

# MATR1X ØVERLØAD: CYBERMANCY

A cyberpunk tarot card game

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Based on **GR1DCANNØN** by **TØM FRANC1S**

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## **/INFLUENCES**

//**GR1DCANNØN** by **TØM FRANC1S**

//**PANDEM1C LEGACY** by **MATT LEACØCK & RØB DAVIAU**

//**GENTLEMAN BAND1T** by **ALL1SØN ARTH**

//**DUNGEØN SOL1TA1RE: LABYRINTH ØF SØULS** by **MATTHEW LØWES**

# INTR0.TXT

Connecting to http://fanfiction.pacifica...

Authenticating...

Loading...

*It is the year 21XX.*

*You are the best hacker in the city-state of Pacifica Prime. You've been scraping pay-data off of corporate servers and scouting the dark corners of the neon-lit matrix since you were old enough to handle your mom's ancient dvorak keyboard.*

*No one knows the matrix like you do.*

*You've run scams with other hacker collectives to leak unreleased intellectual property. You once cracked a corporate manager's illicit credit account and used the money you stole to throw the best block party Pacifica Prime had ever seen. One time you arranged for a whole shipment of Amazing Prime™ slurry to be delivered to climate disaster refugees.*

*But that's all bits and bytes compared to this next job. Every run you've made was a setup for this moment. You have your sights on the biggest score of all: a single hack targeting the Royals of Pacifica Prime.*

*The Royals are untouchable. Corporate CEOs, celebrities, and oligarchs who control all the money and power in Pacifica Prime. You're about to steal everything they own and leave them for dead, burned from the inside out by their compromised cyberware. One night, one hack, one hell of a fortune. If you survive you'll have enough money to make a new world, a better world. If you fail, well, you've been on the run from these corporate suits for your whole life. Hackers don't retire in Pacifica Prime.*

# GAME . RULES

```
/Run matr1x_0verl0ad_cybermancy.exe
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MATR1X OVERLØAD: CYBERMANCY is a cyberpunk tarot game about killing the rich by hacking the internet. You'll use a set of tarot cards, set up in different arrangements, to create a grid representing the internet and surround it with face cards that represent your targets. You'll stack cards by order of their value on the grid, representing your efforts as a hacker to try to kill your targets, avoid ICE, and get out alive.

Within the rules of MATR1X ØVERLØAD: CYBERMANCY the suits of cards will be referred to as follows: swords (♠), cups (♥), coins (♦), wands (♣) for the minor arcana, and trumps (♔) for the major arcana.

## /SETUP

Start with a shuffled deck of tarot cards. The cards you include in the deck depend on the type of game you'll be playing. For more information on game types see the /GAME MØDES chapter.

With the deck face-down, draw cards one by one and lay them face up in a 3x3 grid, skipping the center position. This is the matrix, a representation of the internet. If you draw any royals (paiges, queens, or kings) when laying out the matrix put them face down in a separate pile and keep drawing until you've made the grid without any royals.

If you drew any royals when setting up the matrix you now place them the same way you will when playing: put them outside the matrix, adjacent to the card in the matrix that it is most similar to. That means placing the royal next to the highest value card of the same suit. If none of the cards in the matrix match the royal's suit, then place it next to the highest value card of the same colour. If none of the cards in the matrix match the royal's colour, then place it next to the card that has the highest value. If there is a tie you choose where to put the royal. If the card most similar to the royal is on a corner of the matrix, you can choose which side of the card to place the royal.

## //SETUP.EXAMPLE

```
/Run setup_example.exe  
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Here is an example of a player setting up the matrix. The player has drawn cards from the deck and laid them out in a 3x3 grid, skipping the center space. They have set aside the 3 royals they drew when laying out the grid in a face down pile and are now ready to place them.

5 ♥	2 ♥	4 ♣
10 ♣		6 t
3 ♥	7 ♣	5 ♣

The player then places the royals outside the matrix. They draw and place the  $K♣$  first next to the  $10♣$  since it is the highest value card of the same suit. Next they place the  $Q♦$  next to the  $6t$  since there are no other coins and the  $6t$  is the highest card of the same suit [since its suit is wild]. Finally they place the  $P♠$  next to the  $7♣$  since there are no swords and the  $7♣$  is the highest card of the same colour.

	5 ♥	2 ♥	4 ♣	
K ♣	10 ♣		6 t	Q ♦
	3 ♥	7 ♣	5 ♣	
		P ♠		

## /PLAY

You are now ready to play MATR1X 0VERL0AD. You play by drawing a card from the deck and following these rules:

### //R0YALS

If the card is a **royal** (paige, queen, or king) it is one of the targets of your epic hack, and must be placed using the placement rules above.

