A MESSAGE TO PLAYERS

A Message To Native American Players

If you have Indigenous heritage from the Americas, we invite you to add your personal knowledge and cultural traditions to your Character and to this game in any way you and your fellow Players see fit. Feel free to include an alternate history of your tribe or nation into this world and make it a part of your game in any way that is enjoyable. Or don't. There's nothing that says your Character has to be from your tribe. That's entirely up to you.

Feel free to change the rules too. While we try to call out situations where you might want to include your traditions and heritage in the mechanics, we certainly won't catch them all. Have a better name for something from your language? Call it that! Have a more fun definition for a Skill that fits with your tribe's history than what we have here? Speak with the Story Guide and change it up.

With that said, keep in mind that the intention of this game is not to simply take the reality of our lived world and transpose it onto a future fictional world. This is a work of alternate history fiction. In the world of Coyote & Crow, the last 700 years of our real world history never happened. We encourage you not to overlay your tribe's recent past onto this different future, but instead think in terms of what could be, of what might have been. We'll supply plenty of ideas and suggestions, but it will be totally up to you how much or how little of your tribe or nation you want to bring into the game with you.

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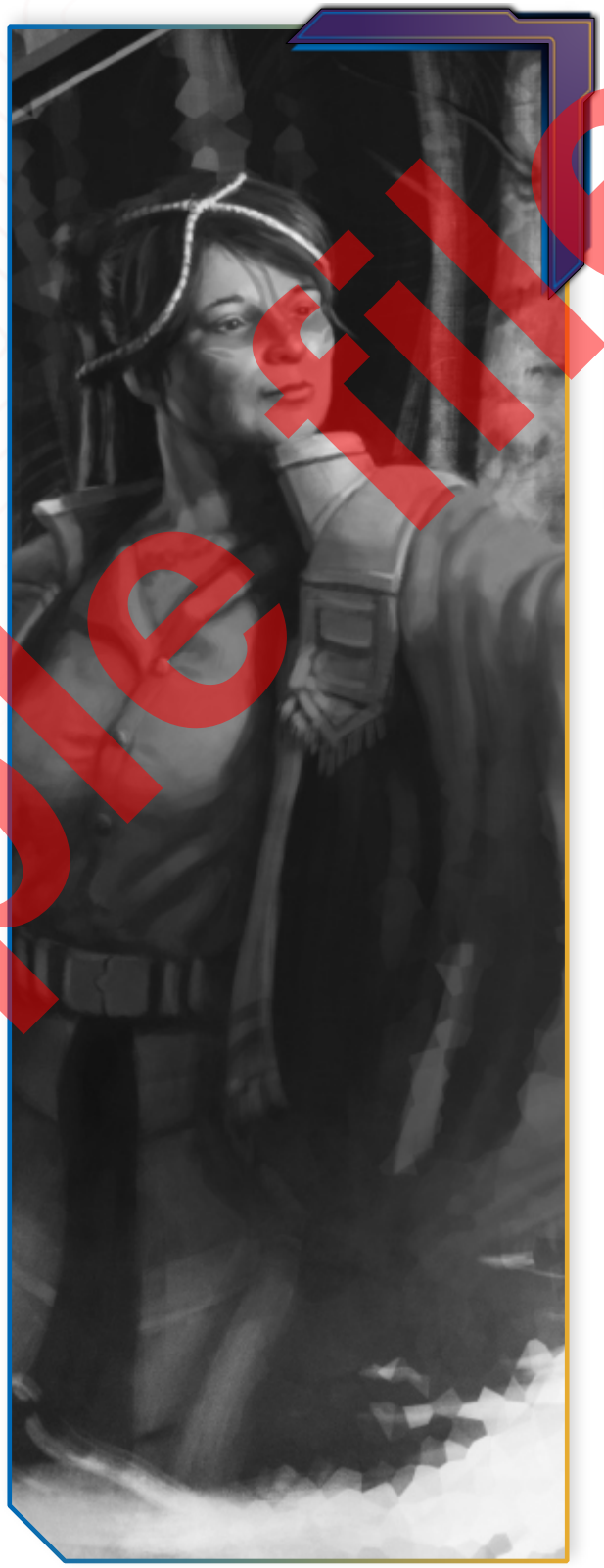
Additionally, you may be in situations where you are playing with non-Native players. We'll have specific instructions for them on how to be respectful and to keep the game fun for all. For the most part, you can just direct them to play off the page. That is, if it's in this book, they can do it. If it's not and those players want to do something that may be drifting into a sensitive or inappropriate territory, you'll have to decide whether that's something you'll want to stop play over to discuss. To avoid this potential disruption, we suggest discussing these possibilities prior to your first Session.

