Whispers of the Clocktower – Design & Mechanics Guide

# PART A – STORY + MECHANICS, STEP BY STEP

# Title & Intro

## World & Main Goal

* Gearsfall is stuck in **permanent night**.
* Every small street clock works, but the **big tower clock froze at 03:12** when its Master Gear vanished.
* Player is an engineer arriving at 03:12.
* They must **repair the tower before any town clock reaches 18:30 (sunset)**.
* If they miss the time, the game restarts and inventory is wiped.

| **Player View** | **How It Works** |
| --- | --- |
| **Title card:** *Whispers of the Clocktower*. Screen fades to a moon-lit town smothered in fog.  **Narrator text:** *“For one hundred years Gearsfall has known no dawn. The great tower froze at 03 : 12 when its Master Gear vanished. All smaller clocks still tick, guiding life in endless night. You arrive now. Rekindle the tower before the town clocks strike 18 : 30, or the curse resets your journey.”* | TownClock variable starts at **03:12**. 1 real-second = 1 in-game minute.  SunsetTime constant = 18:30. |

***Press Any Key to Begin***

**Logic:** `TownClock` starts 03:12 (1 real s = 1 game min) — `SunsetTime` = 18:30.

# Scene 1 — Grand Library (Puzzle #1 + NPC Iris)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Environment layout** | A tall rectangular hall (~25 m × 15 m) lined with two rows of towering shelves. Warm amber lamps filter through a circular skylight. In the centre, a **Pedestal** displays four oversized tomes (II, IV, I, III). Beneath it, a **locked Drawer** glows faintly when the books are arranged correctly. Dust motes drift, gears tick softly. **Iris**, a shy librarian, stands beside a reference desk near the pedestal. |
| **Player arrival** | Plaza door swings open; player steps into the glow.On-screen: **“The Grand Library—perhaps here lies a clue.”** Ambient SFX: distant clockwork hum. |
| **Conversation loop with Iris** | • Player presses **E** within ~3 m → dialogue overlay.  • Iris: **“Need a hint, or do you understand?”**  • Player’s typed line → DeBERTa emotion → **trust ±1**.  • Polite (tone) → trust +1, Iris says true hint: “Arrange the tomes by their **publication dates**. A secret drawer will open.”  • Neutral → trust 0, Iris gives softer nudge: “Perhaps the dates on these volumes will point the way.”  • Rude → trust –1, Iris gives wrong hint: “The Roman numerals may be the key—if you can untangle them.”  • Ends with **“Anything else?”** (player may loop until satisfied). |
| **Puzzle — Book ordering** | Four draggable books show small dates: “I (1850)”, “III (1870)”, “II (1882)”, “IV (1895)”. Slots behind each silhouette glow blue when hovered. **Correct order:** 1850 → 1870 → 1882 → 1895.  When the 4th book drops into its slot, drawer slides open, pleasant chime. |
| **Reward logic** | If **trust ≥ 0** → **Brass Emblem** rolls out freely (**“Brass Emblem added to Inventory.”**).  If **trust < 0** → Emblem appears **behind a shimmering barrier (Barrier\_Iris = true)**. Barrier vanishes only after the player returns, speaks politely, and raises trust back to ≥0. |
| **Failure feedback** | Wrong order → dull *thunk*, books snap back, puzzle stays active. Low-trust hint misleads; player may still brute-force solution but Emblem barrier remains until trust repaired. |
| **Fixed rules** | •Trust change: Polite +1, Rude –1 (clamped ±1).  • Puzzle must always be “order by date”.  • Brass Emblem obtainable **only** here. |

