

A WUSHU GUIDE TO...

GUN-FU



THE ANCIENT ART
OF THE GUN FIGHT

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

The ancient art of the gun fight is all about giving you more options than just "I shoot him" and "I dive for cover." It's about dodging bullets with balletic displays of acrobatic prowess. It's about mixing martial arts with your gunplay, grappling for point blank shots and smashing faces with shotgun barrels. It's about the sniper as your high-caliber guardian angel. It's about running through a hail of lead without fear, auto-firing into a wall of mooks, reloading in the blink of an eye, and lookin' good while you do it!

The first section of this Wushu Guide is your introduction to the fascinating world of gunfights, including a summary of cinematic gun types and the standard stable of Hong Kong stunts. Next, we'll explore ways to incorporate guns into melee combat, the true meaning of Gun-Fu. Then, snipers are given the Wushu treatment. Finally, you'll see Gun-Fu in action via voluminous examples of play.

By the time we're done, you'll be a fully loaded arsenal of gunpowder-fuelled mayhem!

HOW DO I USE IT?

As you may have discerned from the title, this Wushu Guide was written for the Wushu role-playing game. That's why there are so many references to "Yang dice," "Chi," and "Mooks." However, since Wushu is so ridiculously rules-light, most of the tips and tricks are general enough to use with any game system.

My vision of Gun-Fu is inspired by a host of gun-crazy movies and anime. Watching them will not only help you visualize this chaos, it'll keep you entertained for a good, long while! Here's the short list...

- **Desperado** - Fan-friggin-tastic gun fights! The sequel's pretty good, too.
- **Equilibrium** - An otherwise detestable movie that's worth watching just for the gun fights. It's the inspiration for more than one Gun-Fu stunt.
- **The Replacement Killers** - Chow Yun-Fat's first Hollywood movie is a stylish action flick with plenty of classic Hong Kong choreography.
- **American Outlaws** - A modernized western with some nice action sequences.
- **Trigun** - A magnum opus in shooting a lot of people without killing any of them.
- **Gunsmith Cats** - Those ladies know their guns! Clever trick weapons, too.
- **(Almost) Any John Woo Movie** - I know a lot of people prefer his early work, but I like big budget production values! In particular, I'll recommend Broken Arrow, Face Off, Once A Thief, A Better Tomorrow and the final scene of its sequel.

GUNFIGHTS

LOTS OF GUNS

The following is by no means an exhaustive, or even factually correct, catalogue of firearms. Rather, it's a summary of the types of guns seen in action movies, organized according to the stunts and details you'd use for Wushu Embellishments.

Revolvers - These puppies are seen most often in westerns, but police officers used them well into the 20th century. They hold six or eight rounds in a rotating chamber; each must be loaded separately. A pull of the trigger fires one round and rotates another into position. They are notoriously slow to reload.

Semi-Auto Pistols - Modern handguns load ammunition from a clip (which is usually inserted into the grip) and eject the spent casing after each shot. They can carry up to two dozen rounds, give or take, depending on the size of the gun. This is by far the most common type of firearm in modern settings.

Shotguns - A perennial favorite among role-players! Despite their name, shotguns can fire both shot (bundles of tiny pellets) or slugs (traditional, solid bullets). The most famous type is the pump-action shotgun: ammunition cartridges are carried in a tube below the barrel and loaded into the chamber by pulling back a slider that wraps around the tube. Older models are breach-loaded: the chamber opens on a hinge and you have to slide each new cartridge in by hand. Double-barreled shotguns cut that reload rate in half. They even have fully automatic shotguns now! Don't forget to saw off a few inches of the barrel for improved concealability.

SMGs - Short for "sub-machinegun," these models are exemplified by the Israeli-made Uzi. They're larger than a handgun, smaller than an assault rifle, and can fire streams of bullets with a single pull of the trigger. They are a deadly combinations of concealability and destructive power.

Assault Rifles - The venerable AK-47 is the archetypal assault rifle; its most famous predecessor was probably the Tommy Gun. They're big, nearly impossible to conceal, and carry gigantic clips of high-caliber bullets. They also fire bursts or streams of bullets with a single trigger pull. Plus, you can administer some painful bludgeonings with those rifle butts!

