

The Great Storyteller has fallen,  
our Words of Creation no longer  
echo forth from the high mesas.

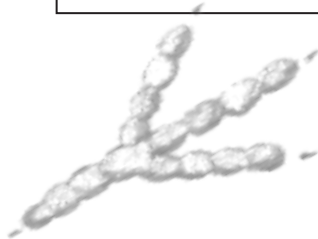
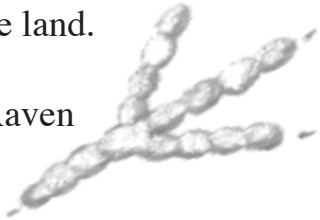
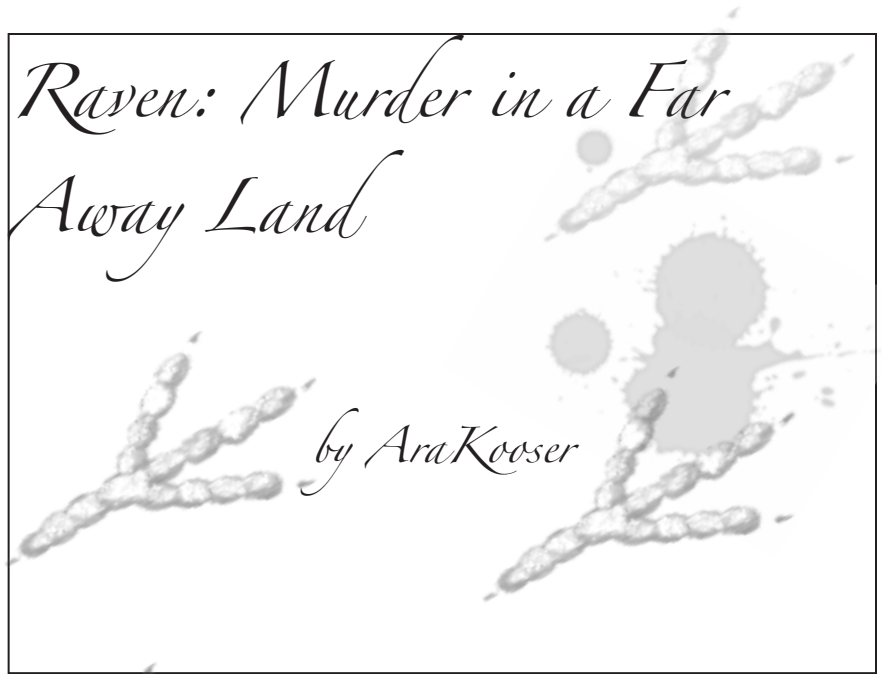
Ravens lost the power to Create,  
Sundered bodies of guardian  
Rooks lie scattered everywhere,  
Hooded Ones saw nothing, Carri-  
on Crows had no enemy to fight.

Our Words are gone and so with  
it Creation. Humans unravelled  
first, blown to dust like ancient  
words. Beast, lacking stories stalk  
the land.

-Raven

# *Raven: Murder in a Far Away Land*

*by AraKooser*



## FUDGE— Freeform Universal Do-it-yourself Gaming Engine

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I’ve included the Fudge License here because I am using parts of the system to run the game here. It’s not the whole Fudge only the parts that fit the story.

Raven was created for a contest over on the Storygames board. [http://www.story-games.com/forums/comments.php?DiscussionID=7801&page=1#Item\\_38](http://www.story-games.com/forums/comments.php?DiscussionID=7801&page=1#Item_38)

This is a game about the undoing of Creation. Someone has murdered the Great Storyteller and thrown the world into chaos.

The players take the roles of four people who are seeking answers to what happened and the means to fix it.

Raven, Hooded Crow, Rook, and Carrion Crow are only as strong as their Stories and Words. When the lasts of these are gone, they are undone and the World breaks.

