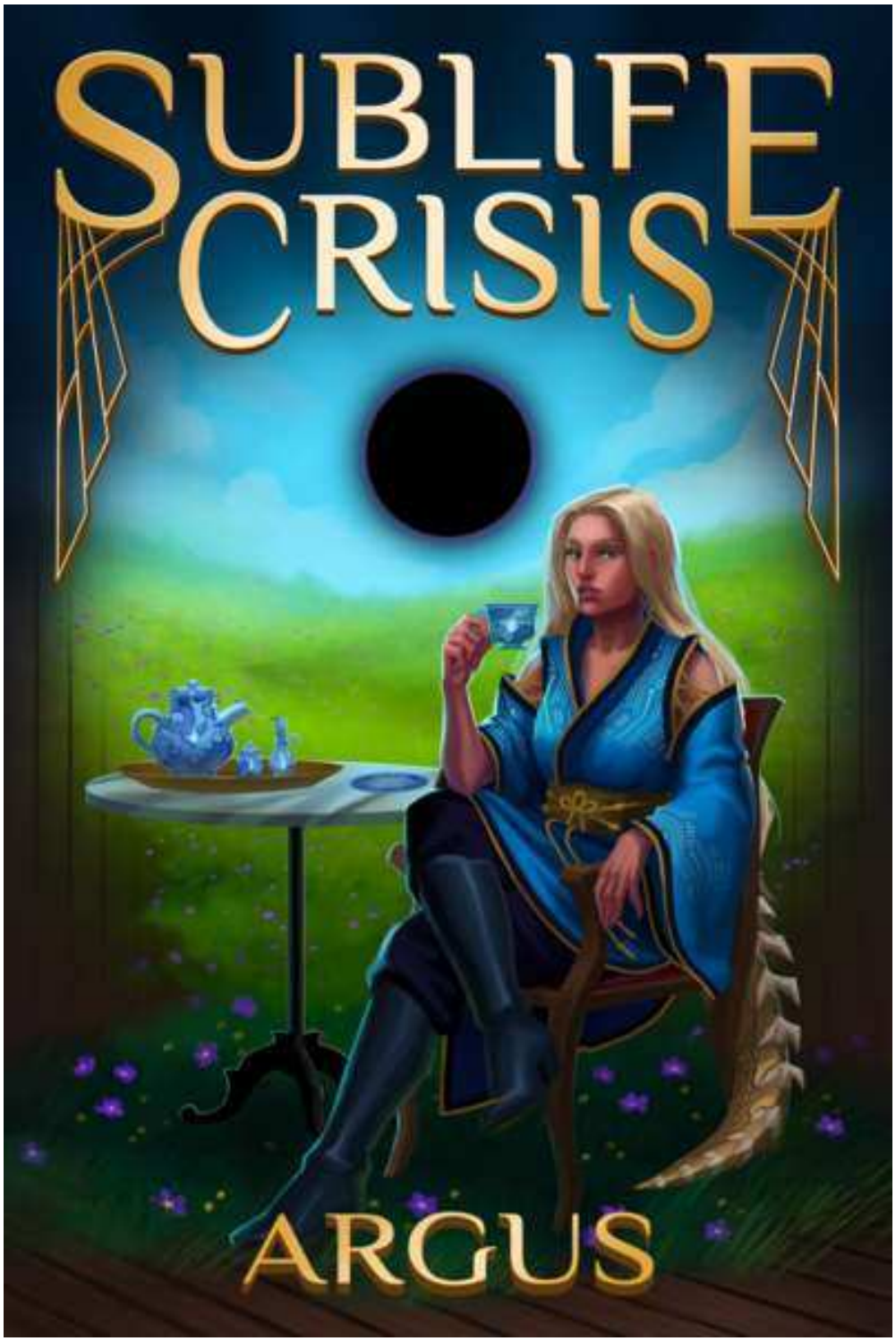
Sublife Crisis Gauntlet



By Bookwormer35

Welcome to the Between. Though your entry to this place doesn't seem to have been through death like it will be in the future, you'll still be spending your time here in between the dozens of lives you'll be living in this Gauntlet. Different from a normal Jumpchain you'll be a serial reincarnator instead, an Intercessor, living in different worlds and bodies each time, the only constant that you'll end up in the Between after each death.

