

## \* Characters

*"What is your character good at?"*

*Is it a job? A background? Perhaps it'll help soon...*

Give this FACET of the character a name.

This Facet gets 1 coin to go with it. Your coins are your ENERGY. You'll flip them when you take action.

When your character or your group has reached a moment of true growth, you get +1 Energy Coin. You may put it toward your existing Facet or create a new one – a skillset, a piece of gear, a relationship...

*What happened during the adventure that caused you to grow in that way?*

## \* Actions

*"What do you do?"*

If a character takes action with a chance of failure, the Quartermaster will flip one or more coins to represent the CHALLENGE: Challenge Coins.

If the character has one or more useful Facets for the action, flip the Energy Coins from those Facets. If they have no relevant Facets, flip 1 coin to represent basic effort.

**HEADS** are always good for the table.

**TAILS** are always bad.

Count the **HEADS** from the Energy Coins against the **TAILS** from the Challenge Coins. Which has more?

|   |   |
|---|---|
| More <b>HEADS</b><br>from the player:           | <b>Strong Hit.</b><br>Something good happens.   |
| <b>HEADS &amp; TAILS</b><br>are tied:           | <b>Weak Hit.</b><br>A compromise, or a good thing<br>and a bad thing happen.<br>Things get complicated. |
| More <b>TAILS</b><br>from the<br>Quartermaster: | <b>Miss.</b><br>Something bad happens.  |

## \* More Energy

If you use a Facet that has more than 1 Energy, flip as much of that Energy as you like.

If you have multiple relevant Facets, you can use all of them for the action.

If you want to help someone, you can flip 1 coin to add to their efforts. If it goes badly, you get caught up in the consequences.

## \* Archetypes

Some character archetypes may allow you to use Energy uniquely. For instance:

**BURN:** Push yourself. Instead of flipping, you *discard* 1 or more Energy until you Recharge. Each burned Energy counts automatically as a **HEADS**.

Unless otherwise specified by the Quartermaster or Silver Bullet's GENRE PAGES, "Warriors" can burn for combat actions, "Experts" can burn for non-combat actions, and "Empowered" characters like mages, aliens, royalty and other such oddities can burn for actions involving their unique ability or quirk.

## \* Consequences

Often the consequences of a **Weak Hit** or a **Miss** will be exclusively narrative. Follow the fiction.

Sometimes it's more damaging; you may lose 1 or even 2 Energy. Discard those Energy Coins; they can't be flipped, burned, or otherwise used until you recharge.

You **RECHARGE**, regaining your lost Energy, when you get a chance to truly rest – the night after the gala; the day after the heist; the week after the battle.

## \* Defeat & Loss

When you are out of Energy, you are **DEFEATED**. You can't take actions, use your Facets, or do much at all; every time your turn comes, flip a coin. As long as it's **HEADS**, you can still be saved. A companion may take action to save you – you're back in the action with 1 Energy.

If they can't, the moment you flip **TAILS**, you are **LOST**.

In an Ocean's 11 adventure, you may have been arrested; in a Downton Abbey adventure, you may be socially ruined; in a Game of Thrones adventure, you may be dead. Regardless... you almost surely won't be back.

# sil\*ver bul\*let :

*\* A solution to a common problem.*

*\* The best way to deal with werewolves.*

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**Silver Bullet is a rules-lite generic system designed to introduce non-players to what's fun and special about TTRPGs! Actions are resolved by flipping a number of coins according to your abilities, with variable challenges and a "beat, meet, or miss" spectrum of results.**

**Along the way, I discovered that I loved Silver Bullet just as much with my *experienced* players, as a hyper-streamlined but robust generic for the Powered by the Apocalypse crowd! We've played a dozen genres and every playtest had players asking to continue the adventure!**

*I wrote this system to feel familiar. It uses a lot of terms you'll recognize from other TTRPGs, because I want the transition from Silver Bullet to other systems to be **easy**. When a Game Master accustomed to piloting other systems sits down at the controls, you should get off the ground quickly. When players disembark to other vessels, it should be a smooth layover.*

*I dream that a veteran could print the rules page and a genre page and just **go**.*

There are 3 categories of people. Silver Bullet is aimed at group 3.

People who already like TTRPGs

People who wouldn't like TTRPGs

People who *think* they won't like TTRPGs, because they're too complicated, or because they don't consider themselves "that kind of nerd". **The werewolves.**



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# Stop. Read 3 things.

- Less than it looks
- Coins vs Coins
- Don't run perfect Silver Bullet

I explain the system in a lot of depth for totally new players, but the core system is very simple. If you've read the ~~sil\*ver bul\*let~~ page, you know Silver Bullet!

Use whatever coins you like - the whole game could be played with a single coin, flipped multiple times. It may be easier to use different coins; the Quartermaster might use quarters for Challenge Coins, and the players might use pennies as Energy Coins. HEADS are always good for the table, TAILS are always bad.

Never worry about playing perfect, RAW Silver Bullet. Like any system, treat this as a box of tools to build something you like. The Special Mechanics and Optional Systems section has a lot of new ways to run your game - play it "right" for a while, then ignore, modify, and hack things to make them do what you want (in this game and all games)!

## Blank Boxes...

...Contain clarifications and options!

## Shaded Boxes...

...Contain gameplay examples to demonstrate ideas!

ART BY Carl Robota, @urbansketchla  
on Instagram

## Dedications

Thank you so much to playtesters and advisors Alejandra, Austin, Carl, Cassidy, Drew, Erin, and Tim in the US; and to Andrew, El, Hans, Zach, and the New Zealand crew!

To my dad and sister, who prompted the invention of Silver Bullet.

To the SidecarStories community, for playing this game every week for a year and keeping me constantly inspired!

To Carl Robota for being the first QM that wasn't me. I didn't believe it really worked until you took a spin.

To Tyler Ricotta for excellent notes; the game is much clearer for them.

To Darby Pak and others for advice and guidance.

Thank you!

# The Quartermaster

## Who? And What?

Of course, many games have their own title for the role of Game Master. While Silver Bullet generally uses well-established terms for nearly everything, this is one title it will claim for its own. In Silver Bullet, the player who assumes this role shall be called **Quartermaster**! All hail the **QM**! If you're reading past the first page, that's **you**! While the other players will generally pilot exactly 1 character (*called Player Characters/PCs*), the Quartermaster will control everyone else (*called Non-Player Characters/NPCs*), the world around them, and referee many rules at the table. That's a classical model of the role, but here are a few models to examine.

### *Behind the Screen*

The classical style is "Behind the Screen": One player takes the role of the QM at all times, and guides the adventure for the other players.

As this QM, you often take the lion's share of the worldbuilding and will craft storylines or adventures for the table to explore - because you love it! It's a grand opportunity to see your visions realized in the hearts of people close to you. You also function as a referee of sorts, with the final say over when mechanics and modifiers apply. When there's a question of what happens next in the world, you answer. When there's a question of how the rules apply, you make a ruling - by looking up the rule in question or making a fair judgment call in the moment.

*Examples: D&D, Pathfinder, Stars Without Number, Call of Cthulhu*

### *Around the Table*

In the "Around the Table" style: all players take a share of the QM role, suggesting new events, consequences, and challenges for one another's characters.

This model often relies less on the session preparations of an individual and more on the table's collective improvisation. At tables where everyone trusts the rest as storytellers, and everyone likes to share in the top-level responsibility, such Around the Table games give everyone a hand on the ball.

*Examples: Fiasco, A Quiet Year, Microscope*

### *Hybrid*

Eventually a hybrid style evolved, where one person is the QM but will prompt the other players to share the role by suggesting events, characters, and other truths about the fiction.

This can take some of the pressure off a QM to have an answer for every minute question of lore in the world. For QMs who work day jobs, this style can save whole tables from dying off to scheduling - the *true* villain of many tabletop adventures. You may ask a player, "What's your character's hometown like? How did they feel about you leaving?" Or as a response to a player's query about the heist venue, you could respond, "There's a band playing that night - who are they, and how popular are they?" and allow the players to contribute to the scene.

*Examples: Apocalypse World, Blades in the Dark, Scum & Villainy, Kids on Bikes*

### *Solo*

More recently, a Solo style has emerged. Flip your own Challenge Coins *and* control your own character(s) to tell your story!

You will pilot a main character through adventures using tools like "Oracles" to provide surprises and variety. This style provides a way to play for the groupless, the deeply introverted, and those who love the solitary fun of anything from Elder Scrolls to Stardew Valley.

*Examples: Journaling RPGs like Thousand Year Old Vampire; some games have optional rules so they can be played solo, like Ironsworn; Rangers of Shadowdeep*

## What are "mechanics"?

Mechanics are the rules; where narrative meets numbers. Some games lead with rules and the narrative is *whatever the mechanics dictate*, but Silver Bullet is built on the instinct to **follow the fiction**. There are rules, but they follow the fiction - they're second priority. Less important. A rule only exists when the QM (or another player) summons it to the table. The first and most significant mechanic in Silver Bullet follows the fiction from the moment someone starts building a character with *Facets*...

# The Silver Bullet System

## Facets

Player Characters in Silver Bullet are competent in many ways, but they're set apart from the other characters that will appear. This is *their* story, after all. They have unique qualities that will impact the course and conclusion of their story; these qualities are called FACETS.

### **FACET** • [fas-it]

A notable aspect of a Player Character in Silver Bullet, represented by a bank of Energy. Facets may include professions, skillsets, gear, relationships, hobbies, backgrounds or other notable qualities that will impact that character's story.

Facets are truths about a character. *Knight of the Fallen North. Mercenary Spaceship Captain. Dowager Countess of Grantham.* These professions, occupations, and titles are great Facets to begin with. Because a character's Facets will be used to decide when they'll be getting any help from their Energy with a particular activity, starting with a Facet that represents a skillset, like a job or hobby, is a good foundation. It means they'll be able to use that Energy when performing activities related to that Facet. Their *Knight of the Fallen North* Facet will let them use Energy for swordfighting, horseriding, long marches, battlefield tactics, maybe even understanding Northlands politics and history... It's a good wide base for the character, ensuring they have lots of activities covered by the Facet.

Some characters may have very important aspects that are more focused on specific gear, relationships, and other non-profession qualities. In Silver Bullet, Mary Poppins would likely have a little Energy in a *Bottomless Carpet Bag* Facet; Tony Stark might have **lots** of Energy in an *Iron Man Suit* Facet. Sherlock Holmes could have a few relationship Facets - a *Dr. John Watson* Facet representing his relationship with his companion, and perhaps a *Street Urchins* Facet representing his relationship with a faction or demographic. Just like skillset Facets, the Energy in gear, relationship, and other Facets will apply to relevant actions.

*The examples at the end of this book will help you write great Facets, but here are a few guidelines: "Luck" doesn't make a good Facet - the coins will tell their own story about everyone's luck! "And" in a Facet probably means it should be split into 2 Facets. Specificity is best in Facets - but Facet titles needn't be comprehensive. The text of a Facet isn't the important part; the important part is the aspect of the character that the Facet represents.*

If a player is more generally stuck trying to write Facets for a character, **consider the bullet points that would appear on their trading card, or a particularly honest social media bio.** Short and to the point, defining a core aspect of the character. The "Characters as Characters" section at the end of this book has examples of famous characters built as Silver Bullet characters using Facets.

### **Spiderman in Silver Bullet**

*Here's how the character Miles Morales might look, expressed in Facets. Let's say he's... Level 6.*

In an adventure full of vile villains and boom-bang action, Miles could have the Facets:

- *Mutated Spider Abilities*, 4 Energy
- *Web Shooters*, 2 Energy

However, perhaps the adventure focuses more on teen heroes dealing with coming-of-age drama and leading their young double lives. Miles's Facets might be:

- *Mutated Spider Abilities*, 2 Energy
- *Promising STEM Nerd*, 3 Energy
- *Uncle Aaron, Mentor*, 1 Energy

The "Characters as Characters" section will have a collection of well-known characters from different media, and how you could build them in Silver Bullet. All rights to characters belong to their respective owners.

## Energy

Each Facet contains some amount of Energy. Energy in Silver Bullet represents a lot about a character. It's where they have invested their time and effort over the course of their lives. When a character puts Energy into a Facet like a profession, it represents all the experience and effort they have with that set of skills. In something more material like a Facet for a piece of gear, it represents not just the physical object and the money to get it, but the practice and maintenance with it. In a relationship Facet, it's the history and trust in that relationship.

When an old outlaw has lots of Energy in a *Six-Shooter Revolver* Facet, that's not just the price paid for the iron; it's the countless hours of shooting bottles on fenceposts; it's the times that piece has saved her life; it's even the nightly ritual with brush and oilcloth to keep it shooting true. Everything she pours into that revolver, it keeps ready for her.

Of course, many characters start at Level 1, with just 1 Energy, despite having lived some of their lives with their skills already. They may have plied their talents in the past, but upon entering the lifestyle of adventure, their talents receive their true tests. Not in theory, not in sterile conditions, not with low stakes, but pushed to the limit with lives hanging in the balance. This is the Energy they can rely upon when things look bleak.

## Checks

You've heard it in your favorite actual-play livestream, or you enjoy telling stories and wonder how this "check" idea even functions in that pastime.

A CHECK is the most fundamental mechanic in many TTRPGs. As QM, you will describe a scene, ask what the characters do, they'll declare an action of some kind, and if the conditions are right, you will call for a **check: a roll of the dice or some other randomizer to check how well the action succeeds**. Usually, this will be an "Action check": consulting the randomizer, but interpreting it through variables that reflect a character's abilities.

In Silver Bullet, Action checks have two parts: the Challenge and the check itself. The QM will flip some coins and count the TAILS, and the player will flip some coins hoping for at least that number of HEADS. Whichever side wins (the HEADS from the player or the TAILS from the Quartermaster) will decide how effective the character's action was, and the story will continue from that point!

### Challenge Coins vs. Energy Coins

*While you could play Silver Bullet by passing a single coin around, the game is much easier if everyone at the table has their own coins, including the QM.*

**Challenge Coins:** These are the coins flipped by the QM. The QM flips the Challenge Coins. They represent how challenging the present action is.

**Energy Coins:** These are the coins flipped by the other players, the non-QM players. Players flip the Energy Coins. They represent the energy put forth by the character to overcome the challenge.

