

Sartre's *No Exit*

Jump by Tak, v1.1.

Jean-Paul Sartre's 1944 existentialist play *Huis Clos* has variously been translated as *Vicious Circle*, *No Way Out*, *Dead End*, *Behind Closed Doors*, its latin equivalent *In Camera*, and, as used here, *No Exit*. You may have noticed a trend in those names.

VALET: Right this way, friend.

The Valet has brought you to a **room in Hell**. How? Perhaps you ended your last jump being damned to hell, or you died and weren't brought back by the end of the jump, or maybe none of that happened and your Benefactor just expects you to roll with it. This jump could last for a day, a week, a month, a year, or hell, even the whole decade... only, you, as a jumper, do not know how long the jump is meant to be. And that Valet, what a strange man! He seems to know all about you, and appears to be hosting your stay here in agreement with your Benefactor.

VALET: Management has agreed that you should receive these. Yes, they are, I believe, *choice points*, a thousand in number. Now do spend them wisely.

The Room is a drawing or living room made in the Second Empire style; rectangular, well-furnished but with little in the way of hiding spots or privacy. It has doors, but they are locked— the doors can only unlock when the jump's duration elapses, and the jump will only end when you leave through one, meaning you could stay for longer than you have to by accident (or perhaps you'll simply never want to leave). The clocks don't run, making it quite dreary keeping track of how long you've been there. There are no mirrors, so you may only see yourself reflected in the responses of others. Nothing breakable, either. There is no lightswitch, leaving the lights and heating always on. There are no books to distract yourself with. There isn't much of an outside, either, if you have some miraculous way to get there:

more rooms, passages, stairs, and that's it. It's an infinite expanse, and you wouldn't want to get lost: only your Room's doors can eventually bring you out of this place.

VALET: You won't be entirely alone, of course. I will respond to the call of this bell on the wall here, though, I will advise, it is a capricious little thing. Sometimes it doesn't work. Oh, and, naturally...

The bell almost never works before the jump's duration is done, especially when you most need it. Ah, but what did the Valet say? This is Hell, so you likely expect torture. Only, you won't find any racks or red-hot pincers. Your **torturers** are other people, strangers, numbering two by default. They won't be fast friends with you, either: they are the sorts of people you wouldn't usually mingle with. Perhaps one you would disapprove of, and another you would be disappointed by. And, sure, one might eventually befriend you, or fall in love with you, or grow to lust for you, but the group's dynamic will tend away from stability and contentedness. If one lusts for you, the other may disapprove and judge. If you bond with one over your similarities, the other will be quick to point out your differences. If one reassures you that you are not deserving of this Hell, the other will know better and express it. If one is content to leave you alone, the other may need some form of validation or attention from you. Not as if by drawback or by 'fiat', but simply because of your personalities and who you are as people. After all, you three have been selected to be each other's torturers, each deserving of Hell, each deserving of each other's torments. You will spend a short while **alone**, then another short while with **one** torturer, then you'll spend the majority of the jump with **both**. If any of the play's strangers fit the bill, you could choose them. If you've brought in companions (see below), they will be slowly introduced after both torturers are already in the room but, thankfully, you likely already get along with them.

VALET: Oh, and there was just one last thing. Perhaps you'd be interested?

If you want to experience this jump like its characters would have experienced the events of the play, or in a way that you can't wait out, you may want to use the scenario, **Hell Is Other People**.

VALET: Lovely, you're all sorted. I'll get going. Have some patience: the second guest will be with you soon!

Perks

There are no origins, but there is another system at play. Some of these perks will have a complication option, as marked by *italics* under the perk's main text. If you choose to take a perk's *complication*, you have two options: you could get the perk for **free for this jump only** (and you lose it in future jumps) **OR** you could get the perk **discounted** but keep it as normal. Think of *complications* like drawbacks: they act on you or the world and can override perks, but will fade at the end of the jump.

Damned Souls (100)

It is quite possible that you and your torturers won't have any languages in common, but why should that stop the dead? You have the strange ability to communicate with the dead, whether they be spirits in Hell or a ghost, to hear and be heard by them even if their strange state might usually make communication impossible. Note that this works on *dead people*: a zombie, soulless as it is, would not be affected.

Crueler (200)

Perhaps you'd like to think of yourself as a good judge of character, and now you have more reason to be confident in that. It is as if you can see guilt, vulnerability, and the presence of hidden secrets behind the eyes, though with no indication of what they might be guilty over, what they are vulnerable to, or what their secrets are. You're also more skilled at catching dishonesty in the unskilled.