Sniper Rifles - These guns are designed for high accuracy over extremely long distances. That means long barrels and tons of gunpowder. High-powered scopes and recoil compensation are popular options. They are often disassembled for discreet transportation. Large and/or armor-piercing slugs help ensure fulfillment of the sniper's motto: One Shot, One Kill.

EXOTIC AMMO

Now that you have your gun, you've got to load it with something. Most people just go with good, old fashioned lead, but there are plenty of other options...

Non-Lethal Rounds - To hit a target without killing them, bullets need to distribute their force over a larger area. Soft materials, like rubber, do this by flattening on impact. You can also use a wider projectile, like the bean bag ammo used with shotguns.

The Face Eraser - This is a nasty one. (You might want to save it for your big bads.) Take a shotgun cartridge and pack it with glass shrapnel instead of, or in addition to, buckshot. The result is a cloud of razor blades that slash their way through anything that gets on your bad side. In a pinch, you could just dump some shrapnel down the barrel for pretty much the same effect.

Armor-Piercing - The simplest way to punch through armor is to make bigger, heavier bullets that channel their momentum through smaller, sharper points. You can also use special alloys that vaporize on impact, forming a shell of plasma around the bullet that burns through even the heaviest armor plating.

Explosive Rounds - Usually, the big BOOM is accomplished with a grenade launcher or bazooka. There are also incendiary rounds that can turn any standard shotgun into a flame thrower. If you want to stretch plausibility a little (and what Wushu player doesn't?), you can even build tiny warheads into normal handgun bullets.

Smart Bullets - In sci-fi settings, miniaturization makes self-guided bullets possible. Tiny scramjets provide additional propulsion, greatly extending the range of handguns and SMGs. Computerized radar systems track targets and miniature rudders allow the bullet to make modest course corrections in flight. You barely have to aim!

GUN-FU STUNTS

Like I said in the introduction, Gun-Fu is about going beyond the simple "I shoot him from behind cover" tactics of realistic gunfights. These basic stunts are cribbed from the time-honored tricks of Hong Kong action choreographers. It's basically a whole lotta jumpin' around with guns a' blazin'!

Bullet Dodging - Always remember: if you keep moving, no one can hit you. It's best to run sideways relative to your attacker's line of sight. Throw in a few flying leaps, somersaults, cartwheels, and coat-flaring spins to keep things interesting. This isn't necessarily the gravity-defying, slo-mo stuff you know from The Matrix; Hong Kong gunfighters have been doing it without wires for years!

2 Guns are Twice the Fun - Using a gun in each hand not only doubles your rate of fire, it also looks damn cool! There's the "running down the hall and shooting mooks on both sides" trick. There's the "crossing your arms and shooting guys on either side of you" trick. Best of all, there's the "spraying two full arcs of bullets with your twin SMGs" trick. Go ahead and use them all. There's no need to choose.

Dramatic Reloads - In a Wushu game, running out of bullets is an opportunity, not an inconvenience. Dropping your clips after a particularly furious exchange is a great dramatic flourish. Check "Equilibrium" for a couple of clever reloads: spring-loaded clips concealed in sleeves and clips weighted to stand on end after being thrown onto a battlefield. For some wire-fu style, try flicking new shotgun cartridges into your breach-loaded sawed-off or tossing new clips into the air and slamming your guns down onto them. Or, don't reload at all. Why spend time fumbling for clips when you could just carry more guns? (This is the Chow Yun-Fat approach.)

Quick Draws - It can be hard to Embellish a single action that takes place in a fraction of second. The secret of the quick draw is in the buildup: staring down your opponent, muscles stretched taught in anticipation, senses attuned to your enemy's every twitch. This is also a good way to ensure one-shot kills in duels: run down the gunfighters' Chi with a round or two of intimidation and buildup before they draw their weapons. You can also take a note from classic samurai duels by following a dramatic pause with details of the shot's aftermath: gun smoke, blood sprays, bodies fallin' over, etc.

