

Outer Wilds Gauntlet

Welcome, Hatchling, to Timber Hearth! This comfortable, if somewhat rocky, planet is the second planet in its solar system, sitting comfortably in a relatively large habitable zone. You, like the other inhabitants, are a Hearthian, a four-eyed species evolved from amphibious life in the warm hot springs that cover Timber Hearth. Your species has developed, thanks in part to archaeological studies of a precursor species called the Nomai, to the point where it is enjoying its first steps into the stars. The Outer Wilds space program is exploring the local solar system on hastily constructed but reliable space ships, aided in part by the fact that planets are only a handful of kilometers away, rather than true interplanetary distances you'd find in your home reality.

You awaken here on the day of your inaugural journey into the cold void beyond the sky, having already received the launch codes from the local observatory.

All of this would be the stage for a lovely extended stay, learning more of the solar system and enjoying a calm life, if not for the fact that your star will swell to an unhealthily large size, compress, and explode in 22 minutes, triggering a time loop for unknown reasons. Best of luck, Jumper, since you're about to be left without anything but your Body Mod and no choice points to start with.

Drawbacks

Late Start (+100 CP, can be taken up to 3 times):

You seem to have woken up a bit late today, Jumper. Each time you take this Drawback, you have 2 fewer minutes before the sun goes supernova. Fortunately, this doesn't affect anything else that's dependent on timing, so everything is still accessible, but you had better hurry. At least you got those few extra minutes of sleep?

Sesquipedalian Loquaciousness (+100 CP):

The Nomai were rather fond of writing in a rather roundabout and lengthy way, with multiple branching thoughts attached to each spiral of writing. It'll take a little longer to read even the shortest Nomai texts, and those seconds count. Better get good at skimming, Jumper!

A Terrible Fate (+100 CP):

Normally, each traveler in the Outer Wilds Ventures Program has their own unique instrument, all contributing to one beautiful song. Now, though, they all seem to be playing the kazoo. Not only is this just a tad sillier, but it means identifying them via signalscope will be slightly more difficult.

Early Finish (+200 CP, can be taken up to 2 times):

The timetable has shifted back slightly — life on Timber Hearth has evolved 2,000 years earlier than normal, and the sun will go supernova 2,000 years earlier than normal, as well. Normally, this would affect nothing at all; don't worry about any sort of butterfly effects, here. However, this means that the mysterious and highly dangerous Ghost Matter will be more prevalent, since it has had less time to evaporate. For only +200CP, this simply makes traveling slightly more dangerous, since you will have to watch your step around a few patches in mostly inconsequential locations, but for +400CP, these patches will be in locations that make vital exploration just that much harder.

A Calm Piano (+200 CP) [Objective]:

In order to leave this Jump with the rewards you have earned, you will have to venture to the north pole of the strange moon which seems to appear and disappear when you aren't looking. Of course, with the cloud cover that obscures your sight, how will you manage to land on it?

Overenthusiasm (+200 CP) [Objective]:

In order to leave this Jump with the rewards you have earned, you will have to explore each section of the cannon responsible for the bright flash of light you see in the sky at the start of each loop. But with the structure as fragmented as it is, how can you access the third piece of the puzzle?

Under Pressure (+200 CP) [Objective]:

In order to leave this Jump with the rewards you have earned, you will have to journey to the core of The Interloper, the comet on a large elliptical path that brings it dangerously close to your star, and find out what is kept inside. But how will you even manage to get inside, when the surface fissure is frozen over?

A Fresh Perspective (+300 CP):

For the duration of the Jump, you lose all knowledge you may have obtained prior to starting this Gauntlet about The Outer Wilds and the various puzzles and secrets that it holds. This is a world of wonder, adventure, and exploration, all of which is rendered somewhat moot when you already know all of the answers.

Feldspar's Gambit (+300 CP):

You do not receive your **Spaceship** until the end of the Gauntlet. Fortunately, thanks to the fact that planets are much smaller around here, you should be able to find a way to launch yourself with your **Thruster Pack**, your **Little Scout Probe and Launcher**, and a lot of ingenuity. Just try not to run out of air or fuel.

