Subnautica

Jumpchain gauntlet

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The Alterra Corporation ship Aurora is currently on-route to the outer reaches of known space on a multi-year mission to construct a new phase-gate. Unknown to most of the crew, it has a secondary mission to investigate the disappearance of another ship along their route, the Degasi. While performing a slingshot maneuver around planet 4546B, something disables the Aurora and causes it to crash. You will be one of the few crewmen that reach an escape pod.

You'll take the place of Ryley Robinson, waking up in the safe shallows with a cut on your forehead and a fire in your pod. With the equipment on hand it should be a simple matter to survive until a rescue ship arrives, except...

This planet is host to the Kharaa bacterium, a lethal pathogen that long ago killed off most of the life on this planet and you'll be infected the moment you hit the water. There is an incubation period of two weeks, give or take, before symptoms begin showing. Without a cure, your death is only a matter of time. Don't expect help, since you'll soon learn that the Aurora was shot down by an alien weapon system. The Quarantine Enforcement Platform was built to prevent Kharaa from spreading off-world by shooting down anyone that attempts to land or leave. Its builders tried and failed to find a cure for the bacterium before it killed them. You'll have to do better. Explore, learn, and complete the puzzle they were unable to solve.

You begin with 0cp and death will not end your chain, only costing you whatever you purchased or collected here.

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Location

+0cp - Safe shallows
The best and safest place for your pod to land in, it has all the basic resources needed to start up and only a few dangers. You'll be floating comfortably on the surface. The occupants of the pods that landed in other biomes were all dead within a matter of hours.

+200cp - Inner area
If you're desperate for a few more points, your pod will instead sink into one of the areas surrounding the safe shallows. These include the kelp forests, mushroom forests, and grassy plateaus. There are numerous predators and some resources will be harder to acquire, but you're not at all required to stay here any longer than absolutely necessary.

+400cp - Outer area
The mountains, the blood kelp zone, the grand reef, the dunes...deep, dark, and filled with extremely hostile creatures. Your pod is not floating on the surface, something malfunctioned and you're now at least 150 meters underwater. You'll probably be dead within the first hour.

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Backgrounds

Castaway
There's only one possible background for you here, a survivor of the crash of the Aurora. You may choose to not have a history and memory of growing up in this universe, in which case damage from the crash will prevent Alterra systems from realizing you shouldn't be here.

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Perks

You get a 50% discount on one perk of your choice from the 200, 400, and 600cp price tiers.

Free – Swimming
Since it would be very silly to drop you here without knowing how, you are now a very able swimmer. Not a champion by any stretch, but not a flailing novice either. You also know how to work underwater, handy when you need to do something while bobbing upside-down.

100cp – Non-essential systems maintenance
The janitor of the future, you have lots of experience fixing things that don't require highly specialized knowledge. Loose wires, cracked casings, leaky pipes, short circuits, that sort of thing. Simple problems like those can be identified at a glance, and with the right tool in hand you can quickly and properly correct them. You may not have the slightest idea how the Aurora's reactor core works, but patching breaches in its casing and radiation shielding? That's easy.

100cp – Reaper wrangling
Realistically, it isn't possible for humans to fight underwater with any degree of finesse. The best you can hope for is to hold on for dear life and just keep stabbing, and you're pretty good at doing just that. You've got a hell of a grip, able to practically glue yourself to something and keep from getting shaken off. This means that, if you're crazy enough, you could hitch a hide on a reaper without falling off or dropping your knife, clinging with one hand and stabbing madly with the other. You also have a pretty good idea of where to grab on, finding a spot that a predator's anatomy won't allow them to reach and making yourself into an itch they can't easily scratch.

100cp – Critter friend
Smaller creatures are more relaxed around you. This makes catching prey fish without advanced tech much easier. Don't expect bleeders and small predators to ignore you completely, but crashfish at least won't blitz you the second you come into sight.

100cp – Transparent hull
There's lots to see here, lots of things that want to kill you, and very small windows on your vehicles. Now you can choose to see through the structure of whatever vehicle you're driving. This doesn't make your vision any better, but in shallow areas or where bio-luminescence, lava or something else provides illumination you'll have a much better grasp of your surroundings.

200cp – Not worth the effort

You're tiny compared to leviathan-class creatures, and while you'd still make a decent snack humans are new here. It seems like predators haven't yet filed you under 'tasty' and will ignore you as long as you don't give them a reason to take an experimental bite. Stay distant, be quiet, go dark, and predators, even reapers and the needlessly aggressive ghosts will completely ignore you. Flap around, flash your lights or get too close, and they may decide to ruin your day. Since vehicles are equally unknown to them and aren't made of meat, this also works when sailing past as long as you keep the lights off, move slowly, and be as quiet as possible.

