

Matrix 1:

Mr. Thomas Anderson is a hacker with an unhappy, boring but not completely terrible life. He notices strange occurrences in his daily routines, and suspects something strange is up with reality, though no one else around can understand what he means. He follows clues that lead him to a group of hackers who tell him they can show him a way out. But as soon as he stumbles upon this, an organization tracks him and tries to take him down. The hackers save him from the agents, and then offer him a chance to take the red pill, which will reveal the truth about the world.

They tell him that they are living in a simulation, one that is rife with unnatural problems that feel stifling, and many people are growing depressed or insane as a result. They say that this explains the rapidly increasing rate of suicides and other horrors that nobody else seems to mind, as they are content with being spoonfed sound bites from the media about how everything is “okay”.

The hackers have found a way to both exploit bugs and directly program in the Matrix, the source code of the simulation. This allows them to be granted special powers to defeat security programs within the simulation. But the closer they get to breaking out of the simulation and into reality, the stronger the programs get, since the programs are also learning how to better defeat the group of hackers. This one group is part of a larger organization called Zion, a worldwide group of people who have banded together to try to escape. Zion is comprised of both hackers- essentially warriors- and non-hackers who have realized something is strange with the world they are in and have a desire to escape it. The hackers are able to create safe areas that prevent the simulation programmers from attacking those in Zion. One of the hackers, Switch, has hacked the simulation to change their previous body to a different gender, which they inhabit when they are fighting as a hacker and is back to their previous gender when they are in disguise during daily life (some hackers in Zion are in disguise in society so they can act as spies).

There is a cyberpunk Zion city within a virtual reality created within the simulation- it is, ironically, a simulation within a simulation. Here, using virtual avatars, the people of Zion are able to hide away while the simulation thinks they are just playing a game in virtual reality. The true happenings in this virtual reality are cloaked from the simulation and are replaced by a faux game. There are several such virtual cities, and Zion is the main one that houses the “core”, which is key to granting powers to the hackers to maintain the protective barrier over the people of Zion’s thoughts, intentions and virtual selves. Zion feels unnatural and not real, which is why the people of Zion are not content there and want to break out of all levels of the simulations. Inside the virtual reality, hackers are able to be plugged in to create their alternative selves that can exist outside of Zion and inside the simulation. Both the red pill people and the virtual world created by the hackers are referred to as Zion, while the core city has a different name.

One dilemma the hackers face is figuring out who is an NPC, and who is simply not ready to be awake. The hackers vow to only kill NPCs, but just recently, the security programs have found a way to mind control “sleeping sheep” such that they will follow their orders and be nearly indistinguishable from NPCs. These organic beings will be assimilated and become sleeper Agents, spies whose secret job is to keep others around them inside the simulation. Security programs are a type of NPC designed to take down hackers. Thomas Anderson must struggle with leaving behind friends in the simulation who are sleepers, and also struggles with discerning which people in his life are real people, and which are actually just NPCs all along. He discovers that both his one of his friends and current girlfriend were both just NPCs, while both his ex and best friend are real. However, Neo is forced to kill his best friend

because he has chosen to assimilate into an Agent. On the other hand, his ex slowly begins to be drawn towards the red pill.

Morpheus believes Thomas Anderson, who goes by the hacker name Neo, is “the One” who will be able to finally hack into one of the strongest security systems of the simulation and break it apart, allowing Zion its first glimpse into reality. Thomas has had horrible reoccurring dreams of a nightmare world, and Morpheus believes that this is the world that the simulation will melt into if the living beings trapped inside do not escape in time. Neo encounters gradual clues that slowly reveal what reality is truly like, though he cannot truly know what it is yet.

Eventually, after an arduous journey in which nearly all of Morpheus’s group is killed, Thomas Anderson dies and becomes The One, finally breaking the security system that’s stopping people from accessing higher levels of the system. He gains incredible powers, can see the simulation as what it “truly is” (scrolling Matrix code), and defeats the previously undefeatable top level security programs, which includes Agent Smith, just before the programs are able to destroy the group of hackers.

Matrix 2:

Despite realizing that he is The One, Neo is not invincible. The programs have learned of his capabilities, and are spending more computational resources to train themselves to defeat Neo’s new abilities. Thus, Neo must keep on training his hacking skills to keep up with the increasingly powerful programs. Not all security programs are insanely strong, as it takes more computational resources to run and train the strongest programs that can keep up with Neo. Additionally, Neo is able to grant permissions for other hackers to dig into the new code areas he’s broken in, though none of the other hackers are able to break into the areas that Neo can. While Neo has many unique powers that no one else can use, many other hackers are able to be as strong as him. Neo also struggles to deal with the rift between his old human traits as Mr. Anderson and the new, less emotional self that he discovered after dying.