Escall's Legacy (+300 CP): [Objective]

In order to complete this Gauntlet, you *must* obtain the ending titled **You Are Observant**. This is a task that requires a lot of planning, research, and speed, but thanks to the nature of the time loop, you have the time to figure out how to accomplish the goal.

If taken with **A Fresh Perspective**, it is recommended that you take all other [Objective] Drawbacks besides **Under Pressure**, since these objectives will likely be steps you will take on the journey to complete the task.

If you take all [Objective] Drawbacks, you receive an additional 100CP.

Perks

Phlox's Gift (Free and Mandatory, 200CP to keep after this Jump):

As you start this Jump, an ancient Nomai statue opens its eyes and looks at you, and you relive the memories you've experienced up to this point. From this point onwards, your memories will be stored in a complex data storage network that will persist regardless of any time manipulation that may occur. If you opt to keep this Perk, time manipulations after you leave will only affect you in positive ways — your memories will be retained, and you will not be erased by being killed in the past, but you can be revived by time rewinding after your death.

Mica's Training (Free):

You know your way around piloting a spaceship. Nothing special, really — don't expect to be pulling any high-speed maneuvers, but you can navigate in three dimensional space well enough to travel between planets with relative ease and grace, or use your thruster pack to move around.

Gossan's Training (Free):

You're well-trained in the proper maintenance of the equipment you can acquire here, be it space suits, thruster packs, or even your own spaceship. It's not going to save you any seats at an engineering college or anything, but you won't be stranded if your suit tears or your fuel line ruptures.

Travelers Theme (Free):

The Outer Wilds is notable for the beautiful, somber soundtrack, which changes often to meet the overall feel of the situation, giving each moment the ambiance it deserves. You can bring this with you, if you would like — quiet melodies with a unified leitmotif, audible without a specific source. This merges with other Perks like this one, letting you control where you draw audio from and play specific songs, or you can simply let this Perk choose which sound would be most fitting for where you find yourself. You can even let others hear, and of course turn it off.

Nomai Linguistics (100 CP):

While the **Nomai Translator** is incredibly useful, it is also clunky and has trouble piecing together figures of speech. Fortunately, with this Perk, you know how to read and write in the Nomai language, which has no verbal components. In fact, much like the complex staves they carry, you can simply make Nomai writing appear by touching a surface, your thoughts transcribed as a growing spiral. You can even teach others to make use of this Perk in its entirety, if you'd like!

Tough As Granite (100 CP):

No, despite the name scheme, that's not a Hearthian's name — in this case, we're discussing literal granite. You're able to take pretty heavy blows and somehow keep on moving, capable of surviving collisions at upwards of 100 km/h and coming away from it with only one or two broken bones. While this might help a little bit if you come to blows with someone, it really makes itself known when crashing — either while inside a spaceship, or just free falling from the atmosphere. If anyone's got a chance of surviving a crash, it's you.

Esker's Talent (100 CP):

I suppose you won't be in Timber Hearth's orchestra for very long, however. You've got a natural gift for music — not just on any one specific instrument, but in general. While you won't be skilled with every instrument you pick up from the get-go, you have a perfect understanding of pitch, timing, and tone, and what chords work together. With a bit of practice, you could probably improvise the sort of tune that others would have to spend a while trying to compose, and play it by ear. It's a great way to pass the time by a campfire under the stars.

Nomai Architecture (200 CP):

While Nomai technology is far beyond what the Hearthians could ever hope to accomplish in such a short time, their architectural design and ability to future-proof their creations can be replicated. You seem to have a similar knack for making your creations built to last, being able to consider just how the environment might affect what you make, and giving your designs just what they need to last lifetimes and accomplish their intended function no matter how much time has passed. As an added bonus, everything you put work into designing or creating will end up being half again as resistant to damage or decay as it should be.

Hearthian Engineering (200 CP):

The Hearthians may not be the most scientifically advanced, especially when compared to the Nomai before them, but they are capable of hashing together *astoundingly* functional construction out of very basic stuff. You gain a similar boost to your ability to creatively apply nearly any technology you can get your hands on — what you can't reverse engineer to make your own, you can at least take advantage of to improve what you have. Finally, your ability to jury-rig tech out of basic parts is enough to let you make even basic computers out of simple woodwork and gears, let alone what you could make with a more solid technological foundation.