You're good at reading people, yes, but not so great at keeping what you 'read' to yourself. You are honest, even to the point of cruelty. If you see a flaw in another, you will make sure they know you know. If you do or do not find someone attractive or foolish or cowardly or haughty, and it becomes even slightly relevant, you will remark on the fact.

Customers Serve Themselves (300)

You tend to be able to set up workplace/living situations where, like at a cafeteria, the 'customers serve themselves' or end up doing to each other what you might otherwise have needed a worker for... or, variously, through their social pressure on each other, *not doing*, without need of law enforcement. There's the option of social torture, sure, but you might also set up a prison (wherein each prisoner, acting in their selfish best interests, works to ensure that the prison continues and without any need of guards or wardens) or a supermarket (where people, afraid of the hypothetical judgment of others, do not steal even when it would be easy).

Devil-Power (400)

Wouldn't it be troublesome, in managing a place like Hell, to employ all the workers and devils needed to torture all those people? It would be so much better if your poor victims simply... tortured themselves, socially, intersubjectively. You have a knack for figuring out which people, even people who have never interacted with each other, would annoy each other and an intuitive sense of what sets of people would, in isolation from anyone else, form a self-sufficient, self-torturing, socially toxic yet self-reinforcing group.

Despite your confidence in your social Hell-making abilities, the Hell you find yourself in surprises you. Blind to the possibility that you might be subject to another's machinations, you will be adamant that there must have been a misunderstanding of some sort, that this is actually Heaven, or that your group was allocated randomly (i.e., not by someone else with this very perk)—probably multiple of those. You can be convinced otherwise, but it will be difficult, and will require at least two others making an effort to convince you.

Never Suspected Anything (400)

Isn't it quite strange that all three of the play's canonical torturers defied the sanctity of marriage? Garcin flagrantly cheated on his wife, Inez seduced her cousin's wife, and Estelle cheated on her husband... yet, short of it possibly being a

contributing factor in their whole 'being damned to Hell' deal, none of them faced any direct repercussions for it. Garcin's wife served him and his lover coffee, Inez' cousin ended up dying in an absurd tram accident, and Estelle died of pneumonia before her husband found out. Now, whether through acceptance, secrecy, or an awful strike of misfortune, and you won't be able to control which, the breaching of relationships tends to... simply work itself out somehow.

But now you're dead, and the consequences of your actions spill out into the world and across the minds and words of others. In being dead, your very personhood is like an object to them now. If you have the perk I See It Now And Then, you will observe as all of your romantic and sexual cheating, as well as other kinds of cheating and wrongs you've committed, are inevitably revealed to the world. If you don't have it, you will instead be haunted with the knowledge that that information will come out.

Yes, My Pet (400)

Like Inez, your manipulation is cruel... and dreadfully effective. Yours is the manipulation that creeps under the skin, that, let us say, *corrupts* someone with honeyed words and shifted blame until they see the world through your eyes. Effective, certainly, though without care it may also leave them isolated from others, emotionally volatile, or left with a heart 'burnt away to a cinder'.

One Never Sleeps (600)

You don't need to sleep, and won't tire from lack of sleep. Similarly, you don't need to eat food and won't hunger, you don't need to drink and won't thirst, and you don't need to breathe air and won't suffocate. Hell, you don't even need to blink, and you'll quickly grow past the instinct to blink often. No need to urinate or defecate, either.

There is no turning off the lights, or closing your eyes. Not even blinking. You can put your fingers in your ears all you'd like, but you will always hear your torturers. You could hold your hands over your eyes and still be aware of your torturers'

movements, the way they hold themselves, their slightest ticks. There is simply no way to isolate yourself from the world— even if you move to your Warehouse or teleport out of the room, you'll still hear them and you'll still feel their gazes on you. You will never be alone. You will never rest.

I See It Now And Then (800)

You have an intuitive sense of when you are being talked about or discussed, and the ability to displace your perception to spy, unseen, on those who would speak of the dead (you). This perception displacement can pass dimensions. Unless you're a genius of some kind, you can generally still only focus on one thing at once, even if multiple groups are discussing you at the same time. Similarly, if ever you find yourself displaced from your body, you can use this perk to look through your body's eyes but without exerting any control, including if that body is a corpse or possessed by another. An authentic medium or channeler of some sort might be able to detect your 'presence' in your jumps, but this world has nothing of the sort.