Collateral Damage - a.k.a The John Woo Principle. All gunfights can be improved by adding copious amounts of flying debris, from wood to plaster to glass. Every bullet that leaves a gun has to hit *something*, and it's very rarely one of the player-characters. Just make sure your gunfight locations feature lots of windows, mirrors, vases, wine bottles, and miscellaneous containers marked "flammable."

Creative Cover - Between sprints and jumps, it may still be a good idea to grab some cover. Don't worry about the penetration power of various firearms; even a bed mattress is solid cover in most action movies. You can hide around corners, crouch behind furniture, use a car door as a shield, and so forth. If there isn't any cover handy, make your own by flipping a table over or using your guitar case as a shield.

Human Shields - They're not just for the bad guys anymore! The classic move is to grapple a mook and hold him in front of you to soak up bullets. If the mook has a gun, grab it and return fire. You can also spin a guy around like a top to attract enemy fire while you dive to the side. Oh, and if you have moral qualms about all this, just make sure your shields are either already dead or wearing some of that delicious kevlar.

Don't Forget the Slo-Mo - So many things are more dramatic in slow motion! Describing actions in slo-mo lets you narrate bullets in flight, turn desperate dives for cover into graceful leaps, and dodge bullets in a very literal sense. (If you've ever seen an episode of "Fastlane," you've seen these principles put to excellent use!)

GUNS AS MELEE WEAPONS

It can be surprisingly difficult to draw, aim, and fire a handgun at an adversary who is already within a few yards. They'll close in and grapple (or stab, or kick) you before you can get off a reliable shot. Unfortunately, modern combat (and Wushu combat) increasingly takes place indoors, where all combat is close range combat.

One solution to this problem is to integrate guns into traditional martial arts. Grappling for an opponent's gun would go from an artless tussle to a choreographed series of blocks, arm locks, throws, and disarms. Instead of diving for cover, you'd close in with a backflip, kick your attacker's gun away, and take them out at point blank range. Whether or not Gun-Fu constitutes a "good" idea for the real world, one thing is undeniable: it would be damn cool to watch!

Point Blanking - Gun-Fu stunts are all about the point blank shot. Bury that barrel in your target's stomach and blast away! The real fun comes in using martial arts techniques to get your gun into position and/or prevent your adversary from doing likewise. He jabs his gun in your face, you sweep it to the side with one hand and bring your own gun to his temple with the other. He blocks with his off hand, holding your gun just clear of his head, and so forth. Trust me, it looks cool when you trade moves back and forth a few times in rapid succession.

Handgun Hammerfist - Pistol whipping is just hitting someone (usually in the head) with the side or grip of a handgun. In the Gun-Fu version, you flip the gun around and hold it by the barrel, using the grip like it's the business end of a hammer. Just make sure your safety stays on! (Pirates were known to use their spent pistols as parry weapons, as well as bludgeons.)

Shotgun Short Staff - Since you don't have to worry about breaking your imaginary shotgun, there's no reason you can't wade into combat swinging it like a baseball bat! You can parry melee attacks, smash knee caps, club people in the face, and punctuate each victory with a thunderous blast of buckshot! Put a sawed-off in each hand for twice the skull-crackin' smack-down.

Rifle Fencing - You can Point Blank with a rifle, but those long barrels put a little too much distance between you and your target for kung-fu style blocking and grappling. Instead, you'll want to use it like a sword blade, to parry your opponent's attempts to line up a shot while simultaneously moving your own gun into position. You can also forego the shooting and jab them with the barrel or bash them with the rifle butt. Attach a bayonet to the barrel for even more stabby fun.

Disarms & Ripostes - If you ever lose your gun, there are plenty of ways to turn the tables. First, you can just knock your enemy's gun out of their hands, too. Even better, you can take your enemy's gun out of their hands and put it in your own. Even more stylish is turning an adversary's gun around the making them shoot themselves! You could also grapple for the weapon and then break free with a baseball bat or golf swing into their face or legs. Last, but certainly not least, you can render your opponent's gun useless by disassembling the chamber, immobilizing the hammer, stealing their ammo clip, or just switching the safety on while you beat them.

