

BlackChain

A Jumpchain-compatible CYOA

by ltmauve v1.0

Humanity's technology continues to advance. History could refer to this era as the "minervite era," named after the superconducting material. With it humanity now has access to artificial gravity, AI, and countless other advanced technologies.

Of course, the future isn't rosy in the slightest. Megacorporations dominate the economy, and even have an agreement with the government that allows them to have militaries and wage war on each other. The economy runs on the Blackchain cryptocurrency, which is dominated by corporations that have the materials and space to set up massive farms of Blackchain cores.

It is 2088. The Tycor megacorporation has just been defeated in their attempt to conquer Earth. The other corporations have begun their operations to scavenge Tycor's assets, which involves a great deal of violence between all parties.

The discovery of “Blackdoor,” a project Tycor was undertaking before it got shut down, is going to lead to an all-out brawl on Minerva as the megacorporations fight to seize this powerful tool.

Take **+1000 Crypto Points** to prepare for the next 10 years.

BlackChain is an indie RTS game by Borington.

Sitrep

Select one. Officer and Grunt may either be Drop-Ins, with no history in the world and no new memories, or Natives, who have a history in the world and memories of that history. Executives must be Natives. It’s not what you know, and it’s actually not who you know. It’s “who knows you.” No history means no power.

Origins

Officer

Officers in megacorp militaries don’t believe in “the brass knows how to do something by knowing who does it.” They’re technical experts as well as commanders in the field.

Grunt

Not just poor bloody infantry, this Origin also encompasses most of the vehicle operators on the battlefield, from tanks to aircraft.

Executive

Sitting in offices away from the fighting, executives manage the company, providing general direction and specific advice to their subordinates. You are a member of your corporation’s military operations department.

Megacorporation

Most megacorporations are relatively the same from within. Especially if you’re involved in the military operations division (which you will be.) As such, you can freely choose from any megacorporation involved in the post-Tycor Charlie Foxtrot. Almost.

The “yellow” protagonist megacorp has an associated mandatory drawback. Tycor was controlled by AIs so you can’t take it with the Executive origin.

Tycor is grey, Orinoco is blue, Stellar United is red, AsterX is teal, and the protagonist faction is yellow.

Place

Officers and Grunts start in one of their megacorporation’s bases off Earth. Executives start on Earth or a regional headquarters (which will be a major base.) The exception is Tycor, who now exist as only scattered pockets.

Perks

Perks associated with each origin are discounted to party members with that origin by 50%. 100 CP perks are free for that origin.

On The BlackChain (free)

This world uses the Blackchain cryptocurrency. What this perk does is it allows you to use Blackchain in future worlds as legitimate currency. You can pay directly from your Blackchain wallet, and whoever you want to get the money will instantly get it. The conversion ratio is a bit funny, but in a modern and mundane world one Blackchain would be about $10.

Officer

Officer School (100 CP)

Look, you need to know how to actually command your troops before they assign you some troops to command. Thus, you're trained to command troops in battle. This is not only deciding the tactics of the battle but getting your troops to follow you.

Hero Invincibility (200 CP)

When you die, you don't immediately fail the jump, but instead stick around for five minutes without chain-failing. If you have allies nearby your corpse (or absent you having one, where you died,) you regenerate until you're fully intact, at which point you revive. Your other regeneration abilities and items won't function until you actually revive again, but if you get even the slightest bit of regeneration then you can stick around past five minutes.

If your allies move away, you don't regenerate health. If you don't have any allies around for five minutes, you start decaying back to your previous state of corpse-ness. If you reach it, then this no longer protects you. I should mention that you're going to be unconscious during this period as well.

I'll also throw in a free "no one will find this odd" effect to the results as well.

Custom Headlights (400 CP)

Most officers spend their time tooling around in a custom vehicle. Even if they don't, a good way to identify officers is by their custom gear. And they normally make those customizations themselves.

