Understand

Gauntlet V1
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Well hello there Jumper! Welcome to a modern world of fun, government corruption, and superintelligent demigods! The original story of Understand follows Leon Greco, a fairly normal individual who underwent an experimental nerve regeneration treatment after falling into a coma due to oxygen deprivation. The experimental treatment, called hormone K, was more successful than any of the doctors involved could have imagined. It didn't just heal his brain, but elevated it to outright superhuman levels! In the process, he also developed into a megalomaniacal psychopath fully willing to destabilize the United States to avoid a minor inconvenience. Luckily, another person named Reynolds achieved the same transcendent level of intellect which Greco had, and instead of losing all empathy for mortals he became a savior who wenton to uplift humanity and kill Greco before he could do any substantial damage.

Now you see, here's the bad news… Reynolds doesn't exist anymore. He is a completely normal person who never underwent any form of nerve damage or treatment, living out his happy, normal life. You, instead take his role. Greco still exists, and it is your job to kill them or otherwise eliminate the threat they represent.

+0CP (Comprehension points)

You start with the "Supercritical" level of intelligence which Greco and Reynolds had by the end of the book. If you succeed at the gauntlet then your **Supercritical** perk will function like any other form of fiat-backed superintelligence, no longer needing the in-story metabolic requirements. Death here does not count as a chain fail, instead merely forfeiting the rewards you obtained here. <u>You are reduced to your body mod for the duration of this jump</u>.

You arrive anywhere in the United States, on the same day when Greco became supercritical. Please note that the drawback "Ignorance" as well as your superintelligence both come into effect before making your location selection.

Drawbacks

There is no drawback limit

+0CP - Ignorance (MANDATORY)
You will not remember where Greco is at the start of the jump and when making your location selection.

+0GP/+200CP - A Bamboo Cage (FIRST LEVEL MANDATORY)
Greco describes his brain as a bamboo cage, limited hardware with which he cannot stand up or sit down, incapable of exerting his full potential and capabilities, or truly resting. This manifests as "meta-hallucinations", times when he understands how his mind generates strange images, but is paralyzed to act against them. For the duration of this gauntlet, you will occasionally have these hallucinations. Greco states they are 'sheer torture', But for you they will be mildly unpleasant. For +200 CP they are the sheer torture Greco experiences.

If you have the **Stable Meta-Programming** perk from below, you are exempt from the +0CP version of the Drawback. You may choose to take the +200CP level of the drawback, in which case **Stable Meta-Programming** is disabled for the duration of the jump.

+100CP - Had A Little Too Much Beer Last Night
Instead of making a location selection, you land in the capital of a random U.S. state, with a hangover.

+100/+300 plus optional extra +100 - CIA
The CIA is searching for you as a high priority target. They will do a lot to get at you, including threatening people you know, declaring you a fugitive on national television, and more. You would think this would be worth more, but keep in mind Greco ran circles around these guys with a fraction of your current intellect. For 300 cp, you start in a holding cell in a CIA Blacksite where you are being tested due to your hormone K doses. Given your current intellect

you will escape, but this is a process that could take up to several weeks. You will not have any access to good learning materials while imprisoned, giving Greco a substantial head start on you. For an extra +100cp which can be added to either option, you have a past significant other here whom you must protect, which the CIA will use to blackmail you. Their death and/or imprisonment due to the CIA will result in a gauntlet failure.

+100/+200/+300/+400CP - Unacceptable Collateral
For +100 cp, you may not kill more than 10,000 people in your attempts to kill Greco. For 200 the number drops to 100, for 300 it becomes 10, and for 400 you may not allow a single person to die in your attempts. Failing these conditions counts as a gauntlet fail.

+200CP/+300CP - Savant
For some reason the hormone K treatment failed to work on one aspect of your intelligence, leaving you merely a peak human in that area.

For +200CP, you can choose: Memory, kinesthetic sense, multitasking, spatial reasoning or any other less powerful mental ability you can think of.

For +300CP, You must choose between logical/mathematical intelligence, and social intelligence. This drawback may be taken as many times as you wish, though do be careful, as many of the capabilities displayed by Greco are reliant on other abilities, and vice versa.

