

A MORIARTY GAMES PRODUCTION

Ajagara



The Empire is vast and powerful and for centuries it has existed without true enemies. The Ajagara, the great segmented ones, have ruled us with claws of truth and jaws of mercy, and we are thankful for the wings of their protection. They commune in great councils in their hollows beneath the earth, and guide mankind onwards. They are the heart of the Empire, and the mind of it – humanity knows its place is to be ruled.

But now strange foreigners, with skin white like beach sand have arrived at our shores. They dare raise their hands to the segmented ones: they dig out their hollows, pull them into the sun with their ropes and chains, and burn them with exploding sticks and strange hard earths. Only one hope remains to the Empire: the Nayaka, the heroes of the Empire imbued with fragments of the very soul of an Ajagara.

Nayaka, possessing as they do both human and inhuman souls, are capable of projecting astonishing items of power and achieving unbelievable feats. They can manifest mystic vestments that protect them and grant them unearthly abilities, and they can push their mundane capabilities beyond the normal limits.

These heroes are one of the few defences against the invaders, for the armies of Ajagara are small, are armed with lacquered wood and wear leather armour. Their foes wear breastplates of shiny rock, carry long poles with blades, and long sticks that boom and kill at great range. Only in times of great need would the Ajagara themselves join the fray, but when they do they are incarnations of fury – vast insect-like creatures a hundred feet long bristling with claws, and soaring on undulating wing-flaps.

CHARACTER CREATION

All players, apart from the GM, need to create a Nayaka hero to guide through play. Use the following process to do this:

- Come up with a basic concept for your character and name them.

- Choose one virtue at Paragon, two at Devout, two at Respectful, and one at Deficient.
- Choose Mandira (School).
- Choose three Siksana (Soulmelds).
- Choose Antarika Sara.

VIRTUES

There are six major virtues in Ajagaran society, and these determine a character's abilities and attitudes.

Control is an individual's ability to control their senses and their physical body, and perform "active" physical actions that rely upon precision and strength.

Determination is one's capacity for determining between truths and falsehoods, both in reality and metaphysically. It encapsulates an individual's ability to notice and sense things and people, and distinguish true and false feelings and appearances.

Harmony is one's balance and sense of place, as well as their ability to cultivate outer and inner peace. It is most strongly associated with "passive" physical actions – those that rely upon stability, balance, and calm to succeed.

Honour is the ability to perform righteous and enlightened actions despite outside interference or fear, and to embrace positive emotion rather than negative. It also indicates a character's social graces and the respect that they instinctively receive from their peers.

Mindfulness is an individuals' understanding of difficult concepts, and their ability to think clearly and carefully about themselves and the world around them. It determines their understanding of both mundane and enlightened subjects, and allows them to be put into practice as well.

Purity is an individual's purity of both mind and body (which are seen as heavily interconnected), and determines both their ability to focus and remain uncorrupted, and their ability to appear honest and open.

MANDIRA

All Nayaka have a patron – an Ajagara who has placed part of its soul into them. Once this process is complete, they must be trained in a Mandira – a mystic and spiritual school based around the principles and personality of the Ajagara in question.

All Mandira are named for their patron Ajagara, and reflect their abilities and potential. You should describe the Mandira you have trained in, as it will influence the theme of the Siksana you can select. The names of Mandira are all similar – they include a profession or action with a descriptor (like "Fire Dancer", "Blood Warrior", or "High Seeker").

SIKSANA

The Siksana, or soulmelds, are physical objects made of the Nayaka's very soul that they express at one of the Chakra points of their body. Each Mandira teaches different Siksana, and you should design your own based upon the themes of the Mandira you have picked.

Mechanically, Siksana provide special abilities (allowing a character to do something otherwise impossible, like throw fire or fly) which allows you to make checks of a type that others cannot, or circumvent checks that others would have to make, and also grant a reroll on any check which aligns with the themes and chakra of the meld.

When you select a Siksana, you must choose a Chakra to express it through. You can only know one Siksana for each Chakra.

The Crown (or Taja) is associated with control, command, thought, intellect, and philosophy.

The Jaw (or Jabara) is associated with speech, beauty, passion, anger, and music.

The Wing (or Pankha) is the back on a human, and represents movement and lightness, as well as speed, mobility, and dominance.

The Front Claw (or Samane Panja) are the arms on a human, and killing claws on the Ajagara, and so represent violence, assault, precision, and consumption.