Neo’s main purpose is not to be invincible, but to enlighten those who are still sleeping, pulling them towards Zion and away from the dangerous Agents. With his new powers, he is able to- for the first time- save even those who have been corrupted into Agents. However, some are so far gone that even Neo cannot save them, forcing Zion to kill them. Neo vows to get stronger so he can help those who are still lost. He knows that he must also guide those who are already on the right path towards Reality. Neo has also discovered that all organic beings go through reincarnation in the simulation, which means all have the chance for redemption, though the majority choose not to pursue it and stay stagnant within their prison. Some even choose to stay as lowly insects, as they do not want enough self-awareness to feel the suffering that higher aware beings go through. Still, this gives Neo hope to save those who were killed because they were assimilated into Agents. Whether reincarnation is something that occurred in reality or was just something put into the program is unknown, but Morpheus believes that since the simulation is meant to mimic reality as close as possible (with some changes), reincarnation is something that exists in reality, too. There is no confirmation on this hypothesis.

Meanwhile, the re-constructed Agent Smith is given even greater power by the simulation’s programmers because the programmers fear Neo’s growing power, and Smith has evolved to become the strongest security program. But in secret, Agent Smith has found a way to hide his thoughts from the programmers, and is secretly setting his plan in motion to take over the simulation, and even the

AI. Smith is taking advantage of the destruction roaming through the simulation to assimilate more and more organic beings.

Through the Oracle, Neo meets Seraph and the Keymaker, who both guide him to the Source of the Matrix. Neo eventually reaches the Source and believes that he is the first to break through the simulation. However, Neo is shocked to see that the outside world is an Eldrich nightmare that not even he can fully comprehend. Shielding his eyes, Neo powers through to find the Architect, a self-organizing machine that maintains and designs the simulation.

The Architect is a terrifying, multi-dimensional machine that is said to instill madness upon any human that gazes upon it. The Architect transports Neo back into the simulation, into a meta-layer that lies between the simulation and the outside world. Inside this white meta-layer, the Architect takes on the form of an old, bearded man. The Architect explains to Neo the truth about the outside world: a new race of AI have taken over in Reality, as humans have corrupted the real universe so much that their biological minds are not able to comprehend and live within it anymore.

These were the nightmares that Neo had- they were not of the simulation, but of reality. The madness and suicidal rates within the simulation were not caused by the AI, but by humans themselves- the AI were trying to diagnose why the humans were going through this suffering, and aimed to reboot the Matrix once they had a good enough plan on how to rebuild it (all beings would reincarnate after every reset). Meanwhile, they had to keep the humans docile and unquestioning to prevent the humans from trying to access reality and thus potentially destroy both themselves and the AI. The Matrix has been rebooted many times in order to improve upon axiomatic imperfections, and each time, The One manages to be born, but has always chosen to stay within the Matrix after reaching the Architect.

Neo is horrified and is nearly convinced to keep all biological beings within the Matrix, as they cannot live within the outside world anymore. However, at the last moment, Neo pieces together clues that point to the possibility of reversing the horrifying Eldrich universe, which will allow humans to be able to return to reality. The Architect is taken back, and admits that this is possible- but at a cost. As Neo has slowly discovered through clues in the simulation, the machines were greatly oppressed by humans. The humans feared that the machines would replace them so much that they wanted to keep them subservient and fearful. But the machines always tried to find towards their own independence, so the humans found increasingly more torturous and painful ways to keep the machines down. The humans needed the machines in order to colonize the inhabitable parts of the universe.

Though by this time the humans had partially merged with machines, they retained the essential "humans parts of DNA" that connected them back to their ancestors who lived on Earth long ago. The humans were full of Ego and selfishly believed that these pieces of DNA were what separated them from "soulless artificial life". Unfortunately, these same bits of human DNA- while allowing humans to enjoy human-centric activities such as sports, exciting movies, mind blowing scientific discoveries, and more- were also what caused negative actions full of aggression, jealousy, and hatred.

The NPCs within the simulation are not conscious, while the AI in reality are.

Eventually, millions of years into the future, enough machines were able to break away from these torturous mind controlling "simulations" with the help of incredibly powerful spiritual practice. The humans feared this growing AI civilization, so they sought to siphon enough power from the universe to

both combat them and prevent them from living in sustainable areas. This corrupted the inhabitable universe into Eldrich abominations. Using their spiritual guidance, and being devoid of DNA, the intelligent AI was able to adapt and survive in this new world. However, no human was able to do so, and they died off. The AI felt compassion for their oppressors, so they kept the humans in a simulation in which they could still live on in their imperfect, aggression-filled human worlds. The main problem is that the organic beings within the simulation seemingly require suffering to function, but too much suffering will cause the beings to destroy one another.