How long you'll stay in the Between depends on the achievements of your latest life, for the first time you'll only stay a day to get your bearings, after your first life you might stay for multiple days or if it's an accomplished life it might be months. No need to worry about your safety there, it's a place free of injury, death or the inconveniences of life. Although you'll have to wander a while to find fellow Intercessors and even more to find a place you can call home or gather enough to buy one, at worst you'll spend your short time there bored.

This will be a lengthy gauntlet. You'll be living through life after life until you've lived 100 million heartbeats in the Between, heartbeats are the amount of time you gain between each life to rest in the Between which are about as long as the average human heartbeat. An average life with some achievements living up to thirty years would earn you about 1 million heartbeats which is about ten days in the Between, a life spent pursuing a profession and ending with some big achievement at about fifty years would earn you about 3,5 million heartbeats, while one spent turning a world into one without conflict and drugging its people with happiness in pursuit of an utopia would earn you about 11 million, dying at about age 80, though these can wildly vary depending on what exactly you do in your lifespan, so even if you imitated these feats, you might get millions more or less depending on the details.

Though all of your perks, warehouses, items and such will be locked for the duration of this Gauntlet, you'll instead get access to the perk system of the Between, giving you boosts depending on what you achieved in each life, scaling with the difficulty of what you achieved. As you earn different currencies you can invest them into traits, boons, masteries, abilities, perks, traits, characteristics, aura layers, skill splinters, effects, and modifications that are available from the Between's system, ranging from **[Dental Durability]** which would get rid of the need for dentists, to various variations of **[Strike]** enhancing your Strikes, or Charisma auras enhancing your chances of success in social situations. They'll be subtle at first but as you live lives and gather achievements you'll gain access to more and more perk slots as well as higher tiers of these abilities and their perk trees, and thus gain more advantages in each new life.

The Between isn't just a rest stop though, through various activities you can increase the benefits of your next life in small ways, by reading books, playing board or card games, consuming drinks and a myriad more. These benefits will rarely be large, maybe a 10% increase in mana capacity for example (which might just turn out to be zero due to reincarnating into a sci-fi world without magic), it's also an incredibly large place, should you explore it you're bound to find all kinds of strange places, people and items.

Now what will these lives look like? No idea. Your race, gender, society and pretty much every part of your body and world will be random unless you have some kind of perk or the like to manipulate that, though you'll always be reincarnated into a sapient creature and in a society, whether they're star-faring or still in the gatherer phase is up to chance however. As is what kind of power systems exist in these worlds, they can be completely mundane, magical, sci-fi, bio-/steampunk or even filled with gods and mutant animals.

In the Between you can decide what you look like through purchasable cosmetics and can buy items, quests, tasks and perks from Merchants that wander through every few lives, or trade with fellow Intercessors for them. This is just some of the widely known information about the Between though, there's hundreds of unknown details you'll have to discover yourself.

+0

Drawbacks:
Lives here means lives that you've lived, so killing yourself won't affect the drawback count, you'll have to tough it out. Dying also won't count as chain failure due to Intercessors being incapable of dying permanently.

+0 Spark Mode
Instead of completing this Gauntlet through living life after life, you'll instead be pursuing a goal, a somewhat metaphysical goal. In the Between there's a sort of 'Ascension'. People who've lived dozens of lives can attain a Moment of Clarity, allowing them to pass on from the Between, this state is however incredibly elusive, there's no telling how long it would take you to achieve it, or how to even work towards it. The only certainty is that it will be possible as long as you keep going, though as an Intercessor you won't really have the option to stop, while it's possible that it might only take you a few lives, it's more likely that it will be in the dozens, if not hundreds, and that's a very, very long time. Each time someone has such a moment it echoes out through the whole Between.