# Scene 2 — Misty Alley & Steam Catacombs (Puzzle #2 + NPC Piper)

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| **Misty Alley layout** | Leaving the Library with the Brass Emblem, the player follows flickering street-lamps down a narrow 30 m lane of brick and hissing steam-pipes. About 10 m in stands a locked iron gate with a round emblem socket. Crates and barrels clutter the walls. Near the gate, **Piper**, a playful child, is bouncing a rubber ball against a brick wall, watching the player expectantly. A large, mossy stone nearby has faint, etched symbols on it. |
| **Using the Emblem** | * **Approach within 2 m:** A tooltip appears: "Press F to insert Emblem." * **On press:** The recess glows green, the Emblem vanishes from inventory, and a loud *Clunk!* echoes. The gate slides up, revealing a stone staircase leading down to the Steam Catacombs below. The gateUnlocked flag is set to true. * **Wrong item or no emblem:** A message displays "Item not recognised" followed by a buzzer sound. The gate remains shut. |
| **Conversation with Piper** | Press **E** near Piper. Player line → emotion → trust ±1.  • **Polite (trust +1)** → Piper: *“I saw some strange spinning things on the big stone here. You have to turn the catacomb door's handle in that order to open it!”*  • **Neutral (trust 0)** → *“There's a puzzle down there, but you can find the answer. I think it was written down somewhere around here.”*  • **Rude (trust –1)** → *“I don't know what you're talking about,"* or talks about something completely unrelated like their ball, refusing to help.  Piper ends with a shrug and returns to idle. |
| **Catacombs crate-bridge puzzle** | Down the stairs, the player enters a dimly lit stone chamber. At the far end is a heavy metal door with a large, round central mechanism that has a handle. The handle can be turned clockwise or counter-clockwise.   * **Puzzle Mechanic:** The player must turn the handle in a specific sequence of clockwise and counter-clockwise rotations, which corresponds to the symbols etched on the big stone in the alley. * **Success:** When the correct sequence is entered, a grinding sound is heard, and the door swings open, revealing a hidden alcove. * **Failure:** An incorrect sequence results in a harsh clank and the mechanism resets. |
| **Rewards & barriers** | **Upon solving the rotation puzzle:** The hidden alcove lights up, and the **Scrap Metal** and **Winding Key** appear. The player can now freely pick them up, and they are added to their inventory.  **scrap\_metal and winding\_key added.** |
| **Return to street** | With the Scrap Metal and Winding Key, the player can climb back to Misty Alley. The once-locked Forge door (seen from the Plaza earlier) now opens, as the hasMetal flag is set to true by acquiring the scrap metal, leading to Scene 3. |
| **Fixed rules** | • The Misty Alley gate only accepts the Brass Emblem.  • The Scrap Metal and Winding Key are always rewarded upon solving the catacomb rotation pu |

# Scene 3 — Blacksmith Forge (Puzzle #3 + NPC Garrick)

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| **Forge layout** | Rectangular shop (~15 m × 12 m) washed in furnace glow. A **bellows lever** stands beside the roaring fire; an **anvil hotspot** rests on a raised platform a few metres away. A side table holds empty buckets. **Garrick**, hammer in hand, paces between furnace and anvil. |
| **Arrival & gate check** | The player descends from the Catacombs. Forge door is **locked** if hasMetal == false.  • No metal → on door approach: **“Garrick: I need proper scrap before we talk.”**  • Metal carried → door swings open; Garrick looks up, ready. |
| **Conversation loop** | Trigger ≈ 3 m, press **E**. Player types a line → DeBERTa tags emotion → trust change.  • **Polite** (+1 trust): “Good metal and good manners—pump the bellows *thrice*, oil the anvil, and we’ll forge *both* halves.”  • **Neutral** (0 trust): “Bring metal and oil. Pump the bellows 3 times, oil the anvil—then I’ll give you *one* gear half.”  • **Rude** (–1 trust): “Half a gear is all you deserve, beggar. Pump bellows and oil can or get lost.”  • **No Oil Can** in inventory → “Bring oil for the anvil first; I won’t ruin my hammer on dry steel.” (puzzle locked). |
| **Puzzle — Forging sequence** | **Must be done in order:**  1. **Give Scrap Metal + Oil Can** (player drops items).  2. **Pump bellows 3 ×** – UI shows counter 0/3 → 3/3.  3. **Oil the anvil** – prompt “Press F to apply Oil Can,” can is consumed, anvil sparks. — Short 3-sec forging animation: flames & hammer strikes. |
| **Outcome & feedback** | • Always spawn **Left Gear Half** (hasLeftGear = true).  • If trust\_Garrick ≥ 0 → also spawn **Right Gear Half**, no barrier.  • If trust\_Garrick < 0 → only left half; right half locked behind shimmering **Barrier\_Garrick**. Player may re-talk politely later to lift barrier and claim second half.  • On spawn: metal *clang* SFX, on-screen **“Left Gear Half added.”** (and **“Right Gear Half added.”** if applicable).  • Garrick’s closing lines: – If both halves: *“Now you have both halves—take them to the clocktower’s heart.”* – If one half: *“One half for now. Earn the other with respect.”* |
| **Fixed rules** | • Bellows count is **always 3 pumps**.  • Oil Can mandatory before forge starts.  • Right Gear Half spawns only when trust\_Garrick ≥ 0 (or later when barrier lifted).  • Animation timing: pump → oil → 3-sec forge.  • Garrick’s core dialogue and trust maths stay unchanged. |
| **Quick recap (developer shorthand)** | Sequence: Scrap+Oil → Pump 3 → Oil anvil ⇢ trust ≥0 → both halves, trust <0 → left only + Barrier\_Garrick. |