Blocking Bullets - If you're shooting for some serious wuxia wackiness, you can allow characters to actively block bullets, not just dodge out of the way. You can go the Wonder Woman route and use some kind of shield (in her case, armored bracelets). If you're using a handgun (preferably two handguns), you can turn your gun to the side and bounce incoming bullets off the barrel. Finally, there's the anti-bullet bullet maneuver, where you actually shoot incoming bullets out of the air. Remember, we're not going for realism, here. We're going for "Oh my god, that was *incredible!*"

SNIPERS

There's nuthin', and I mean *nuthin'*, like good sniper support! Having a sniper on your side is like having a guardian angel... who strikes down, with furious anger, anyone who opposes you. When they're *not* on your side, life can be a very painful place.

ONE SHOT, ONE KILL

The trick to role-playing a sniper in a Wushu game is knowing what to Embellish. Unlike most Wushu characters, snipers don't engage in fast combinations of actions. They are masters of stealth and surveillance. They take their time and pride themselves on killing each target with a single bullet.

First, focus on the gritty details of marksmanship: how you set up your rifle, what kind of ammo you use, all the bells and whistles you've added to your sight. Describe the things you have to take into consideration for long-range shooting: the pull of gravity, wind resistance, leading off by a wider margin because the bullet will take longer to reach its target. You can also earn dice for hit details: kill shots aimed at the head or heart, disabling shots in the leg or knee, and (of course) crimson sprays of blood.

Next, don't try to fit your entire narration into the seconds before and after you take your shot. Snipers must be patient. You can earn dice for a shot by describing hours worth of sneaking around, stalking your target, and maintaining invisibility. This works even better in a sniper duel scenario, where both sides are taking their sweet time.

During a fight scene involving other player-characters, taking your time will only work for the first shot or two. After that, the sniper has to keep pace with the rest of the scene. “One shot, one kill” works great in a mook fight, since you can take out a new target (or many new targets) with each successful Yang die. If the target is a Nemesis, you’ll have to wear down their Chi with those marksman details we talked about.

Snipers don’t dodge. Their defense is invisibility. Yin dice will come from cover, either their camouflage or solid objects around their position. Once that gets old, you can wax poetic with Embellishments like “I strike like the vengeful hand of god himself” or “he’s dead before he hears the gunshot, rolling like thunder from out of the blue.” In a mook fight, you can just say “Screw it” and roll your default die for defense.

In sci-fi games, snipers can take advantage of endless technological advancements. Smart Bullets extend their range almost indefinitely. Remote surveillance drones let a sniper “see” their targets from every angle. Virtual reality displays make objects and buildings appear transparent. Cloaking devices make them *truly* invisible. Just look to your source material (books, movies, etc.) for appropriate possibilities.

KEEPING SNIPERS INVOLVED

By their very nature, snipers aren’t usually in the thick of the action. They’re more the “crouch on a rooftop a quarter mile away and pop people’s heads off without suffering any retaliation” type. The down side is that it’s easy to get left out of a scene that way. To keep your snipers involved in the action, you’ll have to give them other things to do.

Distraction - When we say that every character in a Wushu game should be able to handle themselves in a fist fight, we mean it! At an inconvenient moment, spring a minor nemesis or a few mooks on your sniper. Every second they spend tangling with their new assailant(s) is a second their friends go without cover fire!

Surveillance - As long as they’re already getting a bird’s eye view through those big, high-tech scopes, they might as well feed the rest of the team valuable intelligence. This trick works particularly well in sci-fi games, since the sniper will probably want to have some of those handy surveillance drones and VR gear.

Second Job - Similarly, snipers make good dual job characters. They can provide that ever-so-valuable support fire up front, then switch to hacking security or driving the getaway car. One interesting approach would be to give your sniper some kind of non-combat magical power. They conduct rituals, coordinate demonic activity, or muck around in the astral plane before and after picking off the wall guards with a their high-caliber rifle. Put some tarot cards or rune stones in the sniper’s nest to combine this magic wackiness with the surveillance role, too.

GUN-FU IN ACTION

A BALLET OF BULLETS

Confound always turns up where she's least expected. In this case, at the end of the ally behind her nemesis' strip club, right as his limo is leaving for the airport. At first, the driver just stops, as if waiting for this pedestrian to take her leather coat and move along, but the bodyguards know better. They appear from behind dumpsters, in alley doorways, on the fire escapes, right out of the woodwork itself! The alley echoes with the telltale sound of guns being cocked...