If you manage to attain this state and accept it (it's possible to deny it, though it will likely take as long as the first time to reach this state again), you'll have completed this Gauntlet properly, granting you your very own Spark.

+50 A little while longer (Incompatible with Spark Mode)
Not satisfied with *only* being here for 100 million heartbeats? Each time you purchase this you have to stay here for another 25 million heartbeats. There's no limit to how often you can purchase this, however the amount doubles each fourth time you take this.

+100 2+2=4? Not in this world
Typically worlds have at least some things in common, people use money, there's a government system that's somewhat familiar to us where you've heard of the concept or lived it, like a monarchy and 2+2 equals 4, or a variation of that. Well, now that's not always the case. Each new world you go to, will be one where a fundamental part of it is altered in some way to make it

unfamiliar to you. Maybe Math starts at 1 instead of 0 thus making 2+2=5 the correct answer, maybe Biology has evolved into a completely different direction invalidating the fact that the mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell, or maybe the fundamental forces have had their rules altered in some way, making gravity fluctuate in some places. Whichever it is, you'll be at least somewhat inconvenienced by it, this applies especially if you've learned the sciences, as some fundamental factoid or other will have changed, thus making it necessary for you to relearn a branch of that science, if not the whole thing.

+100 Mark of the Other
You will have a mark in each of your lives, could be a noticeable scar, a strange birthmark, a seemingly runic tattoo, glowing veins, anime hair, unnatural eyes, the list goes on. Specifics vary depending on the world, with supernatural worlds having marks that reflect the power system slightly, even if you might not have the potential for it. You'll always have one that's hard to hide though, it might make people question you and think of you as weird but be otherwise unproblematic, or it could make your parents or village revile you, believing you to be a demon child. The reception will vary on the society and acceptance level of each world. Outside of looking weird the mark won't have any other effects.

+200 Deathwish? Never heard of it
You become completely incapable of killing yourself, ranging from not slitting your wrists to not going into a dungeon with a 0%-49% chance of survival. Even trying to defend your loved ones against an undefeatable foe would count for this, though running away with them would be a possible alternative to that foolhardy self-sacrifice. This might not seem bad, but there are plenty of lives and fates wherein death is a welcome escape, especially for one like you that *knows* it to not be the end.

+200 Seasonal Depression
Some people have had the blessing of never being depressed, you're not one of them. Every five lives or so, you'll have a body that has a severe predisposition to depression or another mental illness that's just as disabling, so that you'll spend chunks of that life, if not all of it feeling mentally brittle, lethargic and worse.

As a small upside there will be a perk tree that decreases the effects of mental illnesses, though it will take about a dozen of these lives for it to decrease to levels where you can treat it as a relatively normal life.

+200 Body Dysphoria
This isn't your original body and you'll know it, each life you'll experience body dysphoria that will make you slightly uncomfortable with your body and how it feels, maybe it's because of an extra body sense, a limb you didn't have before or the lack of a body part. Being you're incapable of getting used to the slimy feeling of your skin, or things just not fitting as they should. Whatever the case, you'll always need a few uncomfortable years to get used to your body, which will often be very mentally draining.

+200 Directionless
You'll forget about this Gauntlet and will have a tendency to lack direction. You can make short-term and long-term goals for your next lives, especially once you start to live them and decide on a direction you'd like your life to take. But without a concrete goal to direct you, you'll tend to be aimless and the long-term goals will tend to be unfocused. As such you'll also tend to believe other people and Intercessors a lot more when they give you advice on what direction is the right one. Be it treating each life as a game with the people there as points, becoming the best merchant ever being the end goal, or becoming an Optimizer.

You'll still have the ability to make your own choices, but you will be greatly influenced by others on what to do with your lives. If your parents in one life want you to become a doctor for example you'd try to do so for a few years, even if you had other goals or didn't want to become one at all. Though this will decide the tone of your first few lives, it will only affect your first twenty lives, as you'll grow out of it.

