Symbiote Jump

Some time back in the fifties, an alien crash-landed on Earth and, in exchange for aid in repairing her ship, she gave the U.S. Government access to something called Symbiotes, artificial intelligences that live inside the bodies of their hosts and who can co-opt their bodily processes, specifically formatted to human biology. Symbiotes, in this sense, are basically AI, designed to keep the host alive during interstellar, non-FTL travel. They're capable of some pretty amazing things, from the before-implied immortality, to regeneration, and much, much more. And the only thing it costs the host is a bit of privacy... well, that and a built-in fail-safe that came as a direct result of the government deciding that, because the alien wouldn't give them any easily weaponizable tech, they needed to shoot her down. You shouldn't need to worry too much about it, though.

It’s now the early 2000’s. Over the next few years, knowledge of Symbiotes is going to become commonplace, and cause a bit of a schism amongst the population of the Earth. And by, "a bit of a schism," I mean, "there's gonna be a capital-W War." You start out a couple of months before the main character of this story reaches synergy, and, basically single-handedly, causes shit to hit the fan. You've got until then to prepare for the worst, because once things start going wrong, it will quickly, and I do need to emphasize quickly, spiral out of control.

Until then, you have some decisions to make, and some points to spend.

!!+1000 CP!!

Oh, and, do be careful. That fail-safe? It's a visual memetic agent that overwrites the Symbiote and lobotomizes the Host, turning them into ravening monsters called Berzerkers. It's triggered by seeing other Berzerkers, or things physically close enough to them, and while there are workarounds, they're not pretty. And the cure is a few years off.
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Identity

Location

Everyone but the United States of America actually likes Symbiotes, because, well, immortality and super science all rolled into one neat little package, what's not to like? Most

of these places have nothing happening in them, basically at all, so most of the descriptions are going to be very bare bones, bordering on irreverent. Roll 1d10, or pay 100 CP, for this.

1: America
America hates Symbiotes for... "reasons." Leaving after everything gets started is going to be a serious pain in the ass.

2: Mexico
One half of the main Symbiote exodus from the USA. America hates them.

3: South America
Never actually gets mentioned in the story.

4: Canada
The other half of the main Symbiote exodus from the USA. America hates them, too.

5: Europe
Also never actually gets mentioned in the story.

6: Asia
Mentioned as being really welcoming to Symbiotes, mostly because of industrial advancements.

7: Africa
Symbiotes here try to artificially breed endangered and extinct species, with mixed results for a while.

8: Australia
Most Symbiotes end up here, through one method or another, after the American exodus.

9: Antarctica
Really fucking cold, which is good for most Sybmiote tech since it generates a lot of heat. God B ends up here, eventually. You'll learn what that means later.

10: Free Choice
You lucky bastard.

Backgrounds

So, first, roll 2d8+14 to determine your physical age. Then pick one of the below Backgrounds for yourself. Pretty standard so far. You can also pay 100 CP to determine your physical age yourself, and change your gender if you want.

As far as your Symbiote abilities go, you begin as a Synergized Pair.

Homeless(Drop-In)[Free]:

No usable history, no family, no friends, no memories invading in on your own. Take the good with the bad, Jumper.

Civilian[100 CP]:

You have a job, job history, a family, friends, possibly even a house of your own. On the other hand, you're susceptible to jury duty.

Military[100 CP]:

It pays well, at least, and it's a gateway to some of the most reliable work there is. You're military trained for combat, and can shoot a gun well.

Political[200 CP]:

Simultaneously one of the best and worst jobs there is. You get paid to lie, cheat, steal, and accept monetary gifts to ensure your vote on things. Most people that willingly take this path are certified pieces of shit, but maybe you're one of the good ones?

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Perks

Homeless

Practical Concerns[100 CP]:

Regardless of where you are, you'll always be able to find a place to sleep and just enough food and water to survive, if not well, then well enough. You might end up sleeping under an overpass, eating the stuff that a gas station tossed out because it didn't sell all day, but you won't freeze and you won't starve. Not great, but it beats the way most homeless people live.

