **Wounds (W):** Total health pool.
- **M (Morale):** Resistance to morale effects. High Morale = Unlikely to flee.
- **RP (Resource Points):** At the start of each round, the Boss Monster adds 6 RP to the boss monster's RP pool. These points can be spent on Reactive Actions or Special Abilities.

Reactive Actions

Reactive Actions (Cost 1 RP unless stated otherwise):

- **Dodge:** The boss attempts to evade an attack. Make a Defense (D) roll against the attacker's WS. If successful, the attack misses.
- **Parry (Melee Only):** The boss attempts to deflect a melee attack. Make a WS roll against the attacker's WS. If successful, the attack misses.
- **Unleash a Bellow (2 RP):** The boss lets out a fearsome roar or cry. All heroes within 6" must make a Morale (M) check or suffer a -1 penalty to WS and D for 1 round.

Monster Bestiary

Grimshade City offers thrilling gameplay in a variety of modes! Assemble your hero team and face the challenges of the Gutter in cooperative PVE scenarios against monstrous foes. Delve deeper into the city's secrets through an engaging campaign, where your heroes grow in power and uncover hidden truths. Or, test your tactical skills against other players in thrilling PVP battles, pitting hero against hero amidst the chaos of Grimshade.

Challenge Rating (CR) in Grimshade City

Challenge Rating (CR) helps you balance encounters and create engaging challenges for your players. It represents the relative difficulty of a monster or boss monster, taking into account its stats, abilities, and overall threat level.

Basic CR Table:

CR	Threat Level	Example Monsters
1/2	Very Easy	Gutter Stalker, Rustcrawler
1	Easy	Glimmerling Swarm, Clockwork Hound
2	Moderate	Spiteful Shade, Stone Guardian
3	Challenging	Alchemically-Augmented Brute, Grimshade Wraith
4	Difficult	Clockwork Juggernaut
5	Very Difficult	Alchemist's Abomination
6+	Boss Monster (Variable)	The Glimmerheart Behemoth, The Clockwork Colossus, etc.

Modifying CR:

You can adjust a monster or boss monster's CR by modifying its stats and abilities. Here's a guide:

Increase CR:

- **+1 WS or D:** +1/2 CR
- **+2 Wounds:** +1/2 CR
- **Add a Special Ability:** +1/2 to +1 CR (depending on the ability's power)
- **Increase Damage Output:** +1/2 to +1 CR
- **Add Resistance or Immunity:** +1/2 to +1 CR

Decrease CR:

- **-1 WS or D:** -1/2 CR

- **-2 Wounds:** -1/2 CR
- **Remove a Special Ability:** -1/2 to -1 CR
- **Decrease Damage Output:** -1/2 to -1 CR
- **Remove Resistance or Immunity:** -1/2 to -1 CR

Balancing Encounters:

- **Party Size and Level:** Consider the number of heroes in the party and their average level when determining the appropriate CR for an encounter.
- **Multiple Monsters:** When using multiple monsters in an encounter, their combined CR should be higher than the party's average level for a challenging fight.
- **Environmental Factors:** Take into account terrain, hazards, and other environmental factors that might affect the difficulty of the encounter.

Example:

You want to make the Stone Guardian (CR 2) a bit more challenging for a higher-level party. You could:

- Increase its WS to 14 (+1/2 CR)
- Add an additional Special Ability: "Stone Throw" - The Stone Guardian can hurl a chunk of rock as a ranged attack (12" range, D12) (+1/2 CR)

The modified Stone Guardian would now have a CR of 3, making it a more formidable opponent.

1. Gutter Stalker (Beast)

A hulking, mutated rat bursts from the shadows, its eyes glowing with an unsettling crimson light. Its mangy fur is matted with filth and grime, and its razor-sharp claws drip with viscous drool. A grotesque parody of its once-ordinary kin, the Gutter Stalker embodies the corrupting influence of the city's underbelly.

- **Appearance:** A hulking, mutated rat with glowing red eyes, razor-sharp claws, and patches of mangy fur.
- **Threat Level:** Low
- **Threat Preference:** Targets isolated or injured heroes. Will flee if overwhelmed.
- **WS:** 10
- **D:** 10
- **MD:** 8
- **Wounds:** 10
- **Morale:** 7
- **RP:** 2 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Swarming:** When two or more Gutter Stalkers are adjacent to the same target, they gain +1 WS and +1 D.
 - **Leaping Bite (2 RP):** The Gutter Stalker leaps at a target within 6", making a melee attack with +2 WS.

2. Rustcrawler (Construct)

A skittering symphony of clanking metal and whirring gears, the Rustcrawler scuttles across the battlefield, its spider-like limbs cobbled together from scrap metal and scavenged components. Sparks shower from its joints as it moves with an unsettling, jerky gait, its glowing eyes searching for its next target.

- **Appearance:** A small, spider-like automaton cobbled together from scrap metal and animated by stolen arcane energy.
- **Threat Level:** Low
- **Threat Preference:** Prioritizes objectives or disrupting support characters. Weak in melee.
- **WS:** 8
- **D:** 12
- **MD:** 10
- **Wounds:** 8
- **Morale:** N/A (Immune to Morale effects)
- **RP:** 2 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Arc Web (2 RP):** The Rustcrawler fires a short-range web of crackling energy (6" range), dealing 6 damage and potentially slowing the target's movement for one round.

3. Glimmerling Swarm (Aberration)

A swirling mass of luminescent insects descends upon its prey, their tiny bodies emitting an eerie, hypnotic glow. The air crackles with a strange energy as the swarm moves with an unsettling unity, its collective buzzing growing louder as it closes in, ready to devour anything in its path.

- **Appearance:** A swirling mass of glowing insects, drawn to sources of heat and light.
- **Threat Level:** Low to Moderate (depending on number of swarms)
- **Threat Preference:** Swarm heroes, hindering actions and dealing minor damage over time.
- **WS:** 9 (as a group, treat as one entity)
- **D:** 11
- **MD:** 9
- **Wounds:** 15 (Each swarm has 15 Wounds, damage carries over)
- **Morale:** N/A (Unaffected by Morale)
- **RP:** 3 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Blinding Radiance (3 RP):** The swarm emits a blinding flash of light. All heroes within 6" must make a MD check or be Blinded for one round.
 - **Swarming Assault:** At the end of each round, each Glimmerling Swarm within 3" of a hero deals 1 point of damage, ignoring armor.

4. Clockwork Hound (Construct)

A sleek, metallic hound with glowing eyes and blades extending from its paws stalks its prey with ruthless efficiency. Its movements are a blur of precision and power, its gears whirring softly as it circles its target, waiting for the perfect moment to strike.

- **Appearance:** A sleek, canine automaton with glowing eyes and blades extending from its paws.
- **Threat Level:** Moderate
- **Threat Preference:** Engages in melee, using its speed to flank and harass heroes.
- **WS:** 12
- **D:** 11
- **MD:** 10
- **Wounds:** 12
- **Morale:** N/A (Immune to Morale effects)
- **RP:** 3 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Pounce (2 RP):** The Clockwork Hound charges forward up to 6", making a free melee attack at the end of its movement.
 - **Relentless:** The Clockwork Hound does not suffer penalties to movement from difficult terrain.

5. Spiteful Shade (Undead)

A translucent, humanoid figure wreathed in shadows drifts through the air, its eyes burning with a cold, spectral fire. The air grows chill in its presence, and whispers of forgotten sorrows echo in its wake. Driven by a thirst for vengeance, the Spiteful Shade seeks to inflict its pain upon the living.

- **Appearance:** A translucent, humanoid figure wreathed in shadows, driven by a thirst for vengeance.
- **Threat Level:** Moderate
- **Threat Preference:** Targets heroes with low MD or those who have recently dealt damage.
- **WS:** 11
- **D:** 12
- **MD:** 13
- **Wounds:** 14
- **Morale:** 11
- **RP:** 3 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Ethereal:** The Spiteful Shade can move through walls and obstacles as if they weren't there.
 - **Withering Touch (3 RP):** The Shade makes a melee attack that deals 7 necrotic damage and has a chance to reduce the target's Morale by 1 for one round.

6. Stone Guardian (Construct)

A hulking statue animated by magic stands guard, its stone eyes fixed in a perpetual glare. Its massive stone weapon, weathered by time but still deadly, hangs heavy in its grasp. The Stone Guardian is an unyielding sentinel, a testament to the enduring power of ancient magic.

- **Appearance:** A hulking statue animated by magic, wielding a massive stone weapon.
- **Threat Level:** Moderate to High
- **Threat Preference:** Guards specific locations or objects. Relentlessly attacks any who come close.
- **WS:** 13
- **D:** 14
- **MD:** 12
- **Wounds:** 20
- **Morale:** N/A (Immune to Morale effects)
- **RP:** 4 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Stone Skin:** The Stone Guardian has a natural armor that reduces all damage taken by 1 (to a minimum of 1).
 - **Ground Tremor (3 RP):** The Stone Guardian slams its weapon on the ground, creating a tremor in a 6" radius. All heroes in the area must make a Dexterity check or be knocked prone.