*<<<We started calling them royals after the climate apocalypse. All that power and money spread across so few people. Of course we worshipped them, we needed to eat.>>>*

### //PR0GRAMS

If the card has a value of **2-10** this is one of the programs in your epic hack and you must place it on one of the cards in the matrix to form a stack. It can go on any card with the same or lower value.

*<<<Well-known exploits, malware, multi-headed worms, trojan packages, storage doublers, and an entire flat of Amazing Prime™ energy drinks. Everything a hacker needs.>>>*

### //RESETS

If the card is an **ace**, **the fool**, or **the magician** these are different types of resets. When you reset a stack pick it up and add it to the bottom of the deck. Then place the reset card where that stack was in the matrix.

### ///ACES

Aces are a **soft reset**. You can play an ace on any stack of cards in the matrix to reset it and add it to the bottom of the deck. Aces have a value of 1.

### ///F00L AND MAG1C1AN

These cards are a **hard reset**. You must play them on the stack that has the lowest value showing on the top card. If there's a tie, then you can choose either of those stacks. The fool has a value of zero, the magician a value of 1, and their suit is wild [they count as every suit].

Empty spaces in the matrix have a value of zero.

## /K1LL1NG R0YALS

When you place a card in the matrix opposite a royal – so that there are two cards in a row between the stack where you placed a card and a royal – those two cards become an overload of malicious code that you are firing at the royal through the matrix. The sum of the two card values is the overload's power. If the sum of the overload is equal to or greater than the health of the royal, the royal is killed. If the sum of the overload is less than the health of the royal, nothing happens.

Different types of royals have different numeric values and different methods by which they can be killed. The 2-10 of the major arcana (♠) have a wild suit [they count as every suit].

### //PA1GES

Paiges have 11 health. To kill a paige the cards in the overload can be any suit.

*<<<The lowest of the royals. Glorified middle-managers. It doesn't take much to hack these fools. Some of them still have their passwords set to "secret".>>>*

### //QUEENS

Queens have 12 health. To kill a queen all cards in the overload must match the colour of the queen.

*<<<True royals, these billionaires will take a little creativity to put in the ground.>>>*

### //K1NGS

Kings have 13 health. To kill a king all cards in the overload must match the suit of the king.

*<<<The richest of the rich. Your programs will need to be perfect to crack their cyberware and liquidate their significant assets.>>>*

Resetting a stack also triggers an overload.

When you kill a royal, flip over their card and any associated ICE face down.

## /ICE

If you cannot place a card in the matrix [because the card in hand has a lower value than any card showing in the matrix] it is added as Intrusion Countermeasure Electronics [ICE] to one of the royals. ICE increases the royal's health and makes them more difficult to kill.

ICE is placed on top or underneath the royal that it is most similar to [closest value and suit, just like the rules for placing a royal] and increases the royal's health by the card's value. When you place ICE make sure the cards do not completely overlap so that you can see the value of each card. This will make it easier to calculate the health of each royal when playing.

For example, if you cannot place a 3♠ on any stack of the matrix and the K♠ and Q♠ are alive and have been placed outside the matrix with no ICE, you would place the 3♠ offset on the Q♠, since it has the closest value [12 rather than 13]. The queen's health is now 15 [12 health for the queen + 3 health from the 3♠].

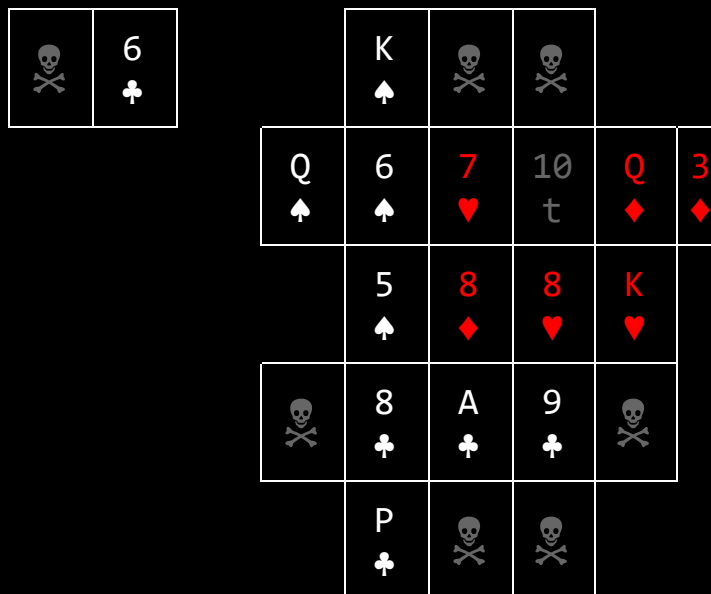
If there is a tie when placing ICE you may choose which of the tied royals gets additional ICE.

