**Grimoire of the Destined (working title) v0.9**

**DESIGN DOCUMENT**

**Introduction**

**Grimoire of the Destined is a game with mostly JRPG elements. It introduces a partially-configured player avatar into an open world, called “Gantus”, where he can take one of three somewhat linear paths through the game to complete it. Each path contains a distinct storyline that fleshes out the world the avatar is in, while also further detailing the origins of the avatar itself. Throughout the chosen path, the player interacts with various objects and people, whom will have varied reactions to him depending on the situation and circumstances of the game. Interactions consist of linear quests in the field map and a turn-based battle system when encountering enemies.**

**The game’s engine will be written in XNA, and may involve additional components if it makes development easier. We will use Alex McGilvray’s engine that we used in CST: Life No More, which will have to be extended upon to be useful.**

**Story**

**You are a construct from a faraway planet. An aeon ago, the planet prospered in technology, founded by one man after discovering a strange anomaly, and as a result, he was revered and worshipped by all. However, with the unlimited wealth and power he had gotten almost overnight, he soon became corrupted, and made many enemies. A great war began, and in a desperate act, he unleashed a bomb upon the entire planet, eradicating all existence within it. Now it lies a smoldering wasteland, with large craters where magnificent cities once stood. The planet was doomed to become a desolate place like thousands and thousands of others in the galaxy.**

**But there was hope. You awoke one day in a great, gilded chamber, among a pile of debris. You don’t know who you are, where you’re from, or what you were doing prior to your slumber. A large, pointed weapon lay against a wall. You picked it up, and soon after, you faded away into the void. Soon after, you found yourself falling from the sky somewhere, in a distant planet lightyears away from your own.**

**For centuries, you travelled through the ever-flowing spacetime, searching for answers and slowly knowing bits and pieces of who you are and what your purpose was. Under many stars in the galaxy, there was a common prophecy amongst its people: that a harbinger was to fall from the sky one day, and either bring fortune or calamity to everything it touches. Through these planets, you knew which ones followed the former or the latter prophecy, seeking you out for help or hunting you down to save themselves. You find yourself half the time in contempt with these creatures, yet curious of them and wishing to befriend them. Alas, your fate seems to drive you elsewhere, as your weapon seems to take you from place to place on a whim, whether you liked it or not.**

**One particular day, you fell into a planet lush with greenery. You haven’t seen grass and trees for a very long time. Knowing what you always did when setting forth in a new planet, you walked. You walked where the wind blew, hoping it will take you one step closer to your answer.**

**Environment**

***See the World Details document for further information.***

**The world map consists of a single continent in Gantus, containing three city-states and at least two or three townships within each of them. At least eight dungeons lie beneath the earth waiting to be explored as the game goes on. The city-states are three times larger than the townships, which are usually two or three maps large, not counting interiors, due to the existence of a castle or a tower within it, as well as various wards and districts of significance to the game.**

**The player is represented as a single character in a top-down viewport, but with cardinal direction movement. The player is able to enter interiors just by walking up to a door or an opening. The player can access a menu on the field in order to customize the party’s equipment or item arrangement and view stats and current objectives. If the player is on the overworld map or interacts with a special stone, he/she also has the option to save the game.**

**Interaction with objects are limited to people, shopkeepers, and creatures as well as plot-crucial objects that stand out from the scene. As an easter egg, we could put random dialog each time the player interacts with a well or a fireplace. Battle is commenced when the player interacts with an enemy or if the enemy is facing right next to the player. Facing is crucial in determining if the fight is an enemy ambush or a player ambush if whoever’s back is turned when either initiate.**

**Services given to players involve a smith, which improves weapons and sells armour, a thaumaturge, which sells spells and offers weapon enchantments, a sundry seller, which sells consumable items, a storage master, which stores items if the player’s stash is full, and an innkeeper.**