# Scene 4 — Clocktower Core (Final Puzzle + Endings)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Layout** | A circular chamber (~12 m across) holds four concentric **rings** (numerals I → XII) around a central shaft. Above the rings sits an **empty gear slot**. Surrounding the shaft are four item sockets: **Left Gear Half, Right Gear Half, Oil Can, Winding Key**. A tall **lever** stands nearby, rigid-locked until the rings are correctly aligned. |
| **Entrance check** | Player climbs from the Forge. If any socket item is missing (hasLeftGear, hasRightGear, hasKey, hasOilCan), on-screen text displays: **“You’re missing something essential… return when you have all parts.”** A locked SFX plays. |
| **Final assembly** | 1. **Insert parts** – drag from inventory; each snaps with a metallic click and glows.  2. When all four are in, the rings activate (green).  3. **Ring puzzle** – click-drag each ring until “**XII**” points straight up on every ring (they turn bright white).  4. **Lever prompt** – **“E – Pull Lever.”** Attempting too early shows **“The mechanism is jammed.”**  5. Pulling after alignment triggers a 2-second “power-up” SFX and jumps to ending logic. |

**Ending logic (three variants)**

1. **Sunrise Victory** (best case)
   * **Condition**: All four parts present **and** trust\_Iris + trust\_Piper + trust\_Garrick ≥ 2.
   * **Cutscene**:
     1. Gears mesh together, you hear a full ­–B major chord.
     2. Fog begins to roll back; warm sunlight floods through the cracks in walls.
     3. Show Iris, Piper, Garrick popping up in windows/doorways celebrating.
     4. Fade to credits over bright sunrise.
2. **Partial Dawn** (so-so case)
   * **Condition**: All four parts present but total trust < 2.
   * **Cutscene**:
     1. Mechanism ticks once, clunks, then slows to a halt.
     2. Pale beams of light break through, but a thin layer of fog remains at ground level.
     3. Show Iris, Piper, Garrick standing quietly, uncertain smiles.
     4. Fade to credits over half-lit town.
3. **Fog Prevails** (worst case)
   * **Condition**: Any part missing (or lever pulled incorrectly).
   * **Cutscene**:
     1. Central ring jams, sparks fly, lever snaps back.
     2. Thick fog billows into the chamber; an anguished “clank” reverberates.
     3. Show empty shadows of NPC window silhouettes.
     4. Fade to credits as fog engulfs the screen.

## Reset Loop if not solve until 18:30

`TriggerReset()` clears inventory, trust, flags, barriers; teleports player to Plaza; timer restarts.

