

Digital Blood on the Clocktower – UX Design for the Storyteller’s Grimoire and Player Interface

This document proposes a user-experience design for a digital adaptation of **Blood on the Clocktower**. It focuses on the Storyteller’s **Grimoire** (the control hub and hidden view) and the player-facing interfaces. Design decisions respect physical game rituals—such as matching the seating order in the Grimoire and moving tokens to simulate bluffing—and are informed by official setup instructions ¹ ² and storytelling advice ³.

1 Grimoire UX & Design

The digital Grimoire acts as both the seating map and the Storyteller’s control centre. It must replicate the physical book-like container: tokens arranged in a circle matching player seating ², hidden information kept out of sight ⁴, and space for reminder and night tokens ⁵. Below, each game stage lists the Grimoire’s screen state, available actions, system responses, future-edit possibilities and design notes.

1.1 Setup Stage

- **Screen state** – The storyteller sees an empty circular grid representing seats. Side panels show available characters, reminder tokens, night tokens and script selection. A progress bar guides through setup steps (choose edition, select characters, assign roles, prepare reminders).
- **Actions available**
 - Select an edition and script; the UI filters available characters accordingly and populates the **character tray**.
 - Drag character tokens from the tray onto seats in the circle or onto the **hidden side panel** for random assignment. The seating order can be rearranged by dragging players around the circle.
 - Add or remove characters according to script requirements (e.g., add two Outsiders when the Baron is selected) and mark travellers/fabled if present. Reminder tokens are automatically added when a character token shows green leaves ⁶.
 - Distribute life and vote tokens to the Town Square; the Grimoire view shows token counts but does not reveal characters to players. Secretly assign character tokens to players and collect them back into the Grimoire ⁷ ².
- **System response** – The Grimoire updates positions of tokens with smooth animations. When characters require additional tokens or alter the distribution of roles, warnings appear. Random assignment uses a deterministic seed for reproducibility, and a log records which character went to which seat.
- **Future edits** – Support switching scripts mid-setup, importing user-created scripts, and adding expansion characters. A **custom token editor** allows adding variant tokens or reminders (e.g., homebrew states), and seat labels accept text or icons.
- **Additional notes** – Emphasise that the digital Grimoire must mirror the physical arrangement: seats in clockwise order, tokens grouped to reflect real-world seating ². Provide accessibility settings (high-contrast mode, colourblind-friendly palettes) and tutorials for first-time Storytellers.

1.2 Day Phase

- **Screen state** – The Grimoire displays the circle of players with life tokens, vote tokens and reminder tokens. A panel lists nominations and votes with a countdown timer. The storyteller's private view reveals each character and alignment, along with a log of previous nights.
- **Actions available**
- **Track discussions** – The Grimoire does not record chat but highlights which players are whispering privately; the storyteller can drag a “whisper marker” between seats to indicate private conversation groups.
- **Nominate & vote** – Click on a player's seat to open a nomination dialog; track the nomination, start a public vote counter and confirm execution if at least half the living players vote ⁸. The storyteller can pause or cancel votes (e.g. for debates).
- **Mark deaths/exiles** – Drag a death shroud over a player's token to mark them as dead and reduce their available votes. Exile travellers by toggling a flag next to their seat; the system removes their ability accordingly.
- **Edit seating order** – For physical reasons (player moves, new travellers), reorder seats by dragging tokens; all associated reminders follow automatically. The UI ensures clockwise order remains consistent.
- **System response** – When votes are cast, vote tokens fly from the player's seat to a central tally. Once the threshold is met, the executed player's token flips and a death animation plays; the system updates alive/dead states and moves them outside the seating circle. Reminder tokens associated with the executed character can either remain (if persistent) or be removed automatically based on rules.
- **Future edits** – Provide toggles for optional features such as timed discussions, secret ballot voting, or automatic vote counting for remote games. Custom scripts may insert special day actions (e.g. midday abilities), so allow modules to add buttons or alerts.
- **Additional notes** – Since players can talk freely at any time, the Grimoire should not restrict chat. However, it should track nomination order and remaining votes to avoid confusion about dead players' single extra vote ⁹.