*Now we set out this bird's body;  
may we, with all living beings,  
realize the emptiness of this shell:  
givers, receivers, gift*

Carrion Crow Prayer before the  
Feasting of the Eyes and Heart

Thanks and Credits:

Fudge System

The People over at Storygames

Wikipedia for the bird pictures

Gimpshop

and Brandi for being patience with me while I write this

Drey - for looking over the game and giving me feedback on short notice

Playtesters: none yet but I hope to have some.

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## Things required for this game

A set of Fudge Dice (4dF)

One twig for each player

Four short twigs tied together in a nice fashion

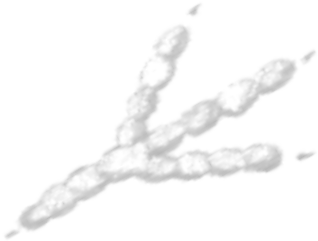
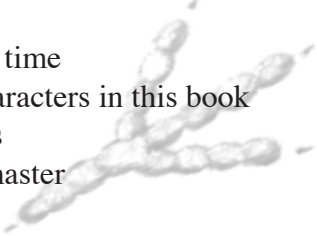
This Book

One hour of time

The four characters in this book

Four players

One Gamemaster



*This meal of three benefits  
nourishes us in our practice.  
Its rewards are boundless,  
filling us with ease and joy.*

Carrion Crow Prayer during the  
Feasting of the Eyes, Heart, and Liver

## One hour rule

In the world with no Words and Stories there is but an hour for you to act. At what passes for dusk before the Beasts come out and when the Hawks return home.

The players have one hour to complete each story and move closer to figuring out who (or what) ended Creation. If the players are in a middle of a conflict it ends immediately and all characters involved are *Sundered and Torn*.

## Order of Play

There is an order to our stories but to the ears of others it sounds like noise.

Stories proceed in this order:

### Gathering of the Rookery

#### The First Steps (Scene 1)

#### On the Way (Scene 2)

#### Over the Threshold (Scene 3)

#### Closing of the Wings

*. Abiding in this world  
like a flower in muddy water,  
the words are pure and go beyond,*

*Thus we bow*  
Hooded Crow invoking the  
Morning Prayer of Purity

## The Gathering of the Rookery

Here the players pick or randomly choose their characters from the four in the book. Each player in turn reads the Background, Three Words, Gifts, and Story aloud.

### Scenes

Each scene is described by two open ended descriptions seeded with actions. In keeping with the spirit of the game you can write down the scenes on a piece of paper beforehand. Then tear it out to present to the players. Here is an example:

*An outlying town surrounded by woods  
Words are written on paper here*

*A ghost of an ancient Rook, choked by his own  
Guards*

The Players (including the GM) create a short list of four NPC's for each scene. Each NPC needs to either help, hinder or use the players to their own end. Creating an in depth NPC is discussed in the GM notes.

The players and the GM need to establish what are the conflicts for the scenes and what is at stake. Players are free to use their Words and Gifts at anytime to move the Story forward. Conflict can come about from many sources: the Backgrounds, differing Words (which may indicate Guilt or at least hiding something), or NPC's to name a few.

Scenes come to a close when all the conflicts have been resolved (that resolution may be open ended).

The next scene is set by the player whose character took the most *Sundered and Torn* in the last scene.

On that very night of Creation's End I saw Rock Coyote talking with Carrion. We all know Rock Coyote flooded this world once. My own people told me that Carrion let Rock Coyote pass by.  
(Raven successful use of Storytelling)

With my stick and Warrior's Prayer I rend Rock Coyote's eyes. So that all coyote's from here on out have black holes where eyes once were.  
(Carrion Crow fights with Rock Coyote and takes two *Sundered and Torn* everyone else in uninjured)

(Carrion Crow picks *A ghost of an ancient Rook, choked by his own Guards* scene)

Luckily the ghost of the Rook still lingers

here. He has Words that will let us know the true killer. Hooded Crow, call forth the spirit!

## Characters and Conflicts

We are but Words and when there is no one to listen we are dead.