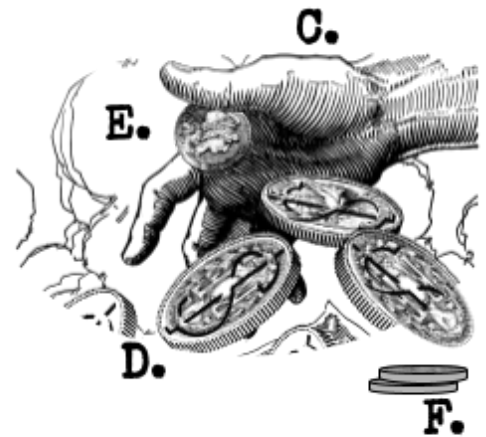
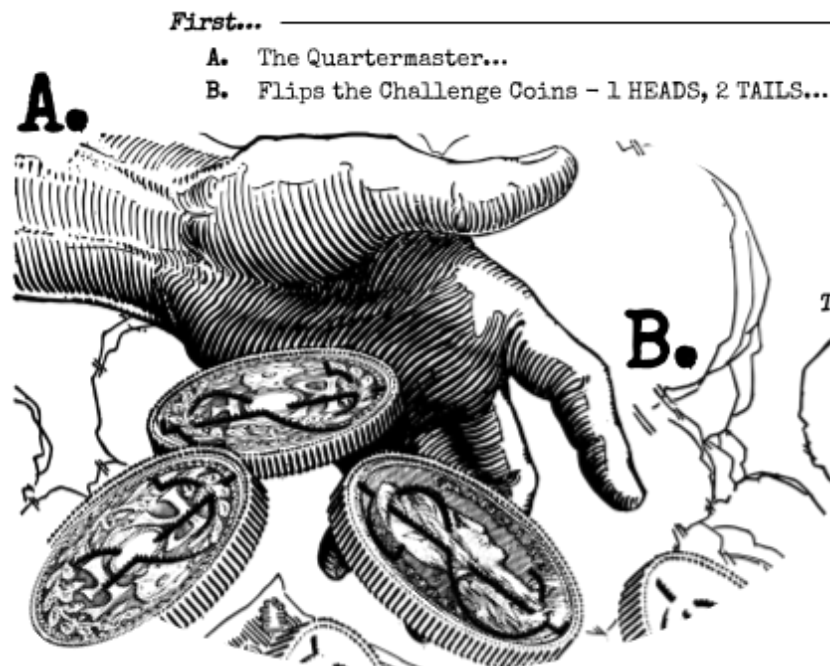
## When to Call for a Check

Many actions won't require a check at all. Speaking casually to someone, opening an unlocked door, drinking a potion - these just aren't difficult enough to warrant a check. Only call for a check if there's a genuine chance of failure. **A good rule of thumb: if the odds of success are better than 50/50, don't call for a check.** Just say that it succeeds and move on to the next bit of action.

A proposed action may have a few good indicators that a check is warranted; difficulty and time are foremost. If something is sufficiently difficult, or if time is short enough to add risk, call for a check!

There may be QM surprises and environmental effects that prompt checks as well! An ambush or a collapsing building could require a sudden and unexpected check, even without a character taking an action. These are useful to keep sessions spicy, but remember that in Silver Bullet (and most Powered by the Apocalypse games) you will make most of your QM moves in response to **Weak Hits** and **Misses** from PC Actions - not on a designated QM turn.

It will be up to the QM to determine which actions warrant a check, but as a general rule; too few is better than too many. If the action is just for flavor, or it wouldn't be an interesting challenge in the games, movies, or shows you like, perhaps a check isn't necessary.



Then...

C. The Player, who has 4 Energy Coins to flip from relevant Facets...

D. Flips 3 Energy Coins...

E. But decides to hold onto 1, in case they want to Burn it after seeing how the other coins land. They want at least 2 HEADS, but 3 HEADS is better.

F. Not all of the Player's Facets are relevant for this action, so some Energy stays on the sideline.



### To Check or Not to Check?

*Axford and Thompson are rogues escaping a castle after a successful pastry heist.*

They run down an empty corridor<sup>1</sup>, but as they reach the staircase to the tower, they stop and listen<sup>2</sup> for any foes. They're fairly successful and they hear footsteps - close by! Guards coming up from the lower levels! The pair leap into the staircase and dart up the stairs<sup>3</sup> before the guards arrive<sup>4</sup>. Reaching the top of the staircase, Axford finds a locked trapdoor<sup>5</sup>. She tries to pick the lock<sup>6</sup> while Thompson hides in the shadows<sup>7</sup> to ambush the guards in case they continue up the stairs<sup>8</sup>. Thompson hides very successfully, but Axford's check is only partially successful, so the guards hear a noise and rush upstairs! Axford darts through the trapdoor<sup>9</sup> to the top of the tower, but Thompson remains hidden<sup>10</sup> as the guards rush past. Axford emerges into the twilight atop the tower, latches a grappling hook to the parapet<sup>11</sup>, and starts to descend<sup>12</sup>. As the guards go to the tovertop<sup>13</sup>, Thompson creeps from her hiding place behind the guards<sup>14</sup>. She is, once again, very successful, and finds herself at the top of the tower behind two unsuspecting guards. Seeing an opportunity, she uses her *own* rope to quickly lasso the guards and pull them backwards into the open trapdoor<sup>15</sup>. She succeeds, and quickly jams the trapdoor<sup>16</sup> before joining Axford below for a pastry feast.

### Meanwhile, in the QM's Head...

<sup>1</sup>Running down an empty corridor? I'll say no check this time. This part of the castle is deserted.

<sup>2</sup>Listening for foes - that's a check! It's quite possible they might miss the sounds and run headfirst into trouble.

<sup>3</sup>Leaping into a staircase, even darting *up the stairs*... Probably no check...

<sup>4</sup>Ah, they want to do it **before trouble arrives**! *Now* there's a check. The task alone is fairly mundane, but it must be executed quickly and quietly.

<sup>5</sup>It's dark up here, but "Can you find a trapdoor?" doesn't feel like an interesting challenge right now. This time, no check.

<sup>6</sup>Picking a lock in this high-stakes scenario is *definitely* an interesting challenge! Check!

<sup>7</sup>Hiding in shadow is a great action for a check. Good stakes, good possibility of failure.

<sup>8</sup>Will the guards come upstairs? I could make a Luck check (just 50/50 to see what they do), but more likely I'll reserve "the guards follow you upstairs" as a Consequence for a potential bad check from one of the PCs.

<sup>9</sup>Rushing through the trapdoor is a check - there are guards in pursuit!

<sup>10</sup>Thompson wants to remain hidden? She's still hiding in the same place, from the same people; not much has really changed. And I want to reward her great check from before. I'll let her earlier check carry forward; no new check now.

<sup>11</sup>Securely latching a grappling hook *could* warrant its own check...

<sup>12</sup>...but really it's all part of one activity, all with the same stakes, and all encompassed within the same skillset. As such, I'll call for a single check to cover latching the grappling hook *and* descending the rope. It keeps the pace up, too.

<sup>13</sup>This time, no Luck check to see what the guards do - they're alerted, they're going to follow the noise.

<sup>14</sup>Thompson was well hidden, but now she wants to *follow* the guards. That's a check.

<sup>15</sup>It could be one check to lasso the guards, and another to pull them to the open trapdoor, but I like the momentum and I ask for one check to cover the whole action. It'll be a hard one, there's a lot going on here.

<sup>16</sup>I could ask for a check to jam the trapdoor, and another for Thompson to descend the tower... But I was planning to end the scene soon anyway, and the table is so excited about Thompson's incredible moves, I decide not to call for more checks and simply hand-wave any remaining minor challenges.



## Applying Facets

Facets will often be defined in a single phrase. It's a profession, a hobby, or a background that indicates the sorts of things a character will be good at; or it's a quality, some gear, a relationship, etc. that's useful to the character. *Physics Professor, Knight of the Kingsguard, Starship Mechanic... Sonic Screwdriver...* When they flip, decide which Facets would be useful for the action. Be generous *and* reasonable! **The QM has final say in whether or not a Facet applies.**

Consider the daily lives of someone who lives by these skills and qualities - would the proposed action be something they practice? Something they've been trained for? Something they encounter often as part of their skills? Two knights could both certainly count armed combat among their skills, but a *Lone Roving Knight* may have skills for wilderness survival, and a *Knight in the Imperial Ranks* may have skills for navigating authority and bureaucracy. When in doubt, let the character's history inform the ruling. It's not about the text of the Facet, but the concept behind it. Follow the fiction.

A character may use multiple Facets for a single action - as many as are applicable. If a character takes an action but has no applicable Facets, they flip 1 coin to represent basic effort.

## Applying Gear & Relationship Facets

A character has the tools and trappings of their trade. Perhaps a weapon, appropriate armor; adventuring gear like torches and rope... Assume these are all at the ready, and simply factor into the character's Facets.

Gear *Facets* are for items of special power or importance. These Facets usually don't require much definition. Characters can use or burn gear for... what it does. Relationship Facets are slightly more complicated. They represent camaraderie, intimacy, teamwork... Characters may apply a relationship Facet for actions that *define* their relationship with that other character, or to apply their skills to another's actions. If a K-Pop Star has a lot of Energy in a relationship Facet with a bodyguard, this k-pop star can utilize that Energy for actions like combat even if he isn't much of a combatant. The other character must be present or available for such actions, of course. It's not that our star is suddenly a great fighter; he simply knows his bodyguard's techniques and patterns well enough to let the bodyguard cover for him. This relationship Facet's Energy can be used to help or hinder the named group or character, too. Great for powerful team moves, and to reflect favor from factions; more on this in the "Special Mechanics" section.

## Burn

Once the table has determined the character's applicable Facets for the action, there is an alternative way to use that Energy: characters may use it to push themselves. Instead of flipping, they may BURN, discarding 1 or more Energy until they Recharge. Each burned Energy counts automatically as a HEADS.

Each Energy can only be used once per action - either flipped or burned. The player may decide for each coin, flip or burn, as they wish. They can, of course, stop early; if they have already achieved a **Strong Hit**, they *should* stop - there usually aren't any bonuses for beating a Target Number by *more than* 1 (the QM should let them know otherwise).

*Genre pages specify which types of characters can burn Energy for different actions, with general examples in the "Genre Pages" section.*

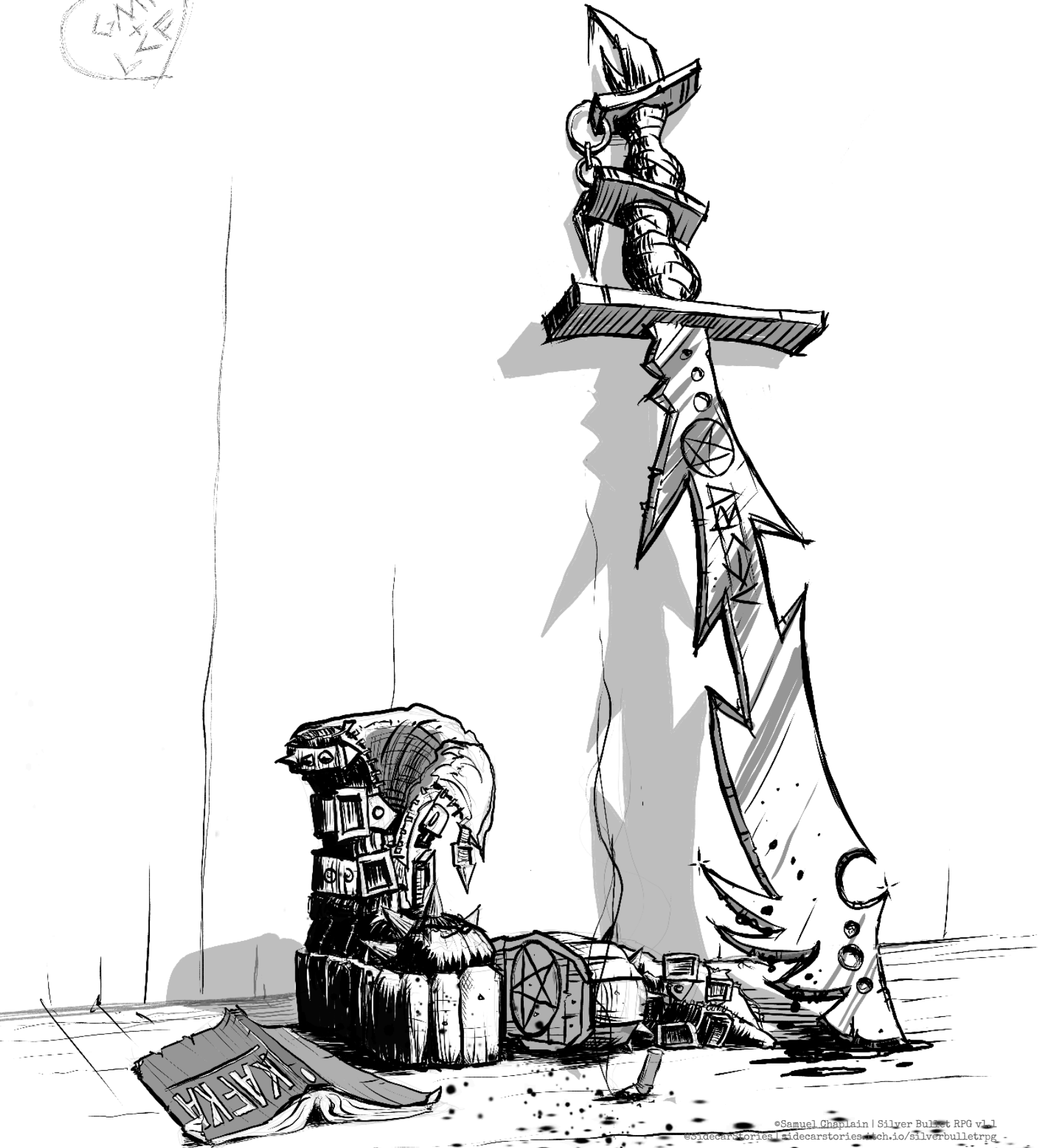
### If the Spiked Platform Boot Fits...

Remember that everything follows the fiction. A character may arrive at a moment where they can choose whether or not to engage one of their Facets, with an understanding of the cost. Let's look at Murphy, a character with Facets *Mall Goth Delinquent* (2 Energy) and *Servant of a Lesser Devil* (6 Energy).

Murphy is up against a wall - literally. A mall-cop is "detaining" Murphy for carrying his 7-foot anime sword into the mall. Murphy would love to ditch this power tripping Paul Blart, so he tries to fight off the mall-cop. He just wants to get in a quick suckerpunch and make his escape.

Murphy's *Mall Goth Delinquent* Facet certainly applies, but with those 2 Energy, he flips 1 HEADS and 1 TAILS. Not enough. *However...* Murphy is also a *Servant of a Lesser Devil*. It lives in a tattoo in Murphy's chest - it could certainly help out now. Even without burning any Energy, Murphy could virtually *guarantee* a **Strong Hit**. **Basically, Murphy has a decision to make:** engage the more powerful and risky Facet, or stick with just the less powerful one.

But everything touches the fiction. If Murphy decides to use his *Servant of a Lesser Devil* Facet, this situation has escalated. Significantly. Win or lose, Murphy has engaged the dark flames of a devil to fight off a mall cop. Whether the mall-cop's zip cuffs burst into flames, or Murphy's eyes turn black, or his voice rings with hellish power, this event is no longer just a comedic, petty scuffle. If Murphy decides to use that second Facet, someone should describe *how* tapping into Murphy's infernal passenger changes this action. Then, Murphy can apply those 6 Energy to the action, and the outcome will reflect the now-shocking skirmish.