Perched on a catwalk high above (+1), Recoil (Old Soldier 5) clicks his assault rifle to full-auto (+1) and sprays both sides of the alley (+1) with the calm dispassion of a man watering his lawn (+1). The mooks fall like bloody dominoes (+1). At the same moment, Confound (Hail of Lead 5) leaps onto the limo's hood (+1) and transforms the windshield into a cloud of shrapnel (+1) with her twin Uzis. She leaps into a cartwheel and sails over the rest of the limo (+1), shooting straight down through the roof and she flies overhead (+1).

The bodyguards are only meant as a momentary diversion, so the GM gives them the most pitiful Threat Rating imaginable: 6. Recoil rolls all 5 of his bonus dice to attack, reserving his default die for defense. Confound doubts there'll be much left when her partner's through. She gets 5 dice, rolling 3 Yang dice and 2 Yin dice. Both players roll at least 1 Yin success, so they don't lose any Chi. Recoil rolls 4 Yang successes on his own, and all 3 of Confound's come up successes, so the mooks are history.

The blood-soaked form of Eddie the Viper (Vicious Bastard 4) rolls out of the wasted limo (+1) and comes up with his gun to Confound's temple (+1). She drops her spent Uzis (+1) and grabs Eddie's gun arm, pulling it to one side just as a bullet rocket's from its barrel (+1). She twists his arm around (+1), pulls a Glock from the small of her back (+1) and buries the muzzle in his spine (+1). Eddie kicks into a backflip to slip out of the arm lock (+1). Confound's bullet just grazes his heel (+1).

The GM picks up 5 dice for Eddie the Viper and chooses to make 3 Yang and 2 Yin. Confound earned the max pool of 6 dice and decides to come out swinging: 4 Yang dice and 2 Yin. Eddie's lower Target Number (4) gets him 2 Yang successes and 1 Yin success, while Confound rakes in 3 Yang and 2 Yin. She easily avoids her nemesis' attacks and scores 2 hits on him. The GM cashes in 2 of Eddie's 3 Chi tokens.

Up on the catwalk, Recoil is snapping a new clip into place when he catches a whiff of gun oil. He spins around to see one of Eddie's legbreakers (Thug 3) sneaking up behind him with a shotgun! He uses the barrel of his assault rifle to parry the shotgun (+1); a blast of buckshot erupts harmlessly to his left (+1). The thug returns the favor by pushing Recoil's rifle upwards, using his shotgun like a staff (+1), and smashes

the butt into the soldier's face **(+1)**. Recoil takes it like man **(+1)**, then stabs his rifle barrel into the thug's kneecap **(+1)**. The goon falls backwards, gasping in pain **(+1)**, and uses the distance to level his shotgun and fire another round **(+1)**. Recoil tilts his weapon up a few degrees and pulls the trigger **(+1)**.

The GM gets 5 dice for this minor Nemesis but, since he was never meant for a long and fruitful life, decides to roll them all in offense. Recoil knows it won't take much to defeat the legbreaker (minor Nemesises generally get less than 3 Chi, and this guy only has 1), so he splits his 6 dice evenly between Yin and Yang. Only 2 of the GM's dice are successes, and Recoil gets all three Yin successes, so no harm done. On the other hand, Recoil's 2 Yang successes are enough to soak up the thug's only point of Chi and then blast him into oblivion!

Eddie the Viper now stands alone against our two heroes. He dives across the alley **(+1)** and grabs a second gun off one of dead mooks **(+1)**. He comes up with his arms crossed, a gun in either hand **(+1)**, and fires a stream of bullets at each of his would-be killers **(+1)**. Recoil falls backwards over the side of the catwalk **(+1)**, hangs upside down by his legs **(+1)**, and cuts a long line of bullet holes into Eddie's side of the alley **(+1)**. Confound spins out of the way **(+1)**, lands in a classic Chow Yun-Fat kneeling pose **(+1)** and empties her clip into the Viper's cold, black heart **(+1)**

The GM decides that Eddie knows the end is near. He declares all 5 of his dice Yang, directing 3 at Confound and 2 at Recoil. Recoil gets 4 dice and chooses to divide them evenly between offense and defense. Confound wants this bastard good and dead, so she rolls all 4 of her dice for attack and counts on her 3 points of Chi to save her. The GM rolls 2 successes to attack Confound and 1 success to attack Recoil. Both of the latter's Yin dice are successes, which more than protects him, but 1 of his Yang dice is a failure. Confound cashes in 2 points of Chi to eat Eddie's bullets, then shoves 4 big Yang successes down his throat! The Viper is dead, and then some! Recoil climbs down from the catwalk and helps his wounded friend to the hospital.

