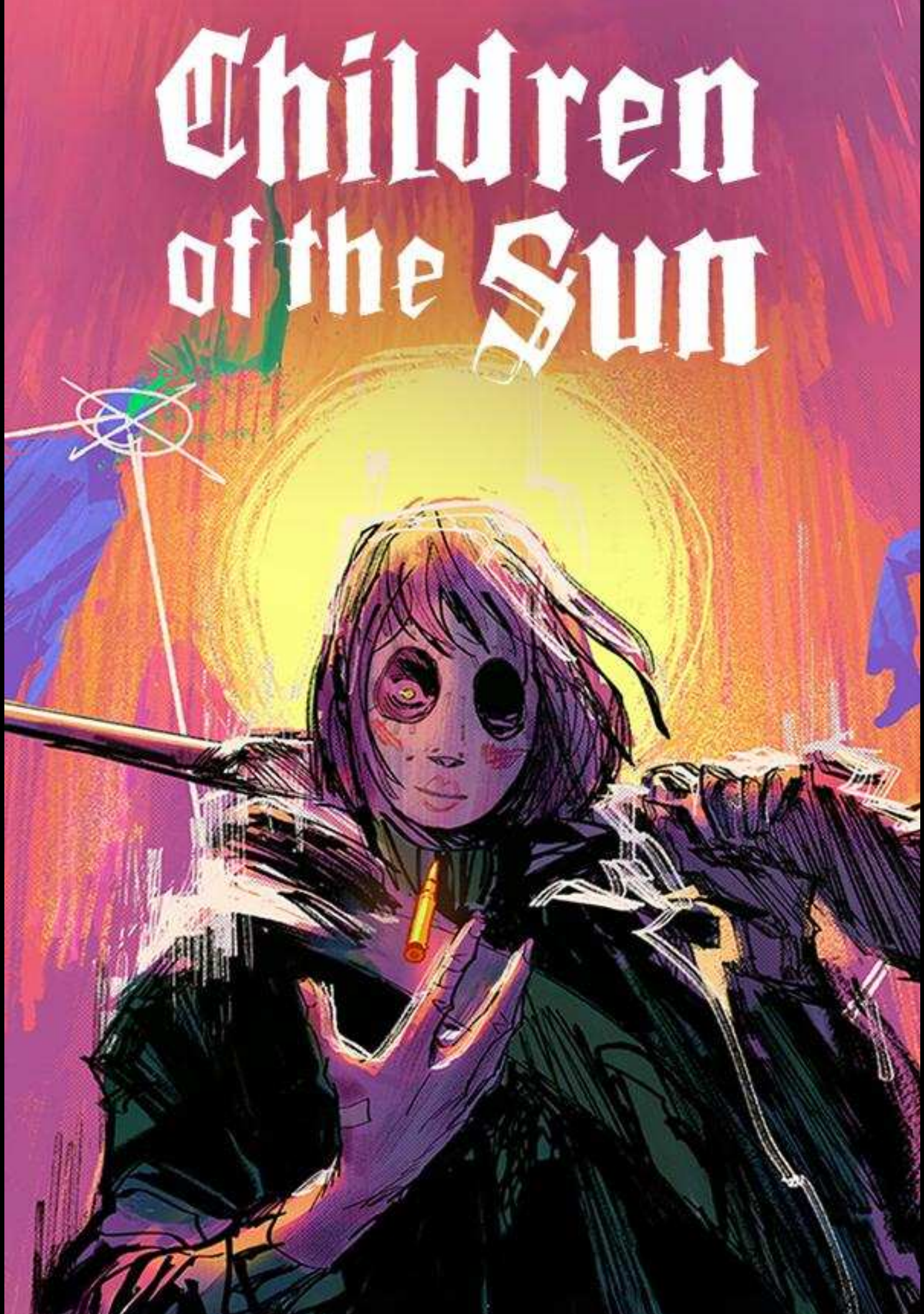

Children
of the Sun

Introduction

The Children of the Sun: a religion, a family, a home, a cult by any other name. The cult was similar to many others like it. Isolating their acolytes in compounds, brainwashing them with love, and grooming them to worship their leader as a messiah, and to follow his every word without question. What separated the Children of the Sun, is that their supernatural power was very real.

