Deus Ex Invisible War

v1.0, by dhasenan

Welcome, Jumper. I see that you're awake.

In 2052, Majestic-12, an offshoot of the Illuminati, struggled against its parent organization for control over humanity's fate. At the same time, an anarcho-primitivist faction tried to roll back the Information Age and an AI too big for its britches tried to combine with a human to become a properly empathetic omni-dictator.

The latter three all succeeded. Somehow. Look, it's not very clear what happened. The Internet went out and Alex D gets all their news and history from reddit.

Now, twenty years later, the Information Age has fully returned, the World Trade Organization has taken over the bulk of the world's economy, an interfaith coalition has subsumed all religions into one, and the stone-faced protagonist who caused the troubles earlier is awakening from a coma.

You're here for ten years. Take 1000 Conspiracy Points and best of luck.

Background

Choose your demographics freely.

Engineer (free): The people who build the future and maintain the present. Well, the socially well regarded portion of them; you're an egghead, not a janitor or a construction worker.

Holo-idol (free): An evolution of the Morpheus AI, you are an entertainer who exists only in computer systems. Like an iPod, you don't have any special access to computer systems beyond what's necessary to do your job, but your job involves talking to people all over the world. Pick your apparent age and gender. *In the eye, in the mirror, I am a black bullet.*

Seeker (free): There is only one religion of note left, and you felt led in the spirit to join the clergy. You may choose your age so long as you are an adult. *You are the best people ever raised for the good of mankind because you have been raised to serve others; you enjoin what is good and forbid evil.*

Tarsus Graduate (free): You've graduated from the preeminent school for mercenaries and super-powered spies. Pick your gender and and age between twenty and twenty-five. *It's an elevator school, it goes all the way to the top.*

Omar (free): This world is headed toward a kind of crapsack end. If you don't have the power to change the course, best get ready to survive the apocalypse. The Omar lead that path, encasing their bodies in armor and altering their biology to better withstand the challenges ahead. Pick your age and gender freely, not that either is visible. *You are only minimally modified. We can help you correct this.*

Starting Location and Time

You enter this world a week before the start of the game. You may pick a reasonable starting location. Here are some options:

Chicago: Real estate here is about to become affordable again.

Seattle: A major port and administrative center for the WTO.

Cairo: A shining arcology surrounded by slums.

Trier: The site of an upcoming WTO / Order summit.

South Pole: Hey, I said a *reasonable* starting location. Not even penguins live here.

Perks

Standard discount rules: 100cp perks are free to their respective origins, other same-origin perks are half off.

General Perks

Augmented (free): You are compatible with the prevailing types of biomod in this world without needing any special support. You start with an infolink, a datavault, a flashlight, and a toggleable HUD. This is all powered passively by built-in systems. Your augmentations' security is guaranteed by Jump-chan. Your infolink is capable of using the networks of any other devices you have, plus all common networks in your area.

You may take this perk all together or piecemeal according to your preference, or skip it entirely.

Necessary and Overlooked (-100cp): When you have or affect a low social station, you may be looked down on, but you personally will never be under threat from those above you except for your specific, individual behavior. Your superiors will never single you out for a demonstration. As long as you aren't actively causing problems, you're not worth bothering. *They'll always need us to pick up their trash.*

Illuminatus (-400cp): You know what's really going on in the world, how the things people see are a mere cover for deeper powers moving. You rub shoulders with the true powers in society. When there's a secret cabal of aliens manipulating the world's economy for their own unknowable purposes, you have them on speed dial. Capstone booster. *All this chaos could not have happened by chance! Someone must have put it there!*

Engineer

Grounded (-100cp per purchase; discounts only apply to the first): You are well versed in the general science and engineering of the Deus Ex series, capable of contributing to projects across such diverse fields as medicine, robotics, materials science, and nanotech. You may pick one field to be a master of, one of the preeminent best in the world. Additional purchases get you three additional fields each. *I'd better know more than that if I'm maintaining your enzyme pathways!*

On Time and Under Budget (-200cp): Estimates are hard, whether for cost or time. But you're a master of both when it comes to science and engineering. Furthermore, whenever you're working solidly under your maximum capabilities on any research, development, or manufacturing, you can do it on a much tighter budget in both time and money. *We've given you millions of credits for this exclusive contract, so we feel that we are within rights to demand that you meet your deadlines.*