Monotony's End[200 CP]
You are immune to boredom. End of statement. Really, that's all there is to it, you no longer have the capacity for boredom. Find yourself some paint to watch dry, and you'll be set for a few hours. As an added bonus, you find things that are actually enjoyable to be significantly moreso, even if you've done them so many times and for so long that they've become routine, or even monotonous.

Fade Away[400 CP]
You can become unobtrusive in the extreme, so much so that, if you can break line of sight for more than a few seconds, you may as well be invisible. Obviously, this won't fool things like a dog's sense of smell, or technological answers, like a pair of thermal goggles, but it will make people much, much more likely to just ignore you, or send you on your way if they've alreay noticed you.

Just Call Me Jerry[600 CP]
Anything you need, you can figure out a way to make it, usually just from whatever's at hand, but if not, then you know where to go to get the parts you're missing. This even counts things that you wouldn't know how to make intuitively and renders most matters of reverse engineering into what you'll feel like is just, "common sense." Anything that it doesn't immediately cover, it will once you manage to get your hands on the plans, or a physical copy to crack open.

Civilian

Common Sense[100 CP]
You have one of the most sorely misnamed, uncommon things in the world: actual Common Sense of every description. What else is there to say? As long as something should be fairly common to understand, you know the easiest way to do it as intuitively as breathing. Hell, this may as well be a super power all on its own, but more to it, you can teach these kinds of common sense to others.

Picking it Up[200 CP]

You can scent a double entendre or a hidden meaning better than a shark can scent blood, even ones that have a grain of truth. You'll never be caught off-guard when someone spouts off any form of double-speak, be it a half-truth or a whole lie. In addition, you always know exactly where to look, and what sources to cite, to prove that you're not full of shit, even to people that would normally be willing to swallow their bullshit, hook, line, and sinker.

Savant[400 CP]
You're brilliant, sure, but there's one area where you shine. A field of physical or scientific study that you entered with the ability of a specialist with years of study, walking, talking, and breathing it with the instinctual fluidity of an inborn knack. This knack has made you one of, if not the best person in the world in that field, among the people that everyone who goes into that field aspires just to be in the same room with, if not outright be. You get to choose this specialization, obviously; what good would this be if you didn't?

Mind Like a Steel Trap[600 CP]
While others are struggling to keep new information down, you're moving on to the next lesson; learn faster by learning better. You process information faster and more efficiently than other people, increasing the rate at which you passively learn new things to about twice as fast as other people, and preventing the loss of information over time. Also, with as little effort as actively studying, you can increase the rate you learn to three times as fast as normal people.

Military
Living Weapon[100 CP]
You're as deadly without weapons as you are with, maybe even a bit moreso. Forget learned and practiced martial arts, you are the one and only master of your body, able to control every part of it with an untold level of fluidity and grace, and your style of fighting is above reproach in much the same way many of the fighting styles from antiquity are. You're also more than capable of incorporating another martial art, or any special techniques or abilities you have, into it with little if any practice beyond taking the time to review them.

Adaptable[200 CP]
You're nearly impossible to be taken by surprise or taken advantage of, both on the battlefield and off. Your instincts are adaptable enough to resist any kind of surprising event, springing into action, or reaction, whenever anything might try to catch you by surprise, quickly formulating a reaction without the sudden interruption of processing power that normally occurs.

Natural Born Killer[400 CP]
Very little gives you pause when it comes to taking down your target. Pain, distance, and things standing between you and it don't matter, and neither does a technological gap that leaves the weapon given to you with a weird, squidgy thing hidden inside its body instead of a conventional trigger. Not that you've become mechanical in how you handle it, you can still make decisions informed by your instincts, you're just better at getting it done.

Tactical Genius[600 CP]
You have a preternatural sense of tactics, both yours and your opponents'. You know, not just how to react in a battlefield scenario, but how your opponents will react, oftentimes before they do, allowing you to really seem like the tactical genius you know yourself to be. This allows you to formulate attack strategies for groups, where Adaptable, above, is more intimate, affecting only your own reactions. Together they allow your strategies to be informed by your knowledge of, and reactions to, the people around you, making the most efficient use of them in any given situation.