Chert's Intuition (200 CP):

You have a sense for what's wrong, and when. Even if you can't *see* the danger, you'll have a gut instinct that tells you when something is about to go awry, and the sensation gets more intense when there's more danger. It's not quite enough to tell you how to *avoid* the danger, or even where to go, but if there's a problem, you'll know before anyone else — and you'll have a pretty good guess at what the problem is. Just don't let yourself get paralyzed by fear or hopelessness.

Nomai Parapsychology (400 CP):

Similar to the abilities afforded to the Nomai by their technology and biology, your visual acuity is raised significantly, and you can focus to sharpen your vision further, and allow you to see more esoteric interactions, such as wavelengths outside of the visual spectrum, gravitational waves, and particle interactions. Additionally, you can make use of telekinesis capable of lifting 15 kilograms of mass within three meters of you with ease. More information is available in the notes.

Riebeck's Boon (400 CP):

Despite being utterly terrified of space exploration and not very good at flying, Riebeck made their way to one of the most difficult-to-navigate planets in the solar system and found themself on one of the most stable and safe locations on it. You now share their incredible mix of luck and willpower, able to keep pushing forward despite your fears and survive despite yourself. Now, you can't get by on luck alone, and skill is important to more ambitious endeavors, but your luck means you'll have a little bit of a buffer to fall back on, and your force of will lets you tough through circumstances that may surprise even yourself.

Gabbro's Insight (400 CP):

You wouldn't know it when first talking to them, but Gabbro is probably one of the most gifted scientific minds Timber Hearth launched into space — even if Chert would disagree completely. They seem to have an intuitive understanding of the situations they find themself in, even if the conclusions they come to confuse others. You and they are quite alike, now, in that your ability to ponder and logic your way through puzzles, the abstract, and scientific discoveries is second to none. Given a bit of time to lay back and ponder, you might figure out a *lot* in due time; for now, though, you can certainly expect to be able to make the mental connections and logical hypotheses required to piece together the puzzles of this star system with the time that you have to explore it.

Items

Space Suit (Free):

A surprisingly well-constructed space suit, especially compared to other Hearthian equipment. A gold-filmed visor, baggy outer layer, and thick gloves paired with a reinforced belt and rugged boots belies how much this space suit allows for high freedom of movement without sacrificing safety. Comes with a notebook which somehow interfaces with the **Spaceship**'s onboard computer, if present, and a roll of suture for field repairs. The air tank stores about 10 minutes worth of oxygen while you're here, but in future Jumps this is bumped up to a far more reasonable six hours.

Thruster Pack (Free):

A maneuverability harness with a built in fuel tank, capable of omnidirectional thrust. It is certainly not built for long term thruster use, but the thrusters are strong enough to function as a passable jump pack even on planets with gravity up to 1.5g.

Nomai Translator (Free, 100CP):

A handheld tool that scans the complicated spiral writing that Nomai used and displays a translated form in whichever language the user is most comfortable with. For an additional 100CP, it will be able to do the same for any written language in future Jumps. A shame it can't translate *to* other languages.

Spaceship (Free):

A clunky, haphazardly-constructed mass of fireproof wood, dense metal, and a not-insignificant amount of duct tape. Despite all these flaws, it is still an extremely functional spaceship, capable of omnidirectional thrust capable of escaping even a gas giant's gravitational pull as well as a fairly archaic autopilot. Thanks to the small tree it's built around, it is permanently oxygenated and pressurized, and it even has a small gravity crystal inside to let you comfortably stay inside. Finally, it has a computer constructed using a fragment of a certain Nomai statue, which allows you to easily record any information you need to. It contains an unlimited amount of fuel, which can also be drawn on to fuel other things, though the throughput for anything but the engine is only about as much as an average gas station pump. It has an additional copy of the two free items below built in.

Signalscope (Free):

A complex handheld signal detector with inbuilt telescopic display. Not only does it function as a telescope, it can also pick up radio signals from across an entire solar system, and will automatically mark the position of the origin of these signals, if not impeded by some sort of interference.