1.3 Night Phase

- **Screen state** – All players' seats dim or display a “sleeping” icon. The storyteller sees the Grimoire in **night mode**, with the night sheet for the chosen script aligned beside the seating circle. Only the storyteller view shows which players wake in which order; players just see a sleep screen.
- **Actions available**
- **Wake players** – Follow the night order; click a character token to wake the player and display a private prompt. The UI emphasises secrecy by greying out the rest of the interface. The storyteller can mark the player as drunk or poisoned, and choose what information to give them (true or false) ¹⁰.
- **Resolve abilities** – For each waking player, a side panel presents ability options (choose targets, swap characters, etc.). After confirming, the system logs the action and returns the player to sleep. If an ability adds reminders or persistent effects, the storyteller drags the appropriate reminder token onto a seat or the Grimoire margin.
- **Schedule events** – The storyteller can queue delayed actions (e.g. Demon star-pass, Ravenkeeper information after a kill) by dropping event markers into an **event queue**; these will trigger automatically at the correct time.

- **Manage order adjustments** – Some abilities occur outside the standard night order ¹¹. The night sheet display allows the storyteller to insert manual events or modify the order for the current night. A “repeat last night order” toggle accelerates subsequent nights.
- **System response** – As each player resolves their ability, the Grimoire logs results and animates state changes (e.g. a poisoned player’s token turns green). When a kill occurs, the life token is removed and the death shroud appears but is not revealed to players until morning. Once all events are complete, the system transitions to morning and reveals deaths to players.
- **Future edits** – Allow custom night sheets for homebrew scripts and expansions. Support optional automation (“Auto-Storyteller”) that uses deterministic rules to resolve simple abilities; the storyteller can override decisions manually. Provide settings for variants such as Blindfold mode (no sleeping animation, for accessibility) or custom wake sequences.
- **Additional notes** – To replicate physical storytelling etiquette, include subtle sound cues or haptic feedback to indicate when a player needs to wake, rather than flashing the screen; this echoes the advice to tap players quietly ¹². Provide an option to anonymise movement so players cannot infer which seat the storyteller taps ¹³.

1.4 Endgame

- **Screen state** – When the victory condition is met (Demon executed or only two players remain ¹⁴), the Grimoire presents an endgame summary: final player alignments, roles, vote history, and timeline of night events. A celebratory animation plays, and the storyteller can choose to reveal the Grimoire to all players or keep it hidden for discussion.
- **Actions available**
- **Reveal roles** – Flip all character tokens to show their faces; optionally reveal certain hidden states (poison/drunk markers, bluff tokens) one by one.
- **Discuss and save** – Provide tools to export the game log and Grimoire layout for later review. Allow the storyteller to restart with the same seating order or reshuffle for the next game.
- **System response** – After revealing, the system highlights key moments (executions, major ability triggers). A scoreboard summarises player performance (e.g. correct nominations, successful bluffs). The platform returns to the lobby or setup screen when the storyteller confirms.
- **Future edits** – Support exporting the endgame log to a shareable URL or PDF. Enable analysis modes where players can annotate the timeline, propose alternative plays, or share with community forums.
- **Additional notes** – The endgame stage is an opportunity for teaching; provide quick links to character almanac entries and strategy tips so players can understand what happened.

2 Player vs. Storyteller Views

The digital platform must strictly separate hidden information for the storyteller from what players see. The following table summarises major Grimoire actions and their corresponding views. Long descriptions appear in the accompanying notes; table cells contain keywords only.

Grimoire action	Storyteller sees	Player sees
Assign roles / place tokens	Full list of characters and alignments; drag-drop tokens onto seats; random assignment log	Only their own role card; seat name/colour; no knowledge of other roles

Grimoire action	Storyteller sees	Player sees
Reorder seating	Drag seats; sees original and new order; tokens move with seats	Seats repositioned; names remain; no role information
Add/reminder tokens	Tray of reminders; drag onto seats; can view reminder tags	May see tokens representing public information (e.g. drunkenness marker); private reminders hidden
Nominate and vote	Nomination dialog shows nominee, voters, threshold; sees life/vote tokens of all	Public nomination announcement; sees vote tokens flying; own vote button
Mark death / exile	Applies shroud to seat; updates alive/dead state; logs kill source	In public view the seat is shaded as dead; loses future vote tokens; sees exile announcement
Wake player at night	Prompts appear for chosen player; selects target(s); sees ability options	Sees a private prompt overlay; chooses targets; all other players remain on sleep screen
Resolve ability	Logs effect; toggles poison, drunk, alignment changes; adds event markers	Only sees potential outcome if ability grants info (e.g. learns alignment); no other state changes are visible
Reveal roles at endgame	Flips all tokens; shows secret tokens and reminders; timeline log	Sees their own role flipped plus others sequentially; receives game summary