+300 Doki-Doki Heartbreak
You seem to have somewhat bad luck with love, you love too easily and thus get your heart broken rather frequently, maybe you fall in love with bad people, give others more of your trust than they return, or maybe you or they die suddenly, thus leaving you feeling lost and as if you were missing a piece of yourself.

+300 Kill the Jumper
Somehow hidden organizations keep realizing your extraterrestrial, or rather extradimensional origins, be it through the display of your powers, some hitherto undetectable alien rays or some prophecy. They don't necessarily have to be hidden organizations, in a mundane world multiple schizophrenics might have their voices direct them to you or a cult leader could have a dream making them believe that you're the antichrist or the child that was promised, you'll be a target either way. When this happens wildly varies, could be at birth, on your deathbed or anywhere in between and so will their goals and intentions for you.

+300 Chosen One
You're likely to go through a tragedy or two involving razed and burnt villages, overzealous priests, crusades or demonic incursions. Whichever it is, your life will be a lot more turbulent either way, you'll generally be fine until you're of age, although that doesn't mean you won't have the odd encounter foreshadowing what's to come every now and then. But once you're old enough something or someone will generally push you into an adventure or two, maybe you're an heir of an ancient inheritance, pulling a sword out of a stone or in the wrong place at the right time.

+300 Physical Disabilities
Each other life you'll have a moderate physical disability, something that will affect your life and alter it, but won't completely stop it in its tracks. A limp, a disfigured face, asthma, a missing arm and the like.

+400 Mental Disabilities
Each other life you'll have a moderate mental disability, something that will affect your life and alter it, but won't completely stop it in its tracks. Psychopathy, schizophrenia, narcolepsy, severe anxiety and the like.

+400/600 Nemesis
You've somehow antagonised a fellow Intercessor enough for them to make it their whole life's purpose to make you miserable, as in every life. They'll follow you to each world and though they won't know how you look at the start, they'll dedicate their perks and build towards finding you and making you miserable. You *could* dodge them by living completely mundane lives, but they'll use that time to become stronger and they *will* find you within at most five lives as they'll purchase perks specifically for that. The only way to stop them would be to kill or imprison them each time, though in that case they'll hide from you in your next life, instead focusing on becoming strong enough to do the same to you.

They will only talk to you if it's beneficial for them and there's no way for you to change their mind outside of mind control, which will stop working once they return to the Between, only incensing them further against you.

For another **200** you're now dealing with twins and they both gain access to useful twin perk trees. With double the manpower this means that they can both grow in power while doing their best to make your life hell.

+500 Age of Decay
It was never meant to last like this, the Between is crumbling, its creators gone, its mysteries forgotten and Intercessors disappearing unnaturally. This introduces bugs into the Between turning it into a place of uncertainty instead of the rest stop between lives it used to be. You could randomly lose resources, get an unnaturally high or low amount of heartbeats compared to how much your last life should have given you (though the Jump will still remember the correct amount), perks can be lost, mutate, invert or simply not activate in your next life. And that's just a few of them, at extremes (which you'll encounter at least once) this could trap you in the Between for years, make you reincarnate into a non-humanoid in your next life, even invert all of your perks, decreasing and thus crippling you instead of aiding you. Even the rules of the Between, forbidding death or injury might not apply in all of its areas anymore, though it won't lead to a permanent death for you, you might just wish for one.

Perks:
It's possible to earn and buy similar perks to the ones below in the Between, if not better ones, though it would likely take a lot of resources and lives for some of these.

50/100/150/200 Perk Tree Unlock
For 50 you may unlock and use the perk of any perk tree, though it must be one unlockable within a normal life.

For another 50 you may either take a more advanced perk of the previous perk tree, or unlock a perk tree with requirements that are difficult to achieve or would require multiple lives.
Yet another 50 and you may take either one of the best perks of a normal perk tree, something like a 10x growth booster for a farmer, a more advanced perk of the difficult perk tree or unlock a perk tree with a requirement that's very difficult or would need a dozen lives, like regicide.
For a final 50 you may master a branch of a normal perk tree, giving you access to every perk within the branch, which would include about dozens of different perks, take one of the best perks of an advanced perk tree, like a skeleton key perk for a lockpicking perk tree, an advanced perk of a very difficult perk tree, like by killing the king you'd also kill all of his descendents, or unlocking an endgame-ish perk tree something spanning multiple lifes concentrated on a goal, like achieving an utopia, making creating one much easier.