7. Alchemically-Augmented Brute (Humanoid)

A grotesque fusion of flesh and metal, the Alchemically-Augmented Brute is a terrifying sight to behold. Bulging muscles ripple beneath its scarred skin, and metal implants protrude from its flesh. Glowing veins pulse with volatile alchemical concoctions, driving the Brute into a frenzied rage.

- **Appearance:** A massive human with grotesque mutations, metal implants, and glowing veins, driven mad by alchemical experimentation.
- **Threat Level:** High
- **Threat Preference:** Targets the closest hero, prioritizing melee combat.
- **WS:** 14
- **D:** 12
- **MD:** 9
- **Wounds:** 18
- **Morale:** 12
- **RP:** 4 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Berserk Charge (3 RP):** The Brute charges forward in a straight line, attacking every target within its path.
 - **Toxic Blood:** Whenever the Brute takes damage, any hero within 3" must make a MD check or suffer 6 poison damage.

8. Grimshade Wraith (Undead)

A skeletal figure draped in tattered robes glides through the shadows, its eyes burning with cold, spectral fire. The air grows heavy with the stench of decay as the Wraith draws near, its every movement accompanied by a faint, chilling moan. It seeks to drain the life force of its victims, growing stronger with each soul it consumes.

- **Appearance:** A skeletal figure draped in tattered robes, its eyes burning with cold, spectral fire.
- **Threat Level:** High
- **Threat Preference:** Drains the life force of its victims, becoming stronger with each soul it consumes.
- **WS:** 13
- **D:** 13
- **MD:** 14
- **Wounds:** 20
- **Morale:** 13
- **RP:** 4 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Life Drain (4 RP):** Makes a melee attack that, if successful, deals 7 necrotic damage and heals the Wraith for the same amount.
 - **Fear Aura:** Heroes within 6" of the Wraith have -1 Morale.

9. Clockwork Juggernaut (Construct)

A massive, heavily armored automaton lumbers forward, its gears grinding and its weapons whirring ominously. Bristling with cannons, blades, and arcane engines, the Clockwork Juggernaut is a walking arsenal, designed to crush all opposition with overwhelming firepower.

- **Appearance:** A massive, heavily armored automaton bristling with weapons, designed for overwhelming firepower.
- **Threat Level:** Very High
- **Threat Preference:** Indiscriminately attacks, prioritizing the most grouped-up heroes.
- **WS:** 15
- **D:** 16
- **MD:** 13
- **Wounds:** 30
- **Morale:** N/A (Immune to Morale effects)
- **RP:** 5 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Rotary Cannon (4 RP):** The Juggernaut fires a barrage of projectiles in a cone-shaped area (12" range), each hero in the area must make a separate D check (D 14) to avoid 8 damage.
 - **Armor Plating:** Reduce all damage the Juggernaut takes by 2 (to a minimum of 1).

10. The Alchemist's Abomination (Aberration)

A grotesque fusion of flesh and metal, stitched together from the body parts of multiple creatures, the Alchemist's Abomination is a testament to the dangers of unchecked experimentation. Its mismatched limbs twitch and spasm uncontrollably, driven by a chaotic alchemical concoction that courses through its veins. It is a creature of unpredictable fury, a nightmare made flesh.

- **Appearance:** A grotesque fusion of flesh and metal, stitched together from the body parts of multiple creatures, driven by a chaotic alchemical concoction.
- **Threat Level:** Very High
- **Threat Preference:** Unpredictable and erratic, will use a combination of melee and ranged attacks.
- **WS:** 14
- **D:** 13
- **MD:** 11
- **Wounds:** 25
- **Morale:** 10
- **RP:** 5 (Start of Turn)
- **Special Abilities:**
 - **Alchemical Concoctions (random each turn, 3 RP):**
 - **Caustic Vomit:** Sprays a cone of acid (8" range) dealing 8 damage (MD check for half).
 - **Flesh Warp:** Grows an additional arm, allowing it to make an extra melee attack on its turn.
 - **Toxic Cloud:** Releases a cloud of poisonous gas in a 6" radius, dealing 5 poison damage to all heroes in the area at the start of their turn for 2 rounds.
 - **Unstable Mutations:** At the start of each of its turns, roll a D20. On a 17-20, the Abomination gains a random mutation (additional attack, increased movement, regeneration, etc. - GM's discretion).

Monster Movement	Mv/Sm	Notes
Gutter Stalker	4/4	Quick and agile, able to dart around the battlefield and through tight spaces.
Rustcrawler	3/0	Relatively slow but can potentially use abilities to close distances.
Glimmerling Swarm	5/5	Moves quickly and erratically, able to surround and overwhelm targets.
Clockwork Hound	5/5	Fast and maneuverable, able to flank and chase down heroes.
Spiteful Shade	4/4	Can move through obstacles, so its Mv is more about positioning.
Stone Guardian	3/0	Slow and imposing, but its strength makes up for its lack of speed.
Alchemically-Augmented Brute	4/2	Can close distances quickly with its charge ability, but otherwise, moderate speed.
Grimshade Wraith	4/4	Moves at a moderate pace, but its ability to phase through objects makes it unpredictable.
Clockwork Juggernaut	3/0	Very slow and cumbersome, but its firepower and armor make it a threat even at a distance.
Alchemist's Abomination	4/3	Unpredictable speed, might be affected by mutations.

Boss Monsters

1. The Glimmerheart Behemoth (Beast):

A monstrous boar, easily the size of a carriage, bursts from the shadows, its already formidable bulk grotesquely enlarged by alchemical corruption. Glowing runes sear the beast's hide, crackling with unstable energy. Thick metal plates, crudely bolted onto its flesh, offer little protection from the pulsating crystal heart that bursts from its chest—a heart that glows with an eerie, hypnotic luminescence. Iron spikes, each longer than a man's arm, protrude from its shoulders and flanks, leaving trails of sparks as the Behemoth charges forward, driven by a primal rage it cannot comprehend.

- Appearance: A mutated boar with glowing runes, metal plating, and iron-tipped tusks.
 - WS: 14
 - D: 13
 - MD: 9
 - Wounds: 25
 - Morale: 11
- Threat Preference:
 - **The Rampaging Beast:** Driven by instinct, it charges headlong at the nearest hero, prioritizing those who dare to attack its exposed, glowing heart. It becomes enraged (gains bonus attacks or damage) when its heart is targeted.
- RP: Starts with 3 RP.
- Special Abilities:
 - Raging Charge (2 RP): Move and attack in the same activation, potentially hitting multiple targets in a line.
 - Fiery Trail: Leaves a burning path in its wake (3" wide), dealing 5 fire damage to those who end their turn within.
 - Glimmerheart Weakness: Takes double damage from attacks that specifically target its exposed heart (requires a called shot).

2. The Clockwork Colossus (Construct):

A symphony of grinding gears and hissing steam announces the arrival of the Colossus, a towering monument to artifice and hubris. This mechanical monstrosity, cobbled together from stolen gears, rusted iron, and arcane engines, stands two stories tall. Chains tipped with hooks and blades snake from its shoulders, each movement precise and deadly. Its single baleful eye, a lens of cracked crystal, blazes with stolen arcane energy, scanning for its next victim.

- Appearance: A towering automaton made of gears, pipes, and stolen arcane energy.
 - WS: 12
 - D: 15
 - MD: 14
 - Wounds: 30
 - Morale: N/A (Immune to morale effects)
- Threat Preference:
 - **The Calculating Engine:** Favors ranged attackers and spellcasters, using its superior range to keep them at bay. Will try to close in and grapple/crush those who get too close, but vulnerable to flanking maneuvers.
- RP: Starts with 5 RP.
- Special Abilities:
 - Detachable Limbs (2 RP): Makes two ranged attacks with chains and hooks (12" range, 8 D). Lost limbs can be reattached at the start of its turn if within 3".
 - Immunity to Pain/Poison: Unaffected by pain and status ailments.
 - Overload Blast (5 RP): As a final action, explodes in a 8" radius, dealing 16 damage to all characters (MD 14 for half damage).

3. The Spectral Weaver (Undead):

A chill wind heralds the approach of the Spectral Weaver, though no physical breeze stirs the air. The Weaver appears as a skeletal figure draped in tattered black robes, its form flickering in and out of existence like a dying flame. Wisps of spectral energy trail from its fingertips, weaving themselves into ectoplasmic wires that crackle with stolen life force. But it is the Weaver's eyes that truly unsettle—burning with a cold, spectral fire that seems to pierce the veil of reality itself.

- Appearance: A gaunt, spectral figure in black robes, floating above the ground, trailing ectoplasmic wires.
 - WS: 13
 - D: 11
 - MD: 15
 - Wounds: 20
 - Morale: 12
- Threat Preference:
 - **The Insidious Puppet Master:** Prioritizes isolating and incapacitating weaker heroes, especially those with low MD, using fear and illusions to separate the party. Enjoys using terrain to its advantage, disappearing and reappearing to flank or drag heroes into hazardous areas.
- RP: Starts with 4 RP.
- Special Abilities:
 - Ethereal: Moves through walls and obstacles as if they weren't there.
 - Spectral Tethers (2 RP): Ranged attack (12" range) that restrains a target for 1 round and deals 5 necrotic damage at the start of their turn. The tether can be broken with a Strength check (TN 12).
 - Summon Spectral Duplicates (3 RP): Creates 1d3 illusory copies of itself. Duplicates have 5 Wounds and deal no damage, but can be used to confuse and distract opponents.