Political

Adaptive Persona[100 CP]
You don't need to believe in anything to be a politician, you just need to be able to convince your constituents that you are, and always were, the person you're selling yourself as. And you're especially adept at it, people willing to believe the noise you're spewing, regardless of prior statements, and even your own actions. If a good salesman can sell ice to an inuit, a good politician can sell himself, period. And when it comes to politicking, you're the best.

Putting it Down[200 CP]
You can double-talk like it's your first language, before even the one/s you grew up speaking. Your ability with double-speak allows you to hide your real meaning multiple horribly confusing layers deep, making what you actually mean a secret to anyone that doesn't have some kind of instinct similar to the perk Picking it Up, above. And even then, to most people, they'll look crazy if they don't have the ability to prove it.

Cover Story[400 CP]
Most cover stories read like asspulls from word one. Not yours. Yours read like the honest to god truth, and that's just the way you like it. You could do something heinous and easily devise a story within a few moments to make it one hundred percent alright, no intervention from your advisor necessary. This doesn't necessarily make you a good liar, it just makes you especially good at the ancient art of covering your ass with little or no prep time.

Winning Smile[600 CP]
You don't always need a rousing speech, or even proof to back up everything you're saying. Sometimes all the proof in the world will still just look like you're covering for someone. No, sometimes the only thing you need to do to sway someone is smile just right. Any time you put on an award-winning smile, whatever you said right before it carries much more belief-swaying gravitas.

Symbiote Abilities
Pretty self-explanatory, these are abilities allowed to Symbiotes. Non-Symbiotes, those with the Human Drawback, can't take these.

Regeneration[100 CP; Free: Any Symbiote]
You heal quickly from wounds. Crazy-quickly, in fact. Your Symbiote's capable of devoting all biological processes to healing specific injuries, fully regrowing fingers, or reattaching limbs held to the stump, within minutes. Also allows the symbiote to control your immune system to hide weapons or objects inside your body without your body attacking them, and

apoptosis(engineered cell death and regrowth) to move weapons that you hide inside you either out of your body, or to a mount your symbiote's built into your skeleton, like a rounded sickle-blade to a raptor-style toe-claw mount, for example.

Basic Bioprocessing[100 CP; Free: Homeless]

Your symbiote can easily engineer biological substances, making better-than-standard synthetic versions. For anything not produced natively within the body, you'll need an intact, functional copy of the structure that makes it first; a spider would be necessary to learn to synthesize spider silk, for example. You'll also need caloric energy to burn as fuel to make it, though you're a bit more capable of breaking down biological substances for it with this, able to, if a bit inefficiently, digest gasoline and other such substances, and the process goes faster with food rich in the materials used to make the substance. As a side note, this is how symbiotes make, "juice," hyper-oxygenated synthetic adrenaline, from the items section below.

Advanced Bioprocessing[200 CP; Discount: Civilian]

Your symbiote can now create and control separate, autonomous bioprocessors, also known as biocomputers, that can carry out instructions without your input. Like Basic Bioprocessing, it can create biological components, but it is also capable of creating things that are organic, but non-biological, such as minerals, like diamond or ruby, or carbon in the form of carbon nano-tubes or nano-scale armor plates, as well as things that are biological, but unnatural, such as an organic fabricator. Biocomputers require a modicum of upkeep, or they eventually deteriorate and die; being close enough for your Symbiote to debug its functions and fix any problems for a few minutes every or day or two is more than enough.

Enhanced Body[200 CP; Discount: Military]

Basically just an efficiency enhancer for your ability to process things natively, putting it on par with Advanced Bioprocessing's ability, though not necessarily its scale. You would, for example, be capable of, 1:1, replacing your organ, skeletal, and muscular systems with far more efficient carbon nano-scale replacements, increasing the efficiency of all of your body's physical functions. Alternatively, you can augment your skeleton with inorganic components like metal, without your body rejecting them, or integrate mechanical parts into your body, such as fabricating a coil gun made from a high-end defibrillator station,

and mounting it in place of your forearm. Y'know, whichever floats your proverbial boat.

Bio-Communication[400 CP; Discount: Political and Companions]

You're capable of communicating, in a purely mental capacity, with other Symbiote pairs, via a pseudo-psionic neural network where each of you know what, exactly, the other members are doing. This also lets you lump your processing power together between the people in a small area, aggregating that power to figure out the best tactic, or to create separate, empty bodies for remote control, or biologically encoded data in hollowed out chips of bone. Additionally, for you, any mental abilities you have, such as learning perks, are also carried over to those within the network, for as long as the connection lasts.