2.1 Private prompts & public reveals

- **Private prompts** – When a player wakes, the storyteller’s prompt panel displays options (choose a player, decide whether to use an ability, etc.). The same prompt appears on the player’s client, with confirm/cancel buttons. After the player responds, the storyteller confirms the outcome and the system applies effects. For characters giving information, the prompt can deliver a yes/no answer or show icons representing other players; because drunk or poisoned players receive false information, the storyteller can toggle an **alternate result** before confirming ¹⁰.
- **Public reveals** – Nominations, votes and executions occur in the open; all players’ screens update simultaneously. A **vote counter** appears showing how many votes are required for execution. When a player is executed, their life token is removed and their seat is marked; they may still vote once more ⁹. The storyteller can decide whether to reveal the executed character’s role, as some scripts call for immediate revelation.
- **Player dashboard design** – Each player’s interface includes: their role card with ability description; a note-taking area; buttons for whispering (opens a private chat with another player, subject to the storyteller’s approval); vote/nominations controls; and an indicator of remaining vote tokens. For accessibility, ensure that colour is not the only way to convey alignment; include shapes or patterns. Offer screen-reader friendly labels and haptic feedback for crucial events.

3 UI Layouts and Wireframes

Below are wireframe-level descriptions of the main screens. These descriptions specify the placement of UI elements and interactions; they should be refined with a graphic designer but illustrate core functionality.

3.1 Grimoire / Storyteller Circle

- **Layout** – A large central circle displays seats arranged clockwise. Each seat contains the player name (or placeholder if unassigned) and the character token (face hidden to players). The storyteller sees the character icon beneath the token. The right side contains collapsible trays for character tokens, reminder tokens, night sheets, and event queue. A top bar shows the current phase, day/night count and available scripts.
- **Interactions** – Drag-drop tokens from the tray onto seats or from seat to seat to reorder. Clicking a seat opens a context menu with options: view role (storyteller only), mark drunk/poisoned/mad, add reminder, nominate, kill/exile. Dragging reminder tokens onto seats attaches them. Event queue items can be reordered by dragging. A **phase toggle** at the bottom advances between day and night; the system warns if unresolved events remain.
- **Accessibility** – Provide zoom controls to enlarge the circle on smaller devices. Use high-contrast tokens with shape indicators for colourblind players. Offer keyboard navigation: arrow keys move between seats, and hotkeys for common actions (e.g. “N” to nominate). Add descriptive alt-text for screen readers.

3.2 Player Seating Circle (Public-Facing)

- **Layout** – For players, the seating circle appears at the top-centre of the screen with seats labelled but character faces hidden. Life tokens (hearts) and vote tokens appear next to each seat. Dead players’ seats dim and slide outward slightly. A chat panel on the right shows public messages; whisper lines connect seats when two players are whispering.
- **Interactions** – Players can click another player’s seat to request a whisper (the storyteller must approve). They can click their own seat to view their role card and notes. During nomination, a **nominate** button appears on each other player’s seat; clicking it opens the nomination dialogue. A vote button appears below each seat when voting begins.
- **Accessibility** – Seats expand when hovered or focused to improve selection accuracy. Provide optional seat numbers for players who struggle with names. Use clear audio cues to announce nominations and votes.

3.3 Day Phase Screen

- **Layout** – Divided into three columns: (1) seating circle at the top with life/vote tokens; (2) public chat and whispers below; (3) an information panel on the right showing a countdown timer, nominations list, and reminders about day-specific abilities. The bottom bar contains action buttons (nominate, whisper, end day) and displays remaining vote tokens.
- **Interactions** – The storyteller triggers nomination by clicking a **nominate** button; players confirm their own nominations by pressing a button next to the nominee’s seat. Vote counting is animated; vote tokens fly from the seat to the centre, and the threshold bar fills. The storyteller can cancel or extend the voting period. Private whispers open as small chat windows anchored to the seats involved; the storyteller can watch or block messages if necessary.