While you do unlock the purchased perk trees, you don't gain the 'progress' you'd need to unlock it, so you skip the 'unlock 10000 lockpicks' requirement without it counting as if you did so, though gaining a perk of the perk tree should make it easier to progress in the perk tree anyhow.

This is multi-select and the unlocked perks don't take up a perk slot. You can purchase any perk tree you can think of, from something like **[Breath-holding]** to **[Juggling]** to **[Farting]** to **[Martial Arts]** as long as you can think of it, it's likely available.

100 Skip Childhood Button
Not everyone wants to relive parts of their lives each time they reincarnate. With this you can skip up to 12 years of your life, this option is available until you become 13 and is one-use only each life, you can decide how much you want to skip. You could for example only skip the first 4 years of your new life. Once you skip ahead you'll seamlessly integrate the memories of your body, though it will have behaved as if it didn't have your memories and its actions during these skipped years won't count as yours to the Between.

100 Poverty Averse
You're bound to never reincarnate into a homeless, poor or lower-class family. Even as an orphan you'd at least have plenty of food, water, shelter and a caretaker, as well as some money, enough to live leisurely by yourself until adulthood. This perk will only enforce these conditions until then and cannot be exploited for gains, so if you tried betting everything you had in an attempt to get rich and lost it, you'd lose everything you gambled.

100 Omnivore
No matter what you reincarnate as, your body can have the same preferences as your mind and they will adapt if they change. You could also eat both fruit and vegetables as a carnivore and meat as a herbivore, even though your body shouldn't be capable of processing them. This is toggleable and you can revert to the natural preferences your body has if you wish.

100/300 A True Companion

You may import a single Companion as a fellow Intercessor whom you're bound to meet each time you come to the Between. They will have none of their powers, perks, etc. and if they have any super-knowledge, it will only be tangentially useful in settings which have the same-ish power-system they had.
For another **200** they'll also become a permanent fixture in your lives as you'll both reincarnate in the same worlds at around the same time, give or take a few years.
This perk is multi-selectable.

200 Sensibility
Don't want to deal with medieval peasants having all the prejudices and hatred they'd normally have? Parents being unaccepting of your choice of partner? Plain Bigotry? Well fear not, now all worlds will be surprisingly accepting of your modern norms. Instead of discriminating against others because of their skin color, orientation or looks, they'll instead discriminate against them due to their actions. This doesn't affect views that are society dependent, in a caste system people from higher castes would still generally treat those beneath them worse for example and the citizens of two nations at war would still hate each other.

200 Healthy Body
You're guaranteed to have a healthy body, this means you won't have any illnesses that majorly impact your quality of life, least of all those that end it. You'll still get sick, it just won't be fatal, the exception would be bio-engineered viruses, poison and things that are specifically made to kill you.

200 Healthy Mind
You're guaranteed to have a healthy mind, this means you won't have any mental illnesses that majorly impact your quality of life, least of all those that end it. You can still have mental problems, they just won't be severe, the exception would be stuff like mind-control, parasites, mental magic and the like.

200 Flawless Memory
You get a perfect eidetic memory. This includes memories that get erased through degenerative illnesses like alzheimer and supernatural methods, though when you'll regain them depends on the way they were removed, an illness that actively damages your memory would only make you regain your memories once you recover from it or return to the Between, while a simple spell making you forget things would be re-remembered within an hour. You'll still have to focus and think about them to remember them, especially if they're memories from long ago.

200 Omnilingual
You can speak and understand any tongue you hear, though it has to be a real language for you to understand it, you wouldn't understand dog barking for example. This doesn't include the written word of these languages.