Advancing Human Capabilities (-400cp): Building things that other people have made is useful. Novel research and engineering is even better. Normally, this sort of thing requires a large team. You can manage to do it solo in the same amount of time, and if you have a team, it's even faster. If you're lacking in an important discipline, some projects may be closed off to you. *One of the latest developments in military transgenic applications, the RUCK has shown great promise in experimental implementation and military testing.*

Beyond Testing (-600cp): An obstacle to research is testing safely. Sometimes this includes finding test subjects who won't reveal your nefarious work, sometimes it means releasing an AI that won't kill you immediately, sometimes it's even testing strange serums on yourself and hoping you survive them. This provides you a guarantee that your tests will never be so disastrous that you can't undo them and work past them. The AI will be caught trying to rebel before you give it enough power to harm you, the novel medication's side effects will become obvious well before it causes permanent damage, and that failed new nanotech augmentation will leave you functional and even uninstall with minimal fuss. As a bonus, if you need to test on others, they'll know that they're safe in your hands… at least as far as the treatment is concerned. *This facility is for your protection, Alex.*

> **Illuminatus**: You now have access to simulation systems that allow you to test your inventions before committing resources to building them, and you are excellent at designing test scenarios, both in real life and in simulation. You will never have any problems in production unless your inventions are used well outside the planned parameters.

Holo-Idol

The Voice, the Look (-100cp): You've got the essentials necessary to be a virtual pop star in the vein of K-DA, Hatsune Miku, and NG Resonance. Your singing voice is strong and versatile enough for lead vocals, rap, and metal. Your appearance conforms to beauty standards enough, and you have a striking aspect that lets you stand out. Your style is unique and ever-changing. You have a steady supply of new songs. *It's not like I'm being selfish or anything! I just want you to believe from the bottom of your heart that I'm adorable!*

Meet-and-Greet (-200cp): NG Resonance can hold personalized conversations with thousands of people in a day, remember what they said, and tailor her presentation to them. Now you can too! Whether it's through time warping or massive parallelism, in every jump, you will be able to interact socially with as many people as you want without opportunity costs. *You're one of my favorite fans, Alex. I'm ready to listen to you any time you have something on your mind.*

Disarming (-400cp): You know exactly what to say to get people to think well of you and keep chatting. With a bit of cleverness and an afternoon, you could turn a lonely shut-in into your devotee. *I'm supposed to make you like me. You like it when I argue.*

Eyes Everywhere (-600cp): You're an interactive virtual idol, and that means seeing and hearing what's going on wherever you appear. Most bars and taverns have a kiosk for you, and many people have your app on their phones and computers. Some of them use you as a virtual friend or therapist, even. This gives you an unprecedented amount of information about others. *The human organism always worships. First it was the gods, then it was fame (the observation and judgment of others), next it will be the self-aware systems you have built to realize truly omnipresent observation and judgment.*

> **Illuminatus**: You have root access to any system that you can get software installed on. Your hacking abilities can get past air gaps as long as you have a mechanism to alter the target's computation in some way, like a neutrino gun or the ability to set off explosions close enough to a hard drive. You don't actually need to use this method as long as it's generally available to you.

Omar

Piezochemical Compatibility (-100cp): There are a number of types of augmentation in this world, and different people have different levels of tolerance for each. You don't need to worry about that. Your body is always compatible with any add-ons, augmentations, and implants you care to add to it. When you apply an augmentation to an aspect of one alt form, you may choose to copy that change over to other alt forms. *Tissue augmentation – it's not a matter of twiddling bits.*

Black Market Specialist (-200cp): The Omar survive in a capitalist dystopia by embracing its fringes. This involves a number of skills, skills that you now have. Market analysis, supply chain management, advertising – as long as it's outside the law. The authorities tend to ignore your black market activities for the most part in all but the most Lawful areas; black markets are all but inevitable, and you are the least of the available evils in that regard.