The Thorax (or Chati) is the torso on a human, and represents health, protection, and solidity. It can also represent positive and noble emotion, and the destiny and fate of an individual.

The Abdomen (or Peta) is the stomach and groin in a human, and represents lust, love, instinct, and belief, and also the will to succeed or triumph.

The Rear Claw (or Riyara Panja) is the legs on a human, and represents movement and grace, particular precise movement, and negative emotions such as pain, fear, and greed.

ANTARIKA SARA

Though the Siksana are the most overt of the powers of the Nayaka, they are not the only ones. You should also choose one of Physical, Mental, or Social – you get a reroll on all checks made of this kind. This represents your focus on that aspect of your abilities and the reinforcement of it with your soul.

PLAYING THE GAME

One person will be the Gamemaster (or GM) and will describe the scenes and play any characters who are not the band of heroes who are the focus of the chronicle. The players will each take on the role of a Nayaka, a hero of the Ajagaran Empire.

The core mechanic of Ajagara is as follows: if you're trying to do something with a risk of failure, roll a single six-sided die and try and get a specific number or over. The number you're trying to hit depends on your rating in the most relevant Virtue. Paragons succeed on a 2 or more, Devout on 3 or more, Respectful at 4 or more, and Deficient only on a 6.

This only works if you're trying to do the most basic of tasks, however – a single roll gives you success when you're trying to achieve something simple (like throwing a punch or finding out a specific piece of information). If you want to perform a more complex action, then you need to *up the odds*.

You can choose to up the odds on a check if you succeed. Simply describe how you're adding to the initial action, and then roll the die again. If you succeed, your addition is made successfully – if you fail, then the action fails, and the more dice you roll the worse the failure. You can keep upping the odds to make an action increasingly complex and impressive if you want, but the consequences of failing get worse and worse.

Let's look at an example: Raj is trying to climb the wall of a foreign fortress which has been built on his lands. He rolls his Control (which is rated as Devout) and succeeds. He decides to up the odds and describes how he checks out the lay of the land as he climbs, rolling the die again (this time against his Determination), and again succeeds. He knows there's a guard at the top so he decides to up the odds *again* and use Control to try and hit him. He succeeds a third time and stops there. All of these components count as *one action*.

Sometimes an action will be very difficult, and the GM should ask the player to roll two dice at the same time – if either fail, then the action fails.

Consult the following table for more detail on the quality of success and severity of failure:

DICE ROLLED	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Basic or Simple	Mishap
2	Significant	Setback
3	Impressive	Embarrassing
4	Astonishing	Humiliation
5	Almost Impossible	Catastrophe

If you get a reroll from your Siksana or Antarika Sara then you can use this to reroll a single die from a check. You cannot reroll the same die twice, and can only use each Siksana and/or Antarika Sara once.

COMBAT

To begin a combat, each participant rolls their Harmony, which they can up the odds on as normal. Order the result from best success to worst failure. This is the order in which they act.

Each participant then gets to act once on their turn – they can perform any action the GM deems fit (though they should be short – no more than a second or two), and these actions can be enhanced by upping the odds as normal.

A special type of action is the *attack*. Attacking can be the whole of an action or part of it, but as soon as you involve an attack as any part of your action the consequences of the action become related to attacking.

Success on attack inflicts a *wound* on your opponent, rated by the number of dice on the attack action. Failure inflicts a wound on you instead, as your opponent defends themselves. Thus, all attacks are a risk to your character. Wounds are described as to their effect (like a broken arm) and then given a value equal to the dice of success or failure that inflicted them.

Wounds wear down a character who suffers them. Once per wound, the GM can invoke that wound to accrue that many points of failure on a check before it's even rolled – you have to work off that failure before you can get any levels of success! Therefore, if you had a 2 dice wound, and the GM invoked it, you'd need *three* dice of successes to get a basic success! Once the wound has been invoked it's reduced by one point in severity.

If you ever have more than 10 points of wounds at any one time, then your character has died.

Most enemies do not have such resilience – most enemies (minions) will go down with just a single wound, whilst more impressive foes might be able to sustain three, five, or even eight levels of wounds. If a foe is suffering a wound, the *players* can invoke it instead.

ADVANCEMENT

Nayaka slowly absorb more power from their patrons. At the end of each adventure they can choose to either upgrade one of their Virtues in rank (Paragon is the highest rank), gain a new Siksana of their choice, or improve an existing Siksana (increasing its narrative use and giving it an extra reroll). Antarika Sara cannot be improved once play begins.