You are familiar enough with this world's techbase to make modifications to your equipment. This is mainly kitbashing, like adding an Electropod's plasma discharger to your ride or adding laser cannons to your Stinger.

You may also kitbash other technologies you know together quickly and easily.

Infowar Training (400 CP)

After gaining enough trust from corporate, you've finally gotten Infowar training. This covers a wide variety of techniques to deal with both electronic defenses and attacks. Most of the attacks you know how to execute rely on having physical access to the hardware, or at least a hardline into the system that isn't mediated by a network.

But given that, you can absolutely wreck almost any security system. Once you control a cable that runs into a computer, you can undo months of firewall installations and security lockdowns in a couple minutes.

Grunt

Boot Camp Indoctrination (100 CP)

A megacorp's boot camp breaks you down to make sure you don't break down in combat. You are very hard to frighten or terrify. In addition, you can quickly process and recover from any traumas you might get.

Basic Training (100 CP)

When it comes to modern combat, you need a weapon if you want to do anything. And you need to know how to use those weapons, too. Fortunately, your training has let you pick up any firearm and know how to use it. Not just pointing it at the enemy and pulling the trigger, but also how to reload it, how to clean it, and how to deal with common issues that happen in the field.

Grenade Pouch (200 CP)

In combat, running out of some supplies can be very bad. Fortunately, you don't run out of combat consumables. Those recharge for you, getting replaced and/or restored after a cooldown, usually about a minute or two. This applies separately for each instance of a consumable you have, so if you bring extra grenades or reloads for your guns each will be replaced individually.

Stinger Eject System (200 CP)

A Stinger suit is an antigrav (technically, grav-repulsion) powered armor originally developed for mining. Those original versions weren't sealed, so the operators wore other spacesuits underneath. When megacorps started adapting the Stinger as a combat suit, they kept the feature. This lets the operator ditch a crippled Stinger in combat and continue fighting. (Well, it has to be a Pathfinder hardsuit since space marine armor won't fit.)

You can discard a set of armor you currently have equipped in order to fully refresh yourself in combat. Full health, energy, and it restores any damage another armor you're wearing might have taken. Doing this makes the outer armor temporarily unavailable, but it can be available as early as the next lull in combat (it obviously depends on what kind of technology you have to rebuild the armor. Here you'll be needing to go back to the barracks to get your Stinger.)

Mechanized Warfare (200 CP)

When it comes to handling vehicles, you're a natural. Once you get your hands on the control sticks (or however you control it), you know how to control well enough to fight with it.

After a few hours of usage, you also know how to handle the maintenance work as well.

Von Neumann Mesh (200 CP)

If you work for an actual megacorp, or even a good "normal" corporation, your standard space marine armor will include a "von Neumann mesh", a network of advanced systems designed to keep your armor sealed and your body in one piece.

You don't seem to need that, because your body and equipment seems to self-repair. You can go from death's door to fully healthy in about a minute, and any equipment on your person will likewise repair at the same relative rate. Anything, including vehicles up to the size of a Meissner tank, is covered. While this applies during combat, don't expect it to outpace even an aggressive mining rover trying to get through your space marine armor.

Drone Handler Certification (200 CP)

Some infantry are issued drones for their usage on the front lines. You are one of them. This includes training in field repair and maintenance for your AI buddy, as well as how to use their abilities in combat.

In addition, you can control a few drones, summons, or "combat pets" without getting distracted, meaning that you can also shoot and dodge while giving commands just fine.

Executive

Executive Mindset (200 CP)

A good executive understands what is happening in their department, and usually a good snapshot of factors outside it. This requires a lot of information, so it's a good thing that you're immune to information overload

You have a decision matrix that you can use to help determine the solutions to organizational problems you have. It's a useful tool but you might want to make some changes before using it outside this cyberpunk universe.