## Setting Challenge Numbers

The scene is set, a character is performing an action... How difficult should it be? The simplest answer: **rate it on a scale of 1 to 10, and flip that many Challenge Coins.**

Assume **0** on the scale is "odds are better than 50/50 - no need for a check". Then **1** on the scale is "odds are 50/50", and **10** on the scale is "impossible, once-in-a-lifetime odds". Rate this particular activity on that scale, and flip that number of coins to represent the Challenge: Challenge Coins. Your rating should reflect **difficulty** and **timing**, with adjustments for **conditions**.

How **difficult** is this action in the context of your universe?

*Punching a musician may be a **1** in a combat-filled fantasy adventure, but a **5** in a Jane Austen adventure.*

How pressing is the **timing** for the action to be considered successful?

*Picking a locked door with 2 hours to spare may be a **2**, but picking that same door before the approaching candlelight reveals all may be a **4**.*

You can adjust for **conditions** with simple +1C and -1C (+1 or -1 coin) to the Challenge Number.

*A thief climbs a wall, trying for stealth. It's a tall wall, few handholds, speed is important; difficulty and timing say it's a challenge of about **4**. Terrible weather? **+1C** to the Challenge. Guards are aware of an incursion? **+1C**. But an explosion elsewhere has distracted them? **-1C**. After the original **4**, the conditions adjust the number of coins to **5**.*

All this fumbling with these 1-10 ratings, conditions, etc. quickly becomes second nature. The important thing is to get those Challenge Coins flipped quickly so you can give the player a Target Number for that action and keep the story rolling.

**Challenge Number** is the number of coins flipped by the QM; the **Target Number** is the number of TAILS that come up when the QM flips those coins.

There are also some things *not* to take into consideration for your 1-10 rating. The character's level and skill should be ignored; an action is easy or difficult independent of who is making the attempt. Nor should you factor in the

consequences of failure; jumping over a manhole isn't more *challenging* if the cover is missing, though it will have harsher consequences. None of these should guide your Challenge Numbers...

Except... well... they should. Ignoring level, skill, etc. is fine in theory, but remember to balance for fun. In time, experience will guide you toward a balance of "realistic" and "generous" that makes your table happiest.

Regardless, you won't get an even distribution between these numbers. Even for high-level characters, lots of actions will have Challenge Numbers of 1-3; even Level 12 characters may only encounter a few 10s in their lives.

### Challenging Stuff...

Here is a rough range of Challenge Numbers (CNs):

- **CN 1** = Basic challenges with the possibility of failure
- **CN 2 - 4** = Moderate challenges
- **CN 5 - 7** = Elevated challenges
- **CN 8 - 10** = Heroic challenges

Though it may be easier to think of it in these terms:

- **CN 1** = Basic challenges with a possibility of failure
- **CN of ½ the character's total Energy** = Robust challenges
- **CN equal to the character's total Energy** = Devastating challenges

## The Result Spectrum

Challenge Numbers, Facets, Energy - it all comes together to tell us the result of the action! The all-important "What happens next?" Results can be Bad, Good, or... Complicated. These are called a **Miss**, a **Strong Hit**, and a **Weak Hit**, respectively. These 3 terms will be very important.

**All of your flipping, burning, etc. are about determining which of these 3 outcomes you get!**

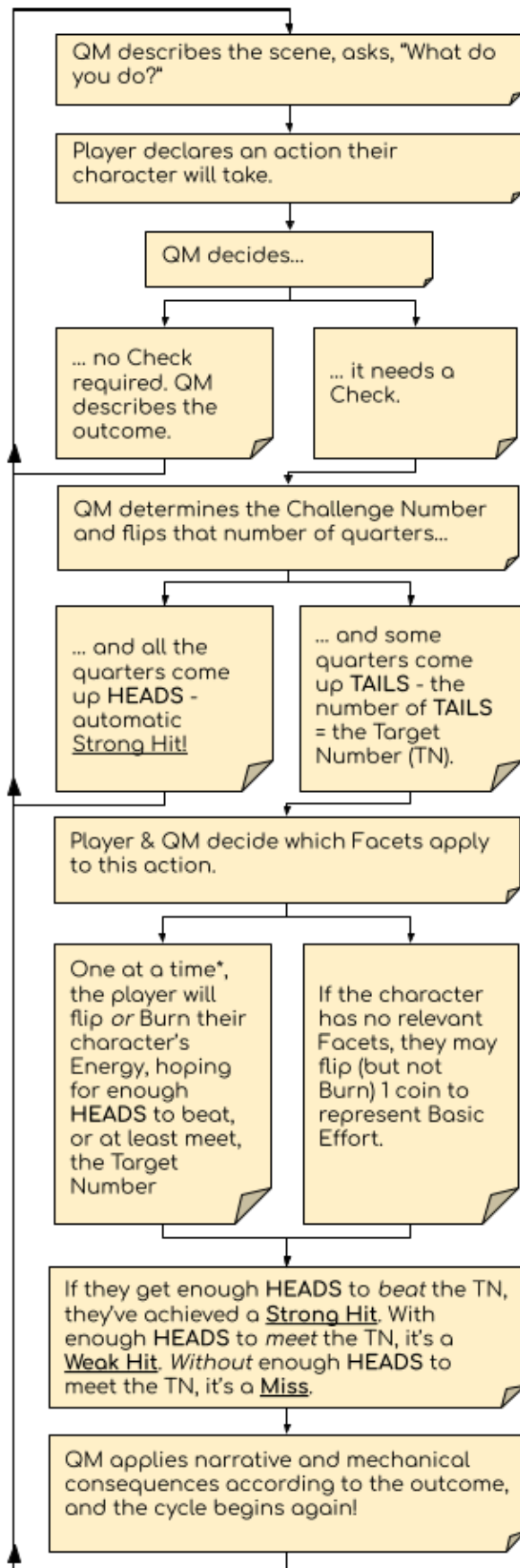
- **Strong Hit**
- **Weak Hit**
- **Miss**

If the character can achieve a number of HEADS that exceeds the Target Number, that's a **Strong Hit**. If they achieve HEADS equal to the Target Number, that's a **Weak Hit**. If they can't manage enough HEADS to meet the Target Number, that's a **Miss**. The QM uses this outcome to apply Consequences, explained in just a few pages.

# Anatomy of an Action Check

The scene is set, a PC is attempting an action - time for a check! Here's the procedure to resolve actions in Silver Bullet, in *extra* detail (it's not as hard as this looks).

## One Turn in Silver Bullet



The QM query "What do you do?" is a classic - but there is some subtext that can be very helpful: "...and what is your intended outcome?" Just ask both questions together for your first few sessions and your table will get into the habit of answering them both. It helps the QM make calls in the party's favor. When you know what a player *hopes* will happen, it's much easier to narrate the outcome of a **Strong Hit**.

If Action checks become drawn-out messes because your table starts to get into frequent litigation after they've flipped their coins, arguing that some new Facet should apply to a check-in-progress, it may be good to rule that all negotiation happens pre-flip. They state an action, the difficulty is set, the table negotiates which Facets apply, *then* the flips can begin.

The player will choose how to use each of the Energy they can throw at this move. Each Energy can be either flipped *or* burned.

### Dear Players,

If you already know this action isn't worth burning any Energy, just flip all your coins at once. It'll keep the game flowing much more quickly.

When they're done utilizing Energy, the dust settles and we have a result. The action is resolved into a **Strong Hit**, a **Weak Hit**, or a **Miss**. The QM describes how the scene has changed as a result of the action and its outcome. *And back to the top!*

### Narrating the Action!

Players will take some time utilizing their Energy. After each HEADS, TAILS, and burn are great moments for narration. Let the players describe their every feint and flourish if they wish, otherwise the QM can use those moments to keep the drama charged by narrating feints and flourishes.

Burning Energy is *especially* good narration territory. When characters burn, let the player describe how their heroic efforts cause them to succeed.

### A Philosophy of Generosity

This is the golden rule: be generous. In your descriptions, in allowing players to try things, and *especially* when applying Facets. In early sessions with new players, they won't have any idea of how to mix rules and narrative. "Would *this* Facet apply?" - this question will come up a lot. As often as you can, answer "Yes". A *Retired Dognapper* can do lots of the same things an assassin would do. Be generous.

### Foraging in the Forest - An Example of Gameplay

*Bishop is the QM, and Liam is playing **Beardsley**, a ranger. Beardsley is alone in the forest, foraging.*

#### **Beardsley**, L6 (Level 6)

- *Ranger of the Greatstone Mountains*, 4 Energy
- *Loyal Boar Companion, Peppermint*, 1 Energy
- *Bastard Ward of the Mountain King*, 1 Energy

**Bishop**: Pine needles crunch underfoot. The sun is setting over the Unfallen Forest, it looks like you have about an hour before dark. What do you do?

**Liam**: Do I see any threats out here, or does it seem pretty safe?

**Bishop**: How does Beardsley try to identify danger?

**Liam**: Oh, basically they just stop in a shadow under a tree, and hold really still and listen.

**Bishop**: Alright, Beardsley pauses, and listens... I think your *Ranger* Facet applies here, so you have those 4 Energy at your disposal to beat...

*\*Bishop hadn't planned for there to be enemies here, but still wants a little challenge. He flips 2C: up comes 1 HEADS and 1 TAILS.\**

**Bishop**: I got one TAILS, so you just have to beat one!

*\*Liam flips one, two, three... all TAILS.\**

**Liam**: Well, Beardsley is gonna get ambushed. They're gonna get Boromir'ed. Last one...

*\*Liam flips the 4th and final Energy from Beardsley's 'Ranger' Facet. HEADS!\**

**Liam**: Okay, that's HEADS!

**Bishop**: That *matches* the Target Number, so that's a **Weak Hit**. Beardsley listens-

**Liam**: Wait! Can I use Peppermint, too? Can Peppermint smell for anything... bad?

**Bishop**: Definitely - you've been saying for weeks that Peppermint has a great nose. In fact, you could even *burn* the one Energy in that Facet to guarantee one HEADS, which guarantees a **Strong Hit**. It just means Peppermint will be pretty useless until you Recharge.

**Liam**: Absolutely not, I will burn down this whole forest before I burn anything from Peppermint.

*\*Liam flips the one Energy from Beardsley's 'Peppermint' Facet. HEADS!\**

**Liam**: HEADS! Peppermint **never** fails! This is why Peppermint is Beardsley's best friend!





**Bishop:** Fantastic, that brings you up to a **Strong Hit!** Beardsley stands very still, with Peppermint by their side... Just Peppermint's snuffling, everything else is quiet. Peppermint even gives you a happy grunt - the area is safe. Just some sunrays flying overhead.

**Liam:** Peppermint saves the day again! Beardsley looks for supplies. Uh, I think... they climb a tree for a good view, and look for water, especially. I think we have plenty of food at camp, but those bandits stole our waterskins yesterday, right?

**Bishop:** They sure did, this is smart. You've got plenty of time to climb a tree, you do this all the time - no check for that tonight. Beardsley climbs this tree while Peppermint snuffles through the pine needles below looking for roots. Go ahead and give me a check...  
*\*Bishop knows that bandits guard most of the water sources here, so this will be a tough check. He flips 4C, and 3 come up TAILS.\**



**Bishop:** ... Target Number is three. Oof. I think your *Ranger* Facet is relevant here, and Peppermint can help you again.

**Liam:** So that's... 5 Energy total... Okay, here we go.  
*\*Liam flips one coin, two - both TAILS.\**

**Liam:** Well, that's two TAILS already. The other three all need to be HEADS, just to get a **Weak Hit**... What happens if I can't find any water?

*\*Bishop doesn't have to answer, but decides Beardsley would know what happens without water.\**

**Bishop:** You'll be fine tonight, but if you don't find any tomorrow, I'll probably start having you make a check every day. If you fail, you take Damage because you're dehydrated.

**Liam:** Ugh... Okay, I'm just going to flip. Beardsley will be able to search again tomorrow, and I want to have my Energy tonight because I'm pretty sure those bandits are going to attack our camp again tonight.  
*\*Liam flips one. TAILS. No point flipping any more, because even if the remaining 2 flip HEADS, it still doesn't match a 3.\**

**Liam:** Nope. TAILS. I can't even get a **Weak Hit** now.

**Bishop:** Beardsley climbs this tree, and another, and another, squinting into the dimming forest, listening for a creek... But still, all is silent. Not a drop. When you climb down from the last tree, the light is gone.

**Liam:** Alright, I'll search again tomorrow. Beardsley heads back to camp, but I don't light a torch. I know there are bandits around here somewhere.

**Bishop:** Alright, go ahead and make a check with *Ranger*, and *Peppermint* too, because he goes by smell.

*\*Bishop decides that the route to camp isn't difficult, the Challenge is just 1C- but navigating in the dark, with bandits around? That's +2C. He flips 3C. 2 TAILS.\**

**Bishop:** Target Number is two.

*\*Liam's first 3 flips all flip HEADS. No need to flip more, Beardsley has already achieved a **Strong Hit**.\**

**Liam:** Three HEADS, all good.

**Bishop:** You get back to camp, no problem. In fact, because you're sneaking along without a torch, you arrive at camp and see your companions around the dim fire... and a trio of unsuspecting bandits watching them from the shadows. They have no idea you're here.

*And the story continues...*

This is an example of moment-by-moment gameplay, but the QM could also have handled this whole excursion with a single check, montage-style; one check with Beardsley's foraging-relevant Facets. Great for scenes where the table isn't interested in all the moment-by-moment activity of a scene, just the outcome. More on this in the Downtime section.

# Consequences

*This section will throw a lot at you. It's one of the most technical parts of running Silver Bullet, and listing all the options makes it seem more complicated than it really is. Follow the fiction - these are just suggestions to help you keep things fresh.*

Ultimately, consequences are not about “success” or “failure”; it's about positive and negative outcomes. Silver Bullet is less about calculating the variables in a simulation; it's much more about a story with good and bad turns. These are the moments for you to make your moves - **the QM doesn't have a full turn in Silver Bullet.**

When a character takes an action that achieves a **Strong Hit**, the consequences are positive! The Quartermaster will describe how the character succeeds and how it improves the scene for the characters.

On a **Weak Hit**, the QM has some options. A **Weak Hit** is the complicated middle ground between success and failure, and it's also some of the most exciting territory for a QM to work with, narratively. A **Weak Hit** indicates that the character's action was fully successful but it brings along some consequences, **or** it was moderately successful but not entirely, **or** it leaves the character with a tough choice...

On a **Miss**, the consequences are bad - the scene turns for the worse. This will usually mean the action failed and the consequences hurt, with nothing to show for it.

