

Schlock Mercenary: The Teraport Wars Jumpchain v 0.3

It is the 31st century. It is a time of galactic war. The ancient wormgate system has been rendered obsolete with the public release of the teraport drive. Now every polity effectively borders every other polity and nations scramble for advantage.

Starting locations:

Roll 1d8 or pay 50 cp to choose:

1. Mahuita Lotucobanatuimaya bohu. Teraformed paradise world.
2. Luna. The oldest (and tallest) standing government in solar system.
Major tourist hub.
3. Dom Atlantis. The capital of the United Nations of Sol. Home to great deal of politicking. No lethal weapons allowed in the city. (Weapons purchased start out in police kiosk at the spaceport.)
4. Kelrik Hub. A space station lying on a wormgate terminus soon to fall to obsolescence with the introduction of the teraport.
5. Credomar. A large residential space-station. Originally designed to be self-sufficient, factionalization in the government has necessitated food shipments from the U.N.S.
6. Yoming. A planet in chaos as economic conflict has escalated to point of orbital bombardment of metropolitan ground targets. Most sane people would one look at this situation and run the other way.
7. Ghanj-rho. The amorph Homeworld. A shattered and wounded world, full of the ruins of the species that preceded the amorphs. The amorphs live at a stone age level. There is one spaceport on the planet, a hive of scum and villainy inhabited by pirates, smugglers and slavers.
8. Free choice

Background

Drop-in (0 cp)

Civilian (0 cp)

Military(0 cp)

Mercenary(0 cp)

Species

Human (0 cp)

Humans are relatively new to the galactic scene (1000 years) but have done quite well for themselves with several prominent polities including the mighty United Nations of Sol.

Common Species(0 cp)

You are a member of any species common to galactic society including Uniocs, Frellenti and uplifted elephants and apes.

Carbosilicate Amorph(200 cp)

You're an Amorph! The descendant of an ancient races biological storage system, your is completely un differentiated – each part of your body is brain, muscle sense organ and digestive unit.

+You are very strong and fast and surprisingly stealthy.

+Your sense of smell and hearing are incredible. You could act as a mobile chemical analysis lab or eavesdrop on a sound-proofed room or implanted earbud.

+You can reflexively synthesize chemical compounds.

+Small arms fire passes through you. If splattered you put your self back together unless sealed in separate bags. The only thing that will put you down permanently are incredible heat,incredible cold, or total disintegration.

+You eat any organic material. Your immune system could fight off military grade hostile nanotech.

+You can fit through tiny holes and shape-shift to mimic inorganic objects(although your inability to change color or texture can be giveaway).

+You can grow multiple limbs and stretch them decameters out at will.

- +You can survive hard vacuum.
- +You don't age.
- You look like a pile of poop.
- You are very clumsy when imitating the locomotive methods of fixed form creatures. You are basically useless in armor or protective clothing.
- There are no Amorph compatible soldier boosts.
- You are naturally blind. You see through an engineered organism that grows on trees. Without trees your eyes cannot be regenerated. You start with two eyes.
- + With eye-tree eyes you have really good vision too.
- You grew up in a stone-age society.
- You can be very childish at times.

Artificial Intelligence(400 cp)

You're an artificial intelligence.

- +You think much faster than biologicals.
- +You multitask effectively.
- +You can easily change bodies or use multiple bodies.
- You are more vulnerable to hacking than biologicals. (although you're still probably safe as long nobody gets physical access – and you stay away from Para Ventura.)
- Less stable than organics.
- You do not automatically start with a body – might want to buy one under items.

Sidebar: If you don't purchase a body:

For non drop-in origins you start on the systems of your employer with hypernet access. Hope you can talk somebody into giving you a body! Drop-ins start out in an AI core in the warehouse connected to any warehouse systems from this or earlier jumps. The warehouse starts open with any forcefield disabled.

Perks

I speak 'warship' very fluently (100 cp, free drop-in)

Unfamiliar controls? No manual? No problem! You can figure out the use of any system in record time. You pilot an alien warship with no training or turn an animal that resisted domestication for generations into a mount.

Basic Training (100 cp, free Mercenary/Military)

You have military training. You know how to use the weapons of this era and more importantly know what the common mistakes that will get you killed are.

Everybody needs a hobby (100 cp, free civilian)

You are very good at some civilian skill. From Doctoring to ship design to hosting a reality show. With civilian background this can be your job. You can also be a Sensei in one the schlockiverse's (non-power-armor-based) martial arts.