+200CP - It's Not Him
By default, Greco is your target, but this drawback changes that to be a person of similar psychopathic tendencies, but different enough mannerisms, beliefs, and goals that your meta knowledge will not help you here.

+200CP/+400CP - With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility
Reynolds wanted to improve the world with his power, and now you must do the same. Previously the gauntlet was over when you eliminated Greco, but now you must make the world significantly better. See notes for more details.

Instead for 400CP, you can only leave when at least 60% of people(those who want to) live in a post-scarcity society which does a passable impression of a utopia. For reference, you must create a society similar to a Midtech Sephirotic

world in Orion's Arm, Earth as of Star Trek TOS, or one of the worse ships in the Culture.

+200CP/+300CP/+400CP/+600CP - Outside of Context Agent
You will not remember taking this drawback. An anonymous third party with unknown objectives and the **Supercritical** perk is inserted into the world. They have goals of their own, but they are not innately hostile to you or Greco. As Greco is a psychopath stuck in a binary, zero-sum view of the world, he will attempt to track and neutralize this person once they reveal themselves. Their actions will throw a wrench into both of your plans, forcing you to adapt for unknown variables. Do note that despite Greco working against them, their interference is a net negative for you.

For +300CP, their goals line up with Greco better than yours, making them harm you significantly more than Greco. For +400CP, they are actively hostile to you while being indifferent or somewhat friendly to Greco. Finally, for +600CP Greco and this unknown agent are working together in harmony, their objectives perfectly aligned.

+400CP - Knowledge is Power...
And unfortunately your Greco took this to heart. Your Greco knows that there is someone with the same level of intellect as him gunning for him, and he will prepare himself to fight against you.

+400CP - They Weren't Lying
In the story, one of the lies the CIA tried on Greco early on to get him to turn himself in was that Hormone K was starting to show side effects that would need testing and treatment. In this timeline it turns out they were telling the truth; Hormone K is progressively burning out your nervous system. At first it will only be occasional tremors and headaches, but it will get worse and worse. Nothing will be able to cure you or slow this process down, and you have only three weeks to find and kill Greco before your symptoms grow too severe and you fail the gauntlet. Greco was lucky enough to avoid this, so at least you don't have to worry about him doing something suicidally desperate.

+600CP - CIA 2: Corruption Boogaloo
The Greco of this world took a different path to dealing with the CIA, befriending and eventually taking over the CIA. They now have full control of

the political, economic, and physical power the agency can utilize. Given the mental capabilities he already had this doesn't make him much more dangerous to the world. The practical upshot of this is the fact that Greco can now only be found in stunningly well hidden bunkers, guarded by teams of highly skilled agents, with multiple escape routes and numerous other tricks designed to make them nigh-impregnable.

+600CP/+800CP - Some Men Just Want To Watch The World Burn
During the process of achieving supercriticality, something broke in Greco's mind. Rather than completely losing his empathy, he became a monster who takes endless joy from the suffering of those around him. He will do his very best to ensure a slow and torturous death for you and civilization itself. Rather than confront you, he will evade you while sowing death and destruction in his wake. He will not use any weapons of mass destruction as they would end his fun too quickly, but that is your only consolation. If Greco causes the death of more than 5% of the world's population, then you will fail this gauntlet.

For 800 CP though… all bets are off. Instead of taking pleasure in pain, his only desire is the death of humanity. He will do absolutely anything in his power to destroy mankind. If 70% of all humans die, you will fail this gauntlet.

Perks

Free - Supercritical
Your intellect has ascended to where it's uncertain if you are actually a post-Singularity entity or not. You could learn how to play a musical instrument in minutes or assimilate the bulk of human knowledge in just a few weeks, figure out the theory behind generating artificial gravity just by cross-correlating multiple obscure facts from real-world physics and mathematics, multitask several separate mental projects simultaneously, easily exercise conscious control over every muscle in your body, and demonstrate a nigh-transcendent level of genius in almost any field of endeavor, whether intellectual, artistic, or physical. Many elements of the psyche conventionally described as 'personality' are now entirely at your discretion, and you have full

control over your emotions and all functions normally delegated to the subconscious mind.