## Challenge vs. Risk

Let the consequences follow the fiction. What are the stakes of the action in the current scene? Remember, the consequences are independent from the difficulty. That jump over an open manhole isn't more *challenging*, but the potential consequences are *dire*. How deep is it? What else could go wrong?

## Follow the Fiction...

Whatever the consequences, always *describe* the results in-scene; never just rattle off damage numbers or consequence types. Also, when describing consequences, hesitate to describe them as character failures. Describing a **Miss** on a hacking check as “succumbing to a torrent of hostile data” is great; describing how “you just punch your keyboard like an ape” will kill morale at the table. They can play oafs, but let them do that themselves!

There are two types of consequences, **Soft Consequences** and **Hard Consequences**. Soft Consequences are narrative, and Hard Consequences have an additional layer of mechanical penalties. One way to think about this distinction: Soft Consequences will alter the table's perception of how they're faring; hard consequences reduce their statistical probability of success.

**Soft Consequences** are the best tool in the QM's toolbox. They're versatile, they can be just as intense as Hard Consequences, and characters can keep taking them without being knocked out of the action!

- The action fails and puts them in a bad spot
- Success, but at a cost
- Reduce their resources
- Present a difficult choice
- Introduce a new threat
- Telegraph incoming danger
- Character's standing with a group or individual worsens
- An enemy pulls their favorite trick or tactic

## Go Softly

Don't let the terms fool you! Hard consequences require more explanation, but the Soft Consequences are the really important ones. They're the first tool you should reach for, and scenes can stay exciting without ever reaching for Hard Consequences.

**Hard Consequences** have the narrative layer, plus a layer of mechanical consequences - Consequences that disrupt a character's Energy, or outright take it.

## Types of Hard Consequences:

The Scene gets worse:

- **Challenge +1C.** Actions affected by a certain complication are more difficult; add a coin to the Challenge. *You've fallen from your horse into the creek; all Challenges for actions involving movement in the water are +1C.*

The Character gets worse:

- **Interrupt Energy:** Energy from a certain Facet can't be used. *Your fall from the horse dazes you; next time you would use your 'Knight of the Fallen North' Facet, you can't.*
- **Damage:** Discard 1 Energy until the next time you Recharge, or 2 for really brutal harm. The player decides which of their Energy to discard. *You fall from your horse at the feet of the mercenaries. You fight well, but they overwhelm you as you get to your feet. Lose 1 Energy - an ax finds its way between your armor plates.*



### 3 Durations: How long does this Consequence last?

- **Next Time:** The Consequence applies once, then it's over. *"You're dazed from the fall off your horse; **Next Time** you need your 'Knight' Facet, you flip with one less coin for your Action check."*
- **Until:** The Consequence applies until a designated time/trigger; usually until that problem is resolved. *"You fall from your horse but your ankle is stuck in the stirrups; you can't burn any Energy **Until** you free yourself." - "You twist your ankle falling from the horse; you're slowed to a hobble **Until** you can rest."*

#### Elevate a Consequence

*Raise the duration or type of an existing consequence.*

Sometimes, it may fit the narrative better to make an existing, interesting consequence more severe, rather than introducing a new one. Narrate how an existing element turns the scene for the worse.

#### Tick... Tock...

If the table stalls and waits too long to take action, throwing a Soft Consequence at them and forcing them to react can get the action moving again, and helps them to learn how the scene's forces behave too! Perhaps an enemy tries a favorite trick...

## When to use Damage

Danger and Damage will depend on the genre and the situation. In genres like Regency Era and Slice of Life, it will often mean pressures and consequences that degrade the character's reputation or ideals. For Game of Thrones and Star Wars, it likely means grievous bodily harm. Losing 1 Energy is a serious penalty!

However, *not every social or bodily injury needs to take Energy!* Because of how scarce Energy is, especially at lower levels, it will usually be more appropriate to make softer moves. You may narrate that they've been winged in the shoulder or sprained an ankle, but instead of taking Energy, use a different Hard Consequence. Remember your favorite media when you apply consequences; if a character in your favorite show could grit their teeth, pour some tequila on it, and carry on without notice... better if it doesn't drain Energy.

You can think of consequences as a funnel toward Damage. The more they fail, the closer they get to a consequence that will sap Energy.

## Setups & Rewards

Characters might intervene in the complications of a scene, warranting -1C (or more) to the Challenge Numbers. If a smoky room is making checks difficult but a PC vents out the smoke, easier Challenges are an appropriate way to follow the fiction!

If a character picks up an improvised weapon, constructs a trap, lays the foundation of a long con, or otherwise sets themselves up for a future move, it may be right to reward them with an extra +1C to the Action check where it all pays off. These coins don't stack, and probably don't last; it's just for moments of special preparation by the character, probably requiring a successful check or two to put the pieces in place.

#### Nurse Lou's Terrible Day

*Lou is a nurse by day, and a superhero by night. Tonight, for whatever reason (to illustrate Consequences), is just not his night. The coins keep coming up TAILS, so Nurse Lou will be enduring a **lot** of Consequences.*

Nurse Lou just finished a shift at the hospital, so his patrol has just begun - and the night is off to a bad start. The suspect that he has been chasing, known only as "The BrickFlayer", ducks into an alleyway just as Nurse Lou spots him. Nurse Lou gives chase. **Miss:** *he rounds the corner and catches a brick to the ankle. +1C to all movement Challenges until he heals.* Brick-Flayer heads up a rickety old fire escape, but Nurse Lou can't give up this opportunity and follows. **Weak Hit:** *The QM offers a choice between losing focus and losing the suspect; Nurse Lou stays on BrickFlayers tail, just a couple stories below, but the bricks shift around the fire escape and break Nurse Lou's focus on the power he was using to track BrickFlayer.* Nurse Lou is determined; he sees BrickFlayer reach the roof above. Reaching the roof himself, Nurse Lou tries to lace his voice with mesmer to convince BrickFlayer to halt. **Miss:** *BrickFlayer powers through Nurse Lou's influence, and gains some resistance against the mesmer - for the rest of this scene, Nurse Lou can't use his "Empowered Voice of the City" Facet against Brick-Flayer.* The villain sprints to the edge of the roof and leaps to another nearby, its brick wall reaching out to catch him! Nurse Lou hesitates at the edge... surely his luck can't stay bad, right? He leaps. **Miss:** *Nurse Lou falls three stories into the alleyway below. 1 Damage is typical, but this is three stories - Nurse Lou takes 2 Damage, and the BrickFlayer escapes into the night...*

## Resting & Recharging

A character Recharges, regaining their lost Energy, when they have a chance to rest and recuperate. Different genres may have different requirements for a “full rest”, but with proper safety and healing resources, the general guideline is “a full night’s sleep”. Gritty fantasy or westerns may demand a longer period of healing; some scifi and social adventures may skew shorter.

Characters finish a full rest with Energy equal to their Level. Upon regaining this lost Energy, they will arrange their Energy as it was before. If a character had 3 Energy toward a *Muay Thai Instructor* Facet, 1 toward a *Hot-Headed* Facet, and 1 for a *Bulletproof Vest* Facet, the Energy will be arranged the same way after they Recharge.

### **Recharging: Optional Rules**

*Instead of just one type of rest, here are some options to best reflect your world:*

**Downtime Rest:** Rather than resting during a night’s sleep or similar, characters need days or weeks of rest, and may only get a full Rest as a Downtime Activity (described in “Optional Systems”). Just add “Full Rest” to the list of available Activities for that Downtime. *Limiting full rests to Downtime will give your adventure a slower pace, and players may play their characters more cautiously.*

**Quick Rest:** The QM may optionally allow a quick rest if the characters can’t afford a full rest but can take a small break: the character flips the coins they’ve lost or burned, and regains any that come up HEADS. Coins that come up TAILS will have to wait for another rest.

**Variable Rest:** Recharge 1 Energy per [hour/day/etc].

**Recovery:** Certain injuries and conditions like poison sustained during an adventure may be harder to shake. The QM may determine that a condition requires Recovery. When the character has a chance to Recharge, they choose one:

- Recover from the condition, but flip for the Energy like a Quick Rest rather than fully Recharging.
- Keep the condition, and regain all their Energy as a normal Recharge.

*When a rest regains a character some (not all) of their Energy, the player chooses which Facets to Recharge.*

## Defeat & Loss

Characters can lose their Energy to Damage, or by burning it. When they have no Energy left, they are Defeated. Defeated characters can’t do much - probably no movement, no actions, no helping others, no Recharging. They are out of the action. Defeated characters flip 1 coin every time their turn comes around; every time it flips HEADS, they hold on for one more round. The first time it flips TAILS, they are Lost. Their story has come to an end.

In most genres, a companion has a chance to Revive a character that is Defeated but not yet Lost. The QM decides the Challenge for this check according to the circumstances. Generally, the Defeated character should flip for Loss between each attempt to revive them - and the Challenge of the Action check to revive them may get +1C more difficult for each attempt as well! However, if the check succeeds, the Defeated character is back on their feet with 1 Energy.

### **Defeat: Optional Rules**

*Instead of a repeated 50/50 chance that a Defeated character will be Lost, here are less-lethal options:*

**Lucky Defeat:** Make descending Luck checks, as described in the Special Mechanics section. The desired truth is “The PC isn’t Lost on this turn”. Call it Very Likely for the first turn, then Likely, then 50/50, etc.

**Heroic Defeat:** Make descending checks with coins equal to their level. For a Defeated L8 character, start by flipping 8C. Next round flip 7C, then 6C the next round, and so on until 1C (repeating 1C as long as possible). As long as each check yields *at least 1 HEADS*, the character is still Defeated but not yet Lost. *This means that higher-level characters are much less likely to be Lost, as there will generally be plenty of time to revive them.*

*If a character has been Lost, give them their moment. The coins have spoken, their end is nigh - but that’s not to say they couldn’t headbutt the cops as they’re dragged away, or give their squire some parting advice as the lights go out. A character’s end is one of the most important parts of their story; give them a moment.*

## Advancement

When the characters achieve a milestone in their adventures - overcoming a significant adversary, ending an adventure arc - they **LEVEL UP**: They get 1 new Energy! 1 Level-Up per session is a good rate for the first few sessions, then you can slow down to 1 per adventure. A great life cycle for a character would be Levels 1 through 12.

As a character advances, they *may* add their new Energy to their existing Facet, or use it to start a new one - placing the new Energy in a Facet for an attitude they've acquired, or for a piece of gear that may be handy in the future, or in a relationship Facet with an impactful character or group. A character might even place Energy into another skillset or background Facet - they might be both a *Physics Professor* **and** a *Muay Thai Instructor*.

The distribution of their new Energy should (or rather *does*) reflect something true about their character. It should follow the experiences they've had in their adventures, or something they're pursuing. A straight-laced surgeon shouldn't suddenly have a Facet called *Yakuza Boss on the Rise* unless it's true in the narrative. Follow the fiction. By that same virtue, a Facet may be rewritten to reflect changes in the narrative. In a few sessions, with some bad twists and turns, it may instead say *Yakuza Boss on the Run*.

If your players are new to Silver Bullet, be flexible with them during their early Leveling. As they begin to understand the system, they may want to change or replace their Facets to better reflect the character as it's always been in their head. Even if it means big changes, let them reconfigure.

If your players already know Silver Bullet, new characters can start comfortably around Level 3. If you're planning a long campaign with these characters, you may want to limit individual Facets to 6 Energy so that the game remains interesting for high-level characters.

### A Story in Facets

PCs' Facets should be more or less settled after you've played with all the rules for a few sessions. By that time, the players will have a good idea of how they'll be used, and whether they'd like to redistribute their Energy. The number of Facets, and the number of Energy in each, should become consistent (other than Level-Ups).

However, at the start of each session, designate a moment for players to rewrite the titles of their Facets. If the story has caused a change to the truth of that character, a player may wish to rewrite a Facet to better reflect that truth. A *Runaway Heir of Gondor* that chooses to take the crown may become a *Returned King of Gondor*. This is the player's choice; whichever they feel best represents the truth of the character. If they've moved into a new life but still rely on their old tricks, the Facet may stay the same! Remember that Facets are simply titles for deeper ideas.

*Talk about the changes, and how the character earned them.*



# Lingo

## The Prime Rule of Silver Bullet:

*Use the rules you like.* This game was born in an adventure using nothing but a single coin-flip to resolve everything. Even ignoring some rules, you're still playing Silver Bullet.

**QM or Quartermaster:** The player at the table who runs the story, the world, and the characters around the PCs.

**NPC, Non-Player Character:** A character played by the Quartermaster.

**PC, Player Character:** A character controlled by a player.

**FACET** [*fas-it*]: A skillset, a job, a background, a piece of gear, a relationship, an attitude, etc. The umbrella term for all the aspects of a character that have their own Energy banks.

**ENERGY:** The effort a character can exert to succeed at the actions they attempt.

**Level:** Level = a character's total Energy. The higher level, the harder the character is to Defeat, the more Energy for checks, and the more Energy available to burn.

**1C:** One coin. +1C means to add a coin; -1C means to subtract one.

**CHECK:** Flipping coins to find out what happens next.

**CHALLENGE COINS:** The coins flipped by the Quartermaster to represent how challenging the current action is.

**CHALLENGE NUMBER:** The *number* of coins flipped by the Quartermaster.

**TARGET NUMBER:** the number of TAILS that come up when the QM flips those coins. Players try to beat this number when they flip their Energy Coins.

**ENERGY COINS:** The coins flipped by a player for their character, to represent the energy they're exerting to succeed, hoping to beat the Target Number.

**SKITCHING a story:** Using a story your players already love - a movie, show, game, etc. - as a vehicle to bring them into TTRPGs, incorporating lots of familiar archetypes and challenges.

## Use

This is the standard usage for Energy. Characters apply this Energy to actions to succeed.

This can be used synonymously with "flip". To Use Energy, the table determines which Facets apply and the player flips coins equal to the total Energy of those Facets. After the check, the Energy goes back into the Facet you pulled it from.

## Burn

Certain Archetypes have a specific core competency, circumstances in which they are simply reliable. If they push themselves hard enough, they can guarantee their odds will improve.

Burning Energy is a gamble. Characters use it up *now* to force their way toward success, but they're exhausting themselves 1 Energy at a time. Push too far, and they'll have nothing left until the next time they Recharge. They're left vulnerable in 2 major ways: that Energy is useless for upcoming actions, and any Damage that steals their Energy could leave them with 0 Energy; Defeated, approaching Lost. Burn wisely. Or at least for something **cool**.

The single coin for basic effort cannot be burned.

## Special Cases

Burning a character's last Energy: When someone burns their last Energy, they BURN OUT - it counts as 1 HEADS toward whatever task they were completing, but they are immediately Defeated and should make their first flip to avoid being Lost.