Adorable Sociopathy (200 cp, discount drop-in)

You will avoid any serious retaliation from superiors for any strange, insubordinate or violent actions... as long as you are not causing any obvious harm. You could intimidate random merchants with a plasma cannon and get away with it. Or you could eavesdrop on senior officer meetings and no one would really care.

Damage taking out a loan on some collateral (200 cp, discount mercenary)

The best cover is cover the enemy cares about. You are now very good at figuring out what the enemy will not risk destroying and how to make it a relevant part of the battle. Also provides a general boost to tactics.

Specialization (200 cp, discount military)

You are trained in common military specialization such a tanker, demolitions officer, quartermaster, or infantry commander.

Bureaucracy Bountiful (200 cp, discount civilian)

The bureaucracies of the 31st century can be huge and unwieldy. (the short form means shorter than you, piled up) Fortunately you are expert in navigating them. You can get any task involving a bureaucracy done in a fraction of the time. You could even set up an efficient set of procedures for an organization of any size if you needed to.

Mindrip Immunity(400 cp, discount drop-in)

Your memories and thoughts and are incredibly heavily encrypted. No one(except jump-chan) can enter your mind unless you let them in. (This lets you turn off your senses.) This protects you from effects from future jumps as long you don't expose yourself to danger by looking at a memetic hazard, psychically contacting somebody you shouldn't have, using dark magic... Furthermore, if you somehow wind up in the same brainspace as another, hostile mind you will have a large advantage in the ensuing conflict and can utterly purge them if you win.

The only just I do is “just pay us on time” (400 cp, discount mercenary)

You are very good at figuring just how much somebody is willing and able to pay for your help and then squeezing them as hard as you can. People will find themselves paying far more that they expected to.. and still being sure that hiring you was the best plan they could have made.

Target rich environment (400 cp, discount military)

When the chips are down, when you are outnumbered, that is when you are best. You are a force of terror and doom capable of crippling a warship with a pair of handguns or leaving whole companies in demoralized chaos. After, all more enemies simply means more things you can kill.

The infantry doesn't need a dog that barks “Hello, world” (400 cp, discount civilian)

You have a considerable natural skill at engineering and system design. You could master a design system in fraction of the time it one would expect. Furthermore, you know how to design things that are rugged, redundant and have exactly the right amount of feature creep. With fabber access you could build a communication system that would require a headshot to kill or personal armor that could briefly protect somebody from artillery fire.

No plan survives contact with the enemy. (600 cp, discount drop-in)

Now, none of the enemies plans will survive contact with you. You are brilliant when determining your enemies plans. You almost always know what to do to throw a hostile scheme into disarray. Sometimes even when you don't know there is a scheme. Your enemies will underestimate you. Underestimate your strength. Underestimate your speed. Underestimate your morality. Underestimate your ruthlessness. Up until they get eaten.

Assembled a military force out of scraps (600 cp, discount mercenary)

Your command skills are through the roof. You could forge a diverse group of demoralized people who have little in common and distrust each other into an effective fighting force. Furthermore, you will always know the best way to make use of your subordinates talents. Finally, you gain a significant boost to skill and willpower when trying to preserve those under your command.

Slime is a defensive lubricant (600 cp, discount military)

You are a master schemer and politician. You could easily rise to highest ranks of an organization and stay there by making yourself too essential to get rid of. In both this and future jumps you can start near the top of any organization you can start as a member of. Finally, once per jump you can dodge all retaliation for a single betrayal or failure. Sheer luck will allow you to create evidence that redeems you.

Resident Mad Scientist (600 cp, discount civilian)

Kevyn Andreyasn combined nanotechnology and wormhole physics to build a stardrive that left the galaxy in flames. When the U.N.S. pooled all of their super-soldier projects they produced a means a immortality... and a mind control device with such terrifying implications that an immense conspiracy was formed to suppress it. What could you do, pooling the technologies of dozens of dimension? Let's find out. The exact effects of this perk depend on what other skills and resources you have but it can potentially be world-shaking.

Gear

Cash (100-1000 cp, two purchases free non-amorph, non-ai civilian)
(discounted any civilian)

Enough credits for a year of low class living or a new hovercar. Up to 9 subsequent purchases, quintuple the amount each time.

Handbrain (50 cp, 1 free all)

The 31st century descendant of a smartphone.