If there are no royals around the matrix when you draw a card that you cannot play, it is placed as preventative ICE [the royals have heard rumours that you're coming for them]. Place the ICE following the rules for placing a royal [near the highest value and closest suit in the matrix]. When a royal is placed on a spot with preventative ICE it automatically adds the ICE to its health.

## //PLAY.EXAMPLE

```
/Run play_example.exe  
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Here is an example of a game of MATR1X 0VERL0AD already in progress. The player has killed 6 royals and flipped their cards over. 5 royals remain alive outside the matrix, and 1 royal is still in the deck. The **Q♦** has the **3♦** as ICE and so has a total health of 14. The player's deck and latest draw are shown on the top left of the diagram below. The player has just drawn the **6♣** and must play it as a program in the matrix.



The player has 3 valid choices for where to place the card.

They could place it on the **5♠** triggering an overload against the **K♥**. This would not kill the **K♥** because the cards in the overload (the **8♦** and **8♥**) do not both match the king's suit.

The player could also play the **6♣** on the **A♣**. This would not trigger an overload since the royal opposite this stack is dead. This would also make it difficult to play any lower valued cards in the future, which means more royals could get ICE and become more difficult to kill.

The player chooses the third possibility, to place the **6♣** on the **6♠**.



	K ♠	☠	☠		
Q ♠	6 ♣	7 ♥	10 t	Q ♦	3 ♦
	5 ♠	8 ♦	8 ♥	K ♥	
☠	8 ♣	A ♣	9 ♣	☠	
	P ♣	☠	☠		

Since the 6♣ is placed opposite a living royal [the Q♦] the card triggers an overload targeting the Q♦. The overload includes the 7♥ and 10t, which have a total value of 17. The Q♦ has a health of 15 [a base health of 12 plus the 3♦ as ICE]. The overload is greater than the queen's health and matches the queen's colour [the 7♥ matches the colour and the 10t has a wild suit] so the Q♦ dies.

This play also kills the J♣, since it triggers an overload with a sum greater than that jack's health. The player flips those cards over and continues to play.



	K ♠	☠	☠		
Q ♠	6 ♣	7 ♥	10 t	☠	
	5 ♠	8 ♦	8 ♥	K ♥	
☠	8 ♣	A ♣	9 ♣	☠	
	☠	☠	☠		

## **/END1NG THE GAME**

There is only one way to win MATR1X 0VERL0AD: CYBERMANCY.

### **//K1LL ALL THE R0YALS**

When you kill all the royals in the deck (all 3 paiges, 3 queens, and 3 kings) you've won!

*<<<Congrats, you have done the impossible and can retire to a life of revolutionary justice.>>>*

There are 3 ways to lose MATR1X 0VERL0AD: CYBERMANCY.

### **//0UT 0F T1ME**

If the deck is empty and there are still royals living around the matrix, you lose. You ran out of time and resources so the royals are going to hunt you down.

*<<<Let's be honest, it was always going to end this way.>>>*

### **//BLACK ICE**

If any royal accrues enough ICE to bring it's total value to more than 20, you lose. The royal has gathered enough ICE that hacking their system has become either impossible or lethal.

*<<<If the ICE doesn't kill you then the royals' private security will definitely track you down and burn your entire apartment complex to the ground.>>>*

### **//FATAL 1NF1N1TE RECURS10N ERR0R**

It is possible to get stuck in an infinite loop where all you can do is place a reset card, replay the cards in the stack, and play a reset again, unable to kill any remaining royals. If this happens, you lose.

*<<<Your suite of elite hacking software and black market gear has malfunctioned. Don't worry, you'll be brain dead by the time the cops find you.>>>*

## **/GAME M0DES**

MATRIX 0VERL0AD: CYBERMANCY introduces several new ways to play MATRIX 0VERL0AD. You can play any method you like, but it is recommended you start with the **BAS1C** game mode [assuming you have not played the original MATRIX 0VERL0AD] then progress to the campaign mode and then the advanced and random modes.

### **//BAS1C**

The basic mode of MATRIX 0VERL0AD: CYBERMANCY mirrors the original MATRIX 0VERL0AD which is played with a normal deck of playing cards. To play this game mode either substitute your tarot deck with a playing card deck [jokers loaded, they count as your hard resets with zero value and wild suit] or make the following adjustments to your deck of tarot cards:

> Remove the **2-21t** [major arcana] from the deck except the fool [0t] and the magician [1t]. This should leave you with a 54 card deck.

The game setup is unchanged. The conditions for winning and losing are unchanged.

### **//CAMPA1GN**

Campaign mode slowly introduces new rules and game types into the basic game mode. This is ideal for players looking for a new challenge but don't want to be overwhelmed with new rules, or want to experience a short cyberpunk narrative arc as new rules are introduced.