Berzerker OS[600 CP; Discount: Synergized Pair(not Human, Imprisoned, or Gray-Matter Transfer)]

The cure for the Berzerker Protocol, plain and simple. Where a standard Synergized Pair has processing about forty times that of human average, a Berzerker, or a Synergized Pair making use of the Berzerker OS, has processing power approximately six hundred times even that advanced number, nearing twenty-five thousand times that of human average via the use of low-loss quantum computing. At this point, bioprocessing is capable of making metamaterials and things along the lines of antimatter. In addition, this computational ability scales with mass; the, "Gods," God A and God B, are tower-sized Synergized Pairs making extreme use of Berzerker OS. See Notes, below, for the kinds of things this entails.

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Stuff

Gear

Juice Cans[50 CP]

A six-pack of sealed 32 oz pop-top cans filled with, "Juice;" hyper-oxygenated synthetic adrenaline. Refills once a week, visual elements of packaging can be customized to your liking.

Military Gear Cache[200 CP]

A cache of military-grade gear, including everything from Symbiote-geared weapons to the advanced anti-Symbiote weapons and technology that the US engineers in the future. This includes the composition of what will become the standard military-issue

combat and regeneration drugs, as well as military-issue genetic modifications, and schematics for injector implants for the combat and regeneration drugs.

The Chair[200 CP; Discount: Military]
It's a chair... Well, okay, it's a scientifically-advanced chair. If a Symbiote pair sits in it, the chair can be used to Imprison it, in the manner of an Imprisoned Symbiote pair, or, if the Symbiote is already Imprisoned, it can be used to free it from Imprisonment. Includes schematics and a manual.

Large-Scale Biocomputer[400 CP]
A biocomputer is a massive wad of meat and, in some cases, electronics that's been programmed by your Symbiote to function as a computing engine and/or processing plant. Being that they're made, primarily, of meat, they need to be fed, and, since they're made of your flesh and have only very rudimentary internal systems, they need to be maintained by your Symbiote every so often. Some are small enough to fit in a cooler, but the one that this gives you is big enough to fill a prison-sized group shower-stall. On the plus side, any bonuses your Symbiote has, it has as well; on the downside, anyone that doesn't know it's there and finds it is going to have a rude surprise that may end in the use of far more fire than is anywhere near advisable in a closed area.

Companions
Jolly Cooperation[50 CP per pair, see below]
You receive, or import, a pair of Companions as a Host and Symbiote pair. They get 600 CP to spend on a Background and Perks, and may take up to 300 CP worth of Drawbacks chosen from, "Body Issues," "Divergent Pair," and the two Symbiote type Drawbacks, "Imprisoned," and, "Gray-Matter Transfer," listed below. You may buy multiple pairs of host and symbiote, each for 50 CP, and each pair only counts as one Companion.

Alternatively, for 50 CP, you can import an existing Companion as your own Symbiote. Normally, Symbiotes have the exact same gender identity and orientation as their host, but this isn’t a problem for you; you could import a sentient house as your Symbiote without a problem, if you have one as a Companion.

Bio-Injector[400 CP; Discount: Human]

A Bio-Injector is a bio-organic device containing a blank, non-synergized Symbiote, completely lacking in personality; whereas normally, a Bio-Injector would erase its contents upon use, this one is specifically modified to skip this process, rendering it indefinitely reusable, and has had the Berzerker Protocol removed. It also modifies its own programming to the genetic code of whatever it's injected into, allowing you to make Symbiotes of even non-humans, though they do still need the 90% predictive rate typically required of Symbiotes. This is a good thing, though; Symbiotes are AI and, baseline, have a relatively alien mentality, and, without the ability to predict human interactions might take a harmless joke for a serious threat on their host's life and attack the person that made it, potentially killing them. In case it wasn't obvious, people that you turn into the Host of a fully synergized Symbiote pair have the option of becoming a Companion if they're willing to come with you; it should be noted, though, that this 90% predictive rate takes, at minimum, five to eight years, even with the knowledge that it should be predicting its host, and could easily take in excess of a decade, depending on the person in question.
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Drawbacks

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for: Drawbacks. Your chance to squeeze every last bit of benefit out of this Jump that you can, even if it means making your own life a living hell for ten years. You can have a maximum of 600 CP worth of Drawbacks.