Gauss/Gunfoam hybrid pistol(50 cp, 1 free mercenary/military)

The common sidearm of the galaxy. Can fire bullets at up to mach 2 for penetration of light armor.

Teraport unit (50 cp, 1 free drop-in)

The revolutionary star drive. Fits in the palm of your hand. This version comes with built in S.I. to help you plot jumps to any (non-interdicted) point in the galaxy. The blueprints were just released into the public domain, but this version comes with a theory treatise to help you adapt to other universes gravity manipulation systems/powers.

The Seventy Maxims of Maximally Effective Mercenaries(50 cp)

The seminal work. Includes the maxims as well as analysis and commentary.

The tub of happiness(50 cp)

A 20-gallon drum of Genuine Artificial Imitation Ovalkwik(tm). For amorphs this acts as stimulant and speeds regeneration. Its effects on other species are unknown, as Schlock doesn't share. Replenishes weekly.

Nanny bags and cryokits(50 cp)

Just scoop the remnants of whoever who don't want permanently dead into it and it'll keep them frozen till you can get them to a proper med facility. As many as you need.

Low-profile powered uniform (100 cp, 1 free non-amorph mercenary/military)

A basic suit of low-profile power armor. Looks like normal clothing or a uniform. Hard (but not impossible) to detect on scans. Stops small arms fire and enhances your strength. Can fly and act as a spacesuit.

Dorothies (100 cp,1 free non-amorph drop-in)

Nanowire garrotes for concealment in footwear. Just click your heels together and the enemy will wish they were home.

Eye-tree (100 cp)

An amorph eye-tree, the symbiote that allows them to see when plucked and inserted in their flesh. Jump-chan would appear to have modified this tree to work with any organic life-form, even allowing creatures with no visual cortex to see.

Chainsaber(100 cp, discount mercenary/military)

Goes through enemies like a chainsaw through butter.

BH-250 plasmagun(200 cp, discount mercenary/drop-in)

The classic instrument of death. Fires a beam of super-heated plasma. Slags tanks and turrets. Quite intimidating. Can also be used as impromptu rocket.

AP-190 plasmagun(200 cp, discount mercenary/drop-in)

Ten times the firepower of the BH-250 in a smaller package! All you lose in the glow of doom and the ominous hum.

Basic soldier boosts (200 cp, discount mercenary/military)

A basic set of soldier boosts. You're stronger, faster, have faster reflexes, and are harder to kill.

Anti-Personel epaulet grenades. (200 cp, discount mercenary/drop-in)

A set of two anti personnel grenades concealed as epaulets or another article of clothing. Regenerate weekly.

Medical lab (200 cp, discount military/civilian)

A 31st century medical lab. Someone trained in its use could regrow some body from a head in jar in a couple weeks.

Multicannon (200 cp, discount military/mercenary)

A Shoulder mounted cannon that can fire a large number of rounds, including anti tank explosive anti-personel and goobers for non-lethal takedowns.

Tater' Gun (200 cp discount military/civilian)

Can quickly use a nano-facturing unit to produce a wide variety of

incapacitation options, including sonic stunner beams, goober rounds and tranquilizer. This version will be able to handle species from other jumps. Guaranteed non-lethal... except to somebody who tries to take down armored troops with it.

Teraport Denial unit(200 cp,discout drop-in)

A pocket sized teraport denial unit. Prevents unauthorized teraports in a 100 km radius. This jump-chan improved version can also block teleportation abilities from other universes. Also includes instruction to make more, including how to adapt it to other gravity manipulation technologies.

Floating maraca (200 cp)

The simplest AI body, composed of a AI core on small unifold unit. No hands but can move nearby objects with the emitter. Furthermore, light can be focused into a sidearm comparable laser.

Goodie bag(300 cp, discount mercenary/drop-in)

Assorted explosives for all your demolition and booby trapping needs. Contains everything from micro charges to neutralize surveillance cameras to antimatter anti-fortress demolition charges. Replenishes weekly.

Robotics lab(300 cp, discount civilian/military)

Automate stuff! Make brains! Fix AIs! Try not to make a robo-tyrant. Supplies replenish yearly.

Fabber-bot(300 cp)

A robot equipped with a flight system and heavy duty cutting implements. Comes with S.I. with installed databases for surgery, military equipment construction and fashion. Alternatively, use as an A.I.. body giving said A.I. those databases.