Variations on Damage: Different genres will have different narrative justifications for "Damage" - in some genres, Damage will be physical; in others it might be social, etc. Temporarily shifting genres in this respect can add interesting stakes to a scene. A classic swords-and-sorcery adventure will usually consider Damage to mean physical injury, but if that adventure finds its characters headed to an important gala or audience with the queen, it may be interesting to say that, during the gala, you can take Damage from social consequences. You may say that being "Defeated" and "Lost" mean a character is humiliated and thrown out - but the moment they leave, that character regains any Energy lost during the gala, and Damage once again means physical injury. Just to keep things spicy.

# Special Mechanics

## Luck Checks

Sometimes, the table needs to make a decision about something that's not covered by other mechanics. Luck checks are great when the table needs a ruling on something, and you want a neutral arbiter: luck.

First, state something the player(s) hope will be true. *"There are no guards in this area."* *"We happened to bring those documents with us."* *"This odd Facet applies because I've had some experience with this action."* Next, determine the odds. If the desired truth is inevitable or inconsequential, just say it's true. If it's impossible, say why. Otherwise, call it **Very Likely, Likely, 50/50, Unlikely, or Very Unlikely**. The table should agree to respect these results before the flip. If you can't, it may be time to take a break.

For **50/50** odds, flip a coin; HEADS deems the desired truth is true, TAILS deems it false.

For **Likely** odds, flip 2 coins. For **Very Likely** odds, flip 3. If there are any HEADS, the desired truth is true.

For **Unlikely** odds, flip 2 coins. For **Very Unlikely** odds, flip 3. If there are any TAILS, the desired truth is false.

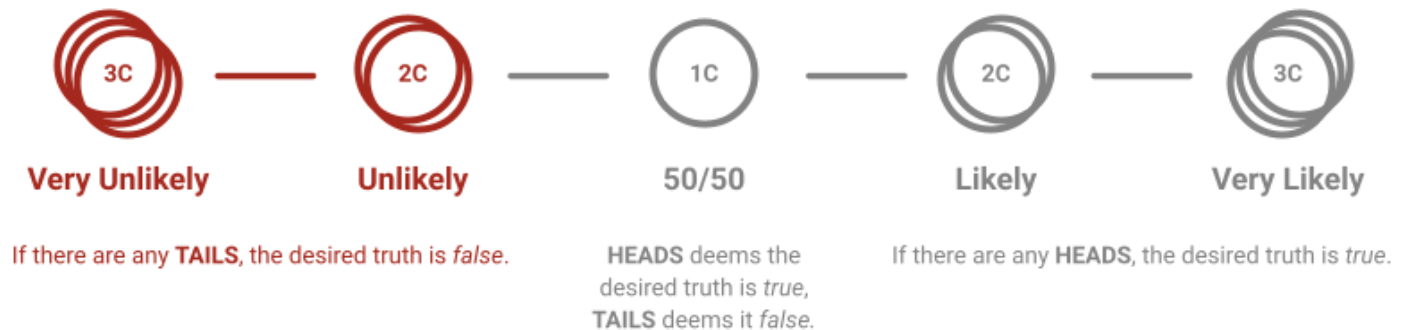
## Aiding a Comrade

A character can get help with a check from 1 other character. If the helper has at least 1 Energy remaining and they're reasonably positioned to aid a companion, they may add 1 coin to the acting character's flip. The helper doesn't necessarily need to have a relevant Facet in order to help, but this +1C cannot be burned, and they expose themselves to the Consequences.

However, if a PC has a relationship Facet nominating another PC (as Sherlock Holmes might have the Facet *Dependent on John Watson*), that Facet grants more aid. When Sherlock takes an action within Watson's skills, and Watson is in a position to help, Sherlock adds that Facet to the check. Likewise, if Watson is taking an action and Sherlock wishes to aid, Sherlock's Facet applies also. Either way, the helper still exposes themselves to the Consequences of the action. *The requirements for being "in a position to help" may be more strict; for instance, it would certainly apply if Sherlock and Watson are in a brawl with some ruffians, but may not apply to Watson coaching Sherlock over-the-shoulder through a tough rifle shot. They must be able to help immediately with the task at hand.*

If a PC has a Facet nominating a Faction (as Sherlock Holmes might have the facet *Friendly With the Street Urchin Network*), the character may get aid from them on certain checks like Downtime - an Asset designated by the Faction may add its Energy to the check.

## Luck Checks



## Group Checks

When a group of PCs all undertake the same action, and each must beat the same Target Number, there are occasions when they might help each other out. *"We sneak past the camp."* *"We forage for supplies."*

In a Group check, HEADS can be distributed between PCs however they desire after the flips. If someone has more HEADS than they need, they can apply the extra HEADS to someone else in order to bring their companion up to the Target Number. Once the table has distributed the HEADS, each character achieves a **Strong Hit**, **Weak Hit**, or **Miss** based on their new total HEADS.

## Flip-Offs

You may come to a moment where you'd like to settle something between two PCs (most frequently, deciding who will act first in moment-by-moment action). Try a Flip-Off:

In unison, each player flips 1 coin. HEADS win. Ignore ties (flip again). Repeat until only 1 remains.

## PC vs PC

Some conflicts are too important for a Flip-Off. When PCs go head-to-head, they may be clashing in ways where their Facets should matter. Both characters state an action; often, the initiator will state their action, and their opponent will state their response. Next, the table determines which Facets apply (QM arbitrates as usual).

After committing to the applicable Facets, each player will know exactly how much Energy they can apply to this action. If one player has more Energy than the other, they flip/burn that extra Energy first. Then, in unison, players flip/burn 1 coin at a time, so both players flip their final coin together. The player with more total HEADS wins. On a tie, it becomes a Flip-Off (see above).

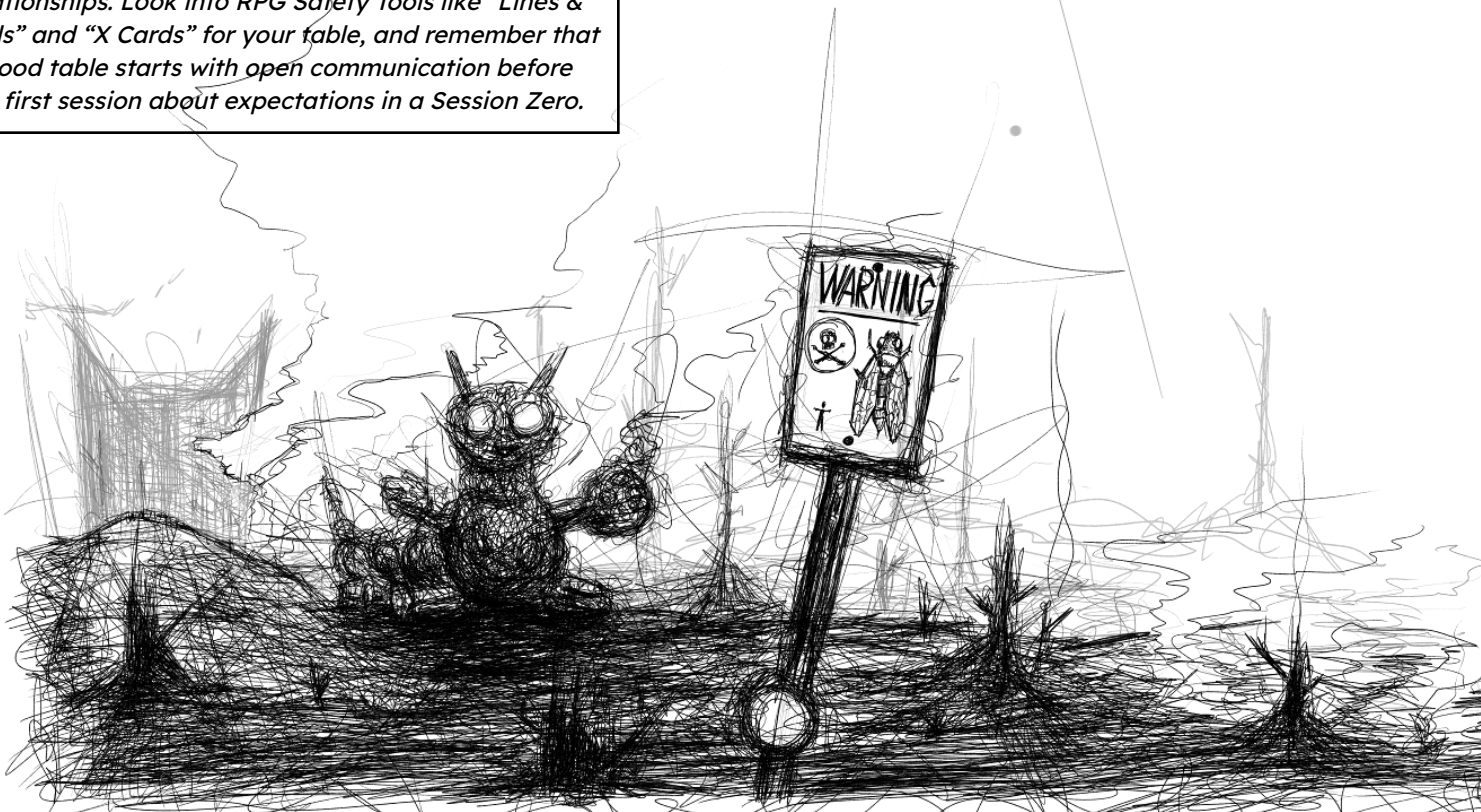
*Practice table safety. PC vs PC can be fun, but Player vs Player never is - and flipping some coins is no substitute for taking a break and maintaining real-life relationships. Look into RPG Safety Tools like "Lines & Veils" and "X Cards" for your table, and remember that a good table starts with open communication before the first session about expectations in a Session Zero.*

## Companions & Friendly NPCs

A pet, mount, or familiar attached to a specific PC should be built as a Facet of that character, but an NPC that works with the entire party could be their own entity.

Companion NPCs have one or two Facets, written by the table. When a PC takes an action where the companion's Facet(s) apply, add the companion's Energy to the PC's check. Companions advance slower than PCs; their total Energy will range from about 1 to 6. PCs can burn this Energy, but that relationship burns like everything else... The end of a companion's Energy is the end of their loyalty, and they will have a price to build it up again. Burned-out or not, a companion NPC will have some ongoing price that will need regular fulfillment if they are to stay with the PCs - anything from money to adventure to renown to love.

If your table is using a Wealth system, they may make a Wealth check (described in "Optional Systems") to hire a companion in their price range. This is handy when a group needs a specialist they lack. The initial check will determine the Hireling's skill: *Total HEADS = the Hireling's total Energy*. They will need payment (another Wealth check) equal to their total Energy after every Adventure they're called upon (once again, paid with a Wealth check). If they can't pay, that Hireling is gone - maybe even with a vendetta. Follow the fiction.



## Vehicles: Ships, Mechs, and Automobiles

Like Companions, vehicles like ships and mechs are represented by their Facets, with Energy which can be added to checks when the PCs take an action. PCs controlling vehicles take their turns as usual, but now with some fixture of the vehicle under their command.

The Facets of a vehicle will be something between individual fittings and more classic PC Facets - things like *Hyperstream Boosted Engine* and *Most Feared Galleon in the Aegis*, respectively. Most vehicle Facets will work like gear Facets: name the thing, and briefly describe what it does. This Energy can be used (and burned) for that purpose when a character makes a relevant check.

The first and often largest Facet on every vehicle will be its **Hull Facet**. This is the galleon's timbers; the starship's force shields; the '86 Mustang's chassis. It takes the blows first. If the vehicle takes damage, flip a coin from the *Hull* Facet. If TAILS, the damage gets through; discard that Energy. If HEADS, the damage is deflected; that Energy stays in the *Hull* Facet. When *Hull* Energy is depleted, damage behaves normally, taking Energy from the vehicle's other Facets and weakening them. When all the vehicle's Energy is gone, it's dead in the water, drifting, or smoking on the roadside.

Challenge numbers for actions in vehicles will fall on the same spectrum as individual actions, 1 being common and 10 being high impossible, but with an understanding that the magnitude is different; activities like long-distance travel are much easier in a vehicle; most non-vehicle weapons can't do Damage to vehicles, while a vehicle-based weapon will probably decimate unprotected individuals. Follow the fiction.

### Shut Up and Drive!

Must a PC have vehicle-specific Facets to operate the functions of a vehicle? That will depend on your genre, but usually not. Because vehicle Facets are *added* to PC Facets, they are generally rather small - it will be the *character's* Facets that really make the difference.

## Opposing Vehicles

When the PCs oppose a vessel of NPCs, treat the whole NPC vessel as a single entity when determining the Challenge - each NPC vessel doesn't need a full breakdown, just a single Challenge rating. More important vessels may have +C or -C for certain qualities like speed or armament.

PC vehicles and NPC vehicles alike deal damage in increments of 1 or 2. **Most attacks deal 1 damage, while attacks taking advantage of rare opportunity or enormous force may deal 2 damage.**

### RECHARGING (Repairing) VEHICLES

In most genres, the most fun way to handle REPAIRS is to make an adventure of it. Rather than sticking a price on repairs, just offer an adventure that will "pay enough to fix the ship", or an adventure to get that replacement part - or tell them they already have the money for repairs, and there's a lead to follow while they're waiting.

#### Vehicles + Wealth

*Using the Wealth system from Optional Systems? Here are some ways Wealth could interact with Vehicles!*

**Outfitting + Upgrades:** To add 1 Energy to your ship, as a new Facet or adding to an existing one, make a Wealth check.

**Strong Hit:** It's paid for.

**Weak Hit:** You can only find a compromise, something with some quirk or defect.

**Miss:** It isn't available in your budget. Base Challenge = the ship's total Energy, +C or -C depending on scarcity/abundance of parts & labor.

**Repairs:** Make a check with no Challenge Coins - just flip/burn your Wealth, and the total HEADS is the amount of Energy you can afford to restore to the ship.

**Trade & Shipping:** If the crew engages in trade with their vessel, they may make a Wealth check to see what profits they make.

- **Strong Hit:** +1 Wealth.
- **Weak Hit:** +0, or +1 with a complication.
- **Miss:** -1 Wealth.

*Challenge Number depends on many factors like the cargo's scarcity, demand, volume... When in doubt, Challenge Number = the table's total Wealth.*





## Progress Bars

It can be difficult to track and communicate the progress of pursuits that require more than a single check - a long-term project, a Boss Fight, the remaining castle defenses. Sometimes you want to track something outside of the PCs, like the wildfire they're fighting, or the garrison guard's alertness. Deploy PROGRESS BARS!

Determine the size of the progress bar - 4, 6, 8, and 12 are a good range from simple to complex. Then lay down that many coins (or checkboxes) in a line. Turn over coins (or check/uncheck boxes) to display progress on the bar! Progress bars can count up, count down; they can tug-of-war back and forth; they can chain together. They may be visible to the players, or QM's-eyes-only. Use them however you want; they're simply a visual aid for you and/or your players.