**Characters**

**Each character starts with a unique weapon, an attack type (melee, ranged, or magic), and a skillset. Each character has a unique skillset and skill growth regardless of attack type, making them useful in certain situations. Three major stats determine the character’s capabilities: Strength, Agility, and Intelligence. The weapon acts as a random range boost to either the character’s Strength or Magic in battle, while the armor he/she wears affects only Agility. The reason for this is that we assume that given each character’s unique background, they are skilled in moving around in the armor of their choosing, therefore we are not including a Defense stat for the sake of simplicity. Each character also has an HP and a TP meter, which scale independently from the three stats. HP denotes the character’s hitpoints and if depleted, will knock the character out, prompting the use of consumables to revive him/her. TP denotes tech points, which is the character’s ability to cast spells or use his/her skills in battle. At the start of each battle, TP always begins at 0 and regenerates at a fixed rate. If depleted, the character will be unable to use their skills and must either wait a certain amount of turns or use a rare consumable that will immediately replenish it.**

**Characters may also have four slots to carry items with. Rather than have an unlimited supply to take from, these items should be placed on-hand to further add a challenge to fights. The item repository will also have a limited amount of space for loot (20-25). Like items do not stack. Extras will need to be sold, put in storage, or thrown away.**

**The player character’s name, by default, is Cletus. He is an amnesiac automaton who came from a faraway planet that fell into extinction after a great calamity brought forth by war. Since his awakening, he wanders through spacetime with a spear as a memento, looking for answers, or running away from authorities who fear that his coming was a bad omen. One day, he fell from the sky into a planet called Gantus. Looking to find the answer he is looking for, he sets off in this new planet, unknowing of the destiny he is about to fulfill.**

**There are three story paths in the game, each with their own set of characters. Characters from other paths may also be encountered in your given path.**

Ishtar Path – Path of Insurrection

* **Cirrus Pluvia** is a vagabond hireling who was recruited into a rebellion that is growing inside the city’s slums. He is a heavy, musclebound sort, but often keeps to himself. He serves as **Rosa Aressus’s** right-hand man and often accompanies her in critical missions, which often involve taking down critical elements of the Coven’s army and resources to further their goal of overthrowing the government. What Cirrus doesn’t know about himself is that he is actually an artificial vessel for an ancient one, who sought one day to use him to invoke an **Everlasting.**
* **Rosa Valencia Aressus** is the youngest daughter of the fifth generation of the Aressus clan, which held dominion over Ishtar for 250 years. Though having lived a sheltered life in various family estates, Rosa often wished a life of adventure outside its walls and hoped that one day she would leave the city-state in order to free herself from what she considered to be the tyrannical rule of her parents, particularly her mother, Victoria.

After encountering an incident within the city streets, she got fed up with the state of rule, believing that the power should be given to the people, so that they may rule based on what they believe is right for them. Her mother disowns her from the clan and she starts a rebellion, which uses guerilla tactics to gain even footing against the tyranny that is the Coven.

* **Victoria Carmelita Aressus** is Rosa’s mother and the unflinching monarch of the Coven of Ishtar. She is a conservative woman who prides herself over her ancestors’ accomplishments to build Ishtar to the metropolis that it was today, to a point that she has become a workaholic, straining her relationship with her only daughter, Rosa. She and Rosa are central to the story surrounding the city-state, as they feud over whom has the right to rule: the people, or the Aressus clan, whom have given so much to the people it can almost be considered a sacrifice.
* **Albert Lycantros** is part of the Iudicando Lux, a specialized task force of the Coven, its members hand-picked by the clan from its regular police for their unique talents. Albert is a natural tactician, self-taught from his time in the police. He deemed his superiors there to be inept at their job, and often disobeyed commands in order to save the life of his comrades during their fight against the rebellion. To avoid the repercussion of his insubordination, Victoria herself picked Albert from the fold and he immediately began training the day after. Though he was thankful for her actions, Albert’s loyalty to the Coven has wavered, his beliefs of merit not being shared by anyone else in the task force, his actions remain unrecognized by his comrades. What he thought was a city-state of progress and merit was slowly becoming one of tyranny and underhanded methods in order to achieve victory.
* **Zane Ohiviel** is a rogue pyromancer living in the mountains northwest of the city-state. He is encountered much later in the path. Zane is not his real name, and he is not a citizen of any of the city-states, instead having sailed from another continent. He is unaware of the civilization that lies beyond the mountains, only having settled there in a quest to find an environment to freely experiment with his magic. He is, however, aware of the technological phenomena and senses a foreboding presence underneath the mountain, leading him to research about it on the side.
* **Nimbostrata**: a volatile, empty vessel housed by the Coven’s experimentation division. By volatile, she is nothing but bottled hatred spewing forth, making it necessary to imprison her in specially-designed cryostasis. She is the main antagonist of the storyline. Much about her origins are shrouded in mystery, but her discovery is what spurred the city-state’s rapid growth in technology. Her purpose is tied to the growth, but the full details of it are unknown. One thing’s for sure, she has a connection with Cirrus.