4. The Alchemically Augmented Kingpin (Humanoid):

Once a cunning crime lord, now a testament to alchemical excess, the Kingpin is a horrifying fusion of flesh and metal. Scars, both new and old, crisscross his body, a testament to countless experiments and ruthless ambition. Metal grafts protrude from his flesh, some gleaming, others crusted with rust or leaking strange fluids. A network of tubes snakes beneath his skin, pulsing with potent elixirs and volatile concoctions. His eyes, however, betray a chilling intelligence—a mind warped by power and driven by a desperate need to control.

- Appearance: A grotesquely enhanced crime lord with metal grafts, scars, and tubes.
 - WS: 15
 - D: 10
 - MD: 12
 - Wounds: 22
 - Morale: 13
- Threat Preference:
 - **The Cunning Tactician:** A master manipulator who hangs back and commands his minions, using his alchemical arsenal to exploit weaknesses and control the battlefield. Targets healers or support characters to cripple the party's ability to function
- RP: Starts with 4 RP.
- Special Abilities:
 - Alchemical Arsenal (2 RP): Chooses from various attacks:
 - Corrosive Grenade: 6" radius, 8 acid damage (D 12 for half).
 - Venom Blade: Melee attack that inflicts Poisoned (poison damage at the start of the target's turn for 2 rounds).
 - Desperate Mutation (3 RP): When reduced to half health, gains +2 WS and +2 D, but suffers -4 Morale, becoming more reckless.
 - Cunning Strategist (2 RP): Grants an additional Action to an allied creature within 6".

5. The Gargoyle's Curse (Aberration):

The Gargoyle's Curse is a creature of duality, trapped between stone and shadow. In its Stone Form, it resembles a grotesque gargoyle, its granite hide scarred and cracked, its wings tattered and leathery. But with a flicker of darkness, it shifts, its body dissolving into a swirling mass of shadows, its eyes burning with malevolent red pinpoints. In either form, the Gargoyle's Curse is a creature of nightmares, its very presence a reminder of the ancient pact that binds Grimshade City to its shadowy fate.

- Appearance: A monstrous fusion of stone, flesh, and shadow, born from fear and ancient magic.
 - WS: 14
 - D: 12 (Shadow Form), 15 (Stone Form)
 - MD: 13
 - Wounds: 28
 - Morale: 10
- Threat Preference:
 - **The Unpredictable Terror:** A hit-and-run predator that shifts between forms to exploit openings. Enjoys pulling targets into hazardous terrain or using fear to make them hesitate before striking. Will target those already affected by status effects or those who are isolated.
- RP: Starts with 4 RP.
- Special Abilities:
 - Shifting Form: Starts in Stone Form. As a Bonus Action, can shift between:
 - Stone Form: +3 D, -2 Mv.
 - Shadow Form: Normal Mv, can move through small spaces (1" wide gaps).
 - Engulfing Shadow (3 RP): Melee attack that attempts to grapple and drag a target into terrain (wall, chasm, etc.). Make a contested Strength check. If successful, the target takes 10 damage and is considered Trapped (requires an action and a Strength check to escape).
 - Aura of Fear: Enemies within 6" have disadvantage on Morale checks.

I hope these monsters provide a good challenge for your players in the shadowy depths of Grimshade City!

Boss Monsters Movement

Monster	Mv/Sm	Notes
Glimmerheart Behemoth	4/2	Fast when charging, but otherwise a bit slower due to its size.
Clockwork Colossus	2/0	Very slow, but its detached limbs and ranged attacks can compensate.
Spectral Weaver	4/4	Can move through walls, so its movement is more strategic.
Alchemically Augmented Kingpin	4/3	Uses cover and allies, so average speed is sufficient.
Gargoyle's Curse	3/0 (Stone), 5/4 (Shadow)	Form-dependent: slow in Stone Form, faster in Shadow Form.

Loot: Use the loot table you provided to reward players for defeating these formidable foes!

Boss Monster Loot Table

Grimshade City: Boss Monster Loot Table (D10 x D10)

After defeating a challenging boss monster in the depths of Grimshade City, your heroes deserve some valuable loot! Use this D10 x D10 table to generate exciting rewards.

How to Use:

1. **Roll two D10s.** The first D10 determines the row, and the second D10 determines the column.
2. **Find the corresponding loot.**
3. **GM Discretion:** Feel free to adjust the loot or its quantity to fit your game's power level and the specific boss monster defeated.

Loot Table:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Potion	Gadget	Weapon Mod	Ammo/Consumable	Armor Patch	Rune/Inscription	Alchemical Formula	Minor Artifact Fragment	Map (Location)	Trinket
2	Potion	Gadget	Weapon Mod	Ammo/Consumable	Armor Patch	Rune/Inscription	Alchemical Formula	Minor Artifact Fragment	Map (Secret Passage)	Trinket
3	Potion x2	Gadget	Weapon Mod x2	Ammo/Consumable	Armor Patch x2	Rune/Inscription	Alchemical Formula	Minor Artifact Fragment	Diagram (Trap/Device)	Valuable (1d6)
4	Potion x2	Gadget x2	Weapon Mod x2	Ammo/Consumable	Armor Patch x2	Rune/Inscription x2	Alchemical Formula	Minor Artifact Fragment x2	Lore Scroll	Valuable (2d6)
5	Gadget	Gadget x2	Weapon Blueprint	Ammo/Consumable	Armor Enhancement	Rune/Inscription x2	Alchemical Formula	Minor Artifact	Cipher Key	Valuable (3d6)
6	Gadget	Gadget x2	Weapon Blueprint	Ammo/Consumable	Armor Enhancement	Rune/Inscription x2	Alchemical Formula x2	Minor Artifact	Encrypted Message	Jewelry (1d4)
7	Gadget x2	Rare Gadget	Enchanted Weapon (Minor)	Ammo/Consumable	Armor Set (Partial)	Alchemical Formula x2	Unique Gadget	Minor Artifact x2	Schematics (Minor)	Jewelry (2d4)
8	Rare Gadget	Rare Gadget	Enchanted Weapon (Minor)	Rare Ammo/Consumable	Armor Set (Partial)	Alchemical Formula x2	Unique Gadget	Minor Artifact x2	Schematics (Major)	Gemstone (1d4)
9	Rare Gadget	Rare Gadget x2	Enchanted Weapon (Major)	Rare Ammo/Consumable	Armor Set (Full)	Tome of Lore	Unique Gadget x2	Major Artifact Fragment	Deed/Contract	Gemstone (2d4)
10	Rare Gadget x2	Artifact (Minor)	Enchanted Weapon (Major)	Rare Ammo/Consumable	Armor Set (Full)	Tome of Lore	Unique Gadget x2	Major Artifact Fragment	Will/Testament	Gemstone (3d4)

Loot Descriptions:

- **Potion:** Heals 8 Wounds.
- **Gadget:** A single-use device with a minor beneficial effect (e.g., flashbang, grappling hook, lockpick kit).
- **Weapon Mod:** A modification that grants a weapon a small bonus (e.g., +1 Damage, Flaming).
- **Ammo/Consumable:** A bundle of special ammunition or a useful consumable item (e.g., alchemist's fire, healing salve).
- **Armor Patch:** Improves a single piece of armor, granting +1 D.
- **Rune/Inscription:** A magical inscription that can be applied to a weapon or armor for a minor bonus.
- **Alchemical Formula:** Instructions for crafting a specific potion or alchemical item.
- **Weapon Blueprint:** Instructions for crafting a unique or powerful weapon.
- **Armor Enhancement:** Improves a single piece of armor, granting a special effect (e.g., fire resistance, silent movement).
- **Rare Gadget:** A more powerful and versatile gadget with a significant effect.
- **Enchanted Weapon (Minor/Major):** A weapon imbued with magic, granting bonus damage, special effects, or both.
- **Armor Set (Partial/Full):** A set of matching armor, providing superior protection and potentially set bonuses.
- **Unique Gadget:** A one-of-a-kind invention with a powerful or unusual effect.
- **Artifact (Minor/Major):** A powerful magical item with significant effects on the game world or character abilities.
- **Tome of Lore:** A book containing valuable knowledge about Grimshade City, its history, monsters, or magic.
- **Map (Location/Secret Passage):** Reveals a hidden location, valuable resource, or shortcut through the city.
- **Diagram (Trap/Device):** Instructions for building or disarming a specific trap or mechanical device.
- **Lore Scroll:** Provides insight into a specific monster, faction, or historical event.
- **Cipher Key:** Unlocks a hidden message or coded document.
- **Encrypted Message:** A message that requires deciphering to reveal its secrets.
- **Schematics (Minor/Major):** Blueprints for building a powerful device or structure.
- **Deed/Contract:** A legal document that grants ownership or rights to something valuable.
- **Will/Testament:** The final wishes of a deceased person, potentially revealing secrets or hidden treasures.
- **Valuable (1d6/2d6/3d6):** A small, valuable item worth the rolled amount in gold or trade goods.
- **Jewelry (1d4/2d4):** A piece of jewelry worth a significant amount of gold.