The QM decides what causes a mark on a progress bar. Some progress bars tick every round, regardless; the QM may mark alongside Consequences. If the players want to advance the progress bar, consider:

- On a **Strong Hit**, mark 3 progress.
- On a **Weak Hit**, mark 2 progress.
- On a **Miss**, mark 1 progress.

Still, follow the fiction. Progress bars needn't react to everything the same way every time.

### Lonely Bars

Progress Bars mean very little on their own. The bar itself is never *the task*, it's just a way to display how far along the characters have *advanced the task*. Rather than just telling the table how much progress was marked, describe how each step gets them closer to their goal (or their doom, depending on the bar).

### Alarm Level



*The QM doesn't want the table to be able to blow the whole heist on one bad check, so the alertness of the guards is a 4-bar. Someone has already had a **Weak Hit** when sneaking around, so the QM marked 1. When it fills up, the guards wake the whole garrison!*

### Building the Raft



*The table wants to fill this bar, and they're nearly there. Once full, they've completed their raft!*

### Wildfire Fighting



*This bar can move in either direction. The table is fighting a wildfire that threatens a friendly village! This 8-bar began at 4 marks - if the table can empty it by firefighting, the fire is out! If the bar gets full, the wildfire grows beyond control and destroys everything...*



## Conflict & Combat

*Three ways to run conflict in Silver Bullet. Use all three, or just your favorite(s), to run anything from classic RPG combat to a Regency adventure or a Slice-of-Life anime - where the barbs are verbal, and the damage is to the heart (or the reputation).*

First, a reminder: the PCs' enemies don't make their own attack checks. Rather, a common **Consequence** for the QM to levy in a fight is that an enemy attack lands, especially when a PC flips a **Miss** on an attack. Their attack flies wide, and they take a hit instead - Damage or otherwise. Some good combat Consequences:

- Damage
- Landing the attack, but with a cost
- Foes execute a favorite trick or tactic
- Reinforcements appear
- Foes gain the upper hand over an objective
- Foes execute a safe retreat
- A weapon or item leaves the PC's grasp

PCs, NPCs, and ambient consequences alike deal damage in increments of one or two. **Most attacks deal 1 damage, while attacks taking advantage of rare opportunity or enormous force may deal 2 damage.** I even dealt 3 damage to the table's mech when a skyscraper fell on it. Follow the fiction.

### Easy

Enemies can work like any other check in Silver Bullet - give them a Challenge Number, and **an attack against an NPC is simply an Action check** factoring in the PC's relevant Facets. A **Strong Hit** means the PC does their damage. A **Weak Hit** brings Consequences, like complicating the scene; maybe the PC and the NPC both land attacks, maybe neither attack lands and they remain locked in combat. On a **Miss**, the foe is untouched, and lands an attack on the PC and does some damage, or tangles them up in Consequences. They're knocked out of the fight after X damage, or when the QM says so.

Regardless of tier, **give every enemy one or two tricks, tactics, or special moves** to use as Consequences when the coins give them the chance. The enemy might be able to lasso the PC, cast a spell, or skitter up a wall like a spider... A unique trick, coupled with a notable feature about the NPC, can make each one feel entirely unique in the table's experience.

*As the fight goes on, the Challenge Number of an opponent may go down to reflect injury or fatigue slowing them down, or it may rise if allies bolster them or reinforcements arrive. Follow the fiction.*

## Robust

For more dynamic fights. Works the same way as Level 1, with a set Challenge Number and some interesting tricks, but **the PC must gain advantage before dealing a decisive blow**. You can think of this as a 3-segment progress bar titled something like "Foe's Defenses"; it starts full. Mark it down on a **Strong Hit** (*their defenses fall...*), mark it up on a **Miss** (*they regain their footing...*), and the foe falls when the bar falls to empty. *You still apply Consequences, soft or hard, on a Miss and a Weak Hit, the progress bar just tracks how close the foe is to defeat.*

## Complex

For well-developed NPCs and meaningful threats. A major obstacle (like a Boss Fight) is **an obstacle with Energy, built with Facets like a PC**. When a PC takes an action against it, use those Facets to determine the Challenge Number. As the PCs land their hits, this adversary loses Energy. As it loses Energy, its Facets get less effective - the foe is weakened! Finally, when ALL its Energy is gone, the foe is *vanquished*!

A foe's Facets can be simpler and more direct than a PC - "*Tentacled Asteroid Beast*" and "*Psionic Scream*" for a sci-fi monster, perhaps - and may change between fights.

### Boss Fight

*The table finally corners the dread pirate NPC Captain Kenrick Pott and his crew in a glittering cave.*

#### NPC Captain Kenrick Pott, L7

- *Captain of the "Shattered Globe"*, 4 Energy
- *Crystalline Eye*, 1 Energy
- *The Shard Sabre*, 2 Energy

When the table rushes into melee against Captain Kenrick and his crew, all three of these Facets go into the Challenge Number - the crew from the "Shattered Globe" surrounding him, the crystalline eye guiding his arm, and the Shard Sabre shattering armor. PCs attacking Captain Kenrick will flip against a Challenge Number 7. A **Miss** - *the attacking PC takes Damage*.

When a PC tries to sneak around behind the pirates, the *Captain of the "Shattered Globe"* Facet will help as the crew provides many eyes, and the *Crystalline Eye* Facet certainly helps, but the *Shard Sabre* isn't useful against this action; Challenge Number 5, the total of the Captain's 2 useful Facets. *The PC scores a Strong Hit: Captain Kenrick takes 1 Damage - one of his Energy is removed.*

Each time Captain Kenrick takes damage, he's easier to beat - his reduced Energy means reduced Challenge Numbers. When his Energy is gone, he is Defeated!

# Optional Systems

## Movement

Many tables can enjoy TTRPGs without specifying movement speeds and distances. Games can be just as fun - and sometimes more so - if **the characters simply move a reasonable distance on their turn.**

If you prefer a more concrete system, use *Sprints*. As is common in TTRPGs, a character may take an action and *sprint*, or they may skip their action and sprint twice.

Upon introducing a new scene, the QM can measure a few important distances between landmarks to the players in sprints.

- "Welcome to the warehouse. It's 4 sprints from the front door to the back door, and 2 sprints across."
- "All streets on this map are 1 sprint across, and a block is 3 sprints long. Stairs are 1 sprint each, and crossing over that rubble is 1 sprint because it's hard to traverse."
- "The shuttle lands on the cliff above you. The cliff is 2 sprints from your bunker, the cliff is 3 sprints of climbing, and the shuttle is 1 sprint away when you reach the top."

*Establishing these distances is equally helpful whether the table is playing with a map and miniatures or simple theater-of-the-mind.*

By establishing a couple of distances on the map, it's usually easy to extrapolate that into any distances you need to address.

There may be times when a PC needs to push a little further than the usual sprint; it may sometimes be appropriate for the QM to offer that player an Action check using the PC's athletic Facets to allow them extra distance. Really though, usually the right answer is to round it up and let the character run a little further. Some creatures may be faster than others; if so, they will get 1 or 2 additional sprints. More granular differences in speed needn't be represented mechanically.

If the definition of *a reasonable distance* is causing a lot of friction at your table, choose a *sprint stick*: a physical object that the table can agree is "a pretty good length for a sprint". A pencil, a piece of paper, someone's phone - it doesn't matter, as long as all the creatures on the table use the same thing to measure 1 sprint.

### Inching Along with Miniatures

As with other movement in Silver Bullet, the scale can be adjusted to your preferences and miniatures; I use inches because it's a common scale for miniatures, but centimeters, etc. would work fine. The important thing, if you are using miniatures, is that the base size or "footprint" of your miniatures is roughly 1in if you're using inches, 1cm if you're using centimeters, etc. This is very flexible - just don't use GI Joe as your miniatures if you're using 1in scale...

You *really* need an *exact* sprint distance? Fine, 6in.

*Assume that whichever unit you choose, 1 unit (in, cm, etc.) on the tabletop represents roughly 1 meter/yard in the scene.*

## Downtime

Perhaps you don't want to play everything out as its own scene, or you want to give your players a structure to declare their own scenes (while you sit back and pick up some ideas) - declare some Downtime before the table's next adventure! Downtime phases are an excellent time to slow the pace and get to know our characters much more intimately.

Declare approximately how much time they have in-game and tell them how many Downtime Activities they can choose. A good standard is "**A few days, and 2 Downtime Activities**", perhaps adding another Activity for each additional week.

Burning Energy for Downtime Activities is permitted but exhausting - the burned Energy will not return until the next Downtime. After a check for a Downtime Activity, if the table is using the Wealth system, they may burn Wealth to add to their result.

### Optional: Downtime Rest

As described in the "Rest & Recharging" section of "Playing the Game": Rather than resting during a night's sleep or similar, characters need days or weeks of rest, and may only get a full Rest as a Downtime Activity

*If players can only get a full Rest as a Downtime Activity, they're likely to play more cautiously, and they will nearly always choose to Rest as one or more of their Downtime Activities. Consider presenting them with Downtime more often.*

## Downtime: Long-Term Project

The catch-all downtime activity. If someone doesn't know how to pursue a project, or doesn't know what to do with their Downtime, this is a great answer! The character steadily works toward a goal over multiple Downtimes.

The player declares a project and its goal, and the QM declares the scale of the project as a Progress Bar - 4 for a simple project, up to 12 for a particularly complex one.

Each time the character pursues this project as a Downtime Activity, the player declares how they pursue it and they make an Action check.

- On a **Strong Hit**, mark 3 progress.
- On a **Weak Hit**, mark 2 progress.
- On a **Miss**, mark 1 progress.

Upon completing the Progress Bar, the character has achieved the goal and reaped the benefits!

*Remember to follow the fiction. "We mark 2 progress" means very little on its own - describe what they learned, or how their efforts have brought their goal closer.*

## Downtime: Acquire an Asset

Sometimes the characters need some temporary help. In that case, they may try to get their hands on something:

- A special item/a few common items
- A vehicle or steeds
- A recruit
- Aid from an expert
- Aid from a faction

This asset is usually temporary, only useful until the next Downtime or the end of this adventure (whichever makes sense) - a new Facet (or sometimes a Long-Term Project) could make it permanent.

The player declares the asset they would like to acquire. They don't have to declare how they get it, but they may if they have a strong relationship with a supplier.

- On a **Strong Hit**, the asset performs as desired.
- On a **Weak Hit**, the asset has a major flaw - it has a noticeable glitch, it becomes useless before its declared expiration, or someone owes the supplier a serious favor. *If the cost is too great, they may choose to leave the asset behind.*
- On a **Miss**, they can't get the asset, and may have exposed themselves to trouble by looking.

## Downtime: Investigate

Sometimes a character (or a player) wants a lot of information on a particular topic, or wishes to scout a location for trouble. Perhaps they simply wish to carouse and meet the locals, hear the gossip - another excellent downtime activity for someone unsure of how to spend their time!

The player declares a target (a person, place, topic, etc.) and their motive and means; what they generally hope to learn about the target, and how they go about gaining their information. Then they make an Action check.

- On a **Strong Hit**, they get details and context - everything that might be available to someone with their level of access.
- On a **Weak Hit**, they get general information, or interesting information lacking context.
- On a **Miss**, they don't learn anything, or they learn a little while exposing themselves.

The QM will describe what the character learns in the course of their investigation.

*Answering one or two specific questions doesn't need to be a Downtime Activity - just ask an NPC during a scene! Or perhaps the players need to explore a topic as an adventure, or scouting a location will use Ops Points instead - the locals don't know enough on the subject, the investigation is stonewalled. In these cases, the QM will inform the player, and they may choose a different topic or Downtime Activity.*

## Aiding a Downtime Activity

A character may, as a Downtime Activity, aid in the Downtime Activity of a comrade. If so, they may add one relevant Facet to the check. Without a relevant Facet, they just add +1C to the check.

*When playing out Downtime Activities as scenes, characters may join other characters narratively without choosing to aid them mechanically. Sometimes, they just want to be along for the scene!*

## Ops Points

Some tables love planning - heists, attacks, parties; for those tables, plan as you like! Other tables don't enjoy that process, and can get bogged down in minutia and tedious preparations for things that may never even come forth when the plan comes into action. For these tables, there are OPS POINTS.

Operations Points, Ops Points, or simply "OP" are tokens that the table can collect as their characters prepare for the operation, then spend as the characters execute. Each player simply states *broadly* how their character might prepare for the coming operation - let's say a heist. One is scouting the venue, one is building gadgets, one is disguised and meeting persons of interest. Each character makes an Action check; a **Miss** gains 1 OP for the table, a **Weak Hit** earns 2 OP, and a **Strong Hit** gains 3 OP<sup>1</sup>. *If using a Wealth system, OP can be purchased at this point by burning 1 Wealth per OP.* Planning is done, you can move straight into the heist!

During the operation, **players can spend Ops Points to create FLASHBACKS**. At any time, a player can declare that they would like to trigger a flashback, and what they tried to accomplish in that flashback. These represent their activities during the planning phase that we skipped over - mapping security presence, constructing an EMP, schmoozing a gallery owner. It could even be simpler than these - purchasing an item, or coordinating codewords. Depending on the magnitude of a flashback, the QM will ask for a number of Ops Points: 0 OP for very simple and easy actions like purchasing a common item, 1 OP for typical actions requiring an opportunity, and 2 OP for particularly complicated or luck-dependent plans.

The player spends the Ops Point(s), triggering the flashback. Either in a full flashback scene or simply as a quick check, the QM asks for a relevant Action check to determine the outcome of the flashback. *Not every flashback is successful!* Sometimes, the preparations made by the characters don't pan out! Still, the flashback ends and the outcome of that preparation manifests in the scene. A character finds a camera blindspot; someone pulls out the EMP they constructed; someone waltzes up to the gallery owner and gets an open-handed slap to the face! *(That last flashback didn't go so well...)*

*Players don't need the table's approval to spend OP, but... Be cool.*

<sup>1</sup>The spectrum of results may offer more Ops Points at the QMs discretion, depending on factors like time and how much value you assign to each OP.

## Wealth

I don't recommend using Wealth in most adventures. Silver Bullet operates on the assumption that money comes and goes, and a PC's Energy represents the effort to acquire anything beyond normal living expenses. There is no personal money system.

However, some adventures may have utility for representing large sums of money. Upkeep and repairs for vehicles like ships, investments in a PC-owned Faction... There may be fun or function in funds. Each coin in the table's bank of Wealth represents huge sums of money, enough to be relatively self-sustaining through minor investments and general money management.

Wealth is represented by a bank of coins, and rather than *spending* coins according to a list of prices, the table will make WEALTH CHECKS. Wealth checks represent transactions magnitudes larger than personal purchases: *adding a new propulsion system to the ship, purchasing a new warehouse for the crew, repairing the battlements of your castle.* Other sections and Genre pages will detail how Wealth checks will apply to specific situations.