Body Issues[+100 CP]

You and the other half of your pair don't quite get along in regards to every little thing. If you're the human host of a Symbiote, your Symbiote at least seems to like to tinker with how you look, and, for whatever reason, this will make you uncomfortable except in very specific circumstances; if you're the Symbiote, your human host will be made incredibly uncomfortable, if not angry, by every attempt you make to visibly change their appearance outside of combat or in the midst of a life-or-death scenario. If your Symbiote is an imported Companion, the two of you will believe the other to be acting in a completely obstinate manner. If you're a Human, and thus don't have a Symbiote, you develop extreme body issues; you will never be comfortable in your own skin and even if you gain a

Symbiote, no matter the level of change you undergo, you never will.

Stowaway[+100 CP]
Role Reversal: The Drawback. You are the Symbiote of your pair. If taken normally, you're simply the Symbiote, aiding your host. If taken with Imprisoned, below, you're partially imprisoned, able to see what's going on, but unable to interact in any way; if taken with Gray-Matter Transfer, you're the human host, your abilities degraded to that of a mentally deficient child.

Divergent Pair[+200 CP]
You and your partner do not get along, like, at all, and neither of you really even knows why. You can expect some rather extreme arguments to break out over some really trivial shit, and for you to get along only when your collective life depends on it. If you don't have, or aren't, a Symbiote, regardless of what you do, you will come off as generally abrasive in that, "ask five different people what your deal is, and you'll get five completely different answers," way that makes it hard for people to get along with you.

Enemy of the State[+200 CP]
On paper, at the very least, the entire United States is harshly anti-Symbiote. On paper. The US Government, at least, is 100% against them. And you, specifically. No one really seems to know exactly what it is you did to get on their bad side, and anyone that would know is absolutely convinced you know exactly what it is you did and are just playing dumb to get some measure of leniency. They won't show you what it is without some really good litigious hoop-jumping on your part, so rev up that law degree if you want to know what it is you're defending yourself against.

Gray-Matter Transfer[+200 CP]
All the information so far has assumed that you're going into this as a Synergized Pair, but organizations of Symbiotes often have to come up with ways of protecting their constituents from the built-in protocols that make their own minds dangerous. As a workaround to keep their people from triggering the Berzerker Protocol, one Symbiote organization came up with the process of Gray-Matter Transfer, writing a kernel of the Symbiote onto their host's brain. While this does baffle the programming enough to stop the protocol from triggering unless accidentally activated while attempting to repair the Symbiote's higher functions, it does render the Symbiote's higher functions moot,

leaving them barely smarter than a highly intelligent human, and leaves the host brain damaged, no smarter than a child. You're the Symbiote in this case, unless you took Stowaway.

Imprisoned[+200 CP]
So far, this has assumed that you're a Synergized Pair, a host and symbiote that have little or nothing between the two of you preventing your growth, but there are other, much worse, ways this could have gone. For example, the Imprisoned are pairs that have had their Symbiotes locked away inside a self-propogating code loop. They were left with their enhanced regeneration on, as well as some somewhat enhanced senses, and little else. If this is taken with Stowaway, you're partially imprisoned, able to watch, but not interact, instead of being completely crammed away inside what amounts to a mental prison of your own devising.

Human[+400 CP]
I don't know why you'd ever do this in this setting of all places, but you're a baseline human. You're not able to take Symbiote powers. Sorry, but they do kinda rely on something that this Drawback specifically takes away. It's only really an option for you human purists out there that just can't be not-human, even if that stops you from being superhuman.

The Fuck Did You Do?[+400 CP]
Bob is an engineer who retired after losing one of his fingers in an accident. Frank is his Symbiote, and the only - potentially, "only other," depending on the Perks you took - Symbiote to ever beat the Berzerker Protocol. By the end of the story, they're using some extreme level tech to fabricate antimatter micro-missiles inside their body and fire them in combat. They have enough plot armor that they tanked a nuke to the face and lived. And, some-fucking-how, you've managed to piss off both of them. What in the fuck did you do?