Somehow, the cult leader managed to unlock psychic powers and developed a procedure to allow his followers to develop their own psychic potential. It should go without saying that this made the cult very popular and gave credence to the leader's claim of divinity. Naturally, he had no qualms abusing this authority.

He would select women from among his followers, married or otherwise, to bear his children. One such follower would begin to waver in his faith when his own wife was chosen for such a duty. This faith would be shattered when the leader arbitrarily chose his daughter as a human sacrifice for their rituals.

In an effort to protect their daughter, the husband was crippled, the wife killed, and the daughter scarred physically and emotionally. Blaming himself for his family's fate, the man blew his brains out with his hunting rifle. The daughter was left with nothing but trauma and an unquenchable hatred for the leader.

This runaway dawned a paper mache mask and seized her father's rifle in order to seek revenge against the cult. Luckily for her, the runaway possessed psychic potential far greater than any other follower, perhaps even the leader himself. Perhaps this is why he was so eager to sacrifice her.

Her specialty was in the manipulation of projectiles, able to "see" from the perspective of her bullets and alter their trajectory. She would use this power to single-handedly massacre anyone the cult would send to slow her down. In proving her superior psychic powers, the seeds of dissent would grow within the cult, with more and more followers seeing the runaway as their true messiah.

Or perhaps your arrival will change all that. You receive 1000 Sun Points. You arrive on the night of the runaway's escape and will remain in this world for one month.

Opening Notes

Unless you take the Drawback Overcast, this Jump will behave like a Gauntlet. This means that you are stripped of any perks, powers, items, etc. from outside this Jump, but death will only send you on to your next Jump. Unlike normal gauntlets, you will still receive a full starting stipend.

Backgrounds

Any background can be taken as Drop-In. Choose age & gender freely.

Beloved Child - Free

You are proud to call the Children of the Sun your family. Perhaps you are truly loyal to the leader, or maybe you recognize his rapidly declining sanity. Either way, you'll do whatever you can to keep the cult safe from the Runaway or anyone else. You may decide whether you're a regular member of the cult or one of the goons that directly opposes the Runaway.

Disowned Child - Free

For one reason or another, you turned your back on the cult. Well, more likely the cult turned its back on you and retroactively decided you were at fault. Like the Runaway, the cult has no intentions to leave you be. Whether you seek to meekly escape their influence or join the Runaway in hunting down these deceivers who stole so much from you, is a choice that you alone can make.

General Perks

Rough Angles - Free

The "Children of the Sun" video game has a fairly distinct aesthetic, resembling rugged PS2-era graphics. At-will, you can superimpose this artstyle onto the world around you. Nobody but you will notice any particular change.

Power of the Sun - Free*

You spend long enough in the cult for the seed of psychic power to take root within you. You are able to move objects with your mind. To start your range only extends a few feet away from you and only allows you to move small objects like scissors or pencils. The range, power, and precision of these powers will slowly improve over time. However, extreme emotions and trauma can explosively speed up this growth.

In a few years, you might be able to suspend entire cars in the air almost a mile away from you without focusing that hard on it or use a knife to slit someone's throat without even looking in their direction. Alternatively, you can pay 200SP up-front to start the Jump already at that level.

The Drawbacks Fatherless bars you from possessing any kind of psychic powers, which naturally means you cannot take this perk. There are several perks that require some amount of psychic ability to function and therefore cannot be taken without this perk. These perks will be marked with a "*".

The Father - 600SP*

Somehow or another, you have discovered the secret to how the Leader is able to unlock the psychic potential of his followers. This process involves frequent meditation, live sacrifices, prayer (either directed towards you or a deity/ideal of your choosing), and a variety of other rituals. Of those who follow your teachings, only 1 out of every 100 followers will develop any psychic abilities of note. Out of every 10,000 followers, you may get a natural savant like the Runaway who can demonstrate unprecedented psychic power. Hopefully your own psychic power is great enough for these anomalies to not threaten your position.

Beloved Perks

100SP perks free and all others half-off to Beloved origin.

Sycophant - 100SP

You always seem to know exactly how to act to get on the good side of power mad lunatics, and more importantly, how to stay there. Whenever your boss is looking for someone to kill to make a statement, it's pretty much guaranteed they'll choose someone other than you, unless you make an effort to piss them off.

