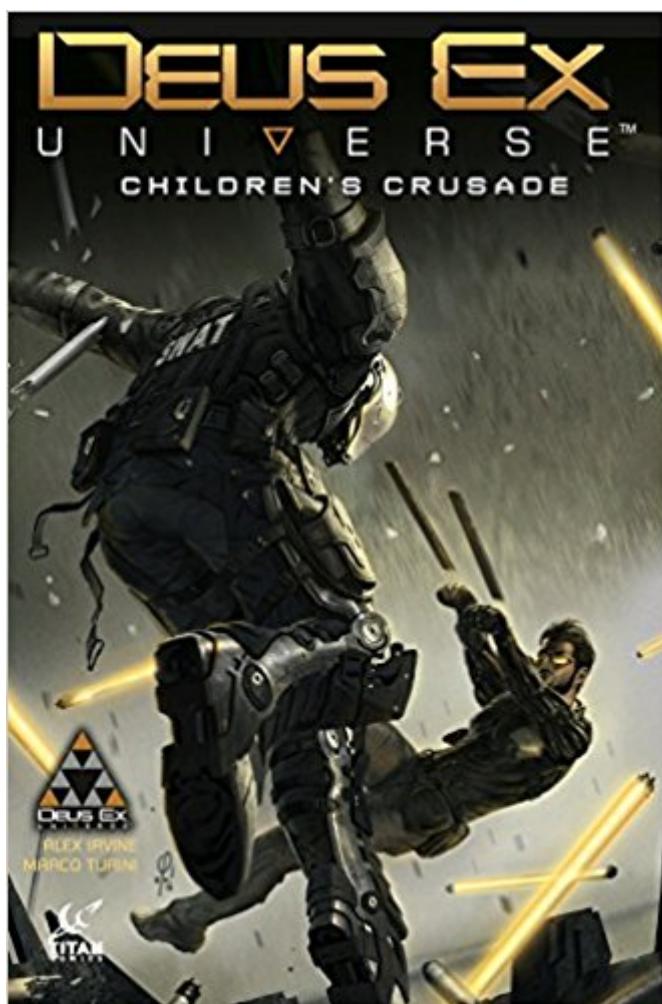


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# Deus Ex Universe Volume 1: Children's Crusade



## **Synopsis**

Brand new original graphic novel based on the popular gaming franchiseÂ Deus Ex In this prequel to the highly anticipated game Deus Ex: Mankind Divided, Adam Jensen sets out on his first mission with the Prague Unit of Task Force 29, the global counter-terrorism unit set up by Interpol/UN as seen in the game, only to encounter explosive augmented terrorist activities...

## **Book Information**

Series: Deus Ex Universe

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## **Customer Reviews**

Alex Irvine's first novelÂ A Scattering of JadesÂ won the Crawford Award for Best New Writer. He also won awards for Best New Novel from Locus Magazine and The International Horror Guild and was a finalist for the Campbell Award for Best New Writer. He is an experienced writer of novelisations including Transformers Exodus, Transformers Exiles and Iron Man: Virus.

When Deus Ex: Mankind Divided opens we find Adam Jensen in Prague working with Task Force 29. TF29 is a division of Interpol, and is dedicated to anti-terrorism activities and Jensen is the newest member. Children's Crusade is a prologue to the game and it chronicles Jensen's first mission with TF29. The book does a good job of establishing Jensen's relationship with the team, introducing characters, and setting the general tone of the world. As an added bonus there are character bios for many of the important characters you'll find in the game. While not essential, it does a good job of getting you into the world and the game.

Children's Crusade is a strong entry into the Deus Ex Universe, further exploring its themes of transhumanism and conspiracy after the events of Human Revolution and Black Light (both of which are recommended to understand the backstory). The introduction of children as major characters in the cruel schemes of the various factions controlling humanity highlights just how dehumanizing it is to be hated out of ignorance, which is a powerful social commentary in both the Deus Ex universe and our own. There are not nearly enough people in either world like Jensen, who is willing to empathize with the victims that the rest of the world is quick to mistrust or demonize.

A must have for any fan of the franchise and cyberpunk in general.

Great story that adds to the political and social climate of Mankind Divided.

This trade paperback compiles all five issues (February – July 2016) of the *Deus Ex: Children's Crusade* comic book series that was one of a number of media tie-ins to the *Deus Ex: Mankind Divided* video game released in August of that year. This compilation also features cover, character, and promotional galleries in its back pages. Needless to say, as a prequel to *Mankind Divided*, this comic book series is not going to be very comprehensible to anyone not familiar with the video game franchise. Having played *Mankind Divided*, I found *Children's Crusade* to be moderately interesting. The storyline is set at the very beginning of Adam Jenson's sojourn with Task Force 29, Interpol's special police unit headed by Jim Miller. There is running drama over whether the team will accept an Aug like Jenson; consequently, he will have to prove himself. This he has abundant chances to do, as the main plot focuses on a rogue Aug, who has brainwashed a cohort of children into becoming literal human bombs. The Aug's goal for this warped bit of excess is simple: carry out a terror campaign to force Western Europe to relent in its persecution of the Augmented. I won't disclose any spoilers, but I will say that there are secrets and conspiracies to be uncovered – a tried and true Deus Ex trope, of course. *Children's Crusade* does a reasonably good job of conveying the cyberpunk stylings of the video game franchise, and of working aspects of the gameplay (such as Infolink conversations, hacking door locks, applying Cloak, etc.) into the comic book. However, I found writer Alex Irvine's script to be too complicated for its own good. Irvine attempts to keep too many narrative threads running at the same time, and the result is a continuous melange

of conversational and monologue text boxes. Indeed, in some panels there are as many as three separate narration boxes, all with different color codes—trying to track who is saying what quickly becomes exasperating. John Aggs's artwork is a cartoonish in style; his depiction of faces, like those of the child characters such as Emilia, has a Manga inspiration that, in my opinion, really doesn't mesh well with the Deus Ex aesthetic. The overall attitude of the book is strident, belaboring the Non-Augmented Vs Augmented conflict more than is necessary. It's past time to revive the atmosphere and mood of the original PC game (2000), which mixed Warren Spector's unique sense of satiric humor in with its multi-layered conspiracy theories. Summing up, this comic is intended for Deus Ex fans, less so, for fans of cyberpunk as a whole. It does a competent job in framing the main storyline of the game, but doesn't go for much beyond that.

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