Finally, the best predictor of success in the corporate world is sociopathy. You have a sociopathic attitude that you can lean into when you want to be a ruthless cyberpunk CEO murdering their rivals. But this is an attitude, and you can just not use it when you want to be an actual decent human being.

Free Corporate Zones (600 CP)

The greatest achievement of the modern megacorporations is the Free Corporate Zones, areas where the only rule of law is that which can be enforced with the barrel of a gun. Such an agreement, where the megacorps keep their more violent acts away from their customer base and the governments keep a good amount of legitimacy, has lasted for a few decades at this point.

You gain the ability to unilaterally create and destroy such zones without it being traced to you. You may order the creation of a FCZ, though the more people live within the zone the longer it will take to come into effect, and everyone living within will be warned about it. There will be a similar delay for revoking a FCZ as well.

When you revoke a FCZ (or a similar effect) you must decide about which law will replace it. You can only replace a FCZ with a legal code that has been used within it recently, the legal authority that most recently had control over the area, or a generally accepted code for neutral territories (i.e. a maritime code.)

Items



Discounts function the same way as for perks. Some items may be purchased multiple times, but Origin discounts will only apply to the first purchase. You may import items that you already have into similar options. The Jumper and Standard Contract companions get **+200 CP** to be spent in this section only. Items do respawn as appropriate to the type of item. (Personal equipment can be grabbed at the nearest barracks, while you obviously can't really find a megacorporation so it only respawns between jumps.)

Extractor (100 CP, 1 free post-Jump)

May be purchased multiple times.

Extractors sift through the ground to find trace amounts of minervite. These particular units will continue to extract minervite even when placed on rocks or soil that doesn't contain the trans-neptunian material.

Control Hub (100 CP, first free)

May be purchased multiple times.

The control Hub is the start of a modern base construction. It produces rovers, processes minervite and other raw resources into construction parts, and also has a blackchain core for covering the licensing costs of some of your units.

Unlicensed Rovers (200 CP)

May be purchased multiple times. Additional purchases are discounted.

A dozen standard mining rovers. They harvest raw materials and carry that on their backs. They also transform themselves into base structures when ordered to. These can show up whenever you take an area to use as a base (which will take them from their current location.)

Unlike normal mining rovers these do not require you to pay licensing fees to keep operating them, which is useful for your time here

Blackdoor (600 CP)

Blackdoor is a proprietary cryptography-cracking program designed by Tycor to break the BlackChain cryptocurrency. It can also be used to break other kinds of encryptions in very short time periods.

You also get the computer Tycor created to run it on as a warehouse attachment. The attachment room is filled with the computer and kept cryogenically cooled at all times, so be sure to wear a spacesuit while inside. While not being used to run Blackdoor it is a fully functional Turing Machine so it can run most other software.

Officer

Motor Pool Reservation (100 CP)

May be purchased multiple times, with a different choice each time.

You have a personal vehicle assigned for your use in combat. All vehicles have full life support with oxygen recycling and very good thermal control (can handle temperatures from 20K to 400K), a self-sealing hull to stop oxygen loss when shot, and communications and IFF gear. Whatever you choose, it's about three times as durable as it would be otherwise.

If you have Custom Headlights, this model comes pre-modified with two useful additions. (For example, Lt. Cassio has a Laika modified with an electropod's plasma discharger and an EWAR splicer tool for attacking cables.)

Select one listed below.

Laika rover

This Laika has been modified for piloted operation, as most others are drones. It's a legged vehicle equipped with a grenade launcher for combat.

Meissner tank

An antigravity hover vehicle equipped with a railgun and capable of firing on the move.

Mantis fighter

An antigravity/ion flying vehicle equipped with two lasers.

Deposit (200 CP)

May be purchased multiple times.

Deposits are structures that hold repair drones. When ordered, the drones fly to an ordered location and will release a repair pulse (which also heals infantry).