It isn't just an ability, it's a curse. Whenever people talk about you, you'll know, and you'll see. Every time they talk about you, you'll be subject to it all, with no way of getting any words in. While it is inaccessible, this jump has a 'living world' where faint emulations of your friends and family live, to discuss you as they realistically might. If they do not know that you died, they will soon. Also, every little thing that happens to your corpse, you'll know.

I Mention Her, I See Her (200, requires I See It Now And Then)

By speaking the name of someone living and that you've met before, you can displace your perception (as it is with the I See It Now And Then perk) to see and hear that person and what they're doing and until you stop focusing on them.

Not 'can', but 'do'. Any time you utter the name of someone still living and whom you've met, you DO see them in that moment, and whatever it is that they are doing is not something you can simply ignore. Attempts at 'tricking' the complication

will fail, too: use of titles or pronouns like 'my friend' or 'he' work just the same.

Dead! Dead! Dead! (1000)

The good news is that you're immortal... the bad news is that you're already dead. Being dead, you can't die: knives, poison, ropes, they're all useless against you. Why? Because, while you can interact with the world as a physical person, you are also a spirit, your soul. Unless some effect would be able to influence both the body and soul directly, it can't so much as scratch you. Not even age can harm you, leaving you as old as you were when you 'died'. No amount of mundane force can budge you.

For the purposes of this jump, the Valet and all of your torturers also have this perk. Hell, even the walls and the building itself have it. With this perk, nothing within this jump could result in you dying or failing your chain.

You can't die, which means that there's no way out of here. While the jump itself might only need to last anywhere between a day and a decade, it will feel a lot longer, as if you are spending decades upon decades, as a minimum, stuck in that room with only your mutual tormentors as company. Time will become, at once, both short and long, with great stretches taking place over moments, but with the seconds themselves seeming to stretch. The power of any willpower and anti-boredom perks you have will gradually lessen over time, too.

Your Torturers

Because 'Companion Section' doesn't have the same ring to it. Yes, you can pay to bring in your companions, but they, too, will be your torturers. Your other torturers, though, are strangers, unknown to you.

The first companion you import costs 300 cp, the second costs 200 cp, the third costs 100 cp, and all subsequent companions are free. Alternatively, if you took the **Hell Is Other People** scenario, they are all free, as bringing more companions with you makes your task harder.

All of your torturers, regardless of origin, have the perks One Never Sleeps, I See It Now And Then, and Dead! Dead! Dead!, while also suffering their *complications*. By default, they will have those perks forever, but you can make them last for this jump only to give them 100, 200, and 300 cp respectively so they can take other perks that they can also take *complications* for. You can also give them your own cp at a 1:1 ratio.

The stranger torturers could be entirely original nobodies you've never seen or heard of but, just in case, below are descriptions of the canon torturers you might want to use instead. Remember, by default, you are picking **two** of them.

Stock Torturers

Joseph Garcin. A cowardly Brazilian journalist who cheated on his wife and, without sympathy, had his wife serve him and his lover with morning coffee. He was executed for refusing to go to war— he might initially claim that he was morally motivated, but in truth he was too scared and refused to fight. He wants to feel manly, and be assured of that manliness from someone who understands his weaknesses.

Inez Serrano. A cruel postal clerk who seduced her cousin's wife, and turned her against him. Lesbian. While decently manipulative, she is as subject to Hell as anyone else. Clever and honest in her cruelty, she may well be the first to deduce the purpose of the room. She's presumably either from Spain or one of its (ex-)colonies.

Estelle Rigault. A ditzy French socialite, she married a friend of the family three times her age for money and status but fell in love elsewhere and had an affair with a man her own age. Her affair got her pregnant overseas, but she didn't want a baby and ended up killing it, leading her lover to suicide. She is vain, perhaps even shallow. She is interested in men, and manly men at that, to define herself as a woman against.

Old enemy (100). Oh, what's this doing here? For 100 cp, one of your torturers will be someone you know and are familiar with from a previous jump... only, they're someone you left on poor terms with, perhaps an ex, perhaps a villain of yours. If they had any ability to teleport/leave the room, any mind control, any ridiculous charisma, or the ability to destroy spirits or the indestructible, they don't for this jump.

Import (200). For a small price of 200 cp, you can replace what would have been a stranger with a companion you're paying to import (see above), effectively removing a stranger from the total number of torturers. Can be taken multiple times.

Drawbacks

Only you can take drawbacks. Various drawbacks will affect your torturers too. The scenario **Hell Is Other People** has its own specific drawbacks that can only be taken if you are also taking that scenario.