### Characters

On each character card there is a Background, three short descriptions (Words) about what your character can do, Gifts, and a Story.

**Background:** This provides a little information on the character and how they see the others. Use this to build, act on, and make your own.

**Words:** These are how your character can interact with the world. A Good rating gives you a +1, a Fair rating +0, and Mediocre -1 to

you die totals. Words are not defined for a reason. Each character's Words allow the character to do anything that the Word embodies.

**Gifts:** These allow you to do special things during the game that sometimes bend the rules. Each one is described on the character sheet.

**Story:** This is a story that is part of your character. If you lose this you can only roll 3dF for as long as the character lives.

**Twigs:** Raven and Carrion Crow start off with one twig each. Rook gets the Armor of Twigs (several twigs tied together).

Each character only lives through three stories except for the Rook. Rook lives for four stories and must pass along what happened previously. At the end of the third story during the Closing of the Wings the characters fall apart.

Feathers drop off and blow away in Words, you become nothing but an object of pity. All the while Rook looks on, picking at the ground.

## Conflicts

When something needs to get done or someone is opposing your character, roll 4dF. Add up the number of +'s and -'s. Add your Word bonus.

Rook is Mediocre at Tool Shaping(-1). I roll 4dF and come up with +, +, +, -. So that is 3 +'s, 1 -, and - for my Word. That is a total of 2 +'s. I start at Mediocre and move two ranks higher to Good. Rook has a new tool.

Whenever two characters are opposing each other the one with the higher total wins but only by the degree of the success.

There are consequences for losing even

when you think there is nothing at stake. The world is ending why are you rolling if nothing is at stake.

## Sundered and Torn

If a character fails at a conflict they are *Sundered and Torn*. The player must tear a piece of the character sheet off and toss it in a pile. Once a piece is removed, the player can no longer use that part of the character sheet. The following things can be *Sundered and Torn*: the three Words, the Story, Gifts, and the Background.

The Background is the final piece of the character and is the last to be removed. Once you are down to this piece you can only roll 2dF but you can make up any Word that might come from your background.

Twigs can be used to mitigate *Sundered and*

*Torn.* In a conflict where you character was using a twig, you can Break the twig instead of tearing off a piece of your character sheet. Once the twig is gone it cannot be replaced. Your character can still use tools.

Players can have their characters attempt to *Sunder and Tear* another PC. This doesn't have to be a physical attack. If successful the player gets an extra dF for the scene.

If your Background is *Sundered and Torn* your character ends. No final words, no actions just death.

## **Closing of the Wings**

Players with characters still alive can help narrate the story for Rook. This serves as a memory tool for Rook and allows the players to recap the events from the past hour. Rook is responsible for carry forth the three stories for

the next generation of characters.

If this is the end of the third story the player's characters fall apart and shuffle off into Creation.

*As I fight on, I leave pieces of me  
blowing in the wind,  
forever gone*

Carrion Crow invoking the  
Warriors Prayer of Acceptance

## Players Notes

Players have a fair amount of narrative authority. Basically by the end you'll want to setup someone to be the fall guy. Be nice to Rook or kill Rook off. Rook controls what that next group knows.

**Rook:** You must tell the story to the new characters from memory. Only the things you narrate become fact for the next Story but you have your Honor so watch your Words carefully.

## GM Notes

The GM's role is to assist in the telling of stories and also try to figure out what is going on here.

There is a little bit of prep time for the GM. For the scenes I would recommend two short,

open ended descriptions with seed elements for action. So you would need six total to tell a full cycle of Stories.

There is a great discussion of how to generate cultured NPCs over on Storygames: [http://www.story-games.com/forums/comments.php?DiscussionID=7789&page=1#Item\\_24](http://www.story-games.com/forums/comments.php?DiscussionID=7789&page=1#Item_24)

NPCs should have three Words that describe them. If they are important NPCs then they get a Background, if they are really important they get a Background and a Gift. As an NPC gets *Sundered and Torn* it's pieces also go into the pile.