You get one of these buildings, which exists in the same space as your warehouse. The drone is deployed from a friendly base or an area under your control, and cannot be called for again until it has returned to its deployment point. It does not require raw minervite to function, and the drones will attempt to home in on as many of the targets that were in the original target area as possible.

Minerva-2 (200 CP)

This is a Firefly-class cruiser. It's armed with dozens of electrical beam weapons and is heavily armored for use in combat.

It's propelled by an antigravity/ion drive. Around a planet, it can maneuver indefinitely using the planet's gravity field. Outside a planet, it can get up to 50km/s of delta-V on a 3%

mass fraction, though that would take two months of acceleration. It can also use the ion mode at a higher thrust but with reduced efficiency.

Because it takes months to travel between planets, it features cryo-coma pods that can keep soldiers from getting bored, rusty, or out of shape.

Grunt

Basic Locker (100 CP)

May be purchased multiple times, with a different choice each time.

You can't go into combat in just a fancy coat like they did in the old days. Especially because a lot of battlefields lack oxygen. So, you need some basic kit. All armors have full life support with oxygen recycling and very good thermal control (can handle temperatures from 20K to 400K), a self-sealing layer to prevent you from bleeding out or losing oxygen when shot, some level of exoskeletal enhancement, and communications and IFF gear. Your gear is three times as tough as it would be otherwise. Pick one of the follow loadouts:

Pathfinder armor

Usually used by scouts. The armor is a lightly-armored hardsuit that only provides endurance enhancement. The standard armament is a 600 nm laser pistol. You also get a few entropy grenades that are particularly effective against buildings.

Space Marine armor

The most common combat armor used here. Despite the name, it has reasonably-sized pauldrons. The armor is tougher than Pathfinder gear and includes both endurance and strength enhancement. The weapon is a 20mm railgun with burst capability, which obviously requires the strength enhancement to not get whacked in the face from the recoil.

Stinger armor

The largest and bulkiest of the armors, it can hover and has massive strength enhancement in addition to endurance enhancement. Combat stingers are armored with ablative energy-absorption armor which reduces the maximum amount of damage heavy attacks can deal. They're armed with built-in electrical claws, mounted to gauntlets about the size of a human torso.

Electropal (200 CP)

May be purchased multiple times.

Electropods are antigravity hover combat support units. They're equipped with an electrical beam weapon which can be used to generate a plasma burst, ablative energy-absorption armor used to protect against stronger attacks, and shielding systems that can protect allies with a temporary reflective shield. In addition, they can use their antigravity systems to shove things. You can use it to maneuver yourself and allies or shove away things like rovers or zappers that are trying to kill you.

You may, with permission, import a Companion into this position to serve as combat support.

Fort (200 CP)

Oftentimes soldiers will request something to duck and cover behind. Look no further than this lev-fort. It is capable of levitating and slowly moving between locations without tapping

into the power network of a base that has built a capacitor, which also means that it won't break when used as a drop-pod. It is also about ten times as tough as other forts.

Executive

Combat Team (200 CP)

May be purchased multiple times.

A battalion of troops that report directly to you, consisting of about 400 people. Roughly half are space marines, with about 50 Pathfinders and 50 pilots and the rest drivers for vehicles. There's also a small support crew (thanks to robotics for keeping that low) as well as their own (unarmed) space transport.

These will keep their changes across different jumps.

Megacorp (600 CP)

Megacorps are larger companies than others. With multiple divisions of troops, factories across the system, and multiple headquarters on Earth, they possess a lot of power in military, economic, and political matters.

You are now the registered owner of your own megacorporation. Each jump you get a similarly influential company under your control. Changes in policy you make will be carried across to future corporations, but changes you make to technology used or the equipment of your "security teams" will not carry over. If your company rises or falls in stature, this will carry over to a certain extent to a limit to future settings. Your company will never be some small fish in a big pond, but neither can it completely dominate the entire economy just from actions in a prior Jump.

Companions

Standard Contract (100 CP)

May purchase twice.