Poison Smiles - 100SP

Like any good cultist, you have mastered the art of weaponizing kindness to make others dependent on you. This is a time-consuming process, but with enough years to groom your mark, they'll gladly turn a blind eye to all but the most extreme displays of cruelty or hypocrisy that might otherwise shake their faith.

Foreshadowing - 200SP*

When somebody is after your life, you will receive visions of their appearance. These are brief flashes and will only trigger if you already know that someone is after you. However, these flashes become more frequent the closer this assassin comes to achieving their goal, allowing you to roughly gauge their proximity.

Occult Sleuthing - 200SP

It's frankly bizarre how quickly the cult realized that they were losing dozens of men to a single bullet. You have the deductive skills to recognize even the most absurd truths behind a given crime scene. Whether that be the involvement of psychic powers, Rube Goldberg-esque murder plots, or similar improbabilities.

Descendence - 400SP*

You have mastered a rare form of psychic power. You are able to teleport up to 4 people, which may or may not include yourself, in a beam of light. The range of this warp is about the size of a small town. This range can be expanded with practice, to the point you could travers an entire city. Regardless of your mastery of this power, these kinds of long-range warps require 45 seconds to warm up.

Personal Space - 400SP*

A special psychic technique used to counter the runaway. You are able to project a large psychic bubble that is able to catch any projectile and redirect it out of the bubble, even if you have no means to perceive said projectiles. This power can only deflect one projectile at a time but can be projected again about half a second after each use. This also enhances your ability to levitate yourself into the air.

Long Live the King - 600SP

You have the kind of charisma that most cult leaders wish they had. You could convince hundreds to worship you as a god, even if you're an unhinged madman who kills their followers on a whim and rapes their wives. Now, going that far may cause a few cracks to form, but you'll still be left with several dozens of followers willing to become killers in their own right just to earn your approval.

Sympathetic Barrier - 600SP*

A special psychic technique used by the Leader to save his own skin. You are able to erect large psychic barriers linked to up to 10 individuals of your choosing. They must remain outside the barrier, no more than 20 meters away, and alive. As long as at least one of these links remains, the barrier is invulnerable to all conventional damage. You can even nest multiple barriers within each other.

Disowned Perks

100SP perks free and all others half-off to Disowned origin.

Hunter - 100SP

Even without the use of psychic powers, you are a crack-shot with a rifle. You can put most snipers to shame and have a vague feeling for when you have a clear shot to either something living, or something that will explode when shot. However, this doesn't actually tell you what that someone or something is.

Survivor - 100SP

For such a young girl, the Runaway makes surviving in the woods look easy and so do you. Fishing, hunting, foraging, you have all the skills one could need to survive without any human assistance for prolonged periods. Some warm clothes, a knife, and maybe a hunting rifle for good measure, and you're set for life.

Mark of the Beast - 200SP

You are able to place a mental "mark" on a living being or other notable targets in your line of sight with a moment of focus. You are able to perceive this "mark" through solid walls once set. These will remain until the target has died, 3 hours pass, or they escape your range (about 2 miles).

Berserker - 200SP

One would think that insanity would be a liability to an assassin. Madness, in all its forms, only seems to increase your lethality. Dulling your pain while sharpening your other senses, concentration, and overall ferocity. Not even hallucinations can impede your ability to strategize or identify your enemy.

The Old King is Dead - 400SP

What better way to prove your superiority over someone than to kill them? Whenever you find yourself up against some kind of (literal or figurative) cult of personality, simply killing the individual at the top has an odd effect on those below. The bulk of said cult will instantly redirect their admiration to you, allowing you to take control of the entire group without any notable resistance.

Sharpshooter - 400SP*

Most individuals you see will have a specific body part that emits a strange purple light. These are nodes of psychic energy. For every two nodes you destroy, you gain one consumable "charge" that allows you to boost a psychic power of your choosing. You can only hold three charges at a time. In the case of the Runaway, these charges allowed her to freely change her trajectory mid-air.

Prelude - 600SP*

On the night before you partake in some kind of assassination or major battle, you will experience prophetic dreams that simulate these missions, down to exact enemy locations. These dreams are abstract, and don't account for factors outside the battle like the betrayal of an ally, or the arrival of a new superweapon. However, you'll have about a dozen attempts to perfect your strategy before you wake up.