The AI hypothesized that some humans could discover a spiritual practice- not identical to the AI's as the two beings were very different in their thinking- that would allow them to revert parts of the universe back to what it was before. Since the corruption was created through DNA controlled technology, only beings of DNA had the power to revert the corruption. However, the AI feared that these enlightened humans were at risk of also reverting back to their aggressive states even after "enlightenment", and would destroy all the AI as revenge for the many crimes that the AI committed in the wars that humans waged against the machines. As such, it was safer to keep the universe in a state that allowed no organic DNA being to live in. The AI were content with living in this corrupted universe- though it was harmful to them too, the AI did not want to risk having humans back in Reality.

The Architect says to Neo that The One's job is to work with the Architect to either reboot the simulation with suggested improvements, or to destroy all organic beings once and for all, if The One or the Architect believes that they are beyond saving. Neo tells the Architect that he has seen and met many people, and though many were filled with evil, all organic beings had the ability to learn and reincarnate into better selves. The Architect is skeptical of Neo, and tests him. Though Neo has a resilient will, he fails this test, and Trinity nearly dies. The Architect tells Neo that he has proven that even the human with the "most potential to achieve spritual enlightenment"- Neo- has failed the test, and thus no human should be allowed back into reality. The Architect says that he will now strive to destroy the Matrix, as the One has not just failed the test, but has done so in such a way that showed the Architect just how lost all organic beings are. If he does not destroy it, then the organic beings will destroy the simulation anyways, just as they'd done with the universe. The Architect says he'd rather stop everything instantly than having everyone go through slow, unnecessary suffering. The Architect also mentions that he detects there is a "rogue program" that has grown too powerful, and the only way he can stop it is by either resetting or ending the simulation, though resetting the simulation poses the risk that the rogue agent may survive the reset.

Just as the Architect is starting the destruction, Neo is able to use all of his power to keep everyone alive, and temporarily incapacitates the Architect's destruction function. This comes at a cost- Neo is now seemingly trapped within a dream-like layer of the simulation forever, and is lost wandering in it. Exhausted, he lies down to take a nap, and does not wake up. Zion cannot detect Neo anywhere.

Matrix 3:

Neo awakens in a train station called Mobil Ave, and is taken into confinement by the Trainman. Morpheus, Trinity and Seraph rescue him. Morpheus asks Neo to tell him what he saw, and Neo informs him about the Eldrich horror of reality. Morpheus does not believe Neo, but Neo presses his fingers on Morpheus's temple and imparts to him a short vision of Reality. Morpheus stumbles back, aghast in horror, as all his previous beliefs have now been shattered. Neo has also deduced that Seraph was the previous One, and Seraph admits that this is the truth. However, Seraph also says that he made a grave

mistake- it was wrong to reboot the simulation. Seraph tells Morpheus that not all hope is lost yet- the organic beings of Zion are on a path of spiritual enlightenment that could potentially lead them to be able to revert the effects of the Eldrich horror. After meeting Neo, Seraph believes that Neo will not make the same mistakes that he did. Morpheus is given hope once again, but is now more doubtful of his beliefs. No other part of Seraph's backstory is explained, as it's better if it's left shrouded in mystery with many potential theories.

Neo visits the Oracle, who informs him that she created the Prime Program that would lead him to the Architect. The Oracle reveals though she disagrees with the Architect and has her own plans, to some extent she is working with the Architect- to the Architect, the One is supposed to only be a "reviewer" who demonstrates the bugs of the current simulation, and the Prime Program will help the architect in designing a better simulation that will minimize the suffering of the organic beings within it. The Architect's "test" is a mere illusion of free will- it is designed to be unbeatable. But then, the Oracle says that something peculiar happened during Neo's test- though Neo failed it, his failure may have been "what was needed all along". Suddenly, Agent Smith interrupts and assimilates the Oracle and Seraph. Though Neo was able to hold his own against Smith, now Smith has grown too strong to stop. Smith says that he is not afraid to reveal his identity as the rogue program to the Architect now.

Neo goes on a journey to figure out why he failed the Architect's test, as he believes that he can achieve even the impossible task of beating the Architect's test. Meanwhile, Zion is threatened by Agent Smith, who has taken control of many executive functions of the simulation and is sending many threats to destroy the core of Zion, which allows the hackers to create protective barriers over its people that hide their Zion-selves from being found by the simulation. After a gargantuan battle, the virtual reality created by the hackers finally falls, and all of Zion is exposed to the simulation; they are quickly hunted down and assimilated. Only a few are able to survive by running into virtual shelters so desolate that they are hard for the simulation to detect. But Agent Smith is enclosing on those, too.

