

# RECLUSE

A SOLO ENGINE  
v1.0 [Graven Utterance](#)

## What's this?

It's a simple question-answering tool you can use to tell stories with unexpected twists, or as drop-in replacement for the oracle in your favorite GM emulator. (I like [so1um](#) and the [CRGE](#).) Its two defining features are:

### Quick interpretation

No arithmetic, large table lookups, or state tracking to understand the results of a roll. Instead, we only do value comparisons between dice and a high/low judgment. After a test roll or two, this can be done with a glance.

### Surprise

Lots of tools like this one inject randomness in the form of plot twists, but the twist is usually introduced in the course of answering the question, or after it's been answered. If you're GMing or playing solo, that means you're adding elements to your narration that you didn't expect, but it's not really *surprising*, the way that players get surprised when they think they know what's going on and it turns out they don't. This tool tries to mimic that feeling of surprise by making the GM into an unreliable narrator; whenever you ask a question using this mechanic, it's possible that *the question itself is wrong*, which fosters less predictable twists.

## Consulting the oracle

You'll need 2d6 in one color, and 2d6 in another. I'll use black and white.

To resolve a yes-or-no question, roll one black die and one white die. If white is highest, the answer is *Yes*. If black is highest, the answer is *No*.

To find out if the answer is more nuanced than just a plain *Yes* or *No*, also look at the value on each die. If both are low (3 or less), add *But*. If both are high (4 or more), add *And*.

You ask, "Does the vampire catch fire?" You roll one white die and one black die and get 5 4. That's a *Yes*, because the white die is higher, and an *And*, because both rolls are 4 or higher. If the black die had come up as 3, it would have been a plain *Yes* instead.

## Likely and unlikely events

*Yes* and *No* are equally likely if you use one die of each color. If circumstances are different, include an additional die in favor of the more likely outcome when you roll, but only keep the higher die of that color when you compare.

You ask, "Does Lydia make it over the fence?" Unlike the werewolf that's after her, she's just a puny human, so it's pretty unlikely she'll succeed. You roll one white die and two black dice. You get 3 3 5. You ignore the black 3, so the answer is a plain *No*; she doesn't make it over.

If you do the math, you might notice that you're about three times more likely to get *And* than *But* on an uneven roll, since you're throwing out low dice. This means more extreme outcomes for extra drama.

## What if I roll doubles?

If the dice are equal, some [presupposition](#) behind the question is wrong! This means that you're taking something for granted that makes it impossible to answer with "Yes" or "No." If it's obvious how you're the question could be assuming something, change it and ask something else. You can also use your favorite plot twist generator if you need to, but keep in mind that *the question itself was wrong*; you'll need to revise your assumptions about the situation and the world, not just add something new.

If you've never thought about questions this way, it can be tricky to recognize what one presupposes. One approach is to imagine what would have to be the same about the scenario if the answer were either *Yes* or *No*. For example, if I ask, "Does the villain's sidekick escape before the train explodes?" there are a lot of things that would have to be the same under either answer, the most obvious one being that the train explodes! (This is a presupposition introduced by the use of *before*.) There are other presuppositions in there too, like that the villain has a sidekick, and even that there's a train.

You ask, "Does Sam grab the gun from the mobster?" and roll 4 4. This means it's not possible to answer "Yes" or "No," but why? You think, "Well, maybe the thing that the mobster is holding only *looks* like a gun," but decide that can't work because it was fired just a minute ago. Instead, you realize the mobster isn't a mobster at all, but an undercover cop! You follow up with a crucial question: "Does Sam know he's interrupting a sting operation?" Fingers crossed...