Ballistokinesis - 600SP*

The Runaway's iconic power. You can infuse your power into a projectile, allowing you to "see" from the projectile's perspective with time slowed to a crawl. You can slightly alter the projectile's trajectory in-flight, but if you hit a valid target (any living being or explosive) your bullet stops in-place for you to freely rotate before resuming its prior momentum. You may develop more techniques in time.

This power has a few weaknesses. You can only control one projectile at a time, and doing so leaves your body defenseless. The projectile will lose all power, and your consciousness will return to your body if the bullet hits any non-valid target or leaves the range of your power (marked by a giant golden bubble only you can see). The size of this bubble will grow as this power does. By the end of her quest for vengeance, the Runaway could encompass a small town with her power.

Items & Allies

Discount any two purchases. Discounted 100SP purchases are free.

Death Mask - Free

Some kind of facial accessory of your choosing. Whether it be a paper mache mask, sunglasses, some kind of face paint, etc. Other than (poorly) obscuring your identity, this has no noteworthy special properties.

Accomplice - 100SP (can purchase multiple times)

With each purchase, you may either create, import, or export a companion. Created or Imported companions get 600SP to spend. Alternatively, you receive a slot that can be used to recruit any canon character, of which there aren't many options.

Deliverer - 100SP

A standard hunting rifle. This is more receptive to abilities that are focused through weapons. However, if you lack any such abilities, it's just a regular gun. You receive a few dozen bullets that are replenished monthly.

Sweet Ride - 100SP

A mundane car. This is nothing fancy, and you do need to refuel it. Just be aware that the entire car will instantly combust in a fiery explosion of a bullet so much as grazes the gas cap. Still, it's better than just walking everywhere.

Invincible - 200SP

Either a large riot shield or a full-body armor. The armor will protect against most bullets from any angle, but certain psychic powers can boost a bullet to pierce through even this. The shield is far sturdier but only defends from one angle.

Old Home - 400SP

A large compound that seems to attract orphans or families seeking to cut all ties with the outside world. In other worlds, it's like a magnet for the types of people that are just perfect for indoctrinating. No matter how many people who come to this compound get indoctrinated, it never seems to harm its reputation.

A New Sun Rises

You have decided against taking a passive role in the conflict between the Runaway and the cult. Should events proceed uninterrupted, the Runaway will manage to carve a path through everyone the Leader throws at her. The might of her psychic power causes many members of the cult to begin doubting the Leader's holiness, as wouldn't the true Messiah logically wield the greatest powers.

Threatened by the possibility of losing his hold on the cult, the Leader becomes increasingly unhinged, which only further drives a wedge between him and the cult. Once all is said and done, the remnants of the cult place the Leader's crown on the Runaway's head mere moments after she pierced a hole in the Leader's own.

What happens afterwards is anyone's guess.

Your goal is simple, to seize leadership of your cult for yourself. Whether you do this from within by turning fellow members against the Leader, or from without by proving your psychic superiority as you carve a bloody path to the Leader.

What you do about the Runaway is up to your discretion. Her mental instability will make any form of negotiation difficult, and it's unlikely that she'll be especially pleased by someone else killing the object of her revenge.

However you claim leadership of the cult, the reward for this is naturally the Cult itself. 100 of the cultists most loyal to you will follow you between worlds as a group companion, 10 of which are psychics. They will likely seek to spread the cult's teachings to other worlds. Though, you are free to tweak said teachings to your own ends. For every 1,000 regular worshipers that are brought into the cult, the "inner circle" or the portion of the cult that follows you between worlds, will increase by 1.

In addition, you receive the Leader's crown to serve as a badge of office. This crown of flowers sits comfortably above your head, never wilts, and recovers from any damage, but is otherwise a mundane ring of flowers.

If you took this challenge without taking Overcast, meaning you do not benefit from any outside perks or powers, you will also receive the Perk The Father for free. If you already purchased it, you will be refunded 600SP to spend as you please.

Drawbacks

No Drawback Cap.

Overcast - +0SP

By taking this, this Jump no longer runs under Gauntlet rules. You get to keep all your outside items, powers, perks, etc. In return, when you die, that's the end of your Chain. Taking this will also reduce the reward for completing the scenario.