200cp – Intimate service provider

In Alterra space everything is a commodity, even affection. You're an expert in opening negotiations, resolving disputes, and cutting ties with a poor business partner. Your best pickup line is to simply ask if someone is 'in the market' for any sort of intimacy, and the propositioned party will respond to your inquiry with an honest response and no offense taken. You still have to work from there to 'seal the deal' but once in a relationship you're equally good at getting them to communicate their wants and needs or discuss changes or additions to the arrangement without drama. If needed, you can also end things with a minimum of bad feelings from either party.

200cp – 3D navigation

Getting lost underwater in a cave system or a large wreck is a death sentence. You have a chance of escaping such a situation alive by being very good at keeping track of your surroundings and retracing your path even after spinning around in three dimensions, looting a room, getting chased around by leviathans and hearing a low oxygen warning. It's almost impossible for you to get lost or get confused regarding your surroundings just because the path you took twisted like a pretzel.

200cp – Pilot rated

You're qualified to handle the standard Alterra vehicles you'll construct here, and know them inside and out. You'll have no trouble handling the cyclops solo, working in the PRAWN suit, or zipping around in the seamoth. You'll pick up the quirks of any other similarly-sized vehicles quickly and be driving them like a pro in no time at all.

400cp – Sonar

With even a little ambient sound you can get a rough impression of your surroundings. If you wish to go active and risk drawing attention, you can send out a powerful pulse to get a better view. You have control over the frequency of your pulses, allowing you to fine-tune the results in terms of range vs detail. With practice, you might even be able to imitate the exact sounds made by local lifeforms to disguise your nature when predators are around.

400cp – Janitor's luck

The single canon survivor of Subnautica was a pretty lucky guy. Out of all the crash survivors he was the only one to land in a safe area with no serious injuries and a mostly intact pod. Like him you'll benefit from minor twists of fate that keep you from dying stupidly. You won't turn a corner and blunder into a hungry predator, instead picking the path when exploring that'll lead to something valuable. Also like him, you'll have to keep working and moving forwards to survive, but now if you die it'll be from carelessness rather than random chance.

400cp – Implanted knowledge

If you have enough money you can skip schooling and have knowledge implanted directly into your brain. Pick one subject of scientific study, you have an education equivalent in the field to a university degree. You may find some practical applications if you get creative and some of it may be of surprising help down here. Because the knowledge was deeply implanted with future-tech, it can never be forgotten. Post-jump you'll know how to recreate this process. A quick procedure can lock information (nothing more complex than text files and basic diagrams) into your mind permanently, never forgotten and retrieved instantly when needed.

600cp – Flex mining

The odd geological processes of 4546B encrusted most mineral deposits with an outer layer of mundane rock and you won't know what's inside until you crack the formation open. Now you can choose what you dig up, so long as what you aim to collect is of the same general type as what you're digging through and it can be found in the same conditions. Dig through any type of igneous rock and collect any other sort of igneous rock, peel away the outer layer of a copper vein and find gold, and so on. This works on anything physical, like gems, metals, even liquids and gasses. You can't get more out of a deposit than its size would suggest, or choose 'random' for your desired loot to get new compounds or things you've never encountered before.

600cp – Persistent immunity

Your body remembers how to fight past infections, but that does not always guarantee survival in the event of a second exposure. This perk fixes that by making you completely immune to anything that your system has managed to survive. This does not apply to external dangers like attacks or environmental conditions, but being cured of or just enduring a virus, bacterium, parasites, poison or anything of that sort until your system purges it means you will never have to worry about that thing ever again. You also gain a massive boost to your resistance towards closely-related strains, variants and derivations of the same in the process.

600cp – Xenopath

A bit of the Sea Emperor Leviathan must have rubbed off on you. Your mind has been improved, becoming able to reach out and sense the thoughts and moods of others. At first you will only be able to make small nudges to nearby minds, keeping them docile and disinterested in you as long as you don't give them a reason to fight against your initially limited degree of influence. Over time and with practice the strength of your powers will develop. You can search for other minds regardless of distance or obstructions, send and receive complex information, and 'program' minds to a degree that depend on how intelligent they are with animals being the most receptive to your instructions. The greatest if most subtle aspect of this power is that it acts as a sort of universal translator, allowing you to safely and effectively communicate with all but the most wildly different alien minds. Even then, some basic concepts can still get across.