Hard armour(400 cp, discount military/mercenary)

Rigid armor, much more durable and powerful than a powered uniform. Life support system can keep you alive for years, though not necessarily pleasantly. Weapons you purchase can be integrated with the armor.

Antimatter epaulet grenades (400 cp, discount mercenary/drop-in)

A version of the epaulet grenades armed with antimatter charges. One is designed to punch through through a tanks shield and slag it. The other has a yield in the megatons... and a timer that can be set for high values.

Replenished Weekly.

Teraport cage(400 cp, discount military/drop-in)

A set of paired teraport cages. Blocks denial fields long enough to extract/retrieve a couple platoons before burning out. Will replenish in the warehouse once a month.

Magic Cryokit(400 cp, discount civilian)

Using classified technology, this device can fully heal anything, including head-in-a-jar in an hour and apply basic soldier-booster. A S.I. means that no skill is needed to operate.

Cyborg Body(400 cp)

A biological body with a computer core in the brain, allowing an AI to live as a biological. Allows use of biological-based abilities from other jumps while retaining AI processing speed.

Heavy Tank (500 cp, discount military/mercenary)

Features a powerful main cannon and shield unit. Flies and can be used as a space superiority fighter as well as ground support. Can carry 9 people although only one pilot is needed. With teraport systems and long-term life support you could use it as a spaceship. Can be an AI body.

Amorph armor (500 cp)

One of the few ways to effectively armor an amorph. The user is shielded in a sphere and operates flight systems, weapons and manipulator tentacles through a system based on eye-tree interfaces. Comparable in durability to hard armor. Note that being confined like this is uncomfortable to amorphs.

Laz'r'us Nannies (600 cp discount mercenary/drop-in)

A heavily classified and illegal form of soldier boosts, allowing survival even if the head is destroyed as memories are backed up redundantly into patterns in other organs. You can regenerate in 30 minutes unless 90% of your body is destroyed or you are completely isolated. You can develop organic weapons or integrate objects and tools/weapons into your body.

Tater' gun, Hacked (600 cp, discounted military/drop-in)

This tater gun has all of its safeties deactivated; the nano-facturing unit will produce any kind of lethal weapon. It can fire barrages of missiles, transform nearby object into combat drones and more. It can still produce nonlethal fire if needed. Can house an AI.

Cargo Ship (600 cp, discounted civilian)

A huge cylindrical cargo hauler, 1 km long and a 200 radius. The tug unit can detach and make deliveries to planets with no spaceport. 1 Crew or use as an A.I. Body.

Integrity Class Destroyer (800 cp discount military/mercenary)

A 300m long warship featuring numerous weapon mounts and a fabber system capable of supplying a full regiment. Colonel Pranger has used a vessel like this as a base for full planetary assaults. Is designed for A.I., but can be flown by a single biological. (although any attempt at a fight with a comparable enemy would need a crew of hundreds or an AI.) You may receive a vessel of similar capabilities but different layout appropriate to your

backstory instead.

Industrial Fabber Unit(800 cp, discount civilian/military)

Connected to your warehouse, bay and spacedock is a fabber designed for a battleplate. It could supply millions or build ships the size of the serial peacemaker. It has it's own exit portal and can deploy probes to harvest raw material from space-rocks.

Transmogriifier(800 cp, discount drop-in/civilian)

The device uses highly illegal and classified technology to allow practically any modifications to biology. You can even alter memories, add or subtract skills or alter personality. (Warning: altering somebodies fundamental goals and ideals may count as killing them for mystical purposes.)

Mercenary company (800 cp, discount mercenary/drop-in)

You are now head of a company 100 near sociopathic trained killers based out of an armed troop transport. (Transport can be used as an AI body.) They will stay loyal as long as they good money and chances for violence They do not count as companions but will follow you to any space opera(or end) jump with casualties replenished.

Companions

Platoon (50-400 cp)

Import one companion per 50 cp spent. They receive twice the cp you spent on this option.

Recruiting drive.(200 cp)

At the end of this jump you can take along one character from this universe as long as you can persuade them. (Jump-chan will explain that you're not crazy.)

AI Adjutant(300 cp)

An AI with whatever personality you want and mastery of at least 5 skills. Will like you but is not shackled to obey you. It can talk to you via your

handbrain or buy it a body in items.