- **Gemstone (1d4/2d4/3d4):** A precious gemstone worth a considerable sum, potentially usable in crafting or magic rituals.

VII. Running Grimshade City

Multiplayer Rules

Reactions and Threat Management

Grimshade City: Multiplayer Rules - Reactions and Threat Management (RP Cost Version)

These rules introduce automatic reactions, streamlined for multiplayer games and powered by Resource Points (RP) to emphasize tactical choices.

I. Line of Sight (LOS) Reactions (1 RP):

- **Spotting an Enemy:** When a hero's activation begins, and they gain LOS to an enemy for the first time that round, they may immediately spend **1 RP** from the Momentum Engine pool to perform one of the following reactions:
 - **Alert (Verbal):** The hero shouts a warning to their allies, granting +1 to the Initiative rolls of all friendly heroes within 6" at the start of the next round.
 - **Take Aim (Ranged):** The hero gains +1 WS with their first ranged attack against that enemy this round.
 - **Brace (Defensive):** The hero gains +1 D against the first attack made against them by that enemy this round.

II. Being Targeted:

- **Attack Reactions (1 RP):** If a hero is the target of an enemy attack, they may spend **1 RP** from the Momentum Engine pool to perform one of the following reactions **before the attacker rolls to hit:**
 - **Dodge:** The hero attempts to evade the attack. Roll a D20 + their Defense (D). If the result equals or exceeds the attacker's attack roll, the attack misses.
 - **Parry (Melee Only):** The hero attempts to deflect the attack. Roll a D20 + their Weapon Skill (WS). If the result equals or exceeds the attacker's attack roll, the attack misses.
 - **Interpose (Ally Only):** An adjacent ally can spend 1 RP to jump in front of the attack. The attacker must target the new defender instead.
- **Spell Reactions (2 RP):** If a hero is the target of an enemy spell, they may spend **2 RP** from the Momentum Engine pool to perform one of the following reactions **before the caster makes their spellcasting roll:**
 - **Counterspell (Mage Only):** A Mage can attempt to counter the spell. Make an opposed spellcasting roll against the enemy caster. If successful, the enemy spell is negated.
 - **Willpower Resistance:** The hero spends Willpower points to reduce the spell's effectiveness or negate harmful effects (GM's discretion based on the spell).

Important Notes:

- **Resource Management:** Using reactions now has a tactical cost, requiring players to carefully manage their team's RP.
- **Speed and Clarity:** These reactions should be resolved quickly to maintain the flow of the game.

- **GM Adjudication:** The GM has the final say on which reactions are appropriate in specific situations.

Benefits of Multiplayer Reactions:

- **Increased Player Agency:** Gives players more control and tactical options, even when it's not their turn.
- **Dynamic Combat:** Creates opportunities for heroic moments and unexpected outcomes.
- **Strategic Resource Management:** Integrates reactions into the core RP economy, adding a layer of decision-making.

These rules, with their RP costs, enhance the tactical depth of Grimshade City, making multiplayer games even more engaging and unpredictable!

Grimshade City: Turn Sequence

1. Start of Round:

- **Leader Generates RP:** The Leader of the hero team generates Resource Points (RP) based on their Morale score, plus additional RP for each hero who is not incapacitated. These RP are added to the team's shared Momentum Engine pool.
- **Boss Monster Generates RP (If Applicable):** If a boss monster is present, it generates RP based on its stats.
- **Environmental Effects (Optional):** The GM may resolve any environmental effects, such as shifting terrain, hazards, or random events.

2. Initiative:

- **Roll Initiative:** Each hero and monster (or group of similar monsters) rolls a D20.
- **Determine Turn Order:** The character or monster with the highest roll acts first, followed by the next highest, and so on. Ties are resolved by the GM (or by a coin flip between players).

3. Hero Activation:

- **Choose a Hero:** The player whose hero has the highest initiative chooses one of their heroes to activate.
- **Perform Two Actions:** The activated hero can perform two actions from the following list:
 - **Move:** Spend an Action Point (AP) to move up to the hero's Movement (Mv) value. Can be split into multiple movements.
 - **Sprint:** Spend 2 AP to move up to the hero's Mv + Sprint (Sm) value in a straight line.
 - **Climb:** Spend AP to climb a vertical surface (see Climbing Rules).
 - **Attack (Melee or Ranged):** Spend 1 AP to make a single attack.
 - **Cast Spell:** Spend the required MP and AP to cast a spell (see Magic Rules).
 - **Use Item:** Spend the required AP to activate an item's effect.
 - **Special Action:** Perform an ability specific to the hero's archetype or equipment.
 - **Interact:** Manipulate an object, open a door, or perform a contextual action.
 - **Momentum Action:** Sacrifice both AP to generate 3 RP for the team.
- **End Activation:** After performing two actions, the hero's activation ends.

4. Monster Activation (If Applicable):

- **Choose a Monster:** The GM chooses a monster to activate, following its instincts and threat priorities.
- **Perform Actions:** The monster can perform actions based on its stats and abilities, including:
 - **Move:** Move up to its Movement (Mv) value.
 - **Attack:** Make melee or ranged attacks.
 - **Special Abilities:** Use unique abilities, often costing RP from its pool.
 - **Reactive Actions:** Spend RP to react to hero actions (see Reactions and Threat Management Rules).

5. **End Activation:** After performing its actions, the monster's activation ends.

6. **Repeat Steps 3 & 4:** Continue alternating between hero and monster activations, following the initiative order, until all characters and monsters have acted.

7. End of Round:

- **Resolve Effects:** The GM resolves any lingering effects from spells, abilities, or environmental hazards.
- **Reset AP and RP:** All heroes regain their full AP. Any unspent RP in the Momentum Engine pool carries over to the next round.
- **Start a New Round:** Begin a new round, starting with Step 1.

Example Turn Sequence:

1. **Start of Round:** The Leader generates 4 RP for the team. The Glimmerheart Behemoth generates 3 RP.
2. **Initiative:** The Dead Shot rolls a 17, the Knight rolls a 12, the Behemoth rolls a 15, and the Rogue rolls a 9.
3. **Dead Shot's Turn:** The Dead Shot player activates their hero, moves to a vantage point, and fires two shots at the Behemoth.
4. **Behemoth's Turn:** The GM activates the Behemoth, spending RP to charge towards the Knight and make a powerful attack.
5. **Knight's Turn:** The Knight player activates their hero, uses a Special Action to block the Behemoth's attack, and then strikes back with their sword.
6. **Rogue's Turn:** The Rogue player activates their hero, moves into flanking position behind the Behemoth, and makes a sneak attack.
7. **End of Round:** The GM resolves any lingering effects and resets AP and RP.

This step-by-step turn sequence provides a clear framework for running engaging and dynamic battles in Grimshade City!

Grimshade City: Campaign Ideas & Leveling

Experience and Leveling:

- **Earning XP:** Award XP for defeating enemies, completing objectives, overcoming challenges, and roleplaying effectively.
- **Leveling Up:** When a hero accumulates enough XP, they level up, gaining additional points to spend on stat increases, new equipment, or special abilities.
- **Campaign Point Limits:** Set point limits for each level to ensure balance (e.g., Level 1: 30 points, Level 2: 40 points, etc.).

Campaign Idea 1: The Heart of the City

Premise: Rumors swirl of a powerful artifact hidden deep beneath Grimshade City, known as the "Heart of the City." It's said to hold the key to the city's fate, capable of either restoring its former glory or unleashing unimaginable destruction. Each House seeks to claim the artifact for their own purposes, setting off a desperate race against time.

Campaign Arcs:

- **Whispers in the Dark:** The heroes begin investigating rumors of the Heart of the City, uncovering ancient texts and cryptic clues scattered throughout the city's districts.
- **The Race to the Depths:** The heroes delve into the city's underbelly, navigating treacherous tunnels, ancient ruins, and forgotten catacombs, competing with rival Houses and facing increasingly dangerous monsters.
- **The Heart's Chamber:** The heroes finally locate the Heart of the City, but must face a powerful guardian or a final challenge to claim its power.
- **The City's Fate:** The heroes must decide how to use the Heart of the City's power. Will they restore balance to Grimshade, or unleash its potential for destruction?

Leveling:

- **Level 1-3:** Focus on exploration, investigation, and smaller-scale encounters.
- **Level 4-6:** Introduce more challenging boss fights, inter-House conflicts, and moral dilemmas.
- **Level 7+:** The heroes become major players in the city's power struggles, facing high-stakes decisions and potentially altering the course of Grimshade's future.

Campaign Idea 2: The Alchemist's Legacy

Premise: A renowned alchemist, known for their groundbreaking (and often controversial) experiments, has vanished, leaving behind a trail of cryptic clues and dangerous inventions. The heroes are tasked with unraveling the alchemist's legacy, facing the consequences of their unchecked experiments and uncovering a conspiracy that threatens to plunge Grimshade into chaos.