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Items

Free – All-environment protection suit
Standard wear for Alterra employees on the clock, this suit will afford minor protection from burns, cuts, shocks, radiation and other on-the-job hazards. It has a helmet that will automatically deploy when needed and comes with a small internal oxygen supply. It is rated for operation both underwater and in hard vacuum, and will automatically adjust to keep the wearer protected from changes in atmospheric pressure.

Free – PDA
Another piece of equipment in ubiquitous use, this PDA comes equipped with a full suite of short-range sensors, is cross-compatible with all Alterra equipment, will monitor your vital signs and equipment status, holds several blueprints for your survival, and has a somewhat snarky virtual personality. While not sapient, it is smart enough to create new blueprints from recovered technical data. If lost or destroyed simply looking for the PDA will bring it back to your hand.

100cp – Cuddlefish
An adorable and highly intelligent animal, this fish will imprint upon you and do its best to provide moral support. It learns tricks easily, is highly sensitive to your emotional state, and spending time with it will help burn off the stress you'll inevitably accumulate here. It's like a dog, but with tentacles. Except it's a fish. Counts as a follower.

100cp – Hardened blade
Light, fitting snugly in your hand, and with a near mono-molecular edge, nothing on the planet short of alien construction can completely resist this serrated and stupidly durable blade. If you're crazy and persistent enough, you could bring down a leviathan with this.

100cp – Universal growbed
This simple box of synthetic soil is a perfect environment for any sort of plant. From the exotic to the mundane, anything grown here will not need watering or maintenance of any kind. The growbed also protects plants from the environment, in case you want to grow roses on the seabed or kelp in space. Anything your plants produce will be held in stasis until harvested, so you don’t need to worry about anything going bad because you let things sit on the vine too long.

100cp – Seamoth
With 'Bumble butt' stencilled on the side, this seamoth is slightly better than the versions you'll construct here. Namely that it's fast enough to outrun an irate leviathan at top speed and manoeuvrable enough to dodge one if you’re lucky. The controls are a little touchy, so get some practice in before you go reaper baiting. Modules can still be installed to improve it further.

200cp – Ion matrix
The amount of power within this piece of hybrid technology is effectively infinite. The output is not, but alone it can power a cyclops and all of its systems or a sizable seabase with lots of equipment. Comes with an adapter that allows it to hook up with any device you'll find here.

200cp – Advanced protection suit

A top-of-the-life environmental suit that combines the benefits of the other suits you can create. Armored against attacks and environmental hazards, the suit will protect much greater protection from radiation, heat, corrosives, teeth, electrical shocks, and other dangers. It also functions like the stillsuit, recycling bodily fluids into drinkable water with no residual odors.

200cp – Xeno-biological stockpile

Gathered by Bart Torgal before his death, you'll stumble across this collection of spores and seeds early in your journey. There are mushrooms, bloodvine cuttings and other plants with industrial applications that just need a proper growbed to be planted in. There's also edible plants, marblemelons and chinese potatoes, and a smattering of other native plant life included in Bart's collection. A few very rare plants seem to be missing.

200cp – Fully-stocked pod

Your pod's storage compartment held more than just a few ration bars, some water, and distress flares. There's a flashlight, a repair tool, a habitat builder (with all modules unlocked) a scanner and propulsion cannon. And there's a lot more food and food and water.

400cp – Egg cave

This quiet cave, dimly lit by luminescent plants is full of eggs. At least one of every species' eggs are found here, but something in the cave prevents them from hatching as long as they're inside. Yes, this cave includes leviathan eggs. A tree similar to that found in the Lost River holds Ghost leviathan eggs, while a little searching will turn up Reaper and Sea Dragon eggs. Getting the eggs to hatch is as simple as placing them in a suitable containment unit, but getting them to firmly imprint on you as a parental figure is another exercise entirely. Post-jump, you'll find a single Sea Emperor Leviathan egg here.

400cp – Kali P.R.A.W.N.

This experimental four-armed prawn suit means no worrying about what loadout you need to choose before setting out. Designed for intuitive use, this suit's four arms are modified manipulator appendages that each have a secondary function that can be switched to on the fly. A drill for mining, a grappling hook, a propulsion cannon, and a torpedo launcher. You have the blueprints to make the modified arms if you'd like to have less of one type and more of another, and other modules can still be installed to improve this suit in other ways.

400cp – Alien database

More theory and scans than blueprints, this database nonetheless contains large stores of information on the technology employed by the aliens on this planet that you wouldn't otherwise be able to acquire. Among other things, there's detailed notes on warper biology and technology, schematics for lots of laboratory-focused technology, some very impressive and long-lasting geothermal power generator designs, and enough equations that you could figure out how to make ion cubes and adapt them for human technology. There are even a few small hints about bombs powerful enough to destroy a solar system...