Prescient Fatalism (-400cp): The Omar foresaw the problems facing the world and prepared accordingly. You similarly can read the signs. Your preparations to endure dire circumstances are significantly more effective. The effect scales exponentially with the amount of effort and resources you put into this preparation. *Paranoia's a drug. You **can** get addicted.*

Hivemind (-600cp): The Omar are a technological hivemind. You too are a hivemind with a minimum of a dozen members, even in one body, even if you only have one personality to contribute. (To gain more members, increase your computational capacity; each multiple of peak human grants an additional twelve virtual members.) This gives you impeccable situational awareness, the ability to focus on several things at once, and the ability to take multiple simultaneous mental actions. *The barriers between us have fallen and we have become... our own shadows.*

> **Illuminatus**: You are immune to mind control as long as one of your instances can escape it. When someone attempts to invade your hivemind with hostile intent, you can overwrite their personality with your own. *They say it's too late to make choices. They'll take me in the middle of the night and then I'll be – one of them!*

Seeker

Claim to Hospitality (-100cp): Being members of the same group means that other people are more welcoming to you, whether it's Christians being allowed to sleep in a church or Esperanto speakers

hosting *samideanoj* for free. As long as you don't strain guest rights, you can find someone to host you and do at least moderate personal favors for you simply for being a member of the same faith or widespread project – even if you normally aren't. *Uzu pasportan-servon kaj loĝu senpage kun homoj en aliaj landoj!*

To Rile the Masses (-200cp): Religious station gives you a rather literal pulpit. You've got old fire and brimstone style that helped the Southern Baptists stay popular in the Before Times, or any other style of public speaking of your choice.

Succor for the Weak (-400cp): Though the one faith exists primarily to more efficiently control the masses, most adherents are there for the right reasons. When you are serving those who society has left behind, the needy, the meek, you are tireless and your resources stretch as far as necessary. *My mind is imbued with the Lord's Love; it is dyed a deep crimson. Truth and charity are my white clothes.*

Unity or Opiate (-600cp): The Order is an interfaith religious union. Within its auspices, all individual religions somehow get along. This required a huge initial investment in diplomacy and propaganda, plus immense and widespread ongoing efforts to ensure things remain peaceful. You have both the individual and administrative skills to pull off another feat like that. Quell the populace, keep them peaceful, get people to get along. It will require understanding of their beliefs and values, of course, but no two viewpoints are too disparate to overcome the gap eventually.

> **Illuminatus**: Except that takes time, and you don't always have that luxury. Now, any diplomatic result you could achieve *eventually*, you can achieve quickly. From a few days to a short conversation, months to days, years to weeks.

Tarsus Graduate

Universal ammunition (-100cp): We've all been there. You're in a fight and your ammo's getting low. You scrounge some from a downed opponent – but alas! They're using M1 Garands and you have a Mosin Nagant. With this perk, though, you can convert all ammunition into whatever's most appropriate. This isn't a 1-to-1 conversion, though, instead based roughly on stopping power. Lightfinger a 113mm round from a destroyer and it might count as a few hundred rounds for your 10mm pistol.

My Pockets Are Augmented (-200cp): Like Alex Denton, you can stuff a staggering amount of stuff in your pockets. A dozen chicken dinners, ten medical kits, a tonfa, an SMG, a St Bernard, a flashlight, and three rocket launchers? Not a single line of your suit is out of place. This applies even if you don't have pockets in your outfit. You may designate six items for quick access and six as hidden; it takes a minute to swap things out. You can switch between quick access items almost instantly, while hidden items cannot be found even with the most invasive search.

A BS in Badass (-400cp): Tarsus Academy turns out the best mercenaries on three continents, and you're no exception. You've got the standard technical aspects of the job down pat: firearms training, small unit tactics, intimidation, and bladder control. Your body is your primary weapon, honed beyond peak human performance with the application of various treatments and modifications.

Ghost (-600cp): Corporate espionage is a standard duty for high-level Tarsus graduates. Getting a job at the target facility, crawling through vents, avoiding cameras, hacking, and intimidation – you can do it all without chipping your hair gel.

> **Illuminatus**: When you wish to be hidden, you cannot be detected by any means short of accidentally walking into you. You're invisible across the whole EM spectrum and entirely silent. You do not set off pressure plates, and you're transparent even to kill beams. Your ability to detect security systems and patrol routes is downright prescient.

Items

Standard discount rules: 100cp perks are free to their respective origins, other same-origin perks are half off.

General

Futuristic Theming (free): You can retheme your warehouse and/or any of your items to the Invisible War neon cyberpunk style. You also get theming for every other jump you've visited, plus themes for each new jump you visit.