Campaign Arcs:

- **The Missing Alchemist:** The heroes investigate the alchemist's disappearance, exploring their abandoned laboratory, deciphering coded notes, and tracking down their former associates.
- **Unleashed Creations:** The heroes face the consequences of the alchemist's experiments, battling mutated creatures, malfunctioning automatons, and volatile alchemical concoctions.

- **The Conspiracy Unfolds:** The heroes uncover a shadowy organization seeking to exploit the alchemist's research for their own nefarious purposes.
- **Confronting the Legacy:** The heroes must confront the mastermind behind the conspiracy, potentially facing a final showdown in a location infused with unstable alchemical energies.

Leveling:

- **Level 1-3:** Focus on investigation, puzzle-solving, and encounters with smaller-scale alchemical creations.
- **Level 4-6:** Introduce more complex inventions, encounters with powerful mutated creatures, and moral dilemmas related to the alchemist's research.
- **Level 7+:** The heroes face the full force of the conspiracy, potentially wielding the alchemist's inventions or developing their own countermeasures to save Grimshade from a catastrophic alchemical event.

Campaign Idea 3: The Glimmering War

Premise: The Glimmerheart, a source of powerful and unpredictable magic, has become increasingly unstable, causing rifts to open throughout Grimshade City, unleashing waves of monstrous creatures. The heroes must join forces with other Houses (however uneasy the alliance) to push back the Glimmering tide and prevent the city from being consumed by chaos.

Campaign Arcs:

- **Holding the Line:** The heroes defend key locations from waves of Glimmerheart creatures, working alongside other Houses to secure vital resources and protect civilians.
- **Closing the Rifts:** The heroes must venture into the Glimmerheart-infested areas to locate and seal the rifts, facing increasingly dangerous monsters and environmental hazards.
- **The Source of the Surge:** The heroes investigate the cause of the Glimmerheart's instability, uncovering ancient secrets or a hidden force manipulating the magical energies.
- **The Final Stand:** The heroes confront the source of the Glimmering War, potentially facing a climactic battle against a powerful entity or a catastrophic magical event that threatens to consume the entire city.

Leveling:

- **Level 1-3:** Focus on defensive battles, securing resources, and smaller-scale rift investigations.
- **Level 4-6:** Introduce larger-scale battles, more complex rifts, and encounters with powerful Glimmerheart creatures.
- **Level 7+:** The heroes lead the charge against the Glimmering War, facing high-stakes decisions and potentially sacrificing themselves to save Grimshade from utter destruction.

Grimshade City: Echoes of the Glimmerheart - A Solo Campaign

Premise: The Glimmerheart, a volatile wellspring of arcane energy, throbs beneath Grimshade City. Its echoes warp reality, twisting creatures into monstrous forms and fueling the insatiable ambitions of the six ruling Houses. You, a lone hero touched by the Glimmerheart, possess unique abilities but are drawn into a dangerous game of power and survival.

Character Creation:

1. **Archetype:** Choose your hero archetype (Knight, Dead Shot, Rogue, Healer, Mage, Specialist, or Leader).
2. **Starting Points:** Begin with 50 points to spend on stats, equipment, and special abilities.
3. **Glimmerheart Touch:** Choose one additional ability from *any* archetype, representing the Glimmerheart's influence. This ability costs no points at the start but can be upgraded with XP.
4. **Leveling:** Earn XP by completing missions and overcoming challenges. Level up to increase your point total (max 100) and enhance your hero.

The D20 Oracle:

- **Mission Generation:** Roll 2D20 before each mission (see Mission Oracle Table). The first D20 determines the mission type, the second reveals a complication.
- **Uncertain Outcomes:** Use a D20 to resolve skill checks, random encounters, and unpredictable events. You (as the GM) set the Target Number (TN) based on difficulty. A D20 roll + attribute modifier + bonuses must equal or exceed the TN for success.

Mission Oracle Table:

D20 Roll	Mission Type
1-4	Retrieval: Recover a stolen item or artifact.
5-8	Infiltration: Gather intel or sabotage something.
9-12	Protection: Safeguard a person or location.
13-16	Investigation: Uncover a conspiracy or mystery.
17-20	Elimination: Neutralize a target or threat.

Complication/Twist (2nd D20 Roll):

D20 Roll	Complication/Twist
1-3	A rival agent seeks the same objective.

D20 Roll	Complication/Twist
4-6	The target is more dangerous than anticipated.
7-9	An innocent is caught in the crossfire.
10-12	A House interferes with your mission.
13-15	The Glimmerheart causes unpredictable chaos.
16-18	A moral dilemma forces a difficult choice.
19-20	A chance encounter leads to a valuable opportunity.

Campaign Phases:

Phase 1: Whispers in the Dark (50-60 Points)

- **Theme:** You're a rising shadow, proving your worth in the Gutter.
- **Missions:** The Dossier tests your abilities with 3 missions, introducing you to Grimshade's factions and dangers.
- **Glimmerheart Echoes:** Experience subtle manifestations of the Glimmerheart: heightened senses, brief visions, or fleeting power surges.
- **Monsters:** Gutter Stalkers, Rusterawlers, Glimmerling Swarms, lone Clockwork Hounds
- **Boss Monster:** A mutated Glimmerheart Hound (enhanced Clockwork Hound with a Glimmerheart-powered bite attack)
- **Level Up:** Complete these missions to reach Level 2 (60 points).

Phase 2: The House Games (60-70 Points)

- **Theme:** Your actions attract the notice of the Houses. You must choose a tentative alliance, always mindful of their true agendas.
- **Missions:** Missions become more complex, involving inter-House conflicts and tests of your morality.
- **Glimmerheart Visions:** Experience vivid dreams and unsettling premonitions, revealing glimpses of the Glimmerheart's true nature.
- **Monsters:** Spiteful Shades, Stone Guardians, Alchemically-Augmented Brutes, packs of Gutter Stalkers led by a mutated alpha.
- **Boss Monster:** The Alchemist's Experiment (a grotesque fusion of multiple creatures, unpredictable and volatile, with a different alchemical attack each round).
- **Level Up:** Successfully navigate the Houses' schemes to reach Level 3 (70 points).

Phase 3: The Unraveling (70-80 Points)

- **Theme:** The Glimmerheart's influence intensifies, tearing rifts in reality and unleashing more powerful creatures.
- **Missions:** Missions become increasingly perilous, forcing you to confront the growing chaos and the Houses' desperate attempts to control the Glimmerheart.
- **Glimmerheart Surge:** Your abilities grow, but you experience uncontrollable bursts of energy, attracting unwanted attention and potentially warping your surroundings.
- **Monsters:** Grimshade Wraiths, Clockwork Juggernauts, Glimmerheart-infused Stone Guardians, packs of Alchemically-Augmented Brutes led by a crazed Alchemist.
- **Boss Monster:** The Spectral Weaver (an undead master of illusions and ectoplasmic constructs, able to summon spectral duplicates and trap victims in its ethereal webs).
- **Level Up:** Survive the escalating chaos to reach Level 4 (80 points).

Phase 4: The Heart of the Maelstrom (80-100 Points)

- **Theme:** The Houses converge on a nexus of Glimmerheart energy, seeking to seize its power for themselves. Your choices will determine the fate of Grimshade City.
- **Final Missions:** The Dossier guides you to a final confrontation, where you must choose a side, forge your own path, or attempt to contain the Glimmerheart's power.
- **Glimmerheart's Choice:** Decide how to wield your amplified abilities: stabilize the Glimmerheart, exploit its power, or destroy it to save the city, even if it means sacrificing yourself.
- **Monsters:** Elite Glimmerheart-twisted creatures unique to each House (e.g., Valerius Glimmer Knights, Thorne Iron Golems, Vashti Serpent Chimeras, etc.).
- **Boss Monster:** The Glimmerheart Behemoth (a colossal creature of pure Glimmerheart energy, capable of devastating attacks and warping reality around it) or a unique Boss Monster representing the faction you choose to support or oppose.
- **Level Up:** Reach Level 5 (100 points) and face the climax of the campaign, your choices shaping the future of Grimshade City.

Remember: Adapt and modify these suggestions to fit your playstyle and preferences. Let the D20 oracle guide you, but don't be afraid to let your own creativity shape the narrative and create a truly unique solo adventure!

Demo Scenario: The Foundry's Heart

Overview:

This scenario is designed for a demo game of Grimshade City, introducing new players to the core mechanics and setting. It pits a team of heroes against a challenging boss monster while presenting opportunities for tactical decision-making and teamwork.

Players: 2 players (or 1 player and a GM)

Play Time: 60-90 minutes

Setup:

1. **Terrain:** Create a dynamic battlefield representing the interior of the Grimshade Foundry, using terrain pieces to represent:
 - **Elevated Walkways:** Provide vantage points and opportunities for flanking.
 - **Machinery:** Large gears, pistons, and pipes offer cover but can also be hazards.
 - **Toxic Pools:** Areas of dangerous sludge that deal damage to those who end their turn within.
 - **The Foundry's Heart:** A central platform or structure where the artifact is located.
2. **Forces:**
 - **Player Team:** Each player chooses 3 heroes (from the core archetypes) or uses pre-generated characters.
 - **Boss Monster:** The Glimmerheart Behemoth (stats provided in a previous response).