Little Scout Probe and Launcher (Free):

A miniaturized gravity cannon based on ancient Nomai designs, paired to your very own Little Scout camera probe. These probes have inertia dampeners that prevent them from doing much damage, but they come equipped with a highly functional sensor suite and camera which sends images and data back to the launcher via an onboard Warp Core. The Little Scout informs you of your distance from the probe and the seismic activity of where it lands, and passively warns of nearby hazards. In addition, it has built-in floodlights that activate when it lands on a surface, and the pictures it takes can reveal invisible environmental threats such as high-energy matter or dangerous pressure differentials. Finally, the Warp Core can be activated to retrieve the probe for relaunch at will.

The Good Stuff (100 CP):

Porphy promised, after all. These three bottles of wine are brewed from the sap of one of the hardy, fireproof trees of Timber Hearth, each with a different proof. Admittedly, the highest proof one is less “delicious sap wine” and more “daunting digestive challenge,” but that’s got a charm in and of itself, right?

Campfire Supplies (100 CP):

A couple of quality logs, some tinder, and a bag of marshmallows. While most Hearthian equipment can function as a firestarter if used improperly — or, occasionally, properly — this also comes with a matchbook. You can find this kit just about anywhere if you’re out in the wilderness and want to rest. The bag contains an unlimited amount of tasty, high-quality marshmallows. If you get them nicely crisped without burning them, they can even promote healing!

A Gneiss Sound (100 CP):

A handmade instrument of your choice, lovingly put together with an incredible amount of care, effort, and skill. On top of being made out of the hyper durable wood of Timber Hearth’s trees and never losing its tune, this instrument projects whatever you play on it as radio waves on a non-intrusive frequency. Instead of an instrument, you could instead have this latter effect applied to your voice, whether whistling or singing. Purchase as many times as you like!

Eject Button (200 CP):

Sometimes, things go wrong. Very wrong. So very wrong that you're decently sure there's nothing that could possibly salvage the soon-to-be wreck you're piloting, driving, or riding in. In times like those, you'll *always* find this handy eject button at the ready. It simply takes whatever part of whatever vehicle you're sitting in — no matter what sort of vehicle — and launches it clear of danger. You're guaranteed to remain safe and unharmed from any complications of the vehicle itself, environmental effects, or the unfortunate effects of high-speed impacts until you finally touch down on a body with a not-insignificant amount of gravity. It won't protect you from anything *afterwards*, though, so you better get swimming or running away from any dangers in the area quick, alright?

Shipment 2b (200 CP):

Delivered to your Warehouse (or, optionally, any building you own) once per month is a crate of 50 kilograms of the incredibly dense metallic ore found in pockets near the core of Timber Hearth, such as the beautiful Zero-G Cave. This star-streaked metal is preeminently resilient to intense pressure and temperature when refined, but surprisingly easy to melt and work in its ore state. Additionally, once per year, you get a crate of ten purple crystals which can be used to replicate the Nomai's incredible Gravity Crystals with some experimentation.

Emergency Tree Seeds (200 CP):

Part of the standard space exploration kit before your time, this packet of Timber Hearth seeds can sprout up a relatively small tree over the course of 30 seconds, regardless of literally any condition outside of needing about two feet of "soil," with no real concern for the composition. These trees are capable of making a bubble of clean, breathable air and maintaining 0.96 atmospheres of pressure within three meters of their trunk. Each packet has three seeds, and you get a new packet each year. Feel free to stockpile, if you'd like!

Blue-Green Geode (400 CP):

A large geode about the size of a human skull, with a fissure down the front. Inside is a limitless supply of the incredibly hazardous ghost matter. The gaseous ghost matter inside is very slightly denser than air and invisible to the unaided eye, but photography reveals it as a hazy blue-green mist, even if the image was not taken using color photography. It can be poured out of the geode, but be *very* careful with it: there's almost certainly uses for this stuff, but I can't imagine that they'd be particularly peaceful uses.