- **Accessibility** – Offer speech-to-text for chat and text-to-speech for incoming messages. Provide adjustable timers and options for slower or real-time play.

3.4 Night Phase Screen

- **Layout** – For players, the screen darkens and displays a “sleep” animation (e.g. closed eyes). A status bar at the bottom shows night number and optional ambient animation (stars or moon). For the storyteller, the Grimoire occupies most of the screen with the night sheet to the right. The top bar shows a list of night events with check-boxes.
- **Interactions** – Players cannot interact during night except when woken; then a modal dialog appears with ability instructions and target selection. The storyteller clicks on players in the night sheet order; prompts appear for each ability. If players are drunk or poisoned, the storyteller selects alternative results. Delay events (e.g. a kill happening after another ability) appear in the event queue; the storyteller can reorder them if necessary.
- **Accessibility** – Provide an option to disable flashing or darkening animations and instead indicate night via a colour overlay. Use audio cues for players on mobile to know when they are being woken.

3.5 Game Setup Screen

- **Layout** – A multi-step wizard: (1) select edition and script; (2) enter number of players and assign names/avatars; (3) assign seats by dragging names into circle; (4) review and confirm. A preview of the Grimoire appears on the right for the storyteller.
- **Interactions** – Dropdown menus for edition/script selection; a randomise button for seat order; toggles for travellers and fabled characters; fields to upload custom scripts. Real-time validation warns if the number of Townsfolk, Outsiders, Minions and Demons is incorrect or if a character with special setup instructions (e.g. Baron) is included ¹⁵.
- **Accessibility** – The wizard should be responsive with large buttons; include voice narration for each step. Provide options to pre-populate player lists from previous games.

4 Scalability and Platform Considerations

- **Responsive design** – The interface must adapt to desktops, tablets and phones. On smaller screens, allow players to swipe through segments of the seating circle rather than showing all seats at once. Provide horizontal and vertical orientation support.
- **Performance** – Use client-side rendering and WebGL/WebCanvas for smooth animations. Pre-load tokens and assets for faster transitions. For large games (20 players), implement a mini-map or scrollable circle so the storyteller can still view all seats.
- **Modularity** – The engine should load character definitions, scripts and UI components dynamically. New expansions can be added via module files; the Grimoire's trays update automatically to include new tokens and reminders.
- **Security & privacy** – Since the game involves hidden information, use end-to-end encryption for private messages and prompts. The server should enforce separation of storyteller and player data. Logs should anonymise players for sharing.
- **Accessibility & inclusivity** – Provide high-contrast themes, dyslexia-friendly fonts, and support for screen readers. Include optional audio narration of prompts and UI events. Offer localised strings for multiple languages.

Conclusion

This design aims to respect the spirit of **Blood on the Clocktower**—a social deduction game of secrets, bluffing and storytelling—while leveraging digital tools to make gameplay smoother and more accessible. The Grimoire serves as both a seating map and a storyteller dashboard, guiding the moderator through setup, day, night and endgame stages. Clear separation of storyteller and player views ensures hidden information stays hidden, while thoughtful UI layouts provide intuitive interactions. Accessibility and scalability considerations prepare the design for mobile devices, expansions and diverse player needs. With these principles, a digital version can capture the excitement and tension of the physical game.

1 2 5 6 7 15 Setup - Blood on the Clocktower Wiki

<https://wiki.bloodontheclocktower.com/Setup>

3 4 12 13 Storyteller Advice - Blood on the Clocktower Wiki

https://wiki.bloodontheclocktower.com/Storyteller_Advice

8 9 14 Rules Explanation - Blood on the Clocktower Wiki

https://wiki.bloodontheclocktower.com/Rules_Explanation

10 States - Blood on the Clocktower Wiki

<https://wiki.bloodontheclocktower.com/States>

11 Abilities - Blood on the Clocktower Wiki

<https://wiki.bloodontheclocktower.com/Abilities>