Objective:

- **Players:** Defeat the Glimmerheart Behemoth and retrieve the artifact: a pulsating crystal heart (represented by a suitable game piece or miniature).
- **Behemoth:** Destroy the intruders.

Special Rules:

- **Unstable Environment:** At the start of each round, roll a D20. On a 1-5, a random terrain piece becomes hazardous (collapses, explodes, releases toxic fumes – GM's discretion).
- **The Artifact's Power:** The pulsating crystal heart emits a faint aura. Any hero within 3" of the artifact gains +1 to all rolls (attacks, defense, casting, etc.).

Deployment:

- **Players:** Deploy heroes on one side of the battlefield.
- **Behemoth:** Place the Behemoth in the center of the board, near the Foundry's Heart.

Turn Sequence:

1. **Initiative:** Roll for initiative each round to determine turn order.
2. **Activations:** Players take turns activating one hero at a time, performing two actions per activation.

3. **Behemoth's Turn:** The GM (or a player controlling the Behemoth) activates the monster, following its special rules and instincts.

Victory Conditions:

- **Players:** Defeat the Glimmerheart Behemoth and have at least one hero survived.
- **Behemoth:** Incapacitate all heroes.

Ending the Demo:

- **Player Victory:** The heroes' triumph, claiming the artifact and potentially earning rewards or experience for a future campaign.
- **Behemoth Victory:** The heroes are defeated but learn a valuable lesson about the dangers of Grimshade City and the importance of teamwork and strategy.

Tips for a Great Demo:

- **Keep it Simple:** Focus on the core mechanics and introduce advanced rules gradually.
- **Encourage Teamwork:** Emphasize the benefits of coordinating actions and utilizing hero synergies.
- **Highlight the Setting:** Describe the Foundry's atmosphere and the dangers lurking within.
- **Have Fun!** Grimshade City is all about creating memorable stories and exciting tabletop adventures!

Grimshade City: A Gazetteer of Shadows and Secrets

World Setting: Grimshade City is a sprawling metropolis shrouded in perpetual twilight. Six powerful houses vie for control of the city, sending their champions into the monster-infested outskirts to gather valuable materials and artifacts. Each house boasts unique aesthetics, combat styles, and magical traditions.

Here are six faction houses for Grimshade City, complete with their ulterior motives and a web of uneasy alliances:

1. House Valerius (The Stalwart Shield)

- **Public Face:** Noble protectors of the city, upholding law and order with unwavering tradition.
- **Ulterior Motive:** Secretly believe they are the only one's worthy of ruling, seeking ancient artifacts to solidify their claim and potentially establish a theocracy.
- **Uneasy Alliance:** Will reluctantly work with House Thorne when necessary, seeing them as a brute force to be wielded.

2. House Vashti (The Serpent's Fang)

- **Public Face:** Wealthy merchants and alchemists, always seeking new opportunities and innovations.
- **Ulterior Motive:** Desire to control the flow of information and resources, using their wealth and influence to manipulate events from the shadows.
- **Uneasy Alliance:** Have a mutually beneficial, but often strained, relationship with House Raeth, exchanging artifacts for forbidden knowledge.

3. House Thorne (The Iron Grip)

- **Public Face:** Guild masters and industrial barons, valuing strength, pragmatism, and ruthless efficiency.
- **Ulterior Motive:** Seek to expand their industrial empire, exploiting the city's resources and workforce to fuel their ambitions.
- **Uneasy Alliance:** Will use their alliance with House Valerius to further their goals but see the knights as obstacles to be removed eventually.

4. House Raeth (The Whispering Veil)

- **Public Face:** Secretive scholars and practitioners of forbidden magic, feared and respected in equal measure.
- **Ulterior Motive:** To unlock ancient and dangerous secrets, even if it means risking the city's safety for greater arcane knowledge.
- **Uneasy Alliance:** Tolerate House Vashti's patronage for access to rare materials but see them as pawns in a grander scheme.

5. House Eldrin (The Verdant Hand)

- **Public Face:** Caretakers of the city's parks and gardens, promoting harmony with nature and peaceful solutions.
- **Ulterior Motive:** Believe the city is losing its connection to nature, seeking to restore balance, even if it means drastic measures to reclaim urban sprawl.
- **Uneasy Alliance:** None truly. They are often at odds with other Houses, particularly Thorne and Vashti, who they see as destructive forces.

6. House Cadmus (The Clockwork Soul)

- **Public Face:** Brilliant inventors and engineers, pushing the boundaries of technology with their creations.
- **Ulterior Motive:** Believe in a future ruled by logic and machinery, seeking to uplift (or replace) humanity with their creations.
- **Uneasy Alliance:** Will collaborate with any House that provides resources and allows them to further their experiments, but their loyalty is always in question.

Remember: These alliances are always in flux, shifting with the tides of power and the discovery of new artifacts. Betrayals, shifting loyalties, and unexpected partnerships are all part of the game in the shadowy streets of Grimshade City!

Districts:

- **The Foundry District:** A labyrinth of smokestacks, foundries, and workshops, ruled by the clang of hammers and the hiss of steam. House Thorne holds sway here, their factories churning day and night.
 - **Notable Location:** The Slagheap: A towering mound of industrial waste rumored to hold the discarded prototypes of House Cadmus, some still dangerously active.
 - **Rumored Artifact:** The Anvil of Creation: A massive, enchanted anvil said to be able to forge any metal or imbue it with powerful magic.
- **The Merchant Ward:** A bustling hub of commerce, where gilded cages hold exotic beasts and the air thrums with the whispers of deals struck and promises broken. House Vashti's influence is strongest here.
 - **Notable Location:** The Serpent's Bazaar: A sprawling marketplace where anything can be bought or sold, if you know the right price. Beware of pickpockets, con artists, and the occasional cursed artifact.
 - **Rumored Artifact:** The Mask of a Thousand Faces: A silver mask that allows the wearer to assume any visage, granting them access to forbidden places and dangerous secrets.
- **The Noble Quarter:** Grand avenues lined with opulent manors, patrolled by knights in gleaming armor. House Valerius maintains a watchful eye over this district, but whispers of decadence and corruption linger beneath the surface.
 - **Notable Location:** The Grand Archives: A repository of ancient texts and forgotten lore, jealously guarded by House Valerius. Some believe it holds the key to unlocking the city's deepest secrets.
 - **Rumored Artifact:** The Sword of Dawn's Light: A legendary blade said to banish shadows and vanquish even the most powerful undead.
- **The Gutter:** A sprawling network of slums, abandoned factories, and forgotten catacombs, where the city's unwanted reside. Danger lurks around every corner, but opportunity can also be found for those brave or desperate enough to seek it.
 - **Notable Location:** The Whispering Warren: A maze of tunnels and abandoned sewers, home to all manner of creatures, both natural and unnatural. Whispers speak of a hidden chamber where House Raeth conducts its most dangerous experiments.
 - **Rumored Artifact:** The Heart of the City: A mystical artifact said to be linked to the very essence of Grimshade, capable of granting immense power or unleashing unimaginable destruction.

Notable NPCs:

- **Alistair Thorne (House Thorne):** The Iron Baron, a ruthless industrialist with a thirst for power and a vision for a city ruled by steel and steam.
- **Seraphina Vashti (House Vashti):** The Serpent's Eye, a cunning alchemist and master manipulator who knows the price of everything and everyone in Grimshade.
- **Lord-Commander Valerius (House Valerius):** The Stalwart Shield, a noble knight burdened by tradition and the weight of his family's legacy.
- **Whisper (House Raeth):** A masked mage whose true identity is a mystery. Their whispers hold power, but their motives are always shrouded in shadow.
- **The Alchemist (Independent):** A brilliant but eccentric tinkerer who sells their services (and sometimes their loyalty) to the highest bidder.

Remember: This is just a glimpse into the sprawling depths of Grimshade City. Let your imagination run wild as you create your own districts, landmarks, NPCs, and artifacts to make this world your own!

Grimshade City: Archetype Leaders

The air in the chamber hung heavy with the scent of incense and unspoken tension. Six figures, each representing a pillar of power in Grimshade City, sat around a circular table carved from obsidian. Gaslight flickered, casting long, distorted shadows that danced across the mosaic floor, mirroring the unease that settled over the gathering.

Ser Lorien Brighthelm, his silver-and-gold armor gleaming under the dim light, adjusted his white tabard emblazoned with the Valerius sunburst. He surveyed the others with a gaze as sharp as his Dawnbringer blade. "I trust we all understand the gravity of this meeting," he began, his voice resonant and commanding. "The Glimmerheart threat grows with each passing night. Our individual efforts have proven insufficient. We must act as one, if only for the sake of our city's survival."

Cora "Whisperwind" Vashti, her features obscured by a silver serpent mask, leaned back in her chair, the rings on her fingers glinting as she steepled her hands. "Unity is a luxury we can ill afford, Ser Lorien," she countered, her voice cool and measured. "Alliances are forged in blood and broken just as easily. What assurance do we have that this is not another Vashti scheme, or a Thorne power grab disguised as cooperation?"