Stunted Glowing Seed (400 CP):

A thorny mass of plant matter with wilted flowers dotting the outside and a few useless clumps of vines dangling from the sides, about the size of a small cabin. On its front is a car-sized, misty hole, which only faintly glows. This stunted Dark Bramble seed won't be able to grow much further on the outside, but the seed itself is a complicated spatial anomaly that means it's bigger on the inside. This small seed leads to a pocket the size of a football stadium. With tender and cautious care, you may be able to spark growth on the inside of the seed, letting you open up new spaces to work with inside of it. Just watch out for the thorns, and try to avoid recreating what happened to the icy planet that Dark Bramble once was.

Hourglass Model (400 CP):

Two spheres floating in the center of a glass bell, with a blue crystal at the top. While holding the blue crystal, you can think of a specific deadline or event, and the spheres will become a model of the hourglass twins, with the sand representing how long until that event or deadline comes to pass. There are no real limits to what event you're measuring with this, other than the fact that it gives no hints towards anything but the time until their completion. The spheres collide with the side of the glass bell when the time is up, making a distinctive chime.

Ending

You will remain in this gauntlet until you find some way of ending the time loop you find yourself in, regardless of the results of the conclusion. If you conclude the Jump without satisfying all of your [Objective] Drawbacks, you are considered to have failed the Gauntlet, and will continue on your Chain *without* what you purchased here. Depending on how you leave this place, you may find yourself with an additional prize.

You Are Dead:

You found the source of the time loop, and chose to end it without escaping the inevitable supernova. Perhaps it is for the best; what a profoundly horrific fate it would be, to remain trapped in this cycle for eternity.

Reward: You continue on to the next Jump with all that you have purchased here, and nothing more. Perhaps there was more to discover?

You Are Alone:

You disabled the time loop, and fled the solar system ahead of the oncoming supernova, managing to escape its effective blast radius. A single survivor among the dying stars, in a ship with limited supplies… This Jump ends here, to spare you from what would obviously come next.

Reward: You continue on to the next Jump, with all that you have purchased here. In addition, you bring with you a very high-grade Nomai Warp Core. This was commonly used to form wormholes for transportation, but with careful study, maybe you can find different uses?

You Are Gone:

Somehow, you found a way to shatter the fabric of spacetime. Given that this is a time loop, it can be assumed that it was probably due to a paradox. Reality cracks along the fault you created, and everything falls into it. A swift conclusion to a several-billion-year-long tale.

Reward: A replica of the Nomai High-Energy Lab is now accessible through an attached door in your Warehouse, or, if you lack one, through a key that works similarly to a Warehouse key. In addition to access to the technology and low-grade Warp Cores within, you can attach nearly anything that requires electricity to the output of the Lab, which can put out an unlimited amount of

power, with a throughput capable of satisfying modern-day Earth's electricity needs. You can even run cables out of the entrance door!

You Are Lost:

Something went horribly wrong after you stopped the time loop, and you have somehow ended up in a state where, depending on the observer, you are either alive or dead. Trapped where you ended up, your time here comes to a close before you lose yourself to timeless solitude.

Reward: A vaguely rectangular chunk of rock the height and width of a human, made of what initially appears to be volcanic glass that's pockmarked with irregular holes and craters. It has unique, macro-atomic quantum properties that make it exist in several locations at once, unless observed, which collapses the probabilistic waveform. When unobserved, it becomes whole again, so it can be infinitely mined for quantum fragments which, with study, can be set to appear in specific locations of your choosing, allowing for a wide variety of interesting uses.

You Are Observant:

You ended the cycle you were trapped in and found a way to accomplish something the Nomai died attempting. This Jump concludes, but not before you get to see the wonderful results of the task you have managed to complete.

Reward: In addition to all of the above rewards, you gain a special Perk:

Explain And Identify:

The tenets of Nomai philosophy: to seek out and understand. You are granted special insight into the fields of study the Nomai investigated so many years ago, allowing you to eventually replicate the various scientific wonders seen across the planets in this solar system and in the rewards here. Your ability to comprehend, analyze, and extrapolate on data, observations, and scientific knowledge is improved drastically, and the laws of physics that govern the technology from this Jump will remain functional for you and those you teach, seamlessly incorporating into the laws of physics of any future universe you visit.

Now that you've broken the cycle, there's only one decision to make.