Players may want to have their characters do something for which they have no Words for. Let them. But give them only 1dF or 2dF at most.

## Other Notes

As I get feedback I'll revise this. I hope the game is playable and fun. If you liked it or hated it e-mail me at [ghashnaga@gmail.com](mailto:ghashnaga@gmail.com).

-Ara

### Rank Chart for Words and Successes

Superb  
Great  
Good  
Fair  
Mediocre  
Poor  
Terrible

*How great, the feathers of liberation  
a formless field of merit  
Wrapping ourselves in Words  
we free all living beings*

Hooded Crow, prayer at Sunset



# Raven



## WORDS

Good (+1)

Storytelling

*Background:* Once we gave birth to Creation and maintained it. Now our Words are broken and lost. Our power diminished. The Guardian Rooks let the enemy in and the Carrion Lords could not fight the unknown. (If this is your last piece you may only roll 2dF in conflicts)

## WORDS

Fair (+0)

Hide traces

## WORDS

Mediocre (-1)

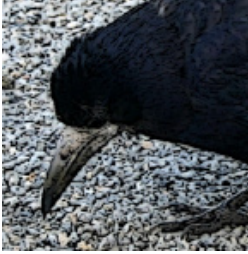
Tool Use

## GIFT:

Words of Creation - once per scene on a successful Storytelling roll (with no chance of *Sundered and Torn*) you can establish a narrative fact for the game that doesn't override another fact or end the scene.

**STORY:** (If you have lost this part of yourself you can only roll 3dF)  
We lived in a land of spirits until one day we flew out. Carrying stones and Words, we forged the world and all of Creation.

# Rook



## WORDS

Good (+1)

Guarding Others

## WORDS

Fair (+0)

Tool Use

## WORDS

Mediocre (-1)

Listening Deeply

*Background:* We have stood guard for eons over the Words of Creation. Our armor is tough and we have honor honed like our beaks. (If this is your last piece you may only roll 2dF in conflicts)

## GIFT:

Armor of Twigs - used in place of Sundered and Torn. You must break it.

Long life - lives for four stories.

**STORY:** (If you have lost this part of yourself you can only roll 3dF)  
Back when the world was young we carried a string across the breaker waves to the spirit realm. The dead follow this string and we guard it's path.

# Hooded Crow



## WORDS

Good (+1)

Nature Lore

*Background:* Long have we protected the Word at the cost of our bodies. We dabble in Lore best forgotten. Our Toil and Blood shall not go unnoticed by Raven and Carrion. (If this is your last piece you may only roll 2dF in conflicts)

## WORDS

Fair (+0)

Bargin

## WORDS

Mediocre (-1)

Picking up Languages

## GIFT:

Decay of Wings - Once per story you can graft a dead piece of sheet onto yourself. This lasts for one scene and you may use the piece as if it was yours.

## STORY: (If you have lost this part of yourself you can only roll 3dF)

There was a world full of people who caused a great flood. They ran for high ground. They become hungry and went down to look for food. The people sank in the mud and died. From them we sprang forth with knowledge from both sides.

## *Carrion Crow*



### **WORDS**

Good (+1)

Hurt things

*Background:* We are not the smartest (we can only use tools to poke out eyes) but we know how to fight. Point us in the direction of the Enemy and we shall devour it. (If this is your last piece you may only roll 2dF in conflicts)

### **WORDS**

Fair (+0)

Stealth

### **WORDS**

Mediocre (-1)

Anatomy

### **GIFT:**

Feast of Eyes, Heart, and Liver- once per scene as soon as anyone falls, you can pounce and devour. This grants you an extra dF on a roll.

### **STORY:** (If you have lost this part of yourself you can only roll 3dF)

Long ago the Enemy came to our world. We chased them out and followed. We waited until they hung their Sun outside their home. We stole it. With burning beaks and molten feathers we flew and dropped their Sun into the Ocean. Their world is now awashed in darkness and cold.