Drawbacks

Take up to 600 cp worth

when they are delicious (+100 cp)

You eat people. You won't necessarily attack people just to eat them, but you don't understand things like “don't desecrate the enemies corpses”. You will also devour people's pets. Adorable sociopathy or other similar perks will not make this more acceptable. Not available if you can't digest biological matter. (like an AI without a cyborg body or fabber.)

big words(+100 cp)

Your vocabulary is very limited. You are not necessarily dumb or unskilled but communicating technical subjects is hard. Even if you can communicate mind to mind complex concepts will be hard.

Kissing curse(+200 cp, requires human-similar romantic behavior)

Anybody you physically express romantic affection for will be dead within 6 months. There are only three outs:

1. You *want* them dead. No exploiting this.
2. A genuine expression of romantic affection from somebody who does not know about the curse will break it, at least until you kiss them again.
3. If as a result of an accident or one who who genuinely desires their death, the victim is harmed worse that they believe it is possible to recover from. Then if they do recover somehow, they will be immune from then on.

Altering minds does not let you cheat these conditions.

Denied(+200 cp)

Teraport denial fields everywhere. Enemies will have at least three backups in diverse locations. Governments extend their fields far further out than is practical. Allies and neutrals will be too paranoid to grant authorization to pass through their denial fields. Furthermore, teraport denial fields are now

guaranteed to block any FTL and teleportation from previous jumps.

We got paid twice(+200 cp)

You are greedy. You will do dangerous things for money even if its not clear your employers can pay. You will cut corners for money. You will squeeze employers for money. Anything that sounds like getting paid twice will be like catnip for you. Not needing money will not mitigate this.

A contract and a grudge(+300 cp)

A major mercenary company, criminal organization or pirate syndicate wants you dead with extreme prejudice. They will be utterly ruthless. They have an entire fleet of ships. (The destroyer from items would be the distinct underdog against them.) If you hide in a secure government-controlled space they will bribe the government and will attack with squads of killers. Wherever you hide they will find you. If you defeat them you always find that there is some subgroup that was not wiped out and will rebuild for another attack within 6 months. They will somehow create a counter to any out of universe powers you use to defeat them.

Mindrip target.(+300 cp)

You have some tiny piece of information relevant to a conspiracy whose revelation could shake the government of a galactic. The conspirators want to know what exactly you know and who you have told. You will not survive the interrogation process. They have fingers everywhere. They can deploy an insane amount of military force, enough to tear a planet to pieces.

The good news is that they need to be subtle to avoid exposing their plans. They also need your brain intact and fresh. In civilized areas they will try to have you arrested and extradited rather than blowing up your house. But if you start cutting loose on the local authorities that will be just the excuse they need to send in the battleplates.

You have two paths to survival, last 10 years without being crushed, or follow your tiny clue to unravel the conspiracy and shake the galaxy.

Mini-jumper(+400 cp, requires amorph)

95% percent of your body along with a proportional amount of your memories has been burned away. Your powers from previous jumps are still

there, but could be hard to use with so few memories.

Shackled (+400 cp, requires AI)

You must now obey orders of the leadership of whatever organization you started as a member of. You are fully committed to their interests and do not want to be free. You are not a citizen. A companion cannot be the one holding your leash. Drop-ins bond to the first non-companion-biological they or a companion meet.

Broken Sword (+1000 cp, does not count toward drawback limit)

The mutiny on-board the superfortress *Sword of Inevitable Justice* ended with the vessels destruction. Without Petey's aid the toughs (including Brea) were wiped out by the final(failed) attempt of the gatekeepers to suppress the teraport. The O'benn wiped out the Kssthra centuries ago and have spent all this time building more weapons. Now they have the Teraport and can unleash this on the galaxy. The chain of events that lead to the formation of the fleetmind will not occur even if you intervene. You must stop the O'benn conquest. Then you must prevent paan'uri from obliterating the galaxy and take the fight to the dark matter entities in Andromeda. An individual paan'uri is more than a match for one of humanity's mightiest vessels. Their core generator throws off more than a supernova of energy every second. Good luck. Oh and if the galaxy burns (more than 10% population loss) you lose the chain no matter how cleverly you hid yourself.

Notes

Ais can take one body up to elephant sized between jumps. Any further bodies are stored, or if there is no room (as there will never be for something that does not fit in any storage spaces) discarded.

Changelog

0.2

Rewrote resident mad scientist.

0.3

Small grammar and balance tweaks

Elaborated a contract and a grudge.

Elaborated mindrip target.