OLD WEST, NEW STYLE

An outlaw called Dead Bang (Let God Sort 'Em Out 4) has been raisin' quite a ruckus in the Peacemaker's town (Quick-Draw Justice 5). The latter has tried to arrest the former on numerous occasions, all without success. Now, the lawman has called the fugitive out. It's kill or be killed, with the town's future hanging in the balance...

Dead Bang swaggers out onto main street **(+1)**, his duster flaring around him in the desert wind **(+1)**. He plucks the cigar from between his teeth **(+1)** and says, "Had your last rites, law man? You've got just over a minute to make peace with your Maker, before I send you to meet him **(+1)**."

The Peacemaker finishes loading his trusty Smith & Wesson revolver (+1), spins it forward, backward, and sideways (+1), then drops it into his holster. "If you spent half as much time shootin' those guns as you do shootin' off yer mouth, I just might have felt compelled to go to church this mornin' (+1)."

The GM gets a total of 5 dice for this opening round of intimidation. The Peacemaker's player gets only 4 dice. The GM decides to go in swinging; he rolls 4 Yang dice and 1 Yin die. The Peacemaker takes a more guarded approach, rolling 2 of each. The GM gets 3 Yang successes for Dead Bang, but his Yin die is a failure. The Peacemaker rolls 2 Yin success and 1 Yang success. Both characters have to cash in 1 point of Chi, which leaves them each with 2 more to spare.

The Peacemaker breathes deep, relaxes his muscles and extends his senses (+1). A bramble of sage brush blows across main street (+1) as the big town clock ticks its way towards high noon (+1). When the moment comes, he will act without thought and righteous purpose with guide his hand (+1).

Dead Bang feigns apathy as he slowly grinds his cigar butt into the dirt (+1). Under the rim of his black, spanish bat (+1), he examines his enemy's every twitch with eyes as cold as steel (+1). His hands drift ever closer to the twin revolvers at his sides (+1).

This is the quick-draw round. The GM picks up 5 dice for Dead Bang, rolling 2 Yin and 3 Yang. The Peacemaker also gets 5 dice, going with 2 Yang and 3 Yin. The GM rolls 2 Yang successes and 1 Yin success, while the Peacemaker nabs 3 Yang successes and 1 Yin success. The Peacemaker's player cashes in 1 point of Chi, but the GM has to lose 2, leaving him at zero. It looks like the law man's tai chi ain't so sissy, after all.

The clock strikes noon and both gunslingers draw their weapons! The Peacemaker's gun snaps up faster than the eye can follow (+1). He pulls back the trigger and fans the hammer back six times (+1). The first bullet flies towards the outlaw's heart like one of Zeus' thunderbolts (+1). The next four bullets knock Dead Bang's shots clean out of the air (+1). The sixth is aimed right between his cold, dead eyes (+1).

Dead Bang's twin revolvers fly into his hands, eager to draw the law man's blood (+1)! His right hand fires off a round (+1), while the left blocks the Peacemaker's first bullet by deflecting it off the gun barrel (+1). Then, he unloads the rest of his ammo so fast that the gunshots sound like a single cannon blast (+1) and tries to sidestep the Peacemaker's fifth shot (+1).

The street falls silent as the dice are rolled... The Peacemaker still has 1 point of Chi left, where his adversary has none, so he decides to go on the offensive. He picks up 4 Yang dice and 2 Yin. The GM splits Dead Bang's dice evenly, 3 of each. He rolls a pair of Yang successes and a pair of Yin successes. The Peacemaker only gets 1 success in defense, but he has the point of Chi to cover it. His 4 Yang successes, however, are more than enough to overcome the outlaw's defenses and send him to hell!