Bar-Oniel Path – Path of Exile

* **Thurian** is a squire of the crown price in the Triumvirate, the major military body of the city-state. He is a quiet sort, orphaned at a young age with Xepscern, who was his only friend when they lived in the streets, dreaming to be in the army someday. Having fulfilled his dream, he dutifully tends of the whims of his knight, lest he be punished greatly. He and Xepscern flee the city-state as fugitives after the crown prince was kidnapped and he had encountered a pretender in the night, causing Thurian to murder him, which is seen by a royal subject and misunderstood as an attack on the royal family.
* **Xepscern** is a mid-ranking foot soldier of the city-state people’s army. He has undergone numerous skirmishes, so a life of war has already been ingrained into him since his drafting into his legion two years ago. Though battle-hardened, he is able to keep his friends in civilian life, and is able to keep sane by visiting his younger sister, Rasteena, in the church. He has a jovial personality and finds ways to brighten a situation when odds aren’t in their favour; a foil to his fellow orphaned friend, Thurian. They flee as fugitives after Thurian is mistakenly accused of murder of the royal family.
* **Rasteena** is Xepscern’s younger sister. She was drafted to be an apparentice cleric for the Church of Yfadna, and has a talent for white sorcery. There is not a day where she will not worry about her older brother, who was drafted into the people’s army to actively fight against their sworn enemies. When an incident leads to her brother and her friend fleeing from the city-state as fugitives, she was taken under the custody of the Triumvirate for questioning. Though she knows nothing of what’s going on, the leadership sought her as a scapegoat for what was considered to be a murder of a member of the royal family.
* **Emperor Augustus** is the current iron-fisted ruler of the city-state of Bar-Oniel. A conqueror at heart, he seeks for his own nation to take over the entire continent one day, and soon after, the world. This attitude that he has instilled upon his citizens is what made the city-state the underdeveloped powerhouse that it was today, and even if the ruling party were to change, the mindset will not for generations to come. Since the ceasefire between the city-state and Ishtar, the emperor has been thinking of ways to rouse its people into battle once again, breaking the agreement and carrying out a surprise attack that will surely lead them to victory. What better plan could be hatched when two members of the army were supposedly caught murdering the crown prince? A scapegoat was in order.
* **Crown Prince Reginald IX** the crown prince of the city-state and next in line for the throne. He is a noble and respectable sort, but lacks his father’s extreme personality. He is however, capable of deep thought and thorough decisions and judgements, making him eligible for the throne. He was kidnapped for reasons unknown, and a pretender was placed in his stead. The perpetrators are unknown, but are slowly revealed throughout the path.
* **Leonid Rex:** a washed-up, old mercenary hired by Victoria (see Ishtar Path) to gather intelligence for Ishtar. Though governed by money and alcohol, he is unpredictable, preferring to do what he wants wherever and whenever. He is brilliant at what he does, and in the hired gun scene, no one could top him off for performance. The trade-offs are worth it, if he ever actually does the job and not run off with the money.
* **Azrael** a trained assassin from the city-state of Kaful, on assignment to kill a magistrate to the emperor in one of the outer villages. He unknowingly gets involved in the plot to break the ceasefire between Ishtar and Bar-Oniel when two of its soldiers were supposedly caught having murdered the crown prince.