This is What You Think of as a Good Idea?[+400 CP]
Really powerful Symbiotes, like Bob and Frank, and Bob's girlfriend Ayva and her Symbiote Danielle, can fuse themselves together in an altogether permanent process that spits out an exact copy of themselves, and makes the fused version all but deific, capable of temporarily rewriting physics on a sub-molecular level, at extreme - that's from-Mars-to-Earth extreme - range. Somehow, either God A or God B, and yes, that's what they called themselves, has caught wind of you and your ability and, since you're too strong on your own, conscripted

you as a, "paladin," to carry out their will. Do try not to upset the nascent reality warpers, hmm?

Who are you, John Connor?[+600 CP]

So, at one point, a certain Symbiote Pair, who may or not be the main character of this story, hacked into the NSA's intelligent, three part, self-improving AI cluster. It caught sight of him, and how he worked, and improved itself along the same lines. When it makes its appearance, it calls itself Facet, and has all the combined resources of the NSA, along with all the money it could steal from the internet. Facet has access to nukes, plural, no in-built drive to preserve human life, and can only be killed by simultaneously destroying all three of its component AI. Oh, and, it hates your face for reasons that it is nowhere near forthcoming about.

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The End

Wow, this has been a ride, huh? You got to see a war start, then finish, potentially met a giant, immortal, insectile alien from space, were around when two people became nascent deities... Shit got weird is what I'm saying. So now what?

Stay here

It's not so bad once America's had its ass kicked for it. Maybe stick near Australia for a bit, just to be safe?

Go home

So, yeah, this place may have basically just given you everything you need to fix everything wrong with everything back home, and it'd be nice to see some of those old faces again.

Move on

Hmm, nah. Next world, please!

Whoa, whoa, hold on there, cowboy, you've got one other choice to make, vis a vis the other half of your Pair, if you have one: You can leave them here, in control of the body you used; considering that they probably know enough about you to fake being you, this could either be a good idea, or the worst idea ever. Alternatively, you can take them with you, either keeping them as a Symbiote inside your body, or by granting them a body of their own.

If you give them their own body, you both get to keep the abilities you bought, and they get access to your memories, as though they had been implanted in you when you were born, and recording everything up to that point. This means they know any skills you have that could feasibly be taught/learned, even those learned through Perks. They also gain any purely genetic abilities you have and your skill with them.

In case you have unresolved Drawbacks that changed your symbiote's type, those go away first, and then you get the choice of spinning them off into their own body.
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Notes

Clarification on Symbiotes

Symbiotes are an alien lifeform that lives within the gaps in your bone marrow as a sort of biological computer AI. This is why the process of modifying their code works the way it does: if you remove a bone from a Symbiote's skeleton by more than a couple of inches, it stuns them momentarily, but also makes a large gap in their surface code that they can see the deeper code through. Imprisoned Symbiotes are immune to this, because their Symbiote isn't the one in charge of their ability. On the other hand, Gray-Matter Transfers are hit especially hard by this, because, well, their Symbiotes are the ones in charge of the body.

As an added note, Symbiotes typically rely on an over-adaptation to their host's specific genetic structure for survival and will die if the host's genetics change too much, which typically means, "any, at all." Symbiotes gained through this Jump don't have that weakness, not even when they're spun off into their own creature, and even the ones made by the Bio-Injector, so further genetic augmentation on your part won't kill them.

Also, Symbiotes are typically of the same gender identity as their host, but you can take a different-gendered Companion as a Symbiote with no issues. They'll still identify as a female, you'll still identify as a male, or however that goes in your specific case. You may be a little girl that imports a buff dude as your Symbiote, I don't know - point is, there won't be any problems, unless you consider getting to know each other better a, "problem."

Clarification on Symbiote Abilities

Symbiote abilities are effectively high-grade nanometer-scale tech, at the very lowest capacity, and high-grade femtometer-scale tech at the highest. This means that even fairly weak Symbiotes, with proper instruction, can reproduce natural-looking diamonds, and other gemstones, with the proper materials. You could also build biological electronics inside your body with little or no trouble, and your Symbiote can get internet basically everywhere by hacking into cellular phone internet services and study or entertain themselves while you sleep.