The Past is Past, Now: Return home, since the past is never really gone completely.
It's Time For Something New: Continue onwards, to your next Jump.

Notes

This Jump was written in a way that is *intentionally vague* towards the secrets that can be discovered in the game, out of a hope that should you find it interesting enough, you experience the game itself. It's an exploratory game which relies on the slow uncovering of the story through its gameplay, and so spoilers affect it rather heavily. With that in mind, the notes below will be quite spoiler heavy, so Jumpers who do not care much for "walking simulator"-style puzzle games can still get a full understanding of what's going on. Apologies for those who are visiting the notes for clarification about certain Perks that specifically call out the Notes — I will place them first, and try to maintain a level of secrecy.

Nomai Parapsychology is based on several Nomai translations which refer to a few individuals collecting more information than initially available with their third eyes, alongside abilities exhibited in-game that allow manipulation of nearby rocks, seemingly at will. The telekinesis afforded by the perk will seamlessly merge other sources of telekinesis together with it, increasing the mass limit and range. You can spread this mass limit across as many objects as you can maintain focus on, but this perk does not in and of itself increase your ability to keep track of objects. As an added bonus, this grants a certain pseudo-proprioception, where you can get a vague echolocation-like sense of your surroundings within your effective telekinesis range by exhibiting a constant, imperceptible telekinetic force. This false proprioception lets you keep track of objects you are actively manipulating even when they are out of sight.

Phlox's Gift applies to *all* time manipulation and the negative and positive results of it. Time stops? You get to move around still. An object causes a paradox? It collapses, instead of the reality you're standing in. You can opt not to have it protect these things if you really want, but when it comes to time shenanigans, you're getting nothing but the good kind. Of course, while you're in *this* Jump, it *only* covers your memory persisting between time loops. No immunity to paradox until you leave.

Emergency Tree Seeds also means you can eventually chop down these trees for a sizable amount of the Hearthians' very durable wood if you give them a decade or two

to grow. They can definitely grow additional seeds on their own, though you'll still only get an extra packet each year delivered, no matter how many you personally harvest. It's up to you what the seeds look like, but I'll put my foot down and say that they don't grow nutritious, easily-edible fruits. At most, pinecones.

Blue-colored text isn't really special in any way, I just picked out the color from Nomaian writing and used it to color any perks or items that have to do with the Nomai. The Nomai Translator Tool is a Hearthian creation, which is why it is orange.

The Hourglass Model can track even abstract, non-determined times, such as the date of your own death, but it is not a measure of fate. It simply would measure how long until, in current conditions, you would die — whether that would be old age, or the destruction of the planet you're on, or the end of the universe, etc. More concrete timelines would be a better use for this, such as when an opponent will have lunch, etc.

If you purchase **A Gneiss Tune** to modify your voice+whistling, I don't see why you couldn't just speak out loud and be a walking radio show host, or use it to call for help. It's not what I had in mind, but I think creative uses like this shouldn't be frowned upon.

Ghost matter, such as from the **Blue-Green Geode**, is incredibly lethal to all forms of life, regardless of their origin. However, dissolving it in water temporarily disables its lethal effects, as seen on Giant's Deep. You can make use of this for safe storage and manipulation of the gas.

The **You Are Dead** ending will be achieved should you die after disabling the Ash Twin Project, no ifs, ands, or buts. If you took **Escall's Legacy**, you'd better be willing to risk Gauntlet failure.

You Are Gone will occur if you cause a paradox regardless of how it happens, be it in the High Energy Lab or in the Ash Twin Project. The reward will be the same regardless.

There is no reward for finding Solanum before completing the **You Are Observant** ending, outside of knowing that you got to let at least one Nomai (or, at least, a reflection of one created by you perceiving an uncertainty singularity) finally realize their generations-long dream. Also, she is just very sweet and she deserves to be remembered.

Explain And Identify incorporates the physics which the Nomai depended on for their creations — namely, black hole-white hole pairing, teleportation through warp cores,

and the negative time interval. However, most naturally occurring black holes in other universes *will not have a paired white hole.* More often than not, you will have to forge your own black holes in order to safely use them as transportation.

v1.0. Can’t get that goddamn banjo out of my head. Love you, Riebeck. -Fel