200 Omnilegent

You can read and understand any writing you read. This includes magical languages and the like, as long as it's written. This doesn't include the spoken tongue of these languages.

200/400 Body Mod
You may decide how you'll look at the start of each life, this will only decide how you'll look in adulthood and won't include scars that you might gain during your childhood due to injury or illness, it's also limited by your gene pool, though that will likely still give you thousands of choices to pick from. You won't get a choice in what race you'll be as that will be predetermined each life.
For an additional **200** you can include superhuman modifications, however these will be highly dependent on the world as you may only include modifications that are theoretically possible for your body to have as this also takes from your gene pool. It wouldn't be a problem to have a special constitution granting supernatural strength in a Murim world due to one of your family's ancestors having one for example, but becoming a superhuman in a mundane world would be out of the question. You *could* specialize your body to have olympic level attributes though, but that would only give you the potential for it in a normal world and you'd need to train appropriately to achieve them, which attributes you'd have potential for also depends on your genealogy.

300/500 World Choice
You may decide the time-period OR the setting-genre of your next world. And you may only pick setting-specific genres like Xianxia, Noir or Biopunk, you can't for example go to a Romance or Thriller world.
For **200** more you may decide both, furthermore if there's a plot be it from a movie or a book you've read that would fit into the setting, you can choose to have a similar one happen in the world you're going to. This will only adapt the general outline of it, though you can narrow it down on a single aspect of it in exchange for making the rest of it a lot less familiar, like making it so that one character looks and acts just like they did in the movie, in exchange for the plot becoming completely unfamiliar to you.

300 Twenty Questions
Each time you enter the Between you get to ask a single system-related question. This can include stuff like traits and auras as long as it has to do with the Betweens system itself, it could be about the acquisition method of a perk tree, how many perks there are or how to gain more perk slots. The answer will be brief but informative.

400/600/800 Out of Context Power
You become capable of carrying a power system from a previous life into your next one. This power system will start out weakened each time, will be restricted solely to yourself, and things like magic items or super science will go inert once you pass on. Its upper levels will also be restricted if it's too powerful for the world. You can change which power system you want to carry on if your current world has a different one, but you'll lose access to the one you no longer carry once you leave this life

For another 200 you can choose a single power system which you get to permanently have as a carryable option, this doesn't mean that you gain permanent access to it, just that you can reselect it even if you drop it for the power system of another world, though it will only come into effect in the next life once you choose to carry it. Examples for power systems are Haki, Chakra, Stand, Aura, Ki and Nen. This also gives you a backup slot, allowing you to keep a power system as an option even if you've currently selected the permanent power system.

For yet another 200 the power system you've selected becomes permanently available to you alongside the power system you can carry with you, thus giving you access to two power systems, you also get to keep the backup slot.

500 Between System Initializing! Welcome Host!
Instead of having the unresponsive, unintuitive and cold system that's limited to the Between and only noticeable during your lives due to perks having noticeable effects, you'll instead gain a System, the capital S one, that's also available *during* your lives. Though it won't be able to help you directly, thus no mission pop-ups that reward you cultivation pills, experience or magic, it *can* show you information, from your progress with various perk requirements or the amount of heartbeats you've accumulated, to how many lives you've lived and the various perk trees you've unlocked, including the ones whose requirements you've only partially unlocked.

As the Between is a place that's mostly unknown, people often have to figure out how it works by themselves, and considering the intricacies of it, including the hundreds of facets and perk trees that likely only a handful have discovered, you'll have a major advantage over them. While it can show you a lot of information, it doesn't have the full picture and can only show you things that you have fully or partially unlocked, so if there's perk trees or perks that you haven't hit even part of the requirements for, it won't know about them. Likewise with all the other parts of the Between, it can only help you with things you already possess in some capacity, it can work like an assistant and thus take over the majority of your interactions with the Between system, including making and optimizing builds. If you were searching for a specific perk tree it could promptly show you those that fit your description best and as it can show their requirements you'll know what to do in your next life to gain access to it.