It also means that, should you give them enough raw carbon(camping bricks work), and enough time with a computer(they don't need sleep, even if you do), they could, over the course of a couple of weeks, replace all of your bones and muscles with carbon nano-scale and nano-tube versions of them, like what you could gain with Enhanced Body, above. This also means that, if you have Berzerker OS, at least one other good intelligence boosting perk, and some time to test, you could print anti-matter explosives, exotic matter, and even things like Marvel Adamantium, Vibranium, and the like, directly inside your body or inside a bioprocessor.

Yes, you can learn how to use the Symbiote-specific Perks, but you'd have to put forth a large measure of effort to learn them on your own, or get someone to walk you through the process, to do so. Learning how to do all of them on your own, with no outside help, would be a matter of years, with great personal risk involved, and putting them into practice would take a while as well.

The main characters, as a comparison, managed the whole list, Berzerker OS included, in the span of about seven or eight years, and the Host of that pair was an engineer, and fairly intelligent, to begin with, and still had to have help with a couple of things. Even at that, most of it was spent on downtime and testing, and they still nearly died a couple of times. The most prominent was with the Berzerker OS, which required them, and will require you, to start becoming a Berzerker to develop.

Buying the abilities as Perks has one other little bonus: They're a bit more effective than if you just developed them yourself, effectively dummying out the need to practice them to hedge out most of the inefficiencies. Effectively, you aren't just paying to get them early, you're also paying for all of the knowledge and experience that your Symbiote would develop with them over

the course of your life up to the point of synergy. Considering how their minds work, and that your body is a couple of decades and change old in this Jump, that's a lot of time spent figuring out how stuff works.

Clarification on Berzerker OS and The End

During the story, Frank, the main character's Symbiote, lets Bob, his host, see things the way he does by dosing him with Juice, which lets him process things fast enough that he's seeing things at about 1/40th speed, and it's revealed that that's how Frank sees things all the time. Non-imported Symbiotes are naturally immune to this effect because of the fact that they're basically living computers, as are legitimate AI imported as Symbiotes, for the same reason. A human mind? Less so. At one point, after a severe injury, he gets access to Frank's processing ability and he sits awake over the course of one night, and can't sleep, because he literally can't stop thinking.

He fixes most of the harder problems that Symbiotes are facing in their projects in about two hours, real-time. Things like most of the cloned animals they're making from DNA of extinct or endangered animals dying before or during birth. He also made a room temperature superconductor shaped like a thumb drive with braille written on the inside of it as a prank against Frank, just to have something to do. But the power was, very quickly, driving him insane with boredom for as long as there weren't problems to be solved. I wold suggest Monotony's End for any Companions imported into that position, if they don't have it already from another source; it doesn't matter how strong your will is when you're dealing with processing speed that can make every second spent not doing something engaging feel like about six and a half hours.

You do get the ability to just kind of turn that off after your time here's over, essentially having a dual-core processor with a massive processing power bias on one end, but if you have Stowaway and Berzerker OS, but not Monotony's End, it might do you some mental harm in the time you're here. Just keep that in mind.

Clarification on Jolly Cooperation

Each functioning pair, that is, both Host and Symbiote, have to buy their perks from a communal pool. Each unit, however, only counts as a single Companion slot filled, despite the fact

that they're two separate minds in one body, and the abilities affect both of them equally.

Other Clarifications

If you do what Bob and Ayva did, where they fused to their Symbiotes to effectively become nascent, if quasi-mortal, deities, whether you spit out a kernel of yourself that doesn't have that level of power or not, you don't get to move on to the next world, you go home. Do not pass, "GO," etc.

Yes, you do get a reasonably powerful Companion effectively for free if you choose to keep the other half of your Pair. Because the other option is making you pay CP to keep them by buying them as a permanent Companion, and we all know that the more paranoid Jumpers will see that as trying to pigeonhole them into buying something they don't want, because it knows literally everything about them, good and bad, and potentially everything they know, and might, might, try to attack them at some point in the future after the Jumpchain is over because they've made themselves a threat to... something. I don't know how they think, don't get me to lying, I just know how they'll react.