Magnus "Ironforge" Thorne, a mountain of muscle and iron, slammed his fist on the table, the impact sending tremors through the room. "Enough with the whispers and accusations!" he boomed, his voice echoing off the stone walls. "House Thorne is here to crush this Glimmerheart menace, not play political games. We stand with Valerius, for now. The rest of you can squabble amongst yourselves while we do the real work."

A chill wind swept through the chamber as Nyx Shadowsong, draped in her black robes, spoke. Her words, barely a whisper, seemed to seep into the very marrow of those present. "The Glimmerheart is but a symptom, not the disease," she murmured, her hooded face turned towards the flickering gaslight. "Ancient forces stir beneath this city, their whispers growing louder. True unity requires understanding the root of the problem, not just hacking at its branches."

Arlan Greenbough, his staff topped with a pulsing green crystal, shifted uncomfortably in his seat. Vines from his armor crept across the obsidian table, seeking solace in the cold stone. "The city bleeds," he said, his voice a low rumble. "Its heart poisoned by industry and greed. True harmony can only be restored when we acknowledge the damage we've inflicted upon the natural world." His gaze settled on Magnus Thorne, a silent accusation hanging in the air.

Evelyn "Cogheart" Ramsey, her body a symphony of gears and brass, tapped a slender finger on the table, her gaze sharp and analytical. "Sentimentality won't save us from the Glimmerheart," she stated, her voice devoid of emotion. "Progress demands efficiency, not nostalgia. House Cadmus offers solutions, not platitudes. We can engineer a way out of this, but we need resources, not distractions."

Lorien sighed, the weight of leadership heavy on his shoulders. "We are a city divided, our strengths fragmented by suspicion and rivalry," he admitted, his gaze sweeping across the assembled leaders. "But the Glimmerheart offers no quarter to any House. If we are to survive this threat, we must find a way to work together. Can we, for once, set aside our differences and focus on a common enemy?"

Silence descended upon the chamber, broken only by the hiss of the gaslight and the whispers of ancient forces stirring beneath the city. The fate of Grimshade, and perhaps its uneasy alliance, hung precariously in the balance.

House Valerius Hero

Name: Ser Lorien Brighthelm

Quote: "By the Light of Dawn, we shall prevail!"

Appearance: Wears gleaming silver-and-gold plate armor over a white tabard emblazoned with the Valerius sunburst. Carries an ornate longsword and a polished steel shield.

Stat Increases:

- **+1 WS (2 points)** - Lorien is a skilled swordsman, even among Knights.
- **+1 D (3 points)** - His armor is of exceptional quality.

Equipment:

- **Dawnbringer (Longsword - 4 points):** +1 Damage, and once per game, Lorien can spend 2 RP to make Dawnbringer emit a blinding flash that forces all enemies within 6" to make a MD check or be Blinded for 1 round.
- **Valerius Crest Shield (Shield - 2 points):** +1 D

Special Rule: Beacon of Faith

- At the start of each round, Lorien can choose to either:
 - **Inspire:** All allies within 6" gain +1 Morale for the round.
 - **Protect:** Lorien gains +2 D, but his Movement is halved for the round.

Total Points: 21 (10 base + 2 WS + 3 D + 6 Equipment)

Ser Lorien Brighthelm: Standing tall and proud, Lorien is a beacon of Valerian ideals. His silver-and-gold plate armor gleams under the gaslight, polished to a mirror sheen. The Valerius sunburst, a symbol of unwavering faith, is emblazoned on his white tabard, its edges slightly frayed from countless battles. His longsword, Dawnbringer, hangs at his side, its ornate hilt catching the light. A faint, almost imperceptible glow emanates from the blade, hinting at its enchanted nature. His steel shield, bearing the Valerius crest, is equally pristine, a symbol of his unwavering dedication to protecting the innocent.

House Vashti Hero

Name: Cora "Whisperwind" Vashti

Quote: "Knowledge is power, and power is everything."

Appearance: Favors dark, practical clothing with hidden pockets for alchemical reagents. Wears a silver mask engraved with a serpent's head, concealing her features.

Stat Increases:

- **+1 M (3 points)** - Cora is cool and calculating, unfazed by danger.
- **+1 WT (2 points)** - Her alchemical knowledge is extensive.

Equipment:

- **Serpent's Kiss (Dagger - 3 points):** Attacks with Serpent's Kiss inflict Poisoned (1 poison damage at the start of the target's turn for 2 rounds).
- **Alchemist's Satchel (Gadget - 4 points):** Contains a variety of alchemical concoctions. Once per round, as a Bonus Action, Cora can use the Satchel to create one of the following effects:
 - **Flashbang:** Blinds all characters in a 3" radius for 1 round.
 - **Healing Vapor:** Heals 2 Wounds to all allies within 3".
 - **Acidic Spray:** Deals 4 acid damage to all characters in a line (6" long, 1" wide).

Special Rule: Calculated Risk

- Whenever Cora successfully inflicts Poisoned on an enemy, she generates 1 RP for the Momentum Engine.

Total Points: 22 (10 base + 3 M + 2 WT + 7 Equipment)

Cora "Whisperwind" Vashti: Cora's dark clothing blends seamlessly with the shadows, her movements fluid and almost serpentine. A silver mask, engraved with a serpent's head, conceals her features, its cold, reptilian gaze sending a shiver down the spines of those who meet her eyes. Her hands, adorned with intricate rings set with shimmering gemstones, move with a practiced grace as she adjusts vials and reagents in her Alchemist's Satchel. A faint scent of exotic herbs and potent chemicals lingers in the air around her, a testament to her mastery of alchemy.

House Thorne Hero

Name: Magnus "Ironforge" Thorne

Quote: "Strength is the only law that matters in this city."

Appearance: A towering figure clad in heavy iron plate, his armor blackened by grime and the heat of countless forges. Wields a massive warhammer that crackles with barely contained energy.

Stat Increases:

- **+2 W (8 points)** - Magnus is incredibly tough, able to shrug off blows that would fell lesser men.

Equipment:

- **Thunderstrike (Warhammer - 8 points):** +3 Damage, and whenever Magnus scores a Critical Hit with Thunderstrike, the impact creates a shockwave. All characters (friend or foe) within 3" of the target must make a Strength check or be knocked prone.

Special Rule: Forged in Fire

- At the start of each of Magnus's activations, roll a D20.
 - On a 15+, one ally within 3" of Magnus gains +1 D for the round, as if tempered by his presence.

Total Points: 26 (10 base + 8 W + 8 Equipment)

Magnus "Ironforge" Thorne: Magnus is a mountain of muscle and iron, his presence dominating any space he enters. His heavy iron plate armor, blackened by grime and the heat of countless forges, bears the scars of numerous battles. A thick beard, streaked with gray, frames his face, his eyes burning with an intensity that speaks of both his unwavering will and the fires that burn within his soul. His massive warhammer, Thunderstrike, rests on his shoulder, its head scarred and dented, crackling with barely contained energy.

House Raeth Hero

Name: Nyx Shadowsong

Quote: "The whispers hold the truth, if you know how to listen."

Appearance: Wears flowing black robes adorned with subtle runes. Her face is often concealed by a deep hood, her expression unreadable.

Stat Increases:

- **+1 MD (2 points)** - Nyx is resistant to the whispers of the void.
- **+1 WT (2 points)** - Her connection to the Ethereal Plane sharpens her mind.

Equipment:

- **Staff of Whispers (Staff - 3 points):** Can be used with both WS and WT. When used to cast a spell, the Staff of Whispers grants +1 to the casting roll.
- **Ethereal Shroud (Cloak - 4 points):** Once per game, as a Bonus Action, Nyx can use the Ethereal Shroud to become Hidden for 1 round. While Hidden, Nyx cannot be targeted by attacks or abilities.

Special Rule: Voice of the Void

- Whenever an enemy within 6" of Nyx fails a Morale check, she may spend 1 RP to force that enemy to immediately make a Move action, as if compelled by unseen forces.

Total Points: 21 (10 base + 2 MD + 2 WT + 7 Equipment)

Nyx Shadowsong: Nyx moves like a phantom, her flowing black robes swirling around her as if stirred by an unseen wind. Subtle runes, woven into the fabric of her garments, glow faintly in the darkness, their meaning known only to those who delve into the forbidden arts. Her face, often concealed by a deep hood, is a mystery, her expression unreadable. When she does reveal her features, her eyes pierce the gloom, burning with a cold, spectral fire that hints at her connection to the Ethereal Plane.

House Eldrin Hero

Name: Arlan Greenbough

Quote: "The city breathes, even if it has forgotten how."

Appearance: Wears simple, weathered leather armor adorned with leaves and vines. Carries a gnarled staff topped with a crystal that pulses with a soft, green light.

Stat Increases:

- **+1 W (4 points)** - Arlan is surprisingly durable, his connection to nature giving him strength.
- **+1 M (3 points)** - His faith in the balance of nature grants him inner peace.