If you're Native and a Story Guide, you'll be able to more easily navigate these situations as you'll be leading the game and helping set the tone and scenarios. Nevertheless, it's best to make sure everyone is aware of boundaries before play begins. This is especially true if you're going to play the game at a convention with strangers. Do not ever feel like you have to educate non-Native players at the table. It's their responsibility to play respectfully within the rules or to learn more outside of their time spent at the game table.



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A Message To non-Native American Players

If you do not have heritage Indigenous to the Americas, we ask you not to incorporate any of your knowledge or ideas of real world Native Americans into the game. Not only may this be culturally insensitive, but many of the assumptions you might make would not fit into this timeline. Instead, delve into the details of the world you are given without trying to rewrite history or impose your perspective.

Please avoid the following:

- Assigning your Character the heritage of a real world tribe or First Nation.
- Assigning your Character a Two-Spirit identity.
- Using any words taken from Indigenous languages that aren't used as proper nouns in the game materials or listed as being part of Chahi (see below)
- Speaking or acting in any fashion that mimics what are almost certainly negative stereotypes of Native Americans.

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In the real world, the terms "Indians", "First Nations Peoples", "Indigenous", and others are often used semi-interchangeably. Please keep in mind though, in this alternate world, none of these words exist or would ever be used. The aforementioned labels all are products of colonialism and in this game, colonization never happened. Instead, people refer to themselves by their given or chosen names, their tribes, the cities they live in, and to some degree, the nations of which they are citizens.

If you are playing with other Players who are Native, do not be afraid to ask respectful questions about their own tribal identities in relation to things that are happening in the game. We suggest you ask those questions away from the game table. Some people are happy to share their stories or their culture, but for many it can be emotional work or deeply personal when often, they're just there to play a game and have fun.

Please remember that "Native American" is a very loose term and that Indigenous peoples are an incredibly diverse group. You wouldn't expect someone from Belgium to know about Irish history. Much the same applies here. Just because you have a Native player in your playgroup does not make them your go-to expert or the person to get permission from.

However, don't be afraid to play this game. The world in this book is rich and diverse, full of science and spirituality. The people of this world do all of the same things you do. They love, work, aspire, struggle, hurt, heal, fail and triumph. Play your characters as people, not "Natives," and you'll be fine.

Note To All Players

Throughout this book, you'll see commonly used words capitalized. For example, "Abilities." Anytime you see a word capitalized in this context it means that the word has a specific game meaning and can be found in the Game Terms Glossary at the end of this book.

Additionally, any time you see a word you aren't familiar with, it's likely a Chahi word. This is a fictional trade language we've created for everyone to use and will help you feel more immersed in the world of Coyote & Crow. For more on this language, see the Chapter, Languages and Communication or the Chahi Glossary at the back of this book.

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A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO ROLEPLAYING

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The Basics

Coyote & Crow is a tabletop roleplaying game for two or more players. It is set in an alternate future, different from ours, where Europe never colonized the Americas, and what we consider Indigenous cultures blossomed into technologically advanced civilizations. You'll need this book, some pencils and paper (or access to the internet and digital devices), and a specific set of dice, which we will discuss later.

What Is A Roleplaying Game?

A roleplaying game, unlike many board or video games, is a collaborative experience. There are no winners or losers and no fixed ending. Instead, one person takes on the role of **Story Guide** and the others, referred to as the Players, control and portray a **Player Character** in the story. Each Player decides the choices and behaviors of their Character. The Story Guide describes the surroundings, the actions of the Characters who aren't Players, and the overall plot points within the story.