To play this game mode consult the **CAMPA1GN GU1DE** handout. It is kept separate from the game rules to prevent spoilers.

## //ADVANCED

Advanced mode incorporates all the cards in the tarot deck. This mode is the same as the final chapters of the **CAMPA1GN** game mode, and presents a challenging game for the experienced **MATR1X ØVERLØAD** player. To play this game mode include the following cards into the **BAS1C** game mode setup:

> Load the 2-21t [major arcana] and the knights [**N♠**, **N♥**, **N♦**, **N♣**] into the deck. This should leave you with a full 78 card tarot deck.

The game setup is mostly unchanged [see the **CARD.CØDEX** chapter for information on the rules for each card]. The conditions for winning and losing are unchanged.

## //RANDØM CHALLENGE

This game mode presents random challenges for players who have completed the **CAMPA1GN** mode or have experience with the **ADVANCED** mode. In **RANDØM CHALLENGE** the player draws a random card from among the chapter cards from the **CAMPA1GN** mode and plays the game with different cards loaded into the deck. To play **RANDØM CHALLENGE** setup up the deck as you would for a **BAS1C** game with the following changes:

> Before setup create a separate deck of cards loaded with the following major arcana: strength [**11t**], the hanged man [**12t**], temperance [**14t**], the tower [**16t**], and judgement [**20t**]. This is the challenge deck.

> Before you setup the matrix, draw a card from the challenge deck. Follow the rules for the challenge card in the **CARD.CØDEX** and shuffle those cards into the play deck.

The game setup is mostly unchanged [see the **CARD.CØDEX** chapter for information on the rules for each card]. The conditions for winning and losing are unchanged.

# CARD . CØDEX

/Run matr1x\_0verl0ad\_card\_c0dex.exe

Authenticating...

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BAS1C CARDS		
RESETS		
CARD	SETUP	PLAY
THE F00L [0t]	Place in matrix as normal	Reset any lowest value stack
THE MAG1C1AN [1t]	Place in matrix as normal	Reset any lowest value stack
ACES [A]	Place in matrix as normal	Reset any stack
PR0GRAMS		
CARD	SETUP	PLAY
2-10 of swords [♠]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack with lower or equal value, or else play as ICE.
2-10 of cups [♥]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack with lower or equal value, or else play as ICE.
2-10 of coins [♦]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack with lower or equal value, or else play as ICE.
2-10 of wands [♣]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack with lower or equal value, or else play as ICE.
2-10 of trumps [t]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack with lower or equal value, or else play as ICE.
R0YALS		
CARD	SETUP	PLAY
PA1GES [P] 11 health	Set aside, then place outside matrix.	Place outside matrix near stack closest in suit, colour, and value.
QUEENS [Q] 12 health	Set aside, then place outside matrix.	Place outside matrix near stack closest in suit, colour, and value.
K1NGS [K] 13 health	Set aside, then place outside matrix.	Place outside matrix near stack closest in suit, colour, and value.

ADVANCED CARDS		
RESETS		
CARD	SETUP	PLAY
THE STAR [17t]	Place in matrix as normal	Reset any stack
THE MOON [18t]	Place in matrix as normal	Reset any stack
THE SUN [19t]	Place in matrix as normal	Reset any stack
PROGRAMS		
CARD	SETUP	PLAY
STRENGTH [11t]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack with lower or equal value, or else play as ICE.
HANGED MAN [12t]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack with lower or equal value, or else play as ICE.
HAUNTS		
CARD	SETUP	PLAY
KNIGHTS [N]	Place in matrix as normal	Place on any stack. Blocks programs from being placed on stack. Does not trigger an overload.
BURNERS		
CARD	SETUP	PLAY
DEATH [13t]	Discard without effect	Discard to revive any royal. Flip over the royal card and any ICE that was placed on it.
TEMPERANCE [14t]	Discard without effect	Discard to kill any royal.
DEVIL [15t]	Discard without effect	Discard to revive any royal. Flip over the royal card and any ICE that was placed on it.
TOWER [16t]	Discard without effect	Discard to swap positions of any two living royals around the matrix
JUDGMENT [20t]	Discard without effect	Discard to kill any royal.
THE WORLD [21t]	Discard without effect	Discard to reset any column or row in the matrix, including royals.

CAMPAIGN CHAPTERS/RANDOM CHALLENGE DECK	
CARD	CHALLENGE
STRENGTH [11t]	Load all 4 KNIGHT [N] cards into the deck and shuffle.
HANGED MAN [12t]	Load the DEATH [13t] card into the deck and shuffle.
TEMPERANCE [14t]	Load the DEVIL [15t] card into the deck and shuffle.
TOWER [16t]	Load the STAR [17t], MOON [18t], and SUN [19t] into the deck and shuffle.
JUDGMENT [20t]	Load the WORLD [21t] card into the deck and shuffle.

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