Huis Clos (+0)

You all speak French, and only French. That's it.

What's the fellow's name? (+0)

Some translations of No Exit change the names around. An American translator changed Joseph Garcin to Vincent Cradeau, notably. Your name, alongside the names of any companions you're bringing with you, have changed. Why? No particular reason, it just might be fun.

We cater for all sorts (+0)

By default, the room, its stylings, and its furniture are in the Second Empire style, which you might also know as 'Napoleon III' style. Only, you might not be familiar with that style, or might not be from a world that's had it. This does not pose an issue: the management can account for all manner of tastes, and your room will be of some other style more appropriate and familiar for you or your torturers. This won't change the room's size, shape, or amenities, but it will change the furniture, decor, and art present.

But damn it all, they might have left me my toothbrush! (+100)

You lose access to your items. You'll keep whatever you had on you when you died/ended the last jump, but it'll become entirely mundane. Alternate title: **All you own is here.**

I don't know. I'm waiting. (+100)

Is this even Hell? Have you sinned enough to deserve such a fate? Is this *it*, or is there more to come? And whatever this is, will it ever end? These questions and more fill your mind, leaving you questioning every little thing, yet never able to reach any conclusions— not for long, anyway. You won't even know

if the jump is meant to end, leaving you questioning if your Benefactor left you here to rot.

They must have taken it from me at the entrance (+200)

You lose access to your perks and powers. Your perks and powers beyond your Body Mod, anyway.

Shall I swear it? (+200)

There is something that happened in your life that haunts, so to speak, in death. It is something that bothers and worries you greatly, to the point that you will seek assurance and validation from your torturers regarding it. They might not assure you of anything at all but, even if they do, you will doubt how much they mean it, how much they believe it. Short of other drawbacks possibly impressing themselves upon your mind just as much, this will be a constant effort, a constant bother, all the way throughout.

No Exit (+200/+100)

There is no leaving Hell, and certainly no leaving this room. Any attempts at leaving the room will fail for the jump's duration, no matter how powerful your teleportation or how incontrovertible your ability to dig through walls is. You can't access your Warehouse or any other extradimensional spaces, either: there's simply no way out.

Along the same lines, *Hell is Other People*, so you won't be able to kill or harm your torturers or create/summon/meet any new people short of the companions you paid for. Similarly, you can't control their minds into getting along— that's something you'll have to work for, if you can achieve it at all.

That's the +200 cp version. For half of that, your Warehouse follows you into this jump, into Hell, and it *becomes* your room. Your Warehouse becomes the room that you and your torturer's are stuck in. And only your Warehouse, too, none of that 'I have a whole country attached to my Warehouse' nonsense.

Scenario: **Hell is Other People**

This is an optional scenario that changes how the jump works. You should decide if you want to use it or not before making your build.

Instead of having a flat but unknown jump duration, the door will remain locked perpetually, trapping you in this jump, until an entirely different set of conditions are met:

- The group will need to figure out that this is Hell, and accept that fact. Thinking it's some other cultural equivalent of Hell (or a generic afterlife) works too.
- Each torturer must tell the others their name. Real names, that is, if possible: aliases will only suffice if, say, there is no real name to know, or they don't know/remember it.
- Each torturer must tell the others how they died. If the torturer did not get here by dying, they would instead have to honestly describe how their last jump ended to the best of their ability. If they died but don't know how, they'll have to figure it out somehow first (this will always be possible, short of out-of-context/jumper perk intervention).
- Each torturer must tell the others of their greatest sins and secrets, or of their sinful lifestyle if some sins aren't leagues above the others and you don't have any big secrets. If they're here as a jumper or a companion (and not because of their sins), and they don't have any big secrets, their 'sins' might be incredibly tame. For edge cases, what management counts as a sin is vague, indeterminable, and maybe even inconsistent, but they tend to be generous.
- Each torturer must show vulnerability to the others. If some torturers already knew each other and have been vulnerable to each other before, they will need to be at least that vulnerable again.

And you'll need to try to open the door, of course. There won't be any indication of it unlocking.

Worth noting: if you have the capacity to somehow kill your torturers or yourself, and lack a way to bring them back, you should be very careful. If any of the conditions cannot be fulfilled, you won't have a way of leaving the jump and you'll be stuck in Hell forever.

By taking this scenario, you gain access to a larger pool of drawbacks. These drawbacks can **only** be taken if you take this scenario. This is because they make it more difficult to accomplish that scenario's goal, and would otherwise be 'free points' if you were content to 'wait it out'.