CYBER-SNIPERS

Terminal is hacking into an enemy's bank account when one of his online buddies sends him a message: "Expect a collect call this evening. Long distance." That's code for "Someone hired a sniper to take you out tonight." Great, just great. This is one headache he doesn't need. Still, he does enjoy a challenge...

First, Terminal (Ballistics 5) sets up a decoy sniper's nest on a rooftop near his home. He takes an old mimetic cloaking device he has lying around (+1) and screws with its thermal filter until there's a .05% inefficiency (+1). That should be just enough to draw attention without *looking* like a decoy. Then, he sets up a low-tech sniper's nest on the second floor of his condo by tearing apart some furniture and concealing himself beneath the wreckage (+1). He deploys surveillance drones outside (+1) and plugs in his cyber-specs for a virtual view of the cityscape (+1). Now, he just has to wait.

The GM will now narrate the Nemesis' actions, even ones that Terminal might not be aware of, in order to generate a dice pool for this deadly game of cat and mouse. The Hit man (Sniper 5) parks his hover car beside a high-rise about a half mile away from Terminal's building (+1). He deploys surveillance drones of his own (+1), which quickly identify Terminal's drones & the malfunctioning mimetic cloak (+1). *Here, the GM decides to fall for Terminal's trap on purpose, because it's a good ploy and the player deserves to be rewarded for his efforts.* He pokes the barrel of his smart rifle out the back window (+1) and fires off three rounds before the first hits its mark (+1)!

Since the combatants are not actually attacking each other this round, any loss of Chi will represent a loss of advantage, not an injury. Terminal's meticulous preparations earned him a total of 6 dice, which he chooses to split evenly between Yin and Yang. The GM also gets 6 dice, but chooses to roll 4 Yang and 2 Yin. Terminal matches the GM's 3 Yang successes with 3 Yin successes. On the other hand, The GM's 1 Yin success is no match for Terminal's pair of Yang successes, so the GM cashes in 1 of his 3 Chi tokens. Terminal has managed to catch his assailant flat footed!

When the first shot is fired, Terminal's surveillance drones lock onto the hit man's position (+1). His cyber-specs light up with 3-D images, augmenting his view of the skyline with tactical data (+1). Terminal activates the warhead on his smart bullet and fires a single shot at the hit man's vehicle (+1). The resulting fireball reduces the hovercar to slag and sends it plummeting earthward (+1). Hungry flames lick the hit man's reactive body armor (+1) as he leaps out of the falling wreckage (+1) and crashes onto a nearby roof (+1). He touches a button on his arm and activates the hovergun concealed in one of his spy drones (+1). It immediately begins transforming Terminal's condo into a well-decorated block of swiss cheese (+1)!

This time, Terminal gets only 5 dice and decides to roll 3 Yang and 2 Yin. The GM decides to split his 6 dice evenly between offense and defense. Terminal rolls 2 Yang successes and 2 Yin successes, but the GM beats that with 3 of each. The hit man escapes the wreck that was his car without a scratch. Terminal manages to survive the barrage of bullets that tears through his condo, but only at the cost of 1 point of Chi. That evens the score to 2 Chi apiece.

The sounds of shattering glass and splintering plastisteel assail Terminal's ears as he clutches his rifle and waits for death (+1). Then, the floor creaks beneath him and falls through, dropping him into the kitchen below (+1). He lands on his feet and sees the hit man through his cyber-specs (+1), switches his smart rifle to armor-piercing ammo (+1), and fires a shot straight through the bastard's aiming eye (+1)! The hit man's drones see Terminal fall through the floor and transmit the data to his tactical display (+1). He snaps his rifle up to his shoulder (+1) and fires 3 bullets: one to the heart (+1), one to the neck (+1), and one right through Terminal's brain stem (+1).

Both duelists rake in 6 dice this round, and both of them go on the offensive by rolling 4 Yang dice and 2 Yin dice. The GM rolls 3 attack successes, but only 1 Yin success. Terminal pulls in all 4 Yang successes, which is just enough to get through the hit man's defensive success and 2 remaining points of Chi. Terminal also rolls 1 Yin success, so he has to cash in his last two points of Chi. He takes those bullets to the chest and neck, but manages to stay conscious long enough to call a black market meat mechanic. The cops find the hit man's corpse an hour later, minus one eye.