Equipment:

- **Living Staff (Staff - 4 points):** Once per round, as a Bonus Action, Arlan can channel the Living Staff's energy to create one of the following effects:
 - **Healing Touch:** Heal 3 Wounds to an ally within 3".
 - **Entangling Roots:** Target one space within 6". That space becomes Difficult Terrain for 1 round.
- **Seed of Renewal (Consumable - 2 points):** Can be used once per game. Place the Seed on an empty space within 6". At the start of Arlan's next turn, the Seed grows into a thicket of thorns that provides Full Cover and deals 2 damage to any character that ends their movement within the thicket.

Special Rule: Harmony of Nature

- At the start of each round, if Arlan is within 3" of a terrain piece that provides Cover, he generates 1 RP for the Momentum Engine.

Total Points: 23 (10 base + 4 W + 3 M + 6 Equipment)

Arlan Greenbough: Arlan's weathered leather armor, adorned with leaves and vines, reflects his connection to the natural world. A tangle of ivy climbs up his staff, its gnarled wood seemingly alive, pulsing with a soft, green light emanating from the crystal at its top. His hands, calloused but gentle, often reach out to touch the plants and trees around him, as if seeking solace and guidance from the natural world. His eyes, the color of moss, reflect a deep wisdom and a profound understanding of the delicate balance of nature.

House Cadmus Hero

Name: Evelyn "Cogheart" Ramsey

Quote: "Progress demands sacrifice. Embrace the future."

Appearance: Her body is enhanced with clockwork gears and polished brass tubing that hums softly with each movement. She often carries a tool kit and wears goggles perched on her forehead.

Stat Increases:

- **+2 WT (4 points)** - Evelyn's mind is sharp and analytical, always seeking solutions.

Equipment:

- **Arc Pistol (Pistol - 5 points):** 12" range, 6 Damage. Once per round, as a Bonus Action, Evelyn can spend 1 RP to Overcharge the Arc Pistol. Her next attack with it ignores Cover and deals an additional 2 damage.
- **Utility Belt (Gadget - 3 points):** Contains a variety of tools and gadgets that grant Evelyn a +2 bonus to skill checks related to mechanics, technology, or disarming traps.

Special Rule: Calculated Efficiency

- Whenever Evelyn uses a Gadget or an item with a mechanical effect, she may reroll any dice roll associated with that action. She must keep the result of the second roll, even if it's worse.

Total Points: 22 (10 base + 4 WT + 8 Equipment)

Evelyn "Cogheart" Ramsey: Evelyn's movements are precise and efficient, her body enhanced with clockwork gears and polished brass tubing that hum softly with each step. Her goggles, perched on her forehead, reflect the gaslight, her gaze sharp and analytical. Intricate tattoos, resembling mechanical schematics, adorn her exposed skin, hinting at the fusion of flesh and machine that defines her existence. A faint scent of oil and ozone lingers around her, a testament to her tireless work in the workshops and laboratories of House Cadmus.

Creating Your Own Adventures

PvE Encounters:

- Determine Encounter Difficulty:**
 - **Easy:** Challenge Rating (CR) equal to or less than the average level of the hero party.
 - **Medium:** CR 1-2 levels higher than the party's average level.
 - **Hard:** CR 3-4 levels higher than the party's average level.
 - **Deadly:** CR 5 or more levels higher than the party's average level.
- Choose a Monster Theme:** Use the setting, current location, or ongoing campaign narrative to guide your choice. (E.g., in the Foundry District, encounters might feature constructs, mutated creatures, or fire-themed monsters.)
- Generate Monster Stats:**
 - **Use existing stat blocks:** Select monsters from a bestiary or previous encounters.
 - **Random Generation:** Use tables or systems to randomly determine monster stats (like the D10 x D10 table provided earlier).
 - **Adjust CR:** Modify stats if necessary to match the desired difficulty level.
- Determine Monster Quantity:**
 - **Solo Boss:** One powerful boss monster for a challenging encounter.
 - **Boss with Minions:** A boss monster supported by a few weaker minions, adding tactical complexity.
 - **Horde:** A large number of weaker monsters, testing the party's crowd control and resource management.
- Set Objectives:** Give the players a clear goal for the encounter beyond simply defeating the monsters.
 - **Retrieve an Artifact:** Recover a specific item from the monster's lair.
 - **Protect an NPC:** Defend a vulnerable character from the monster's attacks.
 - **Escape:** Flee from a pursuing monster or navigate a hazardous environment.

PvP Encounters (Incorporating Monsters):

- Determine Monster Role:** Decide how the monster(s) will factor into the PvP battle.
 - **Neutral Threat:** The monster acts independently, attacking both player teams, creating a chaotic and unpredictable element.
 - **Objective Control:** The monster guards a specific objective or resource that both teams are vying for.
 - **Temporary Alliance:** One team might temporarily ally with the monster to gain an advantage over the other team.
- Select Monster(s):**
 - **Balance:** Choose monsters that won't completely dominate the battle but will provide a significant challenge to both teams.
 - **Theme:** Select monsters that fit the setting and create interesting tactical interactions with the heroes' abilities.
- Monster Placement & Objectives:**
 - **Neutral Threat:** Place the monster in a central location or have it enter the battlefield later in the fight.
 - **Objective Control:** Place the monster near the objective, guarding it from both teams.
 - **Temporary Alliance:** Work with one player to determine how the monster will act in support of their team.

VIII. Appendices

Glossary of Terms

--	--

Quick Reference Sheets

Grimshade City: Status Conditions

Applying Status Conditions:

- **Source:** Status conditions can be inflicted by weapons, spells, monster abilities, or environmental hazards.
- **Duration:** Each condition has a specified duration, usually measured in rounds.

Status Conditions:

Condition	Duration	Effect
Blinded	1 round	Disadvantage on all attack rolls. Cannot perform actions that require sight.
Burning	1 round	Suffers 1 point of fire damage at the start of their turn.
Confused	1 round	At the start of their turn, they attack a random target (friend or foe).
Disarmed	1 round	Cannot make melee attacks. Drops any held weapons or items.
Disoriented	1 round	Disoriented characters have disadvantage on their next action, meaning they roll 2d20 and take the lower result.
Grappled	Until broken	Cannot move. Suffers -2 D against attacks.
Impaired Movement	1 round	-2 to Movement (Mv) and Sprint (S).
Knocked Down	1 round	Prone. Suffers -2 D. Must spend an Action Point to stand up.
Poisoned	1 round	Suffers 1 point of poison damage at the start of their turn.
Rooted	1 round	Cannot move.
Slowed	1 round	Half Movement (Mv) and Sprint (S) values.

Condition	Duration	Effect
Stunned	1 round	2 additional action points to activate.
Weakened	1 round	-2 WS on all attacks.

Breaking Conditions:

- **Duration:** Most conditions end automatically after their duration expires.
- **Actions:** Some conditions can be broken by specific actions:
 - **Free Action:** Grappled, Rooted, and Disarmed can be broken by spending an Action Point.

Special Abilities: Some characters might have abilities to remove conditions from themselves or allies.

Index

No index entries found.

The air hung thick with the stench of ozone and burnt flesh. Rain, acidic and cold, spattered on the cobblestones, reflecting the flickering gaslight in a grotesque parody of starlight. Kaelen, his armor steaming from the recent battle, surveyed the carnage with a grim satisfaction. Three gargoyles, their bodies now little more than piles of shattered stone, littered the alleyway.

“Clean work,” Rhys grunted, wiping his axe on the tattered cloak of a fallen foe. The Dead Shot, never one for pleasantries, scanned the rooftops with a predator’s gaze. “Anything else lurking up there?”

“Doubtful,” Elara, the Serpent’s Fang surgeon, replied, her voice tight with tension. “They rarely travel in such large numbers.” She knelt beside Marius, the Arcanist, who was nursing a nasty gash on his arm. “Hold still. This will sting a bit.”

They were a team forged in the crucible of the Gutter, bound by loyalty to House Vashti and the promise of coin. Tonight’s mission was simple: retrieve a stolen alchemical formula from a rival House. Simple, yet fraught with the ever-present dangers of Grimshade City.

A low whistle cut through the air. Silas, the Whisper’s Shadow, emerged from the fog, his dark cloak blending seamlessly with the shadows. “We’re being watched,” he hissed, his voice barely audible. “Three figures, approaching from the east. House Thorne, by the looks of them.”

Kaelen’s hand instinctively went to the pommel of his sword. House Thorne. Their rivalry with the industrial barons was the stuff of legend, a bloody tapestry woven from greed, betrayal, and the insatiable hunger for power.

“A coincidence?” Elara muttered; her eyes narrowed. “Or a trap?”

Before anyone could answer, a thunderous voice echoed through the alleyway. “Well, well, what do we have here?”

A hulking figure, clad in heavy iron plate and wielding a hammer that crackled with barely contained energy, stepped into the gaslight. Behind him, two more figures emerged from the fog: a woman clad in leather, her hands crackling with alchemical fire, and a hulking brute wielding a chainblade that hummed with a sinister energy.

“The Serpent’s Fang,” the leader growled, his voice a guttural rumble. “Fancy meeting you here. Looks like you’ve had a busy night.” His eyes flicked to the shattered remains of the gargoyles, then back to the Vashti team. A cruel smile spread across his face.

“Don’t suppose you’d be willing to share the spoils, would you?”