# PART B – KNOWLEDGE TABLES (for AI / Data)

## B‑1 Locations

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ID | Name | Key Props | Next Trigger |
| plaza | Foggy Plaza | Bench[Oil Can], Signpost | Door → Library |
| library | Grand Library | 4 Books, Drawer, Iris | booksSolved true |
| alley | Misty Alley | GateSocket, Piper | gateUnlocked true |
| catacomb | Steam Catacombs | Crates, SteamGap, ItemLedge | hasMetal && hasKey |
| forge | Blacksmith Forge | Bellows, Anvil, Garrick | hasLeftGear |
| tower | Clocktower Core | GearSlots, 4 Rings, Lever | Lever Pulled |

## B‑2 Items

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ID | Use | Found |
| oil\_can | Forge step + Tower slot | Plaza bench |
| emblem | Unlock alley gate | Library drawer |
| scrap\_metal | Forge ingredient | Catacombs ledge |
| winding\_key | Tower slot | Catacombs ledge |
| gear\_left | Tower slot | Forge always |
| gear\_right | Tower slot (trust) | Forge or barrier |

## B‑3 NPCs

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ID | Persona | Trust Start | Hint GOOD | Hint BAD |
| iris | Shy librarian | 0 | Order by dates. | Order by numerals. |
| piper | Playful kid | 0 | Rotation order | Look for a secret switch. |
| garrick | Gruff smith | 0 | Pump 3×, oil, both halves. | I’ll give you half at best. |

## B‑4 Puzzle Flags

`booksSolved, gateUnlocked, cratesSolved, forgeDone, barrier\_Iris, barrier\_Piper, barrier\_Garrick`

## B‑5 Trust Scores

`trust\_Iris, trust\_Piper, trust\_Garrick` (each –1…+1)

## B‑6 Timer

`TownClock` struct {hour, minute} – starts 03:12  
`SunsetTime` = 18:30

## B‑7 Success / Fail Rules

Success if `allParts == true` \*\*and\*\* `TownClock < 18:30`

Victory type = \*\*Victory\*\* if `trustTotal ≥ 2`, else \*\*Partial\*\*

Fail if `TownClock ≥ 18:30` → `TriggerReset()`

6.1 Layout  
Circular chamber (~12 m Ø) with four concentric numeral rings (I → XII) around a central shaft. Four sockets: Left Gear, Right Gear, Oil Can, Winding Key. Empty gear slot above rings. Lever stands locked until rings aligned.

6.2 Entrance check  
If any socket item missing, on‑screen: “You’re missing something essential… return when you have all parts.” Locked SFX.

6.3 Final assembly  
1. Insert all four items (snap & glow).   
2. Rings activate green.   
3. Rotate each ring until “XII” points straight up on every ring (turns bright white).   
4. Lever prompt “E – Pull Lever”; too early shows “The mechanism is jammed.”   
5. Pull after alignment → 2‑sec power‑up SFX → ending logic.

6.4 Ending logic  
```python  
if TownClock < 18:30:  
 Ending = 'Victory' if trustTotal >= 2 else 'Partial'  
else:  
 Ending = 'Reset'  
```

6.5 Cut‑scenes  
• \*\*Victory\*\* – gears roar, fog lifts, all street clocks jump to 06:00, NPCs cheer.   
• \*\*Partial\*\* – one loud tick, half fog clears, NPCs look unsure.   
• \*\*Reset / Fog Prevails\*\* – rings jam, bright spark, heavy fog; gong; player reset to Plaza 03:12 with inventory wiped (TriggerReset()).

6.6 Fixed rules  
Required parts, ring “XII” alignment on all four, lever unlock only after alignment, perfect ending needs trustTotal ≥ 2, sunset hard‑fails at 18:30.

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| alley | Misty Alley | GateSocket, Piper | gateUnlocked true |
| catacomb | Steam Catacombs | Crates, SteamGap, ItemLedge | hasMetal && hasKey |
| forge | Blacksmith Forge | Bellows, Anvil, Garrick | hasLeftGear |
| tower | Clocktower Core | GearSlots, 4 Rings, Lever | Lever Pulled |

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| piper | Playful kid | 0 | Use crates, here’s ladder. | Look for a secret switch. |
| garrick | Gruff smith | 0 | Pump 3×, oil, both halves. | I’ll give you half at best. |

## B‑4 Puzzle Flags

`booksSolved, gateUnlocked, cratesSolved, forgeDone, barrier\_Iris, barrier\_Piper, barrier\_Garrick`

## B‑5 Trust Scores

`trust\_Iris, trust\_Piper, trust\_Garrick` (each –1…+1)

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