BAR BRAWLIN'... WITH BULLETS!

The vigilante known as "The Cellist" is casing a speak-easy that may be a front for the Diamondbacks, a local street gang. Unfortunately, his reputation for pandemonium got there first. One of the bouncers eyeballs him and alerts his fellow mooks, who instantly produce guns from every nook and cranny...

The Cellist (Vengeful 5) throws open his cello case and dives right in (+1)! Two metal canisters pop over the lip and roll across the floor as the mooks raise their weapons (+1). Dense smoke billows out of them, filling the bar as The Cellist clicks the safety off his tommy gun (+1). He runs sideways through the fog, perforating the advancing goons (+1) as enemy fire peppers the wall behind him (+1).

The Cellist is fighting alone, but he can be expected to score 3-4 hits per round. The GM wants this to be a pretty significant fight, so she gives the mooks a Threat Rating of 15. The Cellist earned 6 dice and decides to roll 4 Yang and 2 Yin. Both of the latter come up successes, so no Chi is lost this round. One of his Yang dice comes up a six, so the 3 successful dice reduce the mooks' Threat to 12. We're just gettin' started!

The tommy gun's ammo drum runs out just as the speak-easy's ceiling fans start to disperse the fog. The Cellist looms out of the smoke like the shadow of death, slips a choke hold on the nearest mook, and uses him to soak up his buddies' bullets. He disconnects the tommy gun's ammo drum with one hand and kicks it into a mook's face, breaking his nose. Then, he switches his grip on the tommy gun and swings it like Babe Ruth, knocking another goon flat on his ass.

The Cellist gets 6 dice for his filibuster. Once again, he decides to roll 4 Yang dice and 2 Yin dice. He only gets 1 Yin success, but that's plenty when you're fighting mooks. He gets lucky with the Yang dice, rolling 4 successes and reducing the Threat to 8.

Leaving his human shield to bleed on the floor, the vigilante dives back into his cello case and emerges with a pair of sawed-off shotguns. He rolls under a table, comes up between two mooks, and clubs them both in the back of the head. Both barrels are leveled at the bar a moment later, blasting two more goons back into a wall of liquor bottles. They're baptized in a river of booze and shattered glass.

Another filibuster, another 6 dice. This time, the Cellist throws caution to the wind with 5 Yang dice and 1 Yin die. The gamble pays off: the Yin die is a success, so no Chi is lost, and 4 of the Yang dice are successes, which cuts the mook's Threat in half!

The Cellist spins on his heel and clubs those two mooks behind him a few more times, then leaps backwards against the bar, using it for cover. He digs two cartridges of incendiary ammo out of his pocket and tosses them high into the air. He breaks open his shotguns, catches the cartridges on their way back down, and snaps the guns closed. Next, he reaches over the bar, places one barrel against a bottle of 150 proof vodka, and fires an explosive face eraser at the remaining mooks!

The Cellist expects this to be the last round. He gets yet another filibustery 6 dice and rolls 5 to attack and 1 to defend. Unfortunately, he rolls a lot of sixes, including his Yin die. The player cashes in a point of Chi. Since he only gets 3 Yang successes, the mooks still have 1 point of Threat left...

The Cellist gets up from behind the bar and admires his handiwork. Suddenly, the bar manager kicks open his office door, points the business end of Winchester rifle at the vigilante, and opens fire! He can almost see the bullet as he dives to the side (+1). It cuts through the smoke in slow motion and grazes his right ear (+1). As the mook loads a new round, the Cellist jumps backwards through one of the bar's blacked-out windows (+1) and fires his last shot at the alcohol-soaked bar (+1). Fire erupts from the barrel and ignites a pillar of flame straight out of the Bible(+1)!

With only one Threat level left, the Cellist can afford to play it safe. He splits his 6 dice evenly between Yin and Yang, getting 3 Yin successes and 2 Yang successes. The mooks lose their last level of Threat to hellish incineration!