The Challenge of Wealth checks are determined by the approximate cost in the Genre pages, +C or -C depending on availability; rare items or labor will drive the Challenge up, while abundance will lower it. Wealth can usually be burned to add HEADS toward the Wealth check.

The Wealth bank does not draw from the PCs' Energy, it's a new bank of new Energy, shared by the table. Wealth doesn't Recharge; instead, it is earned as payout from adventures or other sources in the story. A reward of +1 Wealth is handsome; +2 Wealth is incredible.



# Factions

If you like to run campaigns with faction conflict at their cores, you can use Facets to play a solo mini-game of faction conflict to surprise and inspire you!

Anywhere from 2-12 Factions can keep the world moving in interesting ways. Treat a Faction like a colossal NPC with Facets - each Facet is a specific major Asset belonging to the Faction. It might be a team of assassins, an expert alchemist, a library of ancient knowledge, a secret hideout... any single unit that acts independently as part of the Faction. They may operate as forceful, financial, or cunning Assets, and their attacks may be martial, financial, espionage, or grassroots shifts - they are simply ways to shift the overall abstract *power* in a campaign.

- 6 Energy for a small Faction
- 12 Energy for a mid-sized Faction
- 18 Energy for a large Faction

*A single Asset is likely to have 1-3 Energy.*

Between each adventure (or once each in-game month, whichever is less frequent), the QM can run a Faction Battle. Or more, if it's fun. I'm not your dad.

## A Faction Battle has 2 Phases:

1. Action Phase
  - a. Randomly designate which faction will act first. Complete the actions of the desired Assets
  - b. Proceed to the next Faction, and so on until all Factions have activated.
2. Headlines Phase
  - a. Record Defeated and Lost Assets.
  - b. Write brief narratives for notable events & deliver to your players (or inject into the next session).

## Phase 1: Action

Start by randomly designating which Faction will go first. We'll call that Faction A. Each of its Assets may attack other Factions' Assets. To see who wins this conflict, flip the coins of both Assets; the winner is unaffected, the loser is Defeated.<sup>2</sup> If a Defeated Asset is attacked, and it loses again, it is Lost - that Faction loses the Lost Asset *and* the Energy that was in the Lost Asset. Defeated Assets may not attack, they must simply wait and hope

that they aren't attacked again. If an Asset is not Lost, and has not yet made an attack during this Faction Battle, they may defend a fellow Asset; they simply receive the attack instead of the original target.

After resolving this attack, the next Asset in Faction A makes its attack, and so on - after all of Faction A's Assets have attacked, move on to Faction B (determined at random). The Assets of Faction B that have not been Defeated will make their attacks, and so on.

Some Assets may be Support Assets, determined at the Asset's creation. These may be targeted by attacks as usual, but they cannot make attacks. Instead, they can revive Defeated Assets. No flip necessary; a support Asset can automatically revive a fellow Asset with equal or lesser Energy. Lost Assets cannot be revived. A Support asset may only *perform* the revive action once per Faction Battle, but an Asset can *receive* revival ad infinitum. Assets which are Defeated but not Lost at the end of the battle will return, restored, in the next Faction Battle.

A Faction that eliminates an enemy Asset gains Energy equal to the Energy of the Lost Asset, at the end of this Faction Battle, to be put toward a new Asset or added to existing Asset(s) before the next conflict.

## Phase 2: Headlines

After the Action Phase, you should have a list of all the *action* - who attacked who, who was defeated, who was routed, who was revived, who was lost...

The heart of this system lies in the QM's creative rationalizing of this list. Play in good faith, and play for your Factions as they would naturally behave. Some Factions might be unaware that another Faction's Assassin exists. A mad wizard might attack all Cunning Assets first as challenges to his intelligence. A CEO might hold grudges and ignore tactical advantages in order to destroy one specific Asset that wronged them. A smart HOA president may lie in wait, attacking nobody, building strength.

Ultimately, it's all for the Headlines Phase. On the table, one pile of coins beats another pile of coins; the fun is in describing the battle between the Mercenary Band and the Goblin Clan and seeing how it changes the world around them. Combine these world events into a newsletter to send to your players, or reveal them during upcoming sessions and let the table discover them organically! Using factions in adventures will bring depth and life to the world around your characters.

<sup>2</sup> Ties may depend on your campaign. If you want terrible Faction turmoil, Ties result in both Assets being Defeated. If you want a more stable Faction backdrop, Ties result in both Assets being unaffected. For something stable but dangerous, Ties initiate a Flip-Off.

# HACKS & HOMEBREWS

If you'd like to bend Silver Bullet to your will, remember that the basic engine of this system is **banks of Energy** - Facets. Before worrying about building additional systems, ask yourself, "Could this be manifested by adding a new bank of Energy?"

Here are some questions to answer about your new bank of Energy to help you make it tick, and a few *non-exhaustive* examples for each.

- What is the format of this bank of Energy?
  - This is a new type of Energy bank that characters can fill with Energy as they level up; it's like a new Facet option alongside skills, gear, relationships, etc. (Ex: "Secrets" Facet in a Regency adventure)
  - It exists as a side-bank, almost as if it were its own character.
  - It exists alongside the characters, and they can all interact with it equally. (Ex. Vehicles)
- Where does the Energy in this bank come from?
  - It starts with Energy = the table's average Level.
  - It contains 1 Energy per character at your table.
  - The table adds or earns it like Wealth.
  - Every adventure, it automatically gains +1C
- How does the table interact with Energy in this bank?
  - They can add it to flips, burn it according to their skills, and generally use it as their own.
  - They may only add it to specific flips in specific circumstances.
  - This bank flips independently of the characters, as its own entity.
  - They may use it for applicable checks, but once you flip it, it's discarded.
- How/When does the Energy in this bank Recharge?
  - It doesn't; when it's gone, it's gone.
  - Like a character, it Recharges to full Energy when the table takes a good long rest.
  - Characters add coins to this bank in order to keep it active.

*Some thoughts on Energy and its uses, if a new Energy bank doesn't provide the solution:*

At the most basic level, keep in mind the 3 tiers of results; **Strong Hit**///**Weak Hit**///**Miss**. All the various uses of Energy are funneling toward a flip, coming out to one of these three results.

Using Energy is a good option for most things, but take care when building a system that's already covered by Facets. Don't spread the characters' Energy too thin, so that they can't be effective in the adventure without many different Facets, but they can't be effective with any one Facet because they're spread between too many.

Burning Energy is like stress from other systems; it is a finite resource that characters can spend to exert themselves powerfully. Burning Energy is a sacrifice and a gamble, so moves that require burned Energy should reflect that risk with great reward.

When building your own Archetypes, figure out the core of what's fun about that archetype in that genre. Archetypes are about classifying the ways that the characters in a genre approach challenges in their world. Then figure out how Energy interacts with that idea - usually it makes them better at that specific angle of interaction.

The burn mechanic is narratively effective. It means that people with Energy left over at the end of a mission are more likely to succeed while the stakes are highest. The one that stayed on the sidelines is more likely to save the day in the end. Very narratively satisfying, and great for helping reserved players out of their shells.

If a player wants something that A. Grants Energy and B. does it all the time, it's probably something they should build as a Facet.



# Genres

## Playing without Genre Pages

While some genres may dwell on a wide range of backgrounds (like fantasy with its warriors, adepts, and mages), others may thrive in specificity. In a *Weird World War* genre, every character may be a soldier; in a *Regency* genre, everyone may be a socialite. The fun then becomes about identifying the different core experiences that these characters have in the world. Build walls around the characters, then name the rooms (I like to distinguish 3) - Officers, Enlisted, and Specialists in our *Weird World War*, for example; or perhaps Nurturing, Naive, and Nasty in the *Regency*.

When playing a campaign where all or most characters share a profession (you're all pirates, soldiers, aristocracy, etc.) it may be prudent to require slightly more specialization when applying Facets. In an adventure with PCs from all walks of life, any *Soldier* Facet might handle explosives; in an all-soldiers adventure, working with explosives might require a *Demolitions Expert*, while a *Machine Gunner* Facet wouldn't apply.

## Sketching

Sketching some media is just holding on and letting it take you for a ride! We want to adventure in worlds that remind us of ones that we love! Space operas of empires and rebellions; fantasy epics to oppose the rising evil; rugged globetrotting to protect artifacts of ancient history... sketching lets us feel those same things in brand-new adventures! And for a QM, sketching will help you bring your table on thrilling adventures every session! Using themes, elements, character types, locations, etc. from those movies, shows, or games will bring your table together. And when the whole table shares that same love, it will carry you better than a hundred rules - when the table shares enthusiasm for the genre you're playing, you never run into a conflict over "Why do they get laser swords but I don't?"

### Say My Name

Names can make things feel like they "belong" in your world, and you'll need lots! Make a few lists of names, for people, places, and perhaps things - names that feel like they *belong* in the world of your adventures. When you need a name during a session, cross one off! Use them generously, mark them on the map when they come up, and update your lists as they run low. *Worlds full of names feel alive!*

*Dissecting media to run as RPG adventures is challenging, so here are a few prompts to help fill your notebook as you read, watch, or play:*

- What is the **scope** of this world? Is it limited to a specific place, or does it traverse a large space?
- What is the **engine** that makes this world move? *Factions, a growing evil, a world event... Worlds rarely wait for the PCs to act.*
- What are the **stakes** of this story? *If everything goes wrong, what bad thing happens? Is it the fate of a galaxy, or the conscience of a small group? Bigger doesn't mean better!*
- Why are we following **these characters**? What makes them special?
- Do the characters come from many **backgrounds**, or are they united by a single aspect, like *Soldier, Swashbuckler, or Aristocrat*?
- What **unites** the characters? *Fate, goals, enemies...*
- What **motivates** characters in this world? *Quests, Loyalty, Wealth, Purpose...*
- What sorts of **people** do the characters meet? What makes those characters interesting?
- What sorts of **places** do the characters visit? What makes those places interesting?
- What **conflicts** confront the characters?
  - People
    - Underlings led by a mastermind?
    - A series of unique opponents?
    - A conspiracy of shadowy individuals?
  - Environmental or Location-based?
    - Endurance
    - Hostile air or ground
    - Beasts
  - Things
    - Technology
    - Disease
  - Ideas
    - Authority
    - Values
    - Leaders
- As conflicts arise, how much **challenge** do they present to the characters? *On a scale of 1 to 10 - anticipate many challenges in the 1-3 range!*
- What **consequences** appear when things go wrong for the characters?
- What can **hurt** an important character? What form does that hurt take? *Physical, emotional, social, reputation...*
- How often does someone get **physically injured**? When they do, do they shrug it off and keep going, or is it a serious concern?
- When someone is **seriously harmed**, what does it take to get them back into the action?



## Playing with Genre Pages

Genre Pages are small expansions with rules, systems, and advice to help you start playing quickly in specific genres! “High Fantasy” in Silver Bullet, “Space Opera” in Silver Bullet, “Weird Western” in Silver Bullet, and more.

### Archetypes & Facets

Genre Pages begin with information for players, starting with archetype cards and tables for creating Facets. The archetype cards presented in the Genre Pages are especially helpful to *newer players*, as they present the player with a finite list of options. New players can panic when presented with unlimited scope, not knowing how much they should describe, how much authority they have, or even how long a turn should be. The character cards give them a place to write their Facets and track their Energy, while the back side has a collection of actions that are probably covered by their chosen archetype.

**If you play with Archetypes, they should still be built out into full Facets.** Don't just play a *Bard*, play a *Bard of the New College of Lies*! Don't play a *Sniper*, play an *Exiled Imperial Railgunner gone Rogue*. Archetypes simply help characters thrive in the genre - they won't provide the versatility of a well-founded Facet.

Characters are not bound to a single archetype. They may put all their Energy into a single archetype-Facet and specialize, or spread their Energy across a few different archetype-Facets. The archetypes are guidelines, not rules.

Archetypes from Genre Pages will specify which sorts of characters can burn for which actions, but the old-school archetypes may serve you fine: “Warriors” can burn for combat actions, “Experts” can burn for non-combat actions, and “Empowered” characters like mages, aliens, and other such oddities can burn for actions involving their special ability or quirk.

### Special Rules

The next section of the Genre Pages is for the whole table, detailing how Silver Bullet might behave differently in this genre, or what special rules may apply. There might be entirely new mechanics to cover the tech of a sci-fi world, or a new type of Facet for the powerful secrets of a Regency adventure.

## Building an Adventure

If you have an adventure and a setting in mind already, you may feel free to disregard the Adventure Building prompts in the Genre Pages. If not, they may be very useful for building a world that feels authentic and exciting, and the characters will be deeply rooted in the world from the very first session.

### Worldbuilding

Take turns creating answers to these questions - everyone answers at least one before anyone gets a second, to ensure everyone gets input.

### Bonds

There will be a list of Bonds as well, to tie some connections between characters. Each character should have a connection to at least 2 other characters at the table - simply choosing the characters of the players on your left and right is easy, but not required. Each pair should choose a question to answer together, and they may choose to share their answer with the table or keep it a secret between themselves and the QM!

### More?

As I get feedback from players and QMs, I may expand the scope of Genre Pages to give tables the tools they need to play Silver Bullet in any genre they like!