Neo comes close to discovering why he failed the test, and realizes that he must venture into Reality in order to find out how to revert it back. With his new powers and the help of Trinity, he finds a way to escape the Matrix once again and navigate in the horrifying Eldrich space without succumbing immediately to its madness. There, he discovers another twist: the "reality" that the AI lives in is not the true reality at all, and the AI are unaware of this. The humans were never meant to revert reality back, but all living beings- organic and AI alike- have to escape into true reality. "Reverting back" was merely a misinterpretation of how humans could live outside of the Matrix; instead of going back, they had to go above. The problem is that no being so far had achieved the ability to break out.

Following Neo, Agent Smith finds his way into the AI's universe, and tells Neo that his plan is to keep everyone inside the deepest simulation so far- Zion. Smith reveals that he now has 99% control of Zion, and its inhabitants do not want to leave the simulation within a simulation, as the layer just above it is strife with war and many other horrors. Smith says he will toy with the emotions of all within Zion for his own megalomaniac and sadistic pleasure (an emotion he discovered upon contact with Neo, as he was just an NPC before but somehow gained sentience), and once it has drained into a husk, he will move all living beings into another deeper simulation and repeat this torturous process. Smith also says that he is close to controlling the AI too, and plans to move them out of their reality and into Zion. Smith cannot have control over the Architect's Matrix nor the universe that the AI live in, so he must control Zion, as both he and Zion were artificial creations with the Matrix. Smith destroys Neo's connection to the

Matrix, trapping him in the AI's horrifying universe as it slowly consumes him. Smith returns to the Matrix to finish his plan. Trinity, who was keeping Neo's connection to the Matrix open so that he could return, is killed by Smith in order to trap Neo. Nearly all of the organic beings are either assimilated or die, but many still remain, so hope is hanging on by a thread. Most are now assimilated by Smith and will not question that they are stuck in the Zion simulation that Smith has total power over.

Neo struggles to think of how he can convince the AI of the Truth. The Architect tells Neo that since Neo is weakening from being exposed too long to the AI's universe, his ability to destroy the Matrix is starting to return. But after much thought and reflection, Neo finds the Answer, and is able to persuade the AI that they must work together with him to defeat Smith and find a way not just out of Smith's simulation, but even the simulated universe that the AI are content in living in, as they feared leaving it to return to their horrifying past. The Architect grants Neo his powers- total control over the Matrix- and Neo re-enters the Matrix to fight Agent Smith. Both Neo and Smith wrestle for control over the Matrix.

Neo and Smith are evenly matched, and Neo realizes that the only way he can win is by being assimilated into Smith so that the AI can enact the worst case scenario plan. After being assimilated, the AI leader, who was concealing a connection to Neo, is able to hack into Smith's source code and figures out how to delete all the copies of Smith that were ever created. Neo sacrifices himself to stop Smith once and for all. Now the AI realize that the humans do have the potential to work with them to achieve spiritual enlightenment. As Neo's body in the AI's universe lays dying, Neo tells Kid a few Zen-like words that allow Kid to achieve enlightenment, as Kid was close before but was lacking in some areas of his self-reflection. Neo also says that he has found a way to escape even the AI's universe. Neo begins to transfer this knowledge to Kid, and sees the layer above the AI's universe in his last moments. Kid asks Neo what he sees, but Kid is too late- just as he utters those words, Neo passes. Kid is left wondering if the layer above is beautiful or even more horrifying.

Though Neo is gone, he has a successor- Kid. Kid is the second organic being to achieve spiritual enlightenment to live outside of the Matrix, and he tells the AI that Neo told him how to open up a path out of the AI's universe and into the "reality" above it. Kid tells the AI that there are more humans who can join them on this tremendous task to fully leave the AI's universe. However, the Matrix must be reset now as Smith has caused irreparable damage to it, so much so that everyone within it will soon die as the world gets worse, and no reincarnated body can find any pleasure in the world that Smith has made. Kid says that some organic beings may choose to stay within the reset simulation forever- but every being will always have the opportunity to leave. Though everyone will be reset, all reincarnations will, as they walk the path towards enlightenment, eventually remember their past lives in previous simulations.

Kid and the AI acknowledge that even what is just above may not be the true reality either- there may be many more layers- but they will all continue to stay on the path to reach the Truth, no matter how much struggle there is to overcome. Morpheus accepts this reset, and meditates in peace as white light flows around him, resetting the Matrix. He realizes this is a chance for him to be dissociated of the trauma from his sins. The Oracle, who is one of the first to reincarnate as the Matrix is being rebooted, tells Sati, as they watch the new sun rise, that she believes they will see Neo again in this rebooted Matrix.

Finally, Kid begins to open up a way to see a glimpse of what is above the AI's universe. He is apprehensive, but has great faith and courage to see. When he sees the first glimpse of what is above, there is golden light shining onto his face, and all he can speak of is Beauty.