Is anyone else coming? (+100)

You don't have to worry about two torturers, now three. It's rather more difficult to create such a perfect discordance as the group gets larger but, do not worry: management is very good at their jobs.

You can never be sure about that bell (+100)

The electric bell to call the Valet will never work. Outside of him introducing a new guest to the room, and maybe him being sent to check in on you on your Benefactor's request if you spend too long in the room after the necessary jump length is done, you'll never see him again.

But don't forget I'm here, and watching (+100)

The sheer shame of being seen prevents you from engaging in any licentious activities. Hell, you can't even gather the will to remove all your clothes.

You're very pretty (+100)

Emerging from the genders, tastes, and orientations of you and your torturers, a 'love triangle' of sorts is sure to come up... only, it is precisely because of those orientations that this 'love triangle' will not easily stabilise or resolve. The canon case involved a lesbian woman after a straight woman, that straight woman after a straight man, and that straight man not

particularly interested in either of them (sorta; read the play).

If only each of us had the guts to tell (+100)

You and each of your torturers have become reticent. You'll tell each other your names, sure, and maybe where you're from, but it would take quite a bit of time, effort, and egging on to find out how they died or what sins they committed to warrant going to Hell. You want to keep just as closed off, yourself. Might not seem like much, but think of all the time you'd be spending with each other at a surface level, without ever really understanding them. Think of the banality.

Everything here's so hideous (+100)

Yeah, and the room doesn't exactly look great, either. It's probably in the uncomfortable angles. You always loathed angles. Even looking at it makes you uncomfortable, as if it's pressing in on you... all your torturers find it just as horrendous as you.

Can't you keep your mouth still? (+100)

Even the slightest habits of others will quickly get on your nerves and annoy you to no end. The way they stand, the way they sit, the way they keep their mouth open or closed, the tapping of their fingers... infuriating.

I'm not polite (+100)

Your torturers will not honey or soften their words and will instead offer their criticisms and insults of you or of each other without much in the way of a filter. Perhaps the word is 'cruel', though theirs is not an active cruelty.

It won't be easy. Have a look at me. (+200)

This drawback drastically lessens the power of charisma perks down to realistic, human levels, as well as anything that works just as well, like a 'anyone who sees you falls in love with you' perk. Similarly, it removes 'boredom immunity' perks (making them merely 'anti-boredom'), 'infinite willpower' perks (making them merely 'more willpower'), 'alien mindset' perks, and anything else that could let you stare into the corner

silently the whole time or charm your torturers into getting along. Notably not incompatible with the drawback 'They must have taken it from me at the entrance'.

I shouldn't have forgotten you (requires imported companions)

None of your imported companions have any idea who you are. Not only have they forgotten what your name is and who you are, they've also effectively forgotten everything after you met them, usually including the bit about travelling to different jumps if they didn't already have some way to do that/justify that in their memories. This drawback gives **100 cp** for 1 imported companion, **200 cp** for 4 imported companions, **300 cp** for 9 imported companions, etc., going up the square numbers.

If you successfully complete the **Hell Is Other People** scenario, you might be able to convince any non-imported torturers that you were saddled with to come with you as a companion. If you do, you can take them as companions for free.

Now I wonder why that door opened.

At the end of the jump's duration, or by satisfying the room's conditions if you took the scenario, the previously unopenable door will suddenly become unlocked. If you don't notice, not much will change. But, when you do notice, when you open that door and gaze at your way out of here, you will have a decision to make...

Condemned to freedom, your drawbacks will fade, you must choose one of the following:

- **I Shall Not Go.** You do not leave the room. The chain still ends, all the same as above, but you stay here in Hell instead. You gain an additional 100 cp every year after you select this option.
- **You're Free to Go.** You leave the room. The chain continues. You move on to the next moment, the next jump. Alternatively, your chain ends and you return to your home setting with all of your boons and, if they wish, companions.

If you left the room and ended up saving at least **1000 cp** from *complication* discounts, you'll find that something else of Hell's has followed you on your chain! Hell's drawing room can attach to your Warehouse or equivalent, following you from jump to jump. If you allow it, it may even *become* your Warehouse, becoming as large as the Warehouse was in the process.

Well, well, let's get on with it...

Changelog to v1.1:

- Removed references to the 'living world' possibly being your previous jump.
- In the intro, corrected 'chain' to 'jump'.
- Reworded how *complications* work.