The rules contained in this book are not meant to hinder your imagination, but give the Players and the Story Guide a structure and format that will help define and focus your stories. The role of the Story Guide is to help the Players tell their Character's story. The Story Guide will interpret the rules when there are disputes, but overall, the most important princi-

ple to keep in mind is that the story is the goal. Telling a good story should be the driving motivator for both the Players and the Story Guide. If the rules ever get in the way, the Story Guide should always feel empowered to adjust them for the sake of everyone's enjoyment.

The Story Guide will describe challenges and plot points over the course of a Session and Players will have their Characters respond to those challenges, as well as pursue their own Character's motivations. A Session is any length of time the game is played over the course of single sitting, usually two to four hours. Multiple Sessions that tell interconnected stories or are bound by a theme are called a Saga. This book will contain everything you need to play the game and create your own version of the world of Coyote & Crow, with the exception of some pencils, paper, and a selection of 12-sided dice. We recommend a total of 12 dice, 9 white and 3 black. One set of this size is the minimum we suggest. If possible, we recommend that each Player and the Story Guide have their own set of 12 dice.

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The Role of the Player

There might only be a single Player in your Saga or there could be more than ten. Likely, you will have three to five Players. Each Player is responsible for creating their Character, with the guidance of the Story Guide. In addition, Players are responsible for showing up for Sessions as agreed to by the group, bringing their Character with them, and guiding their Character's choices. They should try to understand who their Character is, why they would make the choices they would make, and how to interact with the other Players in a way that is not only true to their Character, but that is productive and enjoyable for the entire group.

While Players should strive to be true to their characters, it should never be at the cost of the enjoyment of the group. The Story Guide may be the overall referee of the group, but all are responsible for doing their part to ensure that everyone has a good time.

The Role of the Story Guide

The Story Guide has the responsibility of being a referee, a director, and a writer. They also portray all of the characters in the story not played by the Players. Story Guides have a vision for what challenges the Players will face, what obstacles they will have to overcome, and take on the roles of adversaries and allies. They will interpret rules and make calls regarding the greater overall Saga. The Story Guides also often act as a sort of group leader, handling the scheduling of Sessions and other out-of-game details.

This might seem like a daunting task, but don't worry, we're here to help! We suggest that the person with the most experience in roleplaying games take on this position. If you are all new to roleplaying games, we suggest that the person who owns a physical copy of the book be the initial Story Guide. In addition, we've added an entire section of this book just for Story Guides to assist you in creating fun and challenging adventures.

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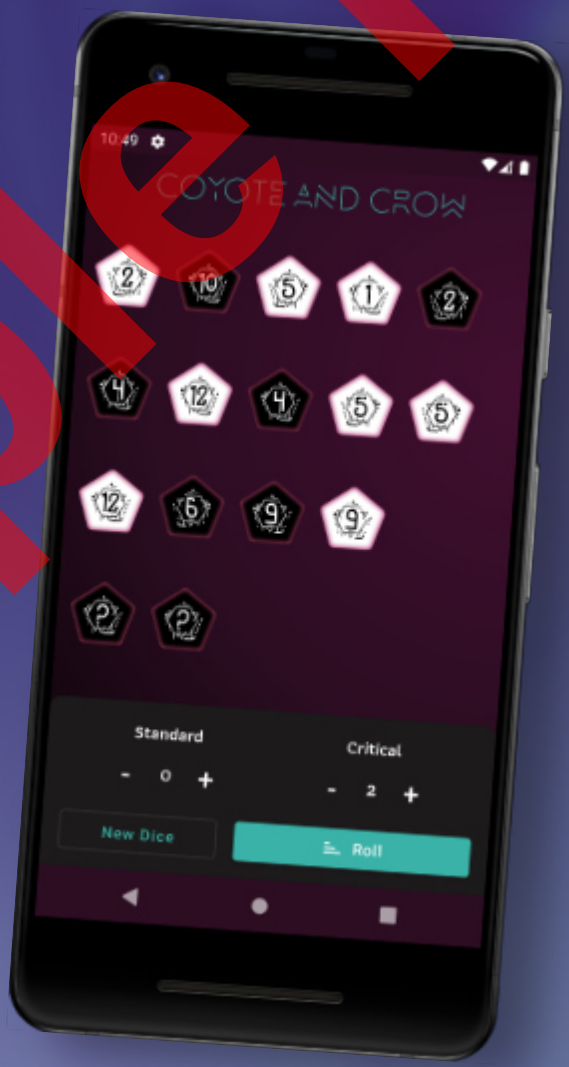
Our Free Mobile App