Import or create up to 4 companions. Each one may choose an origin and has 700 CP to spend as they wish.

Subcontractor Recruitment (free)

Import as many companions as you wish. They have the Grunt origin and get both 100 CP perks and the 100 CP item. They may take any perks in the Grunt line that have been purchased by another party member.

Drawbacks

Speedrun (+0 CP)

While it will take a year or two to travel across the solar system for your adventure, it's still not the full jump duration. With this, 48 hours after the Blackdoor gets decrypted by any corporation, the jump ends.

Mohs 4 (+300 CP)

This universe is so very similar to your old one when it comes to physics. The only difference is minervite and the applications its superconduction allows. Your fancy perks and powers from elsewhere don't use minervite, so you don't get to use them here. I'll seal them away for you.

Equipment Manifest (+300 CP)

What, you want to keep your nice toys? Well, you can't. Even with antigravity/ion drives allowing for much better mass fractions, space is still limited on ships and so you can't bring anything that's not approved. All prior items you have are sealed away for the moment, and any imports you want to set up are deferred until the end of the jump.

Impatience (+200 CP)

It takes weeks at minimum to get from one planet to another. Normally, cyro-coma technology is used to keep troops from getting bored, rusty, or atrophied. Now that doesn't apply to you. You can't sleep away the trips in between planets, and you can't skip them with FTL.

Local Licensing Fees (+100 CP)

Wait, why can't you get more grenades from the command post? Why isn't your von Neumann mesh working? Because you need to pay local licensing fees for each instance of an upgrade you or your forces are using. Each time you start a battle, your upgrades are deactivated until you pay the required fee in Blackchain coins farmed on-site. EULAs are horrible things.

Tycor's Judgement (+200 CP)

Cannot take with Tycor Rebellion or Aurum Quest
Requires Tycor Megacorporation.

Congrats. The price for aiming high and failing is that everyone wants your head. People might be willing to forgive a lot of Tycor (in exchange for signing on with them) but not you. You don't get that deal. People just want you gone, and shooting you with lasers is the fastest way to accomplish that. Hypersonic railgun projectiles are just behind that, followed by grenades.

Aurum Quest (+0 CP)

Cannot take with Tycor's Judgement or Tycor Rebellion
Mandatory with protagonist faction.

So, you liked the campaign so much you wanted to play it again? Great! You get to play the campaign again. You're now a member of Lt. Cassio's combat team. You have plot rails in effect, so you either fail the mission or you advance to the next one and you have to do so with the canon engagements completed with the canon objectives. On the other hand, if you win, you get to keep the Blackdoor, for free. Finders keepers.

If you paid to ensure you left with Blackdoor, you don't get a refund.

Tycor Rebellion (+100 CP)

Cannot take with Tycor's Judgement or Aurum Quest
Cannot take with Tycor Megacorporation

Requires Officer or Grunt

Are you a bad enough dude to save Earth? It's two months before the start of the campaign. Tycor is making its move. You and your unit are stationed on the moon, and you need to intervene and prevent Tycor from seizing control of one of the UN's communication nodes. With that, they'd be able to unleash a cyberattack on the UN's infrastructure and cripple their response to the actual invasion.

It's your job to prevent this from happening. Tycor's forces are already landing, so hurry up and do it.

"Remember, you are entering a Free Corporate Zone, so lethal force is authorized against our competitors."

Conclusion



Congratulations on surviving the full duration of your contract. All drawbacks fall off, and you get a free minervite extractor. Now, make your choice:

Relocate: Select another Jump to visit.

Shut Down: Return to a previous home.

Dominate: Stay here, and use your power as you wish.

Notes

"Minervite" is named after Minerva, the ninth planet in the solar system. Minervite only naturally formed on Minvera. Minvera, being a proper planet, needs to be large enough to sweep its own orbit clear, so its minimum size and gravity would be that of Earth.