Arrogant - +100SP

You just can't let anything be easy. You constantly insist on giving yourself some kind of pointless challenge or handicap. Whether it's insisting on shooting your target through the windows of a moving train or deliberately waiting until their backup arrives. Failing to complete these arbitrary challenges will leave you with a deep sense of disappointment in yourself.

Depraved - +100SP

Like the Leader, you have an insatiable hedonistic streak. You want everything: sex, food, money, power, etc. This compulsion is so strong that without significant willpower, you'll sate these desires with no regards for who gets hurt in the process or what consequences these actions could bring onto you. Expect to make many enemies if you can't keep these desires in-check.

Careless - +100SP

The universe itself seems intent to see you blown up. Whenever it would be to your detriment, potentially explosive targets are far more dangerous than they should me. Without fail, if a single bullet hits these, or something else explodes remotely close to these, they will produce a disproportionately large explosion that can kill someone in full body armor. This never takes effect when it would benefit you.

Scarred - +200SP

Something isn't quite right with your head. A deeply traumatic past event has deeply damaged your psyche. You'll be plagued with nightmares whenever you sleep and overtime these visions will seep into the waking world. This will often manifest in subtle shifts in your perception, like shop signs morphing into cries for help, or random strangers suddenly bearing the face of your worst enemy.

Oblivious - +200SP

Situational awareness has never been your strong suit. Whether it's not noticing the car levitating precariously over your head, taking several seconds to notice your friend got their brains blown out right in front of you, or thinking standing next to a pile of gas tanks for an extended period is a good idea. You're just a bit slow to recognize very obvious signs of imminent danger.

Indoctrinated - +200SP

You have been fully brainwashed by the cult's teachings. While hardly anything uncommon, the Leader has arbitrarily decided to make your life Hell. It'll take something on the level of what the Runaway's family went through for you to even consider turning your back on the cult. Unfortunately, with this going through such a tragedy at the hands of the Leader is a very real possibility.

Dazzling - +200SP

Your radiance is blinding... in the sense that you literally emit golden light from your body at all times. This makes it almost impossible to conceal yourself, as this effect negates stealth abilities and even spreads to any armor or clothing you wear. Your enemies will instinctively recognize this aura as yours. If you feel so inclined, you may retain this aura as a toggleable effect post-Jump.

Spurned - +300SP

You have made a very dangerous enemy. You have wronged a powerful psychic on a level that can never be forgiven, and they will seek your death with every fiber of their being. Their hate catalyzes their powers to evolve further with every single setback. In addition, they seem to have a passive ability that interferes with any attempts to detect them through supernatural means like scrying.

Fatherless - +300SP

You, unfortunately, were not one of the chosen. You possess no psychic abilities to speak of, not even those you would otherwise inherit from your exploits in past worlds. This grants you significantly less authority within the cult, and significantly less power to seek revenge against them, should you be inclined to do so. As explained in Power of the Sun, this bars you from any perks marked with a "*".

Perfectionist - +400SP

Whether due to an excess or caution or simply lack of ammunition, the Runaway always insists on using only one bullet to kill all her targets in a given area. You hold yourself to a similar restriction. You will only allow yourself a single attempt at any distinct mission or task. You can only fire one shot, only write one draft, only attempt a recipe once. If you fail any given task on the first attempt, you will insist on giving up entirely, even if it's well within your means to try again.

Vulnerable - +400SP

As it turns out, the human body is a very fragile machine. Regardless of how far your body has drifted from "human" you'll find this equally true. Should you find any part of your body severely damaged, you will die on the spot. Being shot in the arm or the leg will have identical results to a normal person being shot in the head. Body armor can offset this, but a clever or powerful enough enemy might be able to circumvent or simply pierce through any such precautions.

Ending

Go Home

You choose to conclude your Chain to return to your original world.

Stay Here

You choose to conclude your Chain to remain in this world.

Move On

You choose to continue your Chain into a new Jump.

Closing Notes

Gauntlet by Gene.

I don't mind people reposting my Jumps, but I upload all my finished jumps to the /tg/ drive. If you see someone complaining about a dead link, tell them to check there before trying to contact me directly.