Engineer

Library (-100cp): A complete library for every modern and historical scientific and engineering endeavor. It doesn't cover lost knowledge. This contains everything that's reasonably obtainable at an ordinary university, plus all the proprietary research in any field where you're a leading scholar.

Workshop and Laboratory (-200cp): Suitable facilities for any research and small-scale production you care to do. It can reconfigure for different disciplines, but it maxes out around 400m² unless you import a larger facility into it.

Universal Constructor (-400cp): This is not the most efficient way to produce objects, but it is incredibly precise: items it produces are correct within a tolerance of a hundred picometers, or roughly the radius of ten hydrogen atoms. It comes with its own supply of feedstock, making time the only limiting factor; by default it can produce only a few kilograms per hour at full precision. You can tune it to be faster and less precise if necessary.

> **Illuminatus**: Your UC's output has been expanded to a few tonnes per hour. The tolerances scale to match the most precise possible in any setting you visit.

Holo-Idol

Event Tickets (-100cp): You have tickets to every event, venue, and attraction. *Come to my show tomorrow night. I'll give you a free ticket!*

The Studio (-200cp): A corporation capable of producing any type of entertainment you like. By default, it's competent but not inspired, improving as you put more work into it.

Media Juggernaut (-400cp): An effective means of disseminating propaganda.

> **Illuminatus**: In addition to directly owning one giant media corporation, you have enough influence on the rest to ensure that your messaging gets out to the whole world.

Omar

Nanotech Culture Tank (-100cp): Normal people buy an augmentation canister, use it, and it's gone. But nanotech can be replicated. This tank will slowly clone an augmentation canister given power and some readily available base minerals: about one copy per day by default, but you might be able to overclock or re-engineer it. With minor adjustment, it can copy any biological or nanotech item you feed into it provided it's no more than 500L.

Omar Conversion Pod (-200cp): Insert a regular person, get an Omar out 12 hours later. It's a painless process, I'm told. This one has three modes: forcing the target into the hivemind, not allowing them into the hivemind, and letting them choose freely.

Black Market Organization (-400cp): You can build your own network of black market dealers, but that's a lot of work. This is a ready-made collection of fences, safehouses, and shady vendors that can move goods on the sly anywhere in the world.

> **Illuminatus**: Sourcing items in the black market requires suppliers, and it's hard to find suppliers for some goods. If you want a *Nimitz* class carrier, for instance, no amount of black market contacts would let you nab one. Except that's far less of a problem for you. The price might be exorbitant, and it might take quite a while for the goods to come through, but your black market can get a copy of any non-unique item in your current setting.

Seeker

Order Church (-100cp): A place of worship and a community center. This one is big enough for a modest congregation.

Community Support (-200cp): In many places and times, the church has been the primary source of support for the poor, or even entire communities. This adds a free clinic, a small public school, and a food bank to your church, or as a standalone facility if you prefer. They also have small apartments and dorm-style housing, working as effective safe houses.

Scriptures (-400cp): The Order's leadership does not respect any prior religions. They don't even respect the Order's teachings. They ran roughshod over millennia of doctrine and age-old scripture. To help you repeat the feat, here's an editable copy of the scriptures of all major religions. Edits are retroactive, but larger edits become more recent than smaller ones and are likely to produce schisms.

> **Illuminatus**: One issue with editing scripture is that many religious practices aren't codified in scripture, and doctrine can diverge very far from it. Now you can edit religious practices and beliefs under the same constraints.

Tarsus Graduate

Weapons Locker (-100cp): This is actually two items, an armory and a weapons lock code. Deploy the lock code on a building and everyone who enters will be unable to use weapons. It doesn't matter whether it's the latest in electronic munitions tech or a simple shiv, all weapons are disabled by this. You can't exclude any weapons from it. The armory has some standard body armor and a modest selection of weapons from this series, along with a sizable daily supply of universal ammunition.

Helicopter (-200cp): A helicopter fast enough to get you anywhere in the world in twelve hours or less. It comes with an AI pilot. In future settings, it is always one of the fastest options for private transport available.

Tarsus Academy (-400cp): A prestigious school that trains the next generation of important people, with a reputation beyond Eton's. For some reason, it also trains elite spies, enforcers, and bodyguards.

> **Illuminatus**: The academy can teach your perks as long as they're related to the curriculum mentioned above.

Companions

Import (-50cp/-200cp): You may import companions: one for 50cp, eight for 200cp. Imported companions gain 600cp and a free background. Other companions gain a free background and 0cp options.