100CP - Remembrance
You have perfect, unlimited, and endless memory. You may choose to move memories into hidden storage, replacing them with a mental note. Cognito- and info-hazards are instantly moved to hidden storage in a form of 'quarantine' where they cannot affect your other memories or reach you without you consciously deciding to override safety measures, which you cannot be forced to do through any form of supernatural or invasive manipulation. You may harmlessly delete the contents of your 'quarantine' buffer at any time.This memory is fully retroactive.

100CP - Physique
You have extraordinary genetics and peak human physical conditioning, as well as the ability to maintain it with trivial effort. This reduces in-story metabolic requirements and the frequency of triggering **A Bamboo Cage**, unless you took the +200CP version.

100CP - Stable Meta-Programming
Your control over your meta-mental processes is perfect; you are wholly immune to any form of insanity, no matter what the cause. Even experimenting with altering your own psyche will never put you into a state you cannot safely recover from.

200CP - Apotheosis
Hormone K is a mostly harmless substance, but the leap to supercritical is a great one, and one which caused a great deal of pain to Greco. Fortunately, you are exempt from these concerns. Any procedure, experiment, or surgery which is done with the intent to improve you will always succeed as long as it has the slightest chance of doing so. Augmentations are accepted flawlessly, tribulations are passed without permanent harm, and secret techniques which would kill 99 percent of participants will leave you in the 1 percent.

300CP/500CP - The Mind Arts
Greco and Reynolds each developed abilities reminiscent of Sci-Fi mind control. This perks gives you one of their knowledge sets, and you can buy the other for

an additional 200cp. You may learn these abilities in jump, but they will not be fiat-backed without this perk.

Greco learned how to use incredibly subtle somatic and pheromone control to manipulate subconscious actions of others, creating self sustaining feedback loops of high blood pressure. You could learn to manipulate any system which is controlled by the subconscious brain in any form.

Reynolds managed to engineer strings of memories in other people capable of killing them in moments with a single trigger. You have further knowledge of this art, as with enough time and effort you can create a trigger able to cause any kind of mental change, from simple death, to forcing unconsciousness, all the way up to complete super-ego restructuring. The time required grows exponentially more the more complex or powerful a trigger you are creating. The sleeping example would take an hour of total interaction, the kill several, and the super-ego reprogramming would take from 10, to upwards of 30 hours of interaction depending on the complexity of the change. Note that for entities capable of potentially noticing the trigger being built and preventing it, you may use a more subtle method, tripling the total time necessary but making them completely unrecognizable.

400CP - G-Factor(see notes)
The story Understand focuses on the generality of intelligence, as all mental capabilities grow equally with each other. This perk extends this theme to you, as any perks that give you 'talent' in a mental ability apply that talent to all other mental abilities, including but not limited to logic, spatial awareness, multitasking, social intelligence, abstract thought, etc. Note one exception: non-memory perks will improve memory, but memory perks will not improve your other talents. Any 'skills' you have, whether learned or bought as a perk, act as training boosters for your other skills, increasing the speed of learning up to an equal level of skill.

400CP - Sanctity of the Mind
You have massive resistance to unwilling mental manipulations, making it 3 times more difficult to control you than otherwise, including Greco's mind control. Post jump, it is impossible to influence or control your mind through supernatural or invasive means without your consent.

400CP - Unbound
Greco found that 4 injections of hormone k was the limit a human brain could support. Fortunately for you, you're a jumper and don't have those limitations, or any limitations at all with this perk. You have no limit to how far you can grow, how strong, fast, or brilliant you can be. Continuous training will always yield results.

600CP - Narrative Causality
Despite his godlike intellect, Greco was still concerned a simple mugging could kill him if he was not careful. This is not something you need to be afraid of, as you have plot armor which acts to prevent inglorious or accidental death. No random misfortune or mook opponent will take you down, and even if a significant enemy did defeat you he would be best advised to confirm his kill.

During this gauntlet, this perk will have no effect against Greco or other malicious super-criticals, if any exist.

Items

Free - Starting Allowance
Greco starts with his bank account and an apartment, so it's only fair to give you something as well. You will start this Gauntlet with the clothes on your back and ten thousand dollars in cash, free and clear. (That's a stack of $100 bills a half-inch thick, so don't worry about carrying it.)