# Characters as Characters

To make Facets clearer, here's a list of well-known characters as I would build them in Silver Bullet! In fact, these are essentially full character sheets in Silver Bullet! Not much else required. *The levels are arbitrary.*

*All rights belong to their respective owners.*

## Lord of the Rings

### **Aragorn, Level 9**

- *Ranger of the Dúnedain*, 5 Energy
- *Heir of Isildur*, 2 Energy
- *Narsil, The Sword that was Broken*, 2 Energy

### **Frodo Baggins, L5**

- *Hometown Hobbit with a Quest*, 2
- *Samwise, Trusted Gardener*, 2
- *The One Ring*, 1

### **Gimli, Son of Glóin, L6**

- *Dwarven Warrior*, 4
- *Refuses to be Outdone*, 2

## Star Wars

### **Luke Skywalker, L5**

- *Jedi Padawan*, 2
- *Space Redneck*, 2
- *R2-D2, Astromech Droid companion*, 1

### **Leia Organa, L5**

- *Princess of Alderaan on the Run*, 2
- *Rebel Alliance Leader*, 3

*But wait! Someone wants to play the droid??*

### **R2-D2, L5**

- *Astromech Droid*, 4
- *Hidden Storage*, 1

## Downton Abbey

### **Lady Violet Crawley, L12**

- *The Dowager Countess of Grantham*, 8
- *Close Cronies with Isabel Crawley Grey*, 4

### **Mr. Carson, L8**

- *Stern Head Butler of Downton Abbey*, 6
- *Loves Lady Mary Crawley Like a Daughter*, 2

### **Lady Mary Crawley, L6**

- *Conniving... Heiress? of the Estate*, 3
- *Edith, Much-Hated Younger Sister*, 1
- *Sybil, Much-Adored Youngest Sister*, 2

## Sherlock Holmes

### **Sherlock Holmes, L12**

- *Mastermind Detective of London*, 6
  - *Dependency on Dr. Watson*, 3
  - *Street Urchin Network*, 1
  - *Chemistry Laboratory*, 1
  - *Master of Disguises*, 1

### **John Watson, L8**

- *Veteran Army Doctor of Afghanistan*, 4
  - *Fascinated by Sherlock*, 2
  - *Service Revolver*, 2

## My Hero Academia

### **Deku, L4**

- *Quirk: One for All*, 2
- *Air Force Gloves*, 1
- *All Might, Mentor*, 1

### **Ochaco Uraraka, L4**

- *Quirk: Zero Gravity*, 2
- *Uravity Suit*, 2

### **All Might, L15**

- *Burned Out Superman*, 5
- *U.A. Teacher*, 7
- *Deku, Protegee*, 3

## Supers

### **Spiderman/Miles Morales, L6**

- *Mutated Spider Abilities*, 4
  - *Web Shooters*, 2

### **Batman/Bruce Wayne, L10**

- *Ninjutsu Mastery under Ra's al Ghul*, 5
  - *Lucius Fox's Tech*, 2
  - *Batmobile*, 2
  - *Alfred, Butler*, 1

## Supernatural

### **Sam Winchester, L3**

- *Demon Slayer*, 1
- *Uncle Billy, Mentor*, 1
- *Law Student*, 1

### **Dean Winchester, L3**

- *Demon Slayer*, 2
- *Uncle Billy, Mentor*, 1

### **Uncle Billy, L6**

- *Black Market Occultist*, 6

## Scooby Doo

### **Daphne Blake, L3**

- *Journalist Prone to Getting In Too Deep*, 1
- *Karate Black-Belt*, 1
- *Fashionista*, 1

### **Fred Jones, L3**

- *Natural Born Leader?*, 1
- *The Mystery, Inc. Gang*, 2

### **Scooby-Doo, L3**

- *Mischievous Great Dane Mascot*, 1
- *Cowardly*, 1
- *Shaggy, Best Friend!*, 1

### **Shaggy Rogers, L3**

- *Fleet-footed Hippie*, 2
- *Scooby, Best Friend!*, 1

### **Velma Dinkley, L3**

- *Researcher*, 3

### **The Mystery Mobile, 3**

- *Chassis (Hull)*, 1
- *Full of Junk*, 2

## Percy Jackson

### **Percy Jackson, L4**

- *Demigod: Son of Poseidon*, 2
- *Riptide*, 2

### **Annabeth Chase, L4**

- *Demigod: Daughter of Athena*, 3
- *Yankees Cap of Invisibility*, 1

### **Thalia Grace, L4**

- *Demigod: Daughter of Zeus*, 3
- *Aegis Shield*, 1

## The Thing

### **R.J. MacReady, L5**

- *Helicopter Pilot*, 3
- *"Nobody trusts anybody now..."*, 2

### **Blair, L5**

- *Senior Biologist of Outpost 31*, 4
- *"Nobody gets in or out..."*, 1

### **Childs, L5**

- *Chief Mechanic of Outpost 31*, 4
- *"No Voodoo Bullshit"*, 1

## Inception

### **Dominic Cobb, 7**

- *Extractor*, 4
- *Corporate Spy*, 1
- *Mal... Deceased Wife*, 1
- *"This world is not real..."*, 1

### **Arthur, 6**

- *Point Man*, 5
- *Researcher*, 1

### **Ariadne, 4**

- *Architect*, 3
- *Graduate Student of École d'Architecture*, 1

### **Eames, 6**

- *Forger*, 3
- *Ex-Military*, 3

## Django Unchained

### **Django, L5**

- *Recently Free Man*, 2
- *Bounty Hunter in Training*, 3

### **Dr. King Schultz, L8**

- *Career Bounty Hunter*, 5
- *Retired German Dentist*, 2
- *Traveling Circus Showman*, 1

## The Goonies

### **Mikey Walsh, L2**

- *Won't Take NO For an Answer*, 2

### **Brand Walsh, L4**

- *Jock*, 3
- *Little Bro Mikey*, 1

### **Lawrence "Chunk" Cohen, L2**

- *Prankster Supreme*, 2

### **Clark "Mouth" Devereaux, L2**

- *Unstoppable Motormouth*, 2

### **Andy Carmichael, L4**

- *Cheerleader*, 3
- *Music Lessons?* 1

### **Stephanie Steinbrenner, L4**

- *Practical Thinker*, 3
- *Bestie Andy*, 1

### **Richard "Data" Wang, L2**

- *Overconfident Gadgeteer*, 2

# Thank you for reading Silver Bullet v1.0!

## *What's next for Silver Bullet?*

I decided a few months ago to put my nose to the grindstone and publish Silver Bullet for Free RPG Day 2023 - it made sense, because I wanted this to be a free RPG that would let people play what they want, with almost no barrier-to-entry (or as little as I could contrive, anyway). With that said, I simply hoped to get this into someone's hands. I have plans to "complete" Silver Bullet for an official v2.0 release! Still free, but improved with notes that I get from people playtesting, etc. I have more plans for Silver Bullet!

But *what?*

### **In the core book:**

- First, simply revisions to improve the system's clarity and playability.
- Better layout and design; possibly a version with half-sized pages, but spreading out the information drastically. Make it easier to read.
- Additional styling for borders and text boxes and such. Make it prettier to look at.
- Colorizing the art!
- Making a physical version available for purchase online.

**Genre Pages** - Just a whole lot *more!* Available online to get you playing genres across the board:

- HIGH FANTASY
- SCI-FI
- WESTERN
- SUPERHERO
- REGENCY/JANE AUSTEN
- HEIST
- MONSTER OF THE WEEK
- SLICE OF LIFE
- ISEKAI
- LOVECRAFTIAN MYTHOS
- ODYSSEAN
- POST-APOCALYPTIC
- SUMMER SLASHER
- KIDS ON BIKES
- MAGIC ACADEMY
- And more, suggested in the Silver Bullet forums!
- Even alternate Genre Pages for more specific adventures!

### **Supplements** - (possibly added directly into v2.0):

- Solo Adventuring
  - New systems for running solo adventures
  - RPG Oracles and mini-games to help you QM your own story
- Expanded Vehicle Rules
  - Mechanic's Moves
  - Gunner Moves
  - Pilot Moves
  - Etc.
- Expanded Combat Rules
  - An NPC builder
  - A huge list of NPC Tricks & Tactics
- Expanded Spells & Magic
  - Expanded rules for magic and magic-wielders
  - Spellbooks for casters to peruse and learn
- Focus Moves: a new way to use Energy, alongside flipping and burning, allowing you to focus Energy on certain special moves.

*Please let your voice be heard! Your interest is my interest, so join the discussion at:*

**[sidecarstories.itch.io/silverbullettrpg](https://sidecarstories.itch.io/silverbullettrpg)**

# sil\*ver bul\*let :

## *From The Hip:*

*A step-by-step introduction for first-time TTRPG players. The game remains fully playable no matter how many of these steps your table decides to use.*

By Samuel Chaplain | @SidecarStories

### 1.

*"What do you do?"*

*How does it go? Let's find out...*

Flip a quarter.

- On **TAILS**, something bad happens.
- On **HEADS**, something good happens.

### 2.

*"What is your character good at?"*

*Is it a job? A background? Perhaps it'll help you now...*

Use a penny to represent this **FACET** of the character.

If the quarter flips **TAILS**, but you're doing something your character is good at, flip your penny.

- On **TAILS**, your skills can't save you.
- On **HEADS**, the penny supersedes the quarter. Something good happens.

### 3.

When your character or your group has reached a moment of true growth, you get +1 penny. You may put it toward your existing Facet or create a new one (a skillset, a piece of gear, a relationship). Your pennies are your **ENERGY**.

*What happened during the adventure that caused you to grow in that way?*

### 4.

If use a Facet that has more than 1 Energy, flip as much of that Energy as you like.

If you have multiple relevant Facets, you can use all of them for the action.

If you want to help someone, you can flip 1 penny to add to their efforts. If it goes badly, you get caught up in the mess.

### 5.

For more difficult circumstances, flip more quarters. Count the **TAILS** from the quarters and the **HEADS** from the pennies. Which has more?

- More **TAILS**: **Miss**. Something bad happens.
- Tied **HEADS** & **TAILS**: **Weak Hit**. An okay thing happens, or a good thing *and* a bad thing happen. It's complicated.
- More **HEADS**: **Strong Hit**. Something good happens.

### 6.

When something happens that could sap your Energy, danger may be on its way. On a Miss or a Weak Hit, you may take **DAMAGE**: lose 1 Energy (or 2 for really brutal harm).

You **RECHARGE**, regaining your lost Energy, when you get a chance to truly rest – the night after the gala; the day after the heist; the week after the battle.

### 7.

When you are out of Energy, you are **DEFEATED**. You can't take actions, use your Facets, or do much at all; every time your turn comes, flip a coin. As long as it's **HEADS**, you can still be saved. A companion may take action to save you – you're back in the action with 1 Energy.

If they can't, the moment you flip **TAILS**, you are **LOST**.

In an Ocean's 11 adventure, you may have been arrested; in a Downton Abbey adventure, you may be socially ruined; in a Game of Thrones adventure, you may be dead. Regardless... you almost surely won't be back.

### 8.

Some character archetypes may allow you to use Energy differently, determined by the Quartermaster or by Silver Bullet's **GENRE PAGES**.

**BURN**: Instead of flipping, you discard 1 or more Energy until you Recharge. They're automatically considered **HEADS**.



## \* Characters

*"What is your character good at?"*

*Is it a job? A background? Perhaps it'll help soon...*

Give this FACET of the character a name.

This Facet gets 1 coin to go with it. Your coins are your ENERGY. You'll flip them when you take action.

When your character or your group has reached a moment of true growth, you get +1 Energy Coin. You may put it toward your existing Facet or create a new one – a skillset, a piece of gear, a relationship...

*What happened during the adventure that caused you to grow in that way?*

## \* Actions

*"What do you do?"*

If a character takes action with a chance of failure, the Quartermaster will flip one or more coins to represent the CHALLENGE: Challenge Coins.

If the character has one or more useful Facets for the action, flip the Energy Coins from those Facets. If they have no relevant Facets, flip 1 coin to represent basic effort.

**HEADS** are always good for the table.

**TAILS** are always bad.

Count the **HEADS** from the Energy Coins against the **TAILS** from the Challenge Coins. Which has more?

|   |   |
|---|---|
| More <b>HEADS</b><br>from the player:           | <b>Strong Hit.</b><br>Something good happens.   |
| <b>HEADS &amp; TAILS</b><br>are tied:           | <b>Weak Hit.</b><br>A compromise, or a good thing<br>and a bad thing happen.<br>Things get complicated. |
| More <b>TAILS</b><br>from the<br>Quartermaster: | <b>Miss.</b><br>Something bad happens.  |

## \* More Energy

If you use a Facet that has more than 1 Energy, flip as much of that Energy as you like.

If you have multiple relevant Facets, you can use all of them for the action.

If you want to help someone, you can flip 1 coin to add to their efforts. If it goes badly, you get caught up in the consequences.

## \* Archetypes

Some character archetypes may allow you to use Energy uniquely. For instance:

**BURN:** Push yourself. Instead of flipping, you *discard* 1 or more Energy until you Recharge. Each burned Energy counts automatically as a **HEADS**.

Unless otherwise specified by the Quartermaster or Silver Bullet's GENRE PAGES, "Warriors" can burn for combat actions, "Experts" can burn for non-combat actions, and "Empowered" characters like mages, aliens, royalty and other such oddities can burn for actions involving their unique ability or quirk.

## \* Consequences

Often the consequences of a **Weak Hit** or a **Miss** will be exclusively narrative. Follow the fiction.

Sometimes it's more damaging; you may lose 1 or even 2 Energy. Discard those Energy Coins; they can't be flipped, burned, or otherwise used until you recharge.

You **RECHARGE**, regaining your lost Energy, when you get a chance to truly rest – the night after the gala; the day after the heist; the week after the battle.

## \* Defeat & Loss

When you are out of Energy, you are **DEFEATED**. You can't take actions, use your Facets, or do much at all; every time your turn comes, flip a coin. As long as it's **HEADS**, you can still be saved. A companion may take action to save you – you're back in the action with 1 Energy.

If they can't, the moment you flip **TAILS**, you are **LOST**.

In an Ocean's 11 adventure, you may have been arrested; in a Downton Abbey adventure, you may be socially ruined; in a Game of Thrones adventure, you may be dead. Regardless... you almost surely won't be back.

# sil\*ver bul\*let :

*\* A solution to a common problem.*

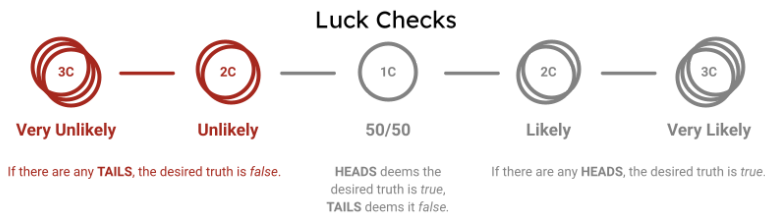
*\* The best way to deal with werewolves.*

Written by Samuel Chaplain, @SidecarStories

Art by Carl Robota, @urbansketchla

# QM Quick Reference

Unsure what to use? **Luck checks for everything!**



## Setting Challenge Numbers - Scale of 1 to 10

- 1 = Basic challenges with a possibility of failure
- ½ the character's level = Robust challenges
- Equal to the character's level = Devastating challenges

| Add a coin if...   | Subtract a coin if...   |
|--|---|
| They have less time than this usually requires.            | They have an abundance of time.                                     |
| They're trying to do this quietly or stealthily.           | They don't mind making a huge mess of things.                       |
| They have the wrong tools for the job.                     | They have exceptional resources for the job.                        |
| They're overwhelmingly distracted.                         | They have absolutely nothing else on their plates.                  |
| They're working in the dark or otherwise sensory-deprived. | They have an unusually good grasp on the situation.                 |
| They're trying to accomplish a little too much at once.    | They're sacrificing other opportunities to focus on this one thing. |
| The scale of this problem is beyond their scope.           | This problem is small beans compared to their usual                 |
| etc...   | etc...  |

## Soft Consequences, The Important Ones

- The action fails and puts them in a bad spot
- The action succeeds and puts them in a bad spot
- Reduce their resources
- Present a difficult choice
- Introduce a new threat
- Telegraph incoming danger
- Character's standing with a group or individual worsens

## Hard Consequences

- **+1C Challenges** - Make checks harder
- **Interrupt Energy** - Limit their Facets
- **Damage** - Take their Energy
  - Most attacks deal 1 Damage
  - Attacks taking advantage of rare opportunity or enormous force may deal 2 damage

# One Turn in Silver Bullet