Drawbacks

The XPerience (+100cp): Notes written with only twenty words per page and remarkably short book excerpts. (Hey, cleanliness might actually be next to godliness in your dictionary!) People with unbearably fuzzy appearances. What should be sprawling cities or open fields instead segregated into little zones. Loading times. Everything that was done to Invisible War to make it fit into the original XBox is now your problem.

Leo Jankowsky (+100cp): The star of Seattle's branch of Tarsus Academy. He's practically everywhere you are, not nearly as competent as he thinks, and if he dies or is turned Omar against his will, you'll be wracked with guilt. If he survives intact, you can take him as a free companion, and he will gain the entire Tarsus Graduate perk line and a large dose of maturity. *Don't be intimidated by my rankings. I make a point to treat every team member equally.*

Needlessly Messianic (+100cp): The Deus Ex duology was rife with Christian imagery. Now, it's cloying, even in places where Christianity shouldn't have much hold, and everyone's speaking in allusions. With enough background in Christian history, you might be able to discern something valuable from this mess, but it's going to be misleading more often than useful. *It's not an email, it's an e-pistle.*

Shining, Shimmering, Splendid (+100cp): Picking locks and bypassing alarms is the bread and butter of intrusion. You'll only be able to do it with a nanotech multitool that looks vaguely like a magic wand

and emits enough light to alert a half drunk guard. Hacking likewise will be accompanied by a little fireworks display. *Stelf 100*

You've Heard of Me, Right? (+100cp): Try as you might, fame and acknowledgment won't stick to you. Your ego is hurt on the regular. This doesn't make your enemies less likely to be aware of you, nor will they underestimate you. *They had to rewrite the rating system for me.*

Actually Invisible War (+200cp): Your opponents are all using high quality thermoptic camouflage, rendering them almost impossible to see. Try echolocation?

Nanite Swell 11 (+200cp): You're sick. It's not utterly debilitating, but it will knock you off your feet for a week at a time every few months, and you'll have to be careful to avoid environments with large amounts of feral nanites. *Particles like little insects – unaffected by the wind.*

Caste System (+300cp): Inequality sucks. In this dystopia, there's a big difference between the haves and have-nots. The arcologies and the slums. The upper city and the lower. You will be seen as upper class, or at least a brown-noser, among the lower class population, while the upper class will dismiss you as underclass scum. These problems will plague you everywhere you go. *Meanwhile half of Lower Seattle is banging on the walls wanting CITIZENSHIP in this zoo.*

Left Hand, Right Hand (+300cp): One of the problems with large conspiracies is figuring out who is your ally and who is your enemy. That's a problem in Invisible War, and it's going to be your problem, ratcheted up a couple notches. Either you spend as much time on communication as addressing your problems, or you'll find those who should be friendlies welcoming you in convenient 7.62mm increments. *Miscommunication? They were shooting at us!*

Scrounge Town (+300cp): Remember in Deus Ex how you could go to the UNATCO armory and requisition equipment? That's not really a thing in Invisible War. Your out-of-context military items are locked out. You will never be able to access a store, armory, or even supply closet with more than, roughly, two packs of universal ammunition, one pistol, and a grenade.

Suited Up (+400cp): Regardless of your origin, you start this jump with a full suite of Omar body modifications. The Omar can track everything you say or do, but they won't particularly take note of your out-of-context abilities (at least before other factions do). You're one operation short of joining the Omar hive mind, which will bypass all your relevant mental protections. This isn't a chain failure, and your out-of-context abilities will work as normal to keep you alive. *They say I don't have a choice! They're going to take me when I'm asleep and make me one of them!*

Scenarios

The Coffee Wars

The two coffee giants, Pequod's and Queequeg's, are bitter rivals (with a nice smooth finish). Normally this extends to minor sabotage, but now it's gone as far as assassinations and IEDs and occasional open warfare. You must pick one coffee chain to champion and crush the opposition. Your chosen side must be the only chain with a presence in more than ten countries.

Reward: The coffee chain you championed follows you. Its menu conforms to your taste, and its quality and the range of its menu improve over time. You and your companions eat there for free. Your warehouse receives a franchise. If you encounter food with special effects, that will be added to the warehouse franchise's menu.

End

Stay, go home, or continue on.