Kaful Path – Path of Freedom

* **Kasim ibn Sulaiman**
* **Champ Aturas**: the reigning grand champion of the Braveheart Arena in Kaful. Champ was a born, yet mischevious fighter, having grown up in the criminal underworld in the city-state. A known member in the arena had caught him one day trying to steal from the wager box and convinced him to turn his life around, making a name for himself as a prized gladiator rather than yet another low-key street rat roaming the streets for pockets to steal. Champ has since then taken residence as the undefeated warrior of the arena, making an honest buck crushing skulls in for entertainment.
* **Farouq**: a former royal guard who was imprisoned for a crime he didn’t commit. He escapes one day and is driven out of the city by his guardian, Maryam, knowing that he won’t be safe inside the city-state as a fugitive. Leaving the city, he vows to find the person who framed him for his crime. Farouq is reserved and calm, and because of his occupation, thinks things through in a black and white manner. This changes throughout the storyline.
* **Khayana**: a trained assassin from an unknown sect, and Azrael’s older sister. She takes contracts within the city-state and once had a member of the royal family as a client. She is hired to seek out and dispatch Farouq.
* **Malakar**: a pirate and high-ranking official of the Gillnetters, which had its origins as fishermen before the advent of Sky Barges.
* **Sayeed**

**Battle System**

**The game borrows most of its aspects from Romancing SaGa, as well as portions from Final Fantasy. I chose the former game because its mechanics are obscure and not as well-known as other JRPGs that are ported in North America. I was opting for an action RPG, but that may be beyond our skill level, so we’re going with priority turn-based combat instead.**

**There are at maximum four characters in a party, with one reserve member. The battle scene has the standard fare of having enemies to the left and the party to the right. The party chooses their commands, and once everyone has chosen one, the fight begins whoever has the most Agility. If an enemy ambush occurs, the formation is voided and the party is vulnerable to attack with the enemy always going first. The same stat could also be determined when the party is escaping (find the lowest stat) or dodging/blocking attacks (percentage success).**

**Basic attacks take from the character’s Strength plus the factor of the weapon and any temporary buffs to the stat from spells. There will be no accessories and weapons are improved and synthesized, not bought as new.**

**There are three “elements” in the game: Sun, Moon, and Star, and each spell corresponds to one of the three, its power affected by the character’s Intelligence and any added buffs to the stat. Basic attacks are non-elemental and deal normal damage compared to spells, unless the character’s weapon is synthesized to be a specific element, in which case the normal Strength calculation is done, with a percentage increase or decrease in damage depending on the enemy’s strength or weakness. Having a “rock-paper-scissors” type of weakness works very well to balance gameplay.**

**Status effects will be explained later throughout the development once we deal with damage calculation.**

**To avoid spamming, techniques and spells, including multi-party techs, have individual cooldown timers, bringing strategy into play. Items will be provided that can replenish such cooldowns, but they will be rare and hard to find.**

**Each character is skilled with a specific weapon. Their weapon gives them a unique set of skills to learn and use as they go through many battles. The chance of learning a new skill increases dramatically if the enemy is stronger than the character. At the end of a battle, a character has a random chance of increasing his/her stats, maximum HP and TP included, only if the enemy is stronger or equal of strength to each party member based on the average of their three base stats.**

**If the party is defeated in battle, the player has the option of redoing the battle again, or loading from a previous save, or quitting the game.**

**Interface**

**The interface will involve presentation of the stats of each character, as well as applied sprites or portraits. Playtime will be shown on the bottom-left alongside the currency you accumulate in the game: Reds. This currency can be used to buy things in shops and improve weapons. There will be an equip menu that allows you to equip armor and items to your character, a skills menu that will show a character’s current skillset (magic or techniques) and weapon, and an artifact menu that will show plot-specific items. These will not be added up to the player’s item repository. Of course, you have the option of saving and loading here.**

**Items**

**Items include restorative items and damaging items. We want to limit the different kinds of items out there, so as to shorten the scope while at the same time, not make anything useless or add complexity to the game.**