Should you happen to start the Gauntlet imprisoned in a CIA black site or under similar circumstances, you will only have the clothes on your back.

100CP - Modern Items (see notes)
You have a state of the art smartphone/computer/ground vehicle. This item is self maintaining, self repairing, and needs no fuel/electricity. This item upgrades to have the best comparable features you have encountered and does not degrade when encountering worse. If applicable, this device has infinite memory, and is compatible with any and all software. It has the most intuitive and efficient UI/Control scheme imaginable. You may summon this item to you. The supernatural aspects of this will not seem strange to others unless you want

it to. You may purchase this item multiple times, choosing one of the other options each time.

Old Reliable - 200CP
Some have pointed out that the plot of Understand would have been easily short-circuited by either Greco or Reynolds landing a good gunshot on the other. You now have a handheld firearm with all the same features as the **Modern Items** perk. This includes the ability to summon it to your hand, something which would let you surprise Greco.

Inconspicuous Wardrobe- 200CP
Greco fooled multiple CIA agents with nothing more than a hoodie and a change in stride. This mundane clothing item of your choice has a minor effect on it, which makes the wearer seem unimportant to most observers. This is not unbreakable, if you do something obviously suspicious or go somewhere you shouldn't be able to, it won't save you, but otherwise it makes you that much harder to identify.

200CP- Bank Account
You have a bank account with currency worth 10 million U.S. Dollars circa 2017, which refreshes every year. You may instantly know how much money is in the account, and summon any amount of currency you wish from the account. You can do this in any form of currency you have encountered. No one will find this strange unless you wish them to.

400 - Hormone K
This is an infinite supply of and mass-producible recipe for an improved version of hormone K. One shot of this into the spine will cure any and all nerve damage, though it will not increase intelligence. You also get another version, which is the good stuff. One shot will slowly bring people to the 99th percentile in all mental areas, 2 is peak human to weak superhuman, three is superhuman, and the 4th enhances someone to the supercritical state that Greco and Reynolds experienced. This will work on non-human biologies , and if the subject does not have a spine, the closest analogue will do. These formulas are impossible to reverse engineer, produce, or use for those whom you would not wish to be able to.

400 - Government Spooks

You have full control and complete loyalty of a government agency with similar economic power, political power, and man power to the CIA as of 2017. If you did not take any related drawbacks this jump, it is the CIA, but if you did then it is an intelligence organization with bases in another country. Keep in mind the only reason Greco had not taken over the world is that he didn't feel like it.

400 - Friends In High Places
You are owed favors by and have blackmail of numerous powerful people, including billionaires, politicians, world leaders, celebrities, and more. These refresh every jump, and if you ever run out it is extraordinarily easy to get more.

600 - The Power of SCIENCE!
A nondescript research agency which does not require any management or funding is under your complete control. You can set this agency to work in any scientific or engineering field, and once every 10 years this group will produce a single discovery which has as much potential impact and importance as hormone K. This discovery will always be something far beyond your current capabilities. This cannot affect the jumpchain until post spark, at which point anything is fair game.

Notes

Thank you to all the people who helped edit and design this jump!
- General: I don't write traps. If something does not specifically state it will screw you over, it won't. If you have a question, feel free to contact me on Reddit or Spacebattles under the name 'Candrew21339'
- Modern Items: This item was inspired by various Ursine/SJ-Chan jumps, mainly the jumpchain gift shop. They are brilliant jump-makers and you should check out their jumps. By ground vehicle, I mean a car, truck, van, etc. Anything which drives on solid ground, not fly or float.
- **With great power comes great responsibility:** It is unknown what Reynolds actually did, because the story ended before we saw it, so I can't really give a good definition for 'improving' the world. All I can say is fanwank, pick some arbitrary 'significant' set of conditions, and use that as your goal post.
- **G-Factor:** for the purpose of this perk, talent is defined as a mental ability to learn and understand a specific skill or field faster than your raw intelligence would allow. Skill is the total comprehension and knowledge in a field.

Changelog

- V.1 - it exists and I'm working on it.
- V.8 - It's almost done but I need to put in a few more perks and items.
- V1 - I don't know what else to add so I'm calling it finished.