400cp – Cyclops

Bright yellow (by default) a cyclops is a mobile base as much as a submarine. Designed for three pilots but able to be driven solo, the cockpit design has been further streamlined to make that easier for you. Unlike the standard cyclops, the internals of this model are modular. You can't change the arrangement of the engines and propellers (it wouldn't work if you did) but you can shift the location of the vehicle bay, bridge, entrances and internal storage space.

600cp – Aurora
Approximately 1.5km long with accommodations for a crew of 150, fully stocked for extended missions away from settled space, and equipped with advanced fabrication facilities, this copy of the Aurora is a top-of-the-line vessel by this galaxy's standards. It is a transport/industrial ship first and foremost, and is equipped with minimal armaments.

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Warehouse attachments

100cp – Degasi base
It seems that wherever you landed, there is a small base nearby that was likely constructed by the Torgals that is still operational. It's pretty bare-bones and a bit of a fixer-upper, with only a fabricator, a radio, and minimal power systems, but it's intact, dry, and can easily be expanded. Post-jump, if you ever find yourself stranded or isolated in a hostile environment you'll stumble across a setting-appropriate base waiting for you in a hidden location once per year.

100cp – Lifepods
Any ships you own of sufficient size will have these pods added to them for your followers to use. In the event of an emergency, they'll know to use them and at least a few of them will always survive, landing nearby to aid you with the basic equipment included in each pod.

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Companions

100cp – Alterra AI
The AI within your PDA is quite advanced, but not sapient and limited in what it can do. Purchasing this upgrades it into full-fledged personhood. In the beginning it will only show more initiative and intellectual flexibility to assist you, but over time it will develop a distinct personality. Loss of sarcastic snarking in the process is not guaranteed. It is utterly loyal to you, though this too may change over time depending on how it's treated.

200cp – Ryley Robinson
Aurora escape pods are two-seaters, and by taking Ryley as a companion he'll be occupying the seat across from yours that would have otherwise remained empty.. He's a glorified janitor, but by luck and by pluck he survived when everyone else had died, solved an ancient puzzle, and saved a world. He's a pretty decent guy, even if his hair does look ridiculous. Ryley has the 'Non-essential systems maintenance' ''Pilot rated' and 'Janitor's luck' perks.

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Drawbacks

+100cp – Optimal outcome

You got brained by a piece of flying debris on the way down. After coming to with a major headache and a bit of dried blood on your face you'll stand up...and then fall back down. As long as you don't try to take things too fast, you'll be fine. But sudden movement or spinning around in three dimensions too quickly risks triggering dizzy spells. They only ever last a few seconds, but being disorientated for even that long can be dangerous in the wrong situation.

+100cp – Symptoms of aggression

Creatures who don't get enough Enzyme 42 in their diet will begin to show signs of infection. Glowing green cysts and discolored veins in the latter stages of the infection are accompanied by levels of extreme aggression, even in herbivores. These creatures will go berserk at the slightest provocation, becoming hyper-focused on killing whatever annoyed them, heedless of any risk or injuries until they eventually die from wounds or exhaustion. Taking this drawback ensures there will always be a few creatures at this stage of infection wherever you go.

+100cp – Lunar dial

Planet 4546B has two moons, one being quite large and unusually close to the planet in a fast orbit. This gives the planet very strong tidal currents that you'll have to deal with. Travel will be more difficult, and at certain places and times the currents can make travel near-impossible. And unless you choose your locations carefully or get very creative, anything you build on or very near the surface will be battered into scrap by powerful waves. As it would be completely unfair otherwise, your pod will land in a small area where the landscape acts as a natural breakwater and comes equipped with fancy future-tech anchors to prevent it from being carried away.

+100cp – Tiny tanks

Realistically, future-tech should allow for air tanks able to keep you breathing much longer than the pittance you need to deal with in the game. This isn't the case now, with your air tanks letting you stay underwater for a few minutes at most with the best tank and equipment available. Keep an eye on your oxygen meter and be very careful inside wrecks and caves.

+200cp – Hidden resources

Some unusual geological process here causes certain types of stone to form shells around mineral deposits. This is no longer the case. While the crater is just as rich in minerals (perhaps even more so) ore is something you now need to scan for before digging it out. This is time-consuming and likely to attract attention from wildlife while you're distracted. Blueprints for man-portable mining equipment will be provided, though it'll be cumbersome and slower than using the PRAWN suit.

+200cp – Active caldera

Maybe the crash of the Aurora had something to do with it, but the dormant volcano you've landed on has entered a period of greater activity. Hotspots are more common and more

energetic, making it easier to gather energy from heat. But the crater is also now experiencing minor earthquakes that will make building more difficult and exploration possibly more dangerous. Some currents will be blisteringly hot and lethal mini-eruptions now occur in areas with magma flows.

