



# NULL VALUE



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# INTRODUCTION

The Matrix is as dangerous as any part of the Sixth World—and as lucrative. Controlling the right parts of the Matrix—just like controlling the right parts of the physical world—means that nuyen in seemingly unlimited amounts can flow into your coffers. And lack of control means you will regularly be taken advantage of, just like a barrens rat.

Perhaps one major difference between the Matrix and the physical world is that not all of the Matrix has been mapped. Between the Resonance Realms and the deep Foundation, there are parts of the Matrix that are seemingly infinite, places where no metahuman—or at least the persona of a metahuman—has been. There is potential for great power in these sections of the Matrix, as they could hold the key to hidden information or controlling other parts of the Matrix. They could also shelter e-creatures like none that have ever been seen, with dangers we have no idea how to counter.

The ten groups profiled in this book understand the power and the danger of the Matrix. Most of them hope to harness the power while overcoming the danger—or perhaps they want to make themselves part of the threats the Matrix presents.

Here are the groups you will learn about in this book:

**Ex Machina** has roots in both the physical world and the Matrix, and they are building new, enhanced versions of humans with little regard for what the result of their tinkering will be.

The digital city of **Garmonbozia** seeks power of a different kind than other groups do—they desire the power of safety. This haven of artificial intelligences hopes to help AIs live and thrive, and perhaps show what role they can play in the larger world.

The **GOD-Slayers** are a threat of a different kind, with goals shadowrunners may be able to relate to. They detest the Grid **Overwatch Division** and its control of the Matrix, and they are after nothing less than the group's total destruction.

The **Lady in Red** may also interact with runners, but in a more nefarious way. Their desire for chaos may pull runners into their orbit, but the lengths to which they will go might cause more than a few problems.

**Marianne** is an issue of a different sort. Rather than a specific group, it's the Matrix system designed to serve France, and its individual peculiarities are shaping how that nation functions.

Meanwhile, back in North America, **New Revolution's Eagle Vanguard** provides a perhaps unwelcome visit from the next iteration of an older threat. Forces looking to reunite the old United States have not given up the fight, and they have brought methods of online recruiting and radicalizing to their work.

Then there's the **Null Sect**. The goals of this group are not always clear, but their skill and ferocity are. If you're on the Matrix and want to survive this threat, you need to be briefed on how they operate.

**OmniSwarm** presents another mystery. They seem to be a collection of Dissonant sprites, but are they true individuals or do they function as a sort of collective organism? This sort of question must be asked to deal with the threat the Swarm poses.

The **Reality Hackers** also cause a lot of Matrix destruction, but of the sort shadowrunners may be more receptive to. Seemingly able to break into any place, the Reality Hackers have a knack for stumbling upon some of the deepest secrets buried in the Matrix.

The **Signal Spikes** bring an environmental flavor to their Matrix actions. Right now they're better at sowing chaos than targeting their efforts, but they have the skill to be dangerous if they become more focused.

Finally, the aptly named **Using This Book** chapter provides some thoughts on how to integrate information from this book into your *Shadowrun* game.

So if you're looking for the state of Matrix groups, or for Matrix plot hooks for your game, or just for some cyberpunk Matrix chaos, *Null Value* is ready for you!

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////////////////////////////////////  
CONNECTING TO JACKPOINT VPN...  
...IDENTITY SPOOFED  
...ENCRYPTION KEYS GENERATED  
...CONNECTED TO ONION ROUTERS  
////////////////////////////////////

>LOGIN  
>ENTER PASSCODE

...BIOMETRIC SCAN CONFIRMED  
CONNECTED TO <ERROR: NODE UNKNOWN>  
////////////////////////////////////

“The Internet is a tidal wave. It changes the rules.”  
— Bill Gates

////////////////////////////////////  
Welcome back to JackPoint, chummer; your last connection was severed **12 hours, 12 minutes, 34 seconds** ago

### TODAY’S HEADS-UP

Does it feel like we delved too deep into the Matrix and found some balrogs?  
We’ve run down some of the monsters for you.  
—Glitch

////////////////////////////////////

### INCOMING

>>> Control is an illusion in the Matrix, but the illusion runs deep. [TAG: HACK & SLASH]  
>>> There are more realities than we know, but we should maybe try to close that gap a little. [TAG: ASTRAL WAYS]  
>>> The weapon the corps fear most is a well-deployed secret. [TAG: WHISPER NETS]

////////////////////////////////////

### TOP NEWS ITEMS

>>> Latest corporate trend: Opening an office of metaplanar relations.  
>>> Danielle De la Mar is proud of the Matrix but sees “work left to be done.”  
>>> CAS opens new round of trade negotiations with Caribbean League, promises “new era of prosperity.”

////////////////////////////////////

**JACKPOINT STATS**  
62 Users are active on the network.

**LATEST NEWS**  
CAS Congress begins hearings on artificial intelligence rights.

**PERSONAL ALERTS**  
>>> You have 6 new private messages.  
>>> You have 7 new responses to your JackPoint posts.  
>>> Matrix outages in Redmond upgraded to “sporadic.”  
There are ten Members online and in your area.

**YOUR CURRENT REP SCORE: 799 (76% POSITIVE)**

**CURRENT TIME: 27 July 2082, 2135 hrs**  
////////////////////////////////////





## RELATIONSHIP TALK

BY SAMUEL RUTZICK

*Evil-Eye: Heya, X. You online?*

*Xanthos: When am I not? It's not like I'm exactly busy these days.*

*EE: Hey, it's not like we haven't offered to put you on the real front lines.*

*X: I know, I know. And I'm happy with what I'm doing.*

*X: But you didn't message me to check on my life-style, Evil-Eye. What do the Signal Spikes need from me today? Politician to blackmail? Factory to blow up?*

*EE: Other way around. We owe you a lot, you know that. This one is on the house.*

*X: You don't owe me a thing. We're fighting for a cause. A cause bigger than any one of us.*

*EE: Hey. No one doubts your devotion, Xanthos. Certainly not me.*

*X: ... thanks.*

*EE: But you've been found out, X. You need to get going, and soon. Or you'll be dead.*

*Ding!*

The elevator doors slid open with a chime and the silent whirr of motors, and a man stepped inside. He was not a shadowrunner.

He was not an anyone of note, really. He was a corp wageslave—the kind of man, in an expensive-but-not-too-expensive suit and with a watch that was just enough to impress a boss but not any real status symbol, who shadowrunners didn't really think about. If they interacted with this kind of person, it was to see them cowering behind desks during firefights, or while they snuck past during infiltrations.

There is no such thing as boring in the Sixth World. This is a world of magic and mystery, cyberwarfare and daring heists. But if you had to pick what boring looks like, then Mr. Andrew Young would be that sort of person.

The RFID chip in his badge chimed off the sensor in the elevator, and it unlocked the button for his floor. Sure, there weren't many perks working at Ares—especially as a middle-manager for middle-managers—and not even Andrew was dumb enough to think they weren't tracking his comings and goings, but, hey, the security was second to none. A few of the lights in the apartment hallway flickered on and off, but the halls were clean, the doors mostly kept people's arguments quiet, and Ares had a subcontractor of a subcontractor spray for bugs. So in the grand scheme of places to live in Seattle, it was pretty solid.

He strode down the hall with an even pace, his briefcase swinging in his hand, and fumbled for his keys. It