Most folks have a few dice in their house. Likely they're six sided dice that come from a classic board game. But like many roleplaying games, Coyote & Crow uses a number of dice and with ones that have a greater range value than 1 to 6. This game uses multiple twelve sided dice (d12s) for a number of reasons. For a start, a die that has twelve sides can generate a wider range of results. When it comes to storytelling, sometimes you don't want to be limited to just six possibilities.

But the other reason we wanted to use something other than a traditional six sided die is *because* it's traditional. For a very long time, board game design has been dominated by American and European designers. When we built this game, we didn't want it to just be set in a new Indigenous world. We wanted it to feel like a new Indigenous game. For that we had to start our own system from scratch. It's not a coincidence that you'll be playing with twelve sided dice and the people of Makasing think of the number twelve as sacred.



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ROLEPLAYING IN THE WORLD OF COYOTE & CROW

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What Is The World Of Coyote & Crow?

Coyote & Crow is a world very different from our own, despite being set on Earth and not that far in the future. Yet it is a different future based on a divergent past. Both worlds share the exact same history up to a certain key moment. That event, that single difference, changed everything, reshaping this world away from our own and into the world you see in this book.

In our world, the monarchies of Europe pushed westward through the 15th century, determined to find faster routes to India, China, and other valuable trading partners. Instead they crashed headlong into something far more valuable – land and resources that they could exploit. Along the way they devastated entire Native populations through murder, slavery, exploitation, and the spread of disease. But what if that hadn't happened? In the world of Coyote & Crow, things took a different turn. This world's history went down another path and the resulting changes created a landscape that bears little resemblance to our own.

What was this change? People call it The Awis - the Darkest Night or The Darkening Land.

Around the year we think of as 1400 AD, something monumental happened. In years past it was often said a great evil, a darkness, one so powerful that it forced the Great Spirit to flee, had covered the world. Later it came to be un-

derstood that something had struck the world, likely a massive meteor, bringing both radiation and rare elements as well as exotic matter previously unknown to our planet. The explanation held true whether one preferred the poetic or scientific description.

The result was that the Earth was plunged into a severe climate change for hundreds of years. How it affected the rest of the world, no one knows for sure. But the people of what we call North and South America were not let off easily. They faced a growing northern ice shelf, extended winters, violent oceans, huge changes in animal and plant populations, starvation, and war. Tribes moved, changed, and evolved. They adapted to the world they inherited and used the gifts left to them by the Great Spirit. Though the Awis plunged the world into a deep ice age, it also brought a strange mark on plants, animals, and people; the purple mark called the Adanadi, a source of inspiration first, and later, power. Eventually, the weather improved. The seas calmed, the ice shelf slowly began to melt and retreat northward. New technologies and trade brought a huge upswing in the standard of living for all.

The Characters you will play in this game are the inheritors of all these changes. These are people who live in a very different world from ours and yet, where it counts, they are just like us. They love and fight, have families and dreams. Nations go to war and make treaties. Engineers and scientists make discoveries that improve and complicate daily living. People strive to make sense of their lives, bring meaning to their efforts, and understand the world around them.

This is also a world where legend meets science. In our world, this is often seen as a battle between right and wrong or good and evil. It is the idea that one has to be fundamentally correct and by necessity, the other wrong. This viewpoint comes primarily from a western European way of thinking. In Coyote & Crow, an advanced piece of science can still have spiritual value. A supernatural experience doesn't have to be dismissed because science doesn't easily explain it. For most folks, the mystical and the logical exist side by side on a daily basis.

Many things in this game are rooted in our shared history. The city of Cahokia, for example, is a

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