+200cp – Hell is other people

It turns out that you weren't the only one to survive the crash of the Aurora. On one hand, you've now got extra help surviving and working towards finding a cure for the bacterium. On the other, the stress of the crash, this world's dangers and the tight quarters means you've got a recipe for cabin fever and interpersonal drama worthy of the trashiest of soap operas. If the other survivors all die you'll feel depressed about it no matter how much you might have hated them. On the other hand, if any of them survive and you take a liking to them you can take them with you with each of them sharing a companion slot.

+300cp – Nature points out the folly of man

The creatures of this world seem to hate anything built by humans. Seabases and vehicles will be under constant attack, though not everything has the ability to inflict any real damage. Don't expect anything you build in territory frequented by larger predators, let alone leviathan-class creatures to last very long. The sight of artificial structures and EM fields from power usage seem to trigger the response, so it may be possible to hide or disguise your technology. Expect super-aggressive predators when exploring in any kind of vehicle that won't let up until you're destroyed or long out of sight.

+300cp – Fear the reaper

There are twenty-five reaper leviathans within the crater. One of them is hunting you. It doesn't know exactly where you are and isn't in a huge rush, but it will eventually make its way to your general location and begin searching if you stay in one place long enough. If it finds you, things will go about as you expect. If you somehow kill the reaper, two will take up the hunt, sticking together and moving as a pair. If you kill those two, three reapers will begin working together to find and kill you as a team, and so on. If you manage to kill them all, no more will appear.

+300cp – IKEA technology

Your pod's database contains the most basic and essential tools for survival, ready for construction. However, a persistent computer error means that you'll never receive a complete blueprint even after scanning multiple fragments of more advanced devices. You'll have to personally assemble the components yourself and design everything you need to explore and survive. Your PDA's AI will assist you and it is capable of doing all the needed programming. Your kitbashed designs are unlikely to perform anywhere near as well as the standard models, but nothing prevents you from taking time to test your designs (and you really, really should) and working out any obvious flaws. You don't want your seamoth breaking down while being chased by a Reaper or your seabase springing a leak while you're asleep.

+400cp – Rapid evolution

Because of the Kharaa or some other factor, life within the crater has changed and evolved at an unusually rapid rate. With this drawback, ‘rapid’ will go from changing multiple times over geological epochs to gaining new tricks every few weeks. Tiger plants may start spitting poisoned or explosive thorns. Bonesharks may develop chameleon-like skin for concealment. Stalkers will learn how to take bites out of seabases. Entirely new species will appear, and you

won't know how dangerous they are, or in what way until they come after you. This won't ruin any critter-derived materials needed for survival, but it will make them more difficult to acquire.

+400cp – Crush depth

Normally your All-Environment Protection Suit is capable of automatically adjusting itself to protect you from the hazards of diving too deep or rapid pressure changes. But damage or something about this planet has disabled those functions. Humans can safely dive with normal oxygen to about 60 meters, and you'll be required to go far, far past that point. Besides equipment like the PRAWN suit now being absolutely required to get anything done in deeper waters, you must pay far more care in your approach to exploration. Forgetting to account for the constant pressure changes you face here now carries the risk of a painful death. On the upside, your PDA will advise you on such issues and provide blueprints to help you deal with them.

+600cp – Unnatural selection

There are signs within the game that Subnautica exists within the same setting as the Natural Selection series, and now that's true. Unfortunately for you. Kharaa will no longer simply kill its victims, it will mutate them into actively hostile forms. The Warpers (Self-warping quarantine enforcement units) are extremely hostile to Kharaa-multated life-forms to the point of prioritizing attacking them over you, and native life will defend themselves from attack as best they can. These mutated creatures range from annoying (mutated peepers) to incredibly dangerous (weaponized leviathans.) No matter how many you kill, more will eventually appear while the number of warpers will slowly dwindle. The only way to remove the threat is to find a cure to Kharaa. And as per Alterra regulations, nothing specifically designed as a weapon beyond the survival knife can be constructed by your fabricators.

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THE END

Will you **go home**, **stay here**, or **move on**?

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NOTES

Since launching in a jury-rigged rocket or relying on faulty tech to prevent decompression sickness would otherwise almost certainly kill you, the 'IKEA technology' drawback does not apply to the escape rocket or to what you need to build with the 'crush depth' drawback.

'Flex mining' can work on magical or exotic materials, as long as you're mining something of a related type. No getting orichalcum or vibranium out of a seam of mundane metals.