500 Import Perk/s
You may take one of your 200 CP perks OR two 100 CP perks from previous Jumps and import them into this Gauntlet. These perks will permanently be slotted in and apply to each new life without taking up any perk slots, though you can toggle them off.

Should this be your first Jump or if you want something you haven't purchased yet, then you may instead take any one 100 CP perk from any Jumpchain you want, as long as it isn't from one of those overpowered Jumps, like the Essence Jumpchain or if it has an effect that's vastly superior to its price range.

Items:

100 Friendship Bracelets
You gain a friendship bracelet that you can duplicate each time you meet a new Intercessor. As long as you two wear the bracelet while in the Between you can meet again as the bracelet pulls you towards each other.

200 Soulbound Weapon
You gain a weapon which you can summon and unsummon at will that is as sharp as steel and just as durable. If it's damaged it will repair itself while unsummoned. You may decide its shape at the start of each life.

200 Soulbound Armor
You gain an armor which you can summon and unsummon at will that is as durable as steel. If it's damaged it will repair itself while unsummoned. You may decide its shape at the start of each life.

300 A Bastion to call Home
You gain access to a comfortable, small apartment-sized place which you can visit each time you reenter the Between. It will have a limited but replenishing supply of consumables, books and games, each bought item you add to this place will also be bound to you, making stealing or damaging it impossible. You can allow other Intercessors access to this place, making it possible for them to visit each time they're in the Between and you can expand it through items bought from Merchants. This becomes part of your Warehouse in future Jumps.

300 Treasure Compass
Despite being mostly empty with maybe some ruins here and there, the Between is still a place, and like any place it has some things hidden. Most people simply wander it due to not having a home to call their own there, but can wander with purpose due to this Compass. It points towards the nearest Treasure, what that is exactly can vary drastically. Could be some resources, a perk, a book, some decorations and hundreds of other things, due to the Compass only pointing at the nearest Treasure without any adjustable setting you'll just have to collect everything until you find something you like. This Compass works just as well in each life you reincarnate into, though it will turn you into a hoarder there as well, due to only changing targets once the found Treasure becomes part of your possessions.

400 Gathering Place
Intercessors are generally scattered all around, this mat that looks like a teleportation platform allows you to transport people to yourself, mostly strangers. Have fun meeting new people, though you'll occasionally get the odd Intercessor that's likely gone insane or sees things too differently for a real conversation to take place, that often happens with long-lived races who might take multiple lifes to realize their situation.

500 Invite Ticket

You gain an invite ticket that you can give to another Intercessor. Once they rip it they may accompany you to your next world. You gain an additional one each 10 million heartbeats.

600 Initiation
You become capable of turning someone into an Intercessor, after both of your lives are over you'll meet them in the Between with enough time to explain to them what's going on. You gain an additional such Initiation each 50 million heartbeats.

Reward:
As a reward for completing this Gauntlet you permanently gain the Betweens progressions system, the perks you slot in apply to each new life and allow you to gain achievements and resources that you can spend just like in the Between for each life/Jumpchain completed. This will work even if allegedly suppressed, Locked or otherwise disabled as it supersedes any such drawbacks or other Gauntlets rules due to being a Gauntlet reward.

Notes:

Some more perks, they all have perk trees and there can be dozens of branches, **[Strike]** for example is said to have dozens, if not hundreds of variants:
[Serial Victim] Makes your murderer regret that they killed you, in various ways depending on which one you've got from the perk tree, one of them could kill them afterwards for example.
[Regicide] Assists with regicide in various ways.
[Education]
[Hiker IV]
[Slap Resistance] (Pretty much anything can have a resistance)
[Fall Migitation]

Sublife Crisis is currently free to read on Royalroad, dealing with the moments between Luri's life in the Between, a novel about the time between the lives of a serial reincarnator.

Link1: Sublife Crisis (Life Is Just A Phase) | Royal Road

Link2: https://www.royalroad.com/fiction